

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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### **Wakandacon returns to Chicago! Local organizers team up again to celebrate Black Excellence**

- *Wakandacon 2019, 2nd annual Afro-futuristic convention celebrating art, community, technology and self-expression returns to Chicago*
- *Wakandacon to be held at Hyatt Regency McCormick Place on July 26-28, 2019*

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS March 14, 2019 – [Wakandacon](#) is a 3-day family-friendly Afro-futuristic convention that celebrates art, community, technology, and self-expression within the African diaspora. Wakandacon will take place at Hyatt Regency McCormick Place on July 26-28, 2019. The event will feature panels, lectures, workshops, and special guests.

Entering into its second year, the 3-day event is organized by a team of Black Chicago residents: co-founders David, Ali, and Matt Barthwell; along with founding producers Lisa Beasley and Taylor Witten.

After last year's successful event the organizers have decided to team up and do it all again. "We were inspired to create something more than a fandom convention. Wakandacon is about art, culture, tech, and self-expression, but also about showcasing dreams, aspirations, and authentic representation of Black people," says Wakandacon founder, David Barthwell.

Afro-futurism is more than a term to describe films like Black Panther and Black science fiction; it is a cultural and artistic movement celebrating the Black experience. Co-founder Ali Barthwell adds, "We wanted a space to gather and talk about everything African-Americans are passionate about. Afro-futurism is about imagining a future for Black people all around the world. Wakandacon is a space for Black people to look past the present and into our future."

By providing inclusive events throughout the year, the Wakandacon team is creating new opportunities and experiences for anyone in search of a place of belonging. In support of the #GoldOpen Movement, which aimed to set box-office records for "Crazy Rich Asians," Barthwell bought out an entire screening during the film's opening weekend last summer. Most recently, Wakandacon producers Lisa Beasley and Taylor Witten co-partnered with Adler Planetarium to curate their Black History Month programming entitled [Adler After Dark: A Night in the AfroFuture](#). The sold-out event saw nearly 1,600 guests ascend to the steps of the planetarium, and many of the attendees were Black Chicagoans. Wakandacon aims to create exciting content, brave spaces, and new experiences for people of color, especially Black people in Chicago and beyond.

Wakandacon returns to Chicago in July 2019 and promises to be a cultural experience unlike any other. Across the 3-day event, more than 2,500 people and 70 minority-owned vendors attended last year.

Programming aims to celebrate creatives of color, women, and thought leaders in order to spark cultural discussion and social discourse. Wakandacon welcomes back partners [Atlanta Black Tech Week](#) founded by Antoine McNeal and [I Play Games](#) founded by Kevin Fair, whose video game hall excited participants of all ages. Also, returning is programming partner [Color Farm Media](#), a multimedia company co-founded by actress Erika Alexander and Ben Arnon which aims to develop and produce premium-quality, diverse film, TV, and digital content for multicultural audiences. A small-business marketplace to support Black and minority business owners and cosplay competition will also be featured.

\$60 Wakandacon Full Weekend Badges are available for purchase at [Wakandaconforever.com](#). \$35 Single-Day

Badges are also on sale. Wakandacon is currently accepting submissions for sponsorship, programming, exhibitors, and volunteers at [Wakandaconforever.com](http://Wakandaconforever.com).



If you would like more information about Wakandacon, please contact Lisa Beasley at [lisa@wakandaconforever.com](mailto:lisa@wakandaconforever.com) or call (312) 967-6997.

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About WAKANDACON: WAKANDACON is a 3-day family-friendly Afro-futuristic convention that celebrates art, community, technology, and self-expression within the Black diaspora. The event is organized by co-founders David, Ali, and Matt Barthwell, and founding producers Lisa Beasley and Taylor Witten. WAKANDACON is a Black-organized and operated convention on July 26-28, 2019 in Chicago, IL.