

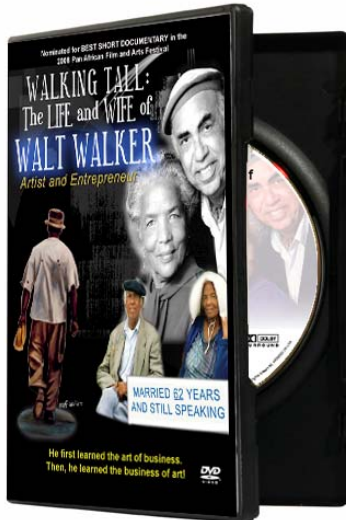


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Date: Feb 13, 2008



**Walking Tall: The Life and Wife of Walt Walker  
Nominated Best Short Documentary for  
2008 Pan African Film and Arts Festival**

Premiering at the 2008 Pan African Film and Arts Festival is ***Walking Tall: The Life and Wife of Walt Walker, Artist and Entrepreneur (2008, 54 mins)***. The documentary was nominated for Best Documentary Short and will be screened Feb. 15 at 1 p.m. and Feb 16 at 11:15 a.m. at the Magic Johnson Theaters in Los Angeles.

The late Walt Walker, who passed away five years ago at the age of 84, created the most extensive collection of paintings, murals, drawings, sketches and graphic arts and holds the distinction of being one of the first African Americans to open an art gallery featuring black images. This documentary will inspire artists to first learn the art of business, then the business of art to steer clear of a life of the starving artist. *Walking Tall* exhibits the most comprehensive body of Walt's popular work as well as little shown works including his sketches and murals.

The work is titled "*The Life and Wife*" of Walt Walker because by Walt's own admission, were it not for the efforts of his business-minded wife, Jane Walker, and their 62 year marriage, we may never have known his name. In addition to his wife, Jane, interviews include Charles Bibbs, renowned artist and owner of 626 Gallery, Cecil and Miriam Ferguson, art curators, Ayuko Babu, founder of the Pan African Film Festival and Walker's eldest son Russell.

Both Walt and Jane came from families with roots in Alabama, and both grew up in Detroit Michigan. Walt's family lived and worked for his Uncle Russel who owned a convenience store in Black Bottom, experiences which later influenced Walt's artwork.

A skilled entrepreneur, Walt went on to open his own stores but always drew and painted on the side. When he moved his young family to Los Angeles in the early 1950's he spared himself a life of menial, low paying jobs by employing his artistic talents as a sign painter for Western Auto Parts, Norms Restaurants and later Safeway Stores. He became the sign painter at the Fabulous Forum where multimillionaire owner Jack Kent Cooke hired him to paint everything from the Lakers logo on center court (or center ice if the Kings were playing) and the numbers on each seat. Cooke sponsored a lavish art show for Walt at the Forum Club, an act which launched his career as a fine artist.

But, that was his day job. He pioneered the black art movement by opening the LeJan gallery, and later was known for exhibiting his own art at Ray's Redwood Kitchen on Western Avenue in Los Angeles for 10 years. After exhibiting at community art shows and outdoor festivals, Jane insisted that they invest in prints so that "the mother in Watts could buy some art for her apartment."

Jane Walker ran the galleries and their print distribution business while Walt created hundreds of beautiful images for his extensive collection. Walt has been honored many times, including an honorary doctorate and special recognition from the City of Los Angeles.

Gail Parker, Executive Producer, spearheaded the filmmaking effort after years of serving as web designer for WaltWalker.com. She assembled a crew to answer Mrs. Walker's dream of having the life's work of her husband preserved for posterity.

The film was written, produced and co-directed by Isidra Person-Lynn and edited by William Byers, who also served as technical director. The directors of photography are Harold Brown and William Byers.

For more information visit [Waltwalker.com](http://Waltwalker.com) or call (323) 507-1268