



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **BETHEL WOODS AND DELAWARE VALLEY ARTS ALLIANCE BRING QUESTLOVE'S SUMMER OF SOUL TO HISTORIC WOODSTOCK SITE**

*The Documentary Focuses on the Importance of The 1969 Harlem Cultural.*

*July 1<sup>st</sup> Outdoor Screening is Free and Open to The Public.*

**June 18<sup>th</sup>, 2021 (BETHEL, NY) – Bethel Woods Center for the Arts**, a nonprofit cultural organization located in Bethel, NY, in partnership with **Delaware Valley Arts Alliance**, is proud to announce an outdoor screening of Ahmir “Questlove” Thompson’s debut film *SUMMER OF SOUL* on **Thursday, July 1<sup>st</sup>** on The Terrace Stage.

Over the course of six weeks in the summer of 1969, just one hundred miles south of Bethel, NY, where Woodstock was held, The Harlem Cultural Festival was filmed in Mount Morris Park (now Marcus Garvey Park). The footage was never seen and largely forgotten—until now. Thompson presents a powerful and transporting documentary: part music film, part historical record, created around an epic event that celebrated Black history, culture, and fashion.

*SUMMER OF SOUL* shines a light on the importance of history to spiritual well-being and stands as a testament to the healing power of music during times of unrest, both past and present. The feature includes never-before-seen concert performances by Stevie Wonder, Nina Simone, Sly & the Family Stone, Gladys Knight & the Pips, Mahalia Jackson, B.B. King, The 5<sup>th</sup> Dimension, and more.

Questlove recently said in an interview with *Rolling Stone* that it was an angering experience to realize that, had it been given proper attention and resources at the time, a film on the Harlem Cultural Festival could have had the same wide influence as 1970’s *Woodstock*. He said, “This was supposed to come out 50 years ago, and I was supposed to see this movie as a four-year-old,” he says. “When *Woodstock* came out, the movie made household names out of every artist who appeared in the film. The legend of that concert wound up subsequently defining a generation.... And so, as a result, when you think of the late Sixties, you think of hippies, mud, free love, Hendrix, all of those things.” He adds: “This could’ve been such an adrenaline boost to black music culture, and it wasn’t allowed.”

“We are looking forward to giving *Summer of Soul* it’s time to shine in the garden. We feel very lucky to be able to screen such an amazing tribute to musical history with such a clear connection to our past,” said Suzanne Morris, Senior Director, Museum Education and Creative Programs. “As a center who aims to give a voice to all, we are thrilled to highlight this moment in not only musical history, but American history too. The documentary reveals a musical movement, a revolution, and a turning point in Black life in America,” she continued.

"There is no better way to kick off the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our festival than with this powerful film full of incredible music and unseen moments in history, brought to the big screen through the fresh storytelling style of Questlove. It is a film I know our audiences will love and I'm delighted to be able to show it in person, under the stars, right here in Sullivan County." added Tina Spangler, Director, Big Eddy Film Festival.

The winner of both the Grand Jury Prize and Audience Award at Sundance Film Festival, the film will be released theatrically by Searchlight Pictures and will stream on Hulu on July 2<sup>nd</sup>, the day following the screening at Bethel Woods.

For guests' safety, this evening will be offered in limited capacity. To honor the sense of community that grew out of The Harlem Cultural Festival, the screening is free and open to all ages. Tickets must be reserved to attend, however. For more information, please visit [BethelWoodsCenter.org](http://BethelWoodsCenter.org).

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#### **About the Big Eddy Film Festival**

Produced by Delaware Valley Arts Alliance of Narrowsburg, NY, the Big Eddy Film Festival aims to advance the traditional art of storytelling by showing the newest and best independent films from around the world and our own backyard. To learn more, visit [www.BigEddyFilmFest.com](http://www.BigEddyFilmFest.com).

#### **About the Delaware Valley Arts Alliance**

Founded in 1976, DVAA serves as Arts Council for Sullivan County, NY. Our mission is to advance the arts in the region through the support and encouragement of artists; innovative programs; advocacy; and alliances with arts organizations, business, and government. With year-round exhibitions, performing arts programming, festivals, regrant programs, and more, DVAA is a vital hub for the region's cultural community. To learn more, visit [www.DelawareValleyArtsAlliance.org](http://www.DelawareValleyArtsAlliance.org).

#### **About Bethel Woods Center for the Arts**

Bethel Woods Center for the Arts inspires, educates, and empowers individuals through the arts and humanities by presenting a diverse selection of culturally-rich performances, popular artists, and community and educational programming. Located 90 miles from New York City at the site of the 1969 Woodstock festival in Bethel, NY, the lush 800-acre campus includes a Pavilion Stage amphitheater with seating for 15,000, an intimate 440-seat indoor Event Gallery, the award-winning Museum at Bethel Woods, and a Conservatory for arts education programming.

Through the in-depth study and exhibition of the social, political, and cultural events of the 1960s, as well as the preservation of the historic site of the Woodstock Music and Art Fair, Bethel Woods educates individuals about the issues and lessons of the decade while inspiring a new generation to contribute positively to the world around them. The not-for-profit organization relies on the generous support of individuals, corporations, and foundations to develop and sustain programs that improve the quality of life in the region and beyond.

For more information please visit [www.BethelWoodsCenter.org](http://www.BethelWoodsCenter.org).