



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

San Diego Public Library

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SAN DIEGO PUBLIC LIBRARY SCREENS DOCUMENTARY “CRIPS AND BLOODS: MADE IN AMERICA”

Hard-hitting, Yet Ultimately, Hopeful Film Offers Historical and Sociological Contexts

SAN DIEGO — The San Diego Public Library and the Media Arts Center San Diego will host a Community Cinema preview screening of *Crips and Bloods: Made In America*, directed by critically acclaimed documentary filmmaker Stacy Peralta. *Crips and Bloods: Made In America* tells the story of the Crips and Bloods, South Los Angeles’ two most infamous African-American gangs. The film will screen Monday, April 27, 2009 at 6:30 PM in the 3rd floor auditorium of the Central Library, located at 820 E Street in downtown San Diego. This event is FREE to the public.

Narrated by Forest Whitaker, *Crips and Bloods: Made In America* provides a historical and sociological context for the rise of the devastating gang violence in South Los Angeles. Peralta, tracks the ascension of gangs through a history of South Central L.A., a once-peaceful African American neighborhood.

Young black men, shut out of youth organizations like the all-white Boy Scouts in the 1950s, formed their own clubs and used their fists to rule the streets. Today, South Central L.A. is one of the most violent places in the world—the stress levels of its children measure higher than those of children in Iraq.

From the genesis of LA’s gang culture to the shocking, war-zone reality of daily life in South L.A., the film chronicles the rise of the Crips and Bloods, tracing the origins of their bloody four-decades long feud. Contemporary and former gang members offer their street-level testimony that provides the film with a stark portrait of modern-day gang life: the turf wars and territorialism, the inter-gang hierarchy and family structure, the rules of behavior, the culture of

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guns, death and dishonor.

Combining unprecedented access to active gangs from neighborhoods all over South Los Angeles, contemporary interviews, political and social commentary, and current and rare archival footage, *Crips and Bloods: Made in America* transcends the typical lurid exposé style and offers a compelling, character-driven documentary narrative that chronicles the decades-long cycle of destruction and despair that defines modern gang culture.

Throughout the film ex-gang members, gang intervention experts, writers, activists and academics analyze many of the issues that contribute to South LA's malaise: the erosion of identity that fuels the self-perpetuating legacy of black self-hatred, the disappearance of the African-American father and an almost pervasive prison culture in which today one out of every four black men will be imprisoned at some point in his life.

Finally the gang members themselves articulate their enduring dream of a better life. They provide *Crips and Bloods: Made In America* with its ultimate statement: a message of hope and cautionary tale of redemption aimed at saving the lives of a new generation of kids, not just in South LA but anywhere in the world that gang violence exists.

Community Cinema is affiliated with the independent media organization ITVS or Independent Television Service. ITVS Community Cinema is a monthly screening series that pairs independently produced documentary films with leading organizations working to resolve related social issues in communities across the country. All film content featured in ITVS Community Cinema will broadcast nationally on the Emmy Award-winning PBS series Independent Lens. *Crips and Bloods: Made In America* will air nationally May 12 at 10 p.m.

Learn about other events at the San Diego Public Library's Central Library and 35 branches, find links to numerous additional resources, or search for materials in the Library's catalog online at www.sandiegolibrary.org.

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