

Bio of Mario Van Peebles

Mario Van Peebles believes there are three loves in your life: What you do, who you do it with, and what you leave behind. With his reality show, *Mario's Green House*, Mario gets to team up with his kids and his filmmaker father Melvin Van Peebles. The show chronicles the Van Peebles family's often-humorous attempts to raise their eco-consciousness as they go green in Hollywood.

With *BRING YOUR "A" GAME*, Van Peebles encourages young brothers to resist the pop culture of anti-intellectualism and educate themselves beyond conventional academics. His documentary, *FAIR GAME?*, explores such topics as the prison industrial complex as a form of modern day slavery, and eco-apartheid.

A graduate of Columbia University with a B.A. in Economics and recipient of an honorary doctorate from Hofstra University, Van Peebles worked for two years for New York's Department of Environmental Protection before moving to Hollywood to act, write, and direct.

"It's called 'show business' not 'show arts.' I needed the business savvy to turn what I love into a career," says Van Peebles. After three years of saving and sleeping on a kitchen floor, Van Peebles got his first break acting in *Heartbreak Ridge* opposite Clint Eastwood. He took that money and funded his first short film. Soon after he was directing episodic TV including his own series for NBC produced by Stephen J. Cannell called *Sonny Spoon*. His theatrical directing debut was the urban gangster hit *New Jack City*, which became Warner Brothers' most profitable movie of 1991. Van Peebles followed up with his multi-cultural western, *Posse*.

Van Peebles then directed and produced *Panther*, while his father wrote and produced it. *Panther* is the story of the Black Panther Party's rise to power. The film became a political classic, earning both controversy and awards including the Lacarno Film Festival's Silver Leopard award.

Baadasssss!, Van Peebles' odyssey about the making of his father's groundbreaking film *Sweet Sweetback's Baadasssss Song* was one of Ebert and Ropert's ten best movies of the year for 2004.

Mario portrayed political icon Malcolm X alongside Will Smith in Michael Mann's *Ali* and occasionally directs and acts in shows like *Damages* and *Law and Order*.