

TENTH ANNUAL
**MEDIA
THAT
MATTERS**

I AM SEAN BELL (10:36 min)
Directed by Stacey Muhammad
Produced by Stacey Muhammad
Winner of the Speaking Out Award



About the Film

I've loved film for as long as I can remember. Initially, screenwriting was my interest; however, I wanted to see my ideas come to life beyond the writing. This led to a desire to acquire the skills needed to actually produce my own projects. So, I embarked upon the journey of studying and learning as much about the filmmaking process as I possibly could by attending film school, workshops, and anything else I could find.

First and foremost, I consider myself an activist, so I'm drawn to human issues and subjects that enlighten and uplift humanity while challenging us to examine our ideals and issues on this planet. I've always been drawn to documentary filmmaking, particularly as an activist. It's a powerful way to communicate with an audience.

When I chose to do the Sean Bell film, I was extremely disturbed by the verdict and wanted to hear from the children, particularly young black boys, about their thoughts, fears and concerns regarding violence against black men. Most of the topics that interest me are those that give a voice to those often unheard populations of people, who indeed have stories to tell and victories to celebrate.

One thing that I've learned is that life is what it is—meaning, everything we do and experience is connected. Often, we try to compartmentalize our lives and deal with different aspects of our experience (be it our personal lives, our career, etc.). Filmmaking, for me, is a spiritual process and journey. I've been prepared through life experiences, for each and every topic I choose to explore.

So, my advice to any aspiring filmmaker would be to live your life with integrity, take care of yourself, learn as much about your craft as possible, commit to creating the life you desire and expect the universe to grant you everything you ask.

Filmmaker Bios

Stacey Muhammad is an award-winning independent filmmaker and activist committed to using the power of media to educate, enlighten and empower humanity.

Her first film, *A Glimpse of Heaven, The Legacy of the Million Man March*, screened at the Reginald F. Lewis Museum in Baltimore, MD in 2005 and received rave reviews. Since that time, the New Orleans native has begun the work of documenting and preserving Hip Hop culture through film and digital media. Her projects include several multi-media projects, music videos and short form documentaries, including, the acclaimed *I AM SEAN BELL*, black boys speak, which made it's film festival premier at the New Orleans International Human Rights Film Festival.

Ms. Muhammad has worked with several media outlets and hip hop artist and has lectured and participated in numerous panel discussions about filmmaking and hip-hop culture. As co-founder of IntelligentSeedz, she is committed to giving at risk youth the necessary skill set to tell their unique stories through film.

Take Action Links

Take Action with ACLU Community Action Manual

(http://www.aclu.org/racial-justice_prisoners-rights_drug-law-reform_immigrants-rights/fighting-police-abuse-community-ac)

Make it a goal to stop police abuse in your community and inspire change everywhere through grass roots techniques.

Take Action I Am Empowered (<http://iamempowered.com/>)

Empower yourself and those around you with the National Urban League's numerous programs and resources for education and youth development.

Take Action with National Poetry Slam 2010

(<http://iamempowered.com/>)

Got something to say? Broadcast it artistically and bring your slam to an ever-growing audience.

For more information about *I Am Sean Bell* and the other films from the tenth annual Media That Matters Film Festival, visit www.mediathatmattersfest.org or contact us at festival@artsengine.net.

