



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Andrea Stewart-Cousins

Maj. Leader Stewart-Cousins Observes Black History Month, Women's History Month With Film Screening

ANDREA STEWART-COUSINS March 5, 2024

| ISSUE: **BLACK HISTORY MONTH**



New York State Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins and State Senator Shelley Mayer teamed up to host a special screening of the acclaimed Ava DuVernay film "Origin" Friday in Yonkers, as a special observance of Black History Month and Women's History Month at the Cinema de Lux Ridge Hill.

"Origin" is a 2023 film written, directed and produced by the Oscar-nominated DuVernay, based on the 2020 book "Caste: the Origins of Our Discontent" by award-winning author Isabel Wilkerson. The film examines how factors other than race play a role in discrimination and hate, and looks at the role caste systems have played in various societies. To date, "Origin" has been nominated for more than 20 awards at a dozen festivals and awards shows, with five wins so far, including a Best Director award for DuVernay from the African-American Film Critics Association.

"Black History Month and Women's History Month come in consecutive months, and days like today offer us the chance to observe the intersection of the two in a thought-provoking way," **Sen. Stewart-Cousins said.** "That's why, as we close out another meaningful Black History Month and begin Women's History month, I am so honored to be joining with Sen. Mayer here at the Showcase Cinema de Lux Ridge Hill to bring these perspectives to light with the showing of "Origin."

Audience members were visibly moved by the touching and sometimes heavy subject matter.

"What makes this such a poignant and powerful piece of media for us to consume as we celebrate Black History and Women's History, is that it reminds us also, of our ability to change hearts and minds with our voices, our vision and our stories," **Sen. Stewart-Cousins said.** "The crucial lesson of Black History Month and Women's History Month is that history is ongoing. The story is not yet written, and together, we can write the next chapter."

State Senator Shelley B. Mayer said, "I was proud to join Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins in co-hosting a special screening of Ava Duvernay's *Origin*. Thank you to all who attended, and I hope they share the inspiration and challenge I am left with as we continue towards a more equal and just society. I also thank Majority Leader Stewart-Cousins for

leading this transformative event and I thank Ava Duverney and Isabel Wilkerson for sharing their incredible story.”

At the screening, Sen. Stewart-Cousins and Sen. Mayer thanked the Showcase Cinema de Lux Ridge Hill for their partnership in hosting the screening.

As always, Sen. Stewart-Cousins encourages any constituents with questions or comments to reach out to scousins@nysenate.gov or call the District Office in Yonkers at 914-423-4031.