

Bluefield State College to Host Writer/Director Art Jones

Who will screen and lecture about his film-in-progress

“Spirit: The Will to be Free”

A Movie about the Haitian Revolution (1791-1804)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Bluefield State College will host Writer/Director Art Jones, author of the critically acclaimed documentary “Thirteen Percent”, on Wednesday, September 23, 2015 from 11:00 to 12:00 Noon in the Basic Sciences Auditorium on the Bluefield State campus. The event is funded by Dr. Jo-Ann Robinson, Vice President for Student Affairs & Enrollment Management at BSC.

Writer/Director Art Jones, grew up in Harlem, is a veteran of the audiovisual industry for more than 30 years. His career in the film industry began as a production assistant on the *Schoolhouse Rock* educational cartoon series that aired on the ABC TV Network for over six years. Mr. Jones also has lived overseas, in the Middle Eastern country of Bahrain, where he directed and produced the critically-acclaimed film *Models of Success* and started a multimedia center for Ahlia University. Art is the writer, director of, and inspirational force behind his new project, *Spirit*, a film about a peoples’ will to be free.

Spirit: The Will To Be Free is a 125-minute long historical epic docudrama that covers the third great revolution—following the American and French revolutions—of the late 18th century and into the beginning of the 19th century, each inspired by the Enlightenment idea that political power and authority rises up from the people and not down from the clouds as per the so-called divine right of kings. The Haitian Revolution (1791-1804), however, exhibited one major difference, argues Writer/Director Jones: “It was fought by the oppressed, for the oppressed, and designed to free all.” This third revolution is the first successful slave revolt of the late 18th century. Handing Napoleon perhaps his most significant military defeat, the success of the Haitian Revolution thwarted the then-First Consul’s plans to use the island of Saint-Domingue (shared by today’s modern states of Haiti and Dominican Republic) as a launching pad to attempt to reconquer France’s former colonial claims in the newly-independent United States, which had been lost as a consequence of the French and Indian Wars, otherwise known as the Seven Years’ War of 1754-1763. The successful revolt not only freed the slaves on the island of Saint-Domingue, and, in the process, causing great havoc in the slave-owning southern United States, but, as well, it established the first black-ruled state in the Western Hemisphere. More importantly for the nascent United States is that Napoleon’s defeat in Saint-Domingue forced France to sell the Louisiana Territory to the United States in 1803 for \$15 million, arguably the greatest land deal in history, and a welcomed asset for the United States which immediately doubled its size as a consequence.

More than 14 scholars have so far been interviewed for the film, and more than 30 hours of shooting has resulted in a six-minute DVD clip along with a succinct synopsis and a completed script. *Spirit* is currently a work-in-progress. Once appropriate financing is secured, production of the film will be completed and ready for distribution within ten months.

For further information, contact Colin S. Cavell, Ph.D. at ccavell@bluefieldstate.edu or 304-327-4034. One can reach Writer/Director Art Jones at his film studio **Dream Factory**, at 3341 Parc Lane, in Atlanta, Georgia, 30311 or call 404-334-0577 or via the web at www.dream-factory.co.