

Bella Maori, PhD

Screenwriter | Novelist | Director | Actress | Model | Producer | Social Justice Advocate

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IMDb: imdb.me/bellamaori | Website: bellamaori.com

Professional Summary

Award-winning screenwriter, novelist, and filmmaker with a PhD in Philosophy (Women's and Gender Studies) from Antioch University (2025). A Los Angeles native weaving academic depth with cinematic storytelling to challenge systemic inequities. Directed and produced the award-winning web series pilot *Ugly* (10 festival wins) and authored a film noir feature-length screenplay. Recognized as a model (Playboy Centerfold, Baby Keem's *Melodic Blue* trailer) and advocate, seeking roles in writing, directing, and producing to elevate marginalized narratives.

Filmography & Production Highlights (Chronological, Newest to Oldest)

Shattered Screens (Short Series, Pre-Production, 2025) – Creator, Writer, Director, Producer

Multi-episode exploration of digital-age disillusionment; in active development with storyboarding and budgeting underway.

Ugly (Web Series Pilot, 2021) – Writer, Director, Producer, Lead Actress (Zuri)

Explored colorism's impact on Black women's identity in Hollywood; earned 10 international awards including Best Writer, Best Director, Best Cinematography, and Best Female Breakout Performance.

The Misfit Effect (Podcast Series, 2018) – Writer

Narrative audio series blending social critique and personal stories; expanded into written formats.

The Internship Games (Feature Film, 2015) – Actress (Lead Role)

Debut starring role in independent feature, showcasing dramatic range post-modeling career launch.

The Disillusion of Pretty Butterflies (Short Film, 2011) – Writer, Director, Producer

Examined social media's psychological effects on Gen X and Millennials; MFA thesis project with innovative noir visuals.

Untitled Film Noir Feature (MFA Thesis Screenplay, 2011) – Writer, Novelist

Full-length script blending mystery and social critique; developed for potential production, with novel adaptation in progress.

Additional: Lead Model in Grammy-winner Baby Keem's *Melodic Blue* album trailer (2021); various acting roles in film/TV.

Awards & Recognitions

- Winner: Independent Shorts Awards; International World Film Awards; Four Theatre Selection Awards.
- Panelist/Presenter: National Women's Studies Association (NWSA) Conference (2019, 2021) – Paper: "South African Women's Voice: Renegotiating the Old Colonial Narrative Under New Terms."
- Accepted Publication: National Student Leadership Diversity Convention (2022) – Essay: "Empowering Black Women's Identity in Private and Public Sectors of Professional America."
- Media Features: Viral articles in *Viva Lifestyle & Travel*; covers in *Splash Magazine* and *The Indie Post*; featured as an influencer on Worldwide Entertainment TV.

Education

PhD, Philosophy (Concentration: Women's and Gender Studies)
Antioch University, Los Angeles, CA | 2025
Focus: Black women's identity in media, film, TV, and professional sectors

MFA, Creative Writing

Full Sail University, Winter Park, FL | 2011
Thesis: Film noir feature screenplay

MAT, Master of Teaching

University of Southern California, Los Angeles, CA | 2016

BA, English Literature

California State University, San Bernardino (CSUSB), CA | 2006

Affiliations

- Member, Epsilon Sigma Chapter, Zeta Phi Beta Sorority

Skills & Expertise

- Screenwriting & Novel Writing: Feature-length noir; thematic focus on social justice and identity.
- Directing & Producing: Festival-winning shorts/web series; storyboarding, pre-production planning.
- Acting & Performance: Lead roles in indie projects; on-camera presence across drama and noir.
- Modeling/Content Creation: Playboy Centerfold; print/digital campaigns; trailer work for major artists.
- Advocacy & Research: Published essays/papers on racial/gender justice; viral lifestyle articles.
- Technical: Final Draft, Adobe Suite (Premiere, Photoshop); public speaking at major conferences.

References & Links

Available upon request.

IMDb: imdb.me/bellamaori

Portfolio: uglyseries.com

Press: LA Featured