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**FILMS AT CAAM EXPLORE THE CULTURE OF BEAUTY IN AMERICA WITH
THOUGHT-PROVOKING DOCUMENTARY SCREENINGS THROUGHOUT
NOVEMBER**

LOS ANGELES (November 1, 2012) It's been noted that "beauty is not one's own, but a reflection of one's culture." During the month of November, the California African American Museum (CAAM) branded series, *Films at CAAM*, will present four documentary screenings that will explore the impact and ramifications of America's cultural obsession with beauty, pageants, competitions and images.

Each documentary screening will begin at 7 p.m., every Thursday, from November 8th through November 29th, with the exception of Thanksgiving Day.

In an effort to highlight the need for realistic and relevant images of women, CAAM will present the following documentaries:

Thursday, November 8, 2012 – *First Position* (2011, 90 min.)

First Position features the inspirational footsteps of six ballet dancers' struggle to maintain form in the face of personal injury and personal sacrifice as they enter the most prestigious youth ballet competition in the world.

Thursday, November 15, 2012 – *Miss Representation* (2011, 90 min.)

This documentary exposes how mainstream media continues to underrepresent images of women in positions of power and influence, and would prefer to promote images that suggest a woman's power lies in her beauty and sexuality alone. **Following the documentary, Apryl Michelle Brown who lost all of her limbs as a result of illegal butt injections, will tell her story.**

Thursday, November 29, 2012 – *Beauty Culture* (2011, 30 min.)

Photographer Lauren Greenfield interviews a group of high school students as they discuss how female beauty is defined and how supermodels, plastic surgery, toddler beauty pageants and spray tans are depicted as part of modern American culture. Former model Bethann Hardison and actress Jamie Lee Curtis are featured.

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Thursday, November 29, 2012 – *The Souls of Black Girls* (2009, 52 min.)

Filmmaker, Daphne Valerius takes a stark look at the relationship between historical and existing media images, as well as the self-image disorders, of African American women as a result of trying to attain the standards of beauty that are instituted. Cultural critic Chuck D., Jada Pinkett-Smith, Gwen Ifill and Regina King are featured in this documentary.

Immediately following each screening there will be a Q&A and panel discussion with stylists and film producers to discuss the issues of beauty that plagues America.

For more information visit www.caamuseum.org. RSVPs are strongly encouraged at (213) 744-2024. CAAM is located at 600 State Drive, Exposition Park, Los Angeles, 90037. Follow CAAM on twitter @CAAMinLA and “Like” CAAM at www.facebook.com/CAAMinLA.

CURRENT EXHIBITIONS IN THE CAAM GALLERIES:

Coloring America: Selections from the California African American Museum’s Permanent History Collection opening October 31, 2012 – January 27, 2013

Shared Thread in CAAM’s Courtyard through December 30, 2012

African American Military Portraits from the American Civil War: Selected Images from the Library of Congress Collections through January 20, 2013

Legacy of the Golden State Mutual Life Insurance Company: More Than a Business through March 3, 2013

Go Tell it on the Mountain through April 7, 2013

ABOUT THE CALIFORNIA AFRICAN AMERICAN MUSEUM

The California African American Museum (CAAM) researches, collects, preserves and interprets for public enrichment the history, art and culture of African Americans. Chartered by the California State Legislature in 1977, CAAM is a state supported institution and a partner with the 501(c)(3) non-profit organization Friends, the Foundation of the California African American Museum. In addition to its permanent collection of over 3,000 objects of art, artifacts and historical documents, CAAM also houses a research library containing more than 20,000 volumes, employs and trains high school students through its *Young Docents* program, and hosts in-house curated exhibitions and traveling exhibitions on a regular basis. The museum also tours CAAM exhibitions throughout California and the nation.

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