

## Renowned Journalist Nikole Hannah-Jones and Olympian Ibtihaj Muhammad Headline GU-Q's Celebration of Black Storytelling



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In celebration of the contributions of Black intellectuals and artists around the world, Georgetown University in Qatar (GU-Q) invites the community to a series of events including its inaugural “**Black Literary Arts Festival**,” the first festival of its kind in the region. This dynamic series of events throughout February, known as Black History Month in the United States, will highlight the power of Black storytelling through film screenings, author talks, masterclasses, children’s activities, theatrical performances, and panel discussions.

According to festival co-chair Jamillah Scott-Branch, Director of the GU-Q Library, “Our vision is to create a space for meaningful dialogue about the craft and experiences of Black writers and storytellers from across the African diaspora, and draw attention to the vital importance of Black voices in contemporary discourse. Through these events, the university reaffirms its commitment to amplifying diverse perspectives and fostering conversations that inspire change.”

## **Key Events:**

### **Film Screenings (February 9, 2025)**

The month begins with [African American Cinema](#) featuring screenings of *Killer of Sheep* and *Residue*, followed by discussions led by Richard Peña, visiting professor at GU-Q and acclaimed film scholar and organizer of the New York Film Festival.

## **Black Literary Arts Festival (February 10-15, 2025)**

The heart of GU-Q's Black History Month programming, the "[Black Literary Arts Festival: Ink & Impact – The Literary Labor of Black Storytellers](#)," will feature an impressive lineup of renowned authors, scholars, and artists who have shaped contemporary literature and thought. Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist **Nikole Hannah-Jones**, creator of the **1619 Project**, and celebrated Olympic medalist and author **Ibtihaj Muhammad** will be among the featured authors.

Events include children's storytime and activities, book signings, masterclasses, a performance night, and insightful discussions on the impact of Black storytelling across cultures. Speakers include:

- Nikole Hannah-Jones – Creator of *The 1619 Project*, MacArthur Genius Grant recipient, and award-winning journalist.
- Ibtihaj Muhammad – Olympic medalist, activist, and author of *Proud*.
- Michaela Angela Davis – Cultural critic, executive producer of *The Hair Tales*, and co-author of *The Meaning of Mariah Carey*.
- Rachel L. Swarns – New York Times journalist and author of *The 272: The Families Who Were Enslaved and Sold to Build the American Catholic Church*.

- Chika Unigwe – Award-winning Nigerian author of *The Middle Daughter*, and professor of creative writing.
- Folly Bah Thibault – Acclaimed journalist and television presenter.
- Tope Folarin – Nigerian-American writer, Rhodes Scholar, and author of *A Particular Kind of Black Man*.
- Maurice Jackson – Historian, jazz scholar, and author of *Rhythms of Resistance and Resilience*.
- Anita Gonzalez – Professor of performing arts and co-founder of Georgetown’s Racial Justice Institute, author of *Shipping Out: Race, Performance, and Labor at Sea*.
- Stephan Buoro – Research fellow and author of *The Five Sorrowful Mysteries of Andy Africa*.
- Su’ad Abdul Khabeer – Scholar-artist-activist, author of *Muslim Cool: Race, Religion and Hip Hop in the United States*, and creator of *Umi’s Archive*.
- Theri A. Pickens – Poet-scholar specializing in Arab American Studies and Black Studies, author of *What Had Happened Was*.

**Theatrical Performance – *Here I Am* (February 19, 2025)**

Mélanie Short-Colomb's acclaimed one-person play will be staged for the first time outside the United States. An original production from Georgetown University's Laboratory for Global Performance & Politics, "[\*Here I Am\*](#)" is a deeply personal exploration of history, identity, and the legacy of slavery at Georgetown.

To learn more about these events and to register, visit

<https://www.qatar.georgetown.edu/black-history-month/>

## **About Georgetown University in Qatar**

GU-Q is committed to excellence in education, research, and engagement with global issues.

Celebrating its 20th anniversary, GU-Q continues to be a hub for intellectual and cultural dialogue in the region.