

True Blood's Nelsan Ellis to Play MLK in 'The Butler'

Written by Forward Times Staff
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Actor Nelsan Ellis will go from a possessed gay Louisiana cook in HBO's "True Blood" to the prince of peace on the big screen.

Director Lee Daniels has tapped the star to play Martin Luther King Jr. in "The Butler," reports Deadline.com.

Mariah Carey and Yaya DaCosta ("America's Next Top Model") have also recently joined the cast, which includes Forest Whitaker, David Oyelowo, Oprah Winfrey, Cuba Gooding Jr., Terrence Howard, Lenny Kravitz, Alan Rickman, Jane Fonda, John Cusack, Robin Williams, Liam Neeson, Minka Kelly, Alex Pettyfer, Colman Dingo, Vanessa Redgrave, James Marsden and Liev Schreiber.

As previously reported, the film is based on the true story of Eugene Allen, the late White House butler who served eight presidents during his tenure from 1952 to 1986.

Quincy Jones has been lined up to score the film.

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In addition to playing Lafayette Reynolds in "True Blood," Ellis most recently completed "The Reluctant Fundamentalist" and "Gods Behaving Badly." He's also directing the documentary "Damn Wonderful."