

BLACKSTAR LUMINARY GALA

NOVEMBER 20, 2026
THE BELLEVUE HOTEL
PHILADELPHIA, PA



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LUMINARY GALA 2025, PHOTO BY NAOMIEH JOVIN

INTRODUCTION

BlackStar Projects is thrilled to present the 2026 Luminary Gala, an unforgettable night honoring trailblazers transforming the arts, culture, and media landscape. The Gala is a must-attend event bringing together artists, philanthropists, and BlackStar's vibrant community of supporters to celebrate our work and raise vital funds for its continued growth.

As BlackStar's premier fundraising event, the Gala raises essential resources to support our year-round programs, which empower Black, Brown, and Indigenous artists in the moving image field.



LUMINARY GALA 2025, PHOTO BY NAOMIEH JOVIN

INTRODUCTION

The evening will feature the Luminary Awards, presented to artists, cultural leaders, and collectives, whose contributions align with BlackStar's mission of creating a more just and liberatory world. A selection of past award honorees include:

Robert Townsend (2025)
Autumn DuraId Arkapaw (2025)
Meshell Ndegeocello (2025)
Tourmaline (2024)
Telfar Clemens & Babak Radboy (2023)
COUSIN Collective (2023)
Mira Nair (2022)
Ava DuVernay (2017)
Julie Dash (2016)
dream hampton (2015)
RZA (2014)
Howard University Film Program (2013)



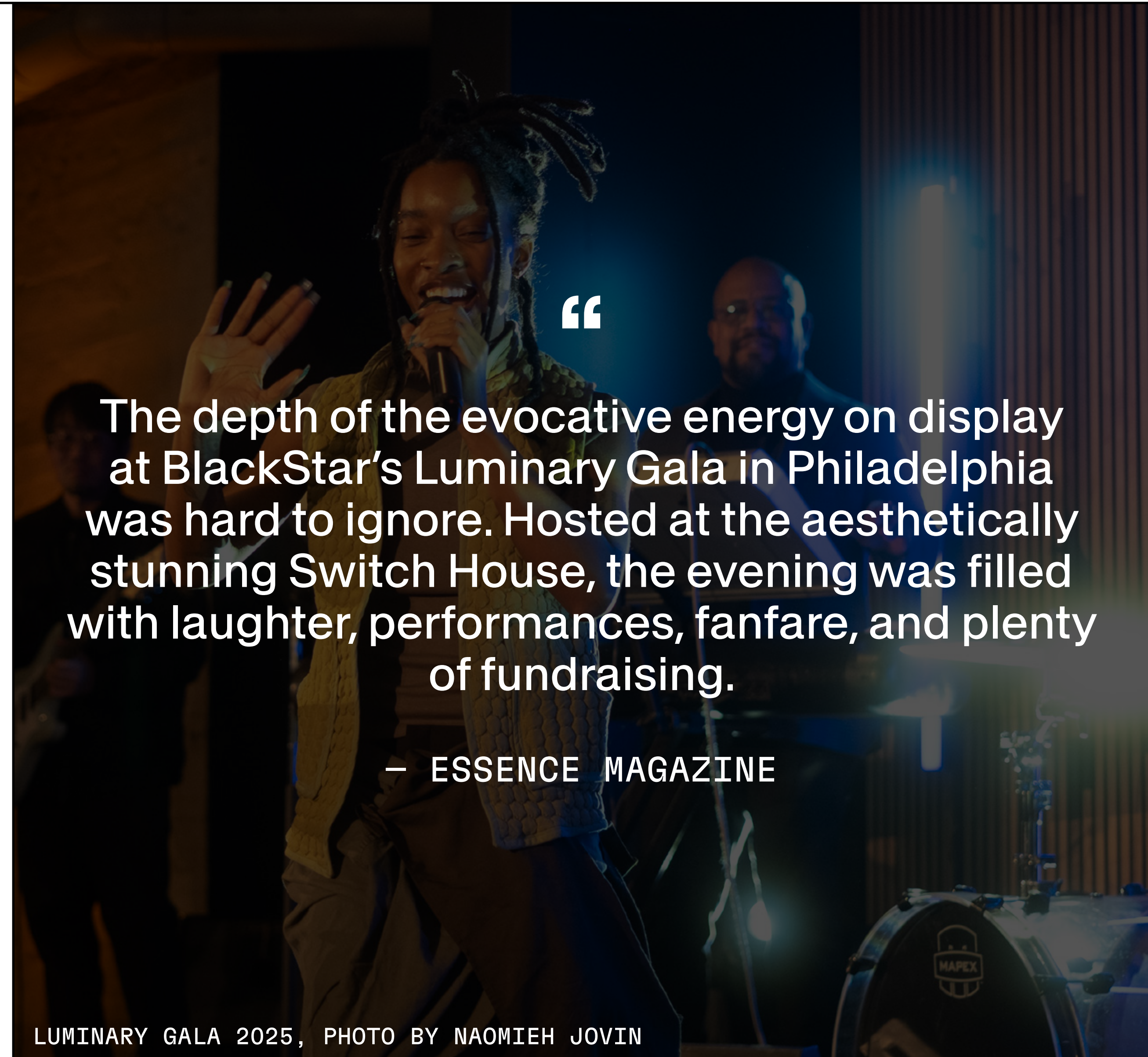
LUMINARY GALA 2025, PHOTO BY NAOMIEH JOVIN

LOOKING BACK AT THE 2025 LUMINARY GALA

The 2025 Luminary Gala was a beautiful evening of celebration and entertainment. Held at The Switch House in Philadelphia, last year's Gala honored Autumn Durald Arkapaw, Meshell Ndegeocello, Robert Townsend, and Third World Newsreel for their groundbreaking work in film and cultural advocacy.

The event was generously supported by Open Society Foundations, with additional support from Companions and Animals for Reform and Equity (CARE), Cozen O'Connor Public Strategies, Ogilvie Family Foundation, Lapine Group, Inc., Fidler Club, Mural Arts Philadelphia, PECO an Exelon Company, Pierson Ferdinand LLP, Portage & Practice, Good Mirrors, and MidAtlantic FX.

The 2025 Luminary Gala Host Committee included: Adjoa Jones de Almeida, Allison Acevedo, Brandon Pankey, Deesha Philyaw, Donna Frisby-Greenwood, Ernest Owens, Irit Reinheimer, James Claiborne, Councilmember Jamie Gauthier, Jermaine Jenkins, Joe Hill, Korin Williams, Loira Limbal, Louis Massiah, Senator Nikil Saval, Noura Erakat, Raymond Perkins, Val Gay, and Senator Vincent Hughes.



“
The depth of the evocative energy on display at BlackStar's Luminary Gala in Philadelphia was hard to ignore. Hosted at the aesthetically stunning Switch House, the evening was filled with laughter, performances, fanfare, and plenty of fundraising.

— ESSENCE MAGAZINE

LUMINARY GALA 2025, PHOTO BY NAOMIEH JOVIN

ABOUT BLACKSTAR

BlackStar creates the spaces and resources needed to uplift the work of Black, Brown and Indigenous artists working outside of the confines of genre. Our programs provide artists opportunities for viable strategies for collaborations with other artists, audiences, funders, and distributors. And, we curate every aspect of our events to be intentional community building efforts, connecting diverse audiences in a Black-led space centered on joy and thriving.

Since its founding, BlackStar has expanded to meet the holistic needs of our audiences and currently offers a suite of programming, including:

- BLACKSTAR FILM FESTIVAL
- SEEN JOURNAL
- GREAVES SEMINAR
- YEAR-ROUND PROGRAMMING AND CURATORIAL PROJECTS



“
We’re interested in pushing against the boundaries of form and believe moving image artists can be the architects of a more liberatory world.

– MAORI KARMAEL HOLMES,
CHIEF EXECUTIVE & ARTISTIC OFFICER

GREAVES SEMINAR 2025, PHOTO BY PABLO ALARCON JR.

OUR IMPACT

BlackStar views cultural production as a key tool in addressing historical inequities for Black, Brown, and Indigenous artists. By creating opportunities for economic growth, creative expression, and community building, we focus on cultural healing and relational repair. We measure our impact through both qualitative and quantitative data, tracking the direct support we provide to filmmakers from these communities, the accessibility of our programs, and the strength of our partnerships with like-minded organizations in the arts, culture, and social justice sectors.



BLACKSTAR FILM FESTIVAL 2025, PHOTO BY DEONTÉ LEE

OUR IMPACT

“

One of the foremost film festivals in the country.

– THE PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER

“

I like to liken BlackStar to the Freedom schools of the 1960s, and I feel they embody the spirit of popular education and liberation, drawing inspiration from a long history of efforts to empower marginalized and underrepresented communities through knowledge and storytelling.

– JON SESRIE-GOFF, FILMMAKER

“

The premiere destination for experimental artistic endeavors.

– THE CUT

SPONSORSHIP

By sponsoring the 2026 Luminary Gala, you're directly supporting BlackStar's mission to challenge systemic inequities in the media arts and beyond. Your contribution will help amplify the moving image as a powerful tool for social change and invest in the creative freedom of Black, Brown, and Indigenous artists.

As an artist-centered and artist-led organization, BlackStar is committed to creating care-focused spaces for creatives of color, providing them with the essential resources and support they need to thrive.

We recognize that artists of the global majority often face resource scarcity, isolation, and exclusion from funding and economic opportunities, while shouldering the weight of diversity and representation.

At BlackStar, we tackle these challenges with a thoughtful, strategic approach to programming, organizational structure, and partnerships with like-minded individuals, businesses, and nonprofits. Your sponsorship enables us to continue this vital work.



LUMINARY GALA 2025, PHOTO BY NAOMIEH JOVIN

SPONSORSHIP BENEFITS

Shine \$1,000

- 1 ticket to Cocktail Hour + Benefit Program
- Name on Digital Materials
- 1 Virtual Pass to BSFF2026

Blaze \$2,500

- 2 tickets to Cocktail Hour + Benefit Program
- Name on Digital and Printed Materials
- 2 Virtual Passes to BSFF2026

Glow \$5,000

- 4 tickets to Cocktail Hour + Benefit Program
- Name on Digital and Printed Materials
- 2 All-Access Passes to BSFF2026

Gleam \$10,000

- 6 tickets to Cocktail Hour + Benefit Program
- Name on Digital and Printed Materials
- Visible Name Recognition onsite
- 4 All-Access Passes to BSFF2026

Beacon \$25,000

- 10 tickets to Cocktail Hour + Benefit Program
- Name and Logo on Digital and Printed Materials
- Visible Name + Logo Recognition onsite
- Half page ad in the program guide
- 4 All-Access Passes to BSFF2026

Constellation \$50,000

- 15 tickets to Cocktail Hour + Benefit Program
- Name and Logo on Digital and Printed Materials
- Prominent Name + Logo Recognition onsite
- 15-second digital ad onscreen at the gala
- Half page ad in the program guide
- 6 All-Access Passes to BSFF2026

Galaxy \$100,000

- 20 tickets to Cocktail Hour + Benefit Program
- Name and Logo on Digital and Printed Materials
- Premier Name + Logo Recognition onsite
- 30-second digital ad onscreen at the gala
- Full page ad in the program guide
- 10 All-Access Passes to BSFF2026

ADVERTISING OPPORTUNITIES

Opportunities include:

- FULL PAGE PROGRAM AD \$600
- HALF PAGE PROGRAM AD \$300
- QUARTER PAGE PROGRAM AD \$150
- SINGLE WEBPAGE AD \$500



LUMINARY GALA 2025, PHOTO BY NAOMIEH JOVIN

IN-KIND OPPORTUNITIES

In-kind sponsorship opportunities for the Luminary Gala provide businesses and organizations a chance to contribute valuable goods or services while gaining visibility and recognition for their support.

We welcome inquiries and look forward to discussing options should your business be interested in supporting the Gala through in-kind donations.

Opportunities include:

- Sponsoring gift bags for gala attendees
- Alcohol and beverage donations as a sponsor of the cocktail hour and opportunities to highlight sponsorship through a signature cocktail
- Event production support (e.g., audio/visual equipment, event furniture, signage)
- Event design and decor, such as floral arrangements or branded decorations, and travel support, including shuttle services or hotel accommodations for out-of-town guests
- Dressing and/or styling BlackStar's honorees, host, or leadership team



LUMINARY GALA 2025, PHOTO BY NAOMIEH JOVIN

JOIN US

Join our supporter community today as a BlackStar Luminary Gala Sponsor!

Become a part of one of the world's most welcoming, inspiring, and collaborative organizations for filmmakers, writers, artists and cultural change makers of color. Support fiercely independent media and creators who are shaping and shifting the culture. Engage with our multicultural audience of tastemakers and influential attendees.

QUESTIONS? CONTACT:

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LUMINARY GALA 2025, PHOTO BY NAOMIEH JOVIN