



LA REBELLION: CREATING A NEW BLACK CINEMA



L.A. REBELLION

CREATING A NEW BLACK CINEMA

UCLA Film & Television Archive

UCLA SCHOOL OF THEATER, FILM AND TELEVISION

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“L.A. Rebellion: Creating a New Black Cinema” is part of Pacific Standard Time: Art in L.A. 1945-1980. This unprecedented collaboration, initiated by the Getty, brings together more than sixty cultural institutions from across Southern California for six months beginning October 2011 to tell the story of the birth of the L.A. art scene.

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Series programmed by Allyson Nadia Field, Jan-Christopher Horak, Shannon Kelley and Jacqueline Stewart

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L.A. REBELLION COMES HOME

There are projects that take on a life of their own, as if reality suddenly asserts itself, grabbing an idea and shaking it so that it grows and grows. Such has been the case with “L.A. Rebellion: Creating a New Black Cinema.”

It all began with a very modest idea to participate in the Getty Foundation-funded exhibition *Pacific Standard Time: Art in L.A. 1945-1980*. I had met Billy Woodberry in 1984 at the Berlin Film Festival and shown his work in Rochester, New York at George Eastman House. Billy still works at UCLA. UCLA Film & Television Archive had of course preserved a number of Charles Burnett's films, including *Killer of Sheep* (1977), which was subsequently named to the National Film Registry of American Films. Previous UCLA film programmers, including Andrea Alsberg, Cheng-Sim Lim and Mimi Brody floated, at various times, the idea of an L.A. Rebellion program. So, it was an idea whose time had come. When we wrote our first grant application, we thought we would show the work of 10, maybe 12, UCLA film students. Now we know there are more than five times as many, even if many of them were filmmakers only briefly. It has become a project involving almost every staff member in the Archive.

The first changes came, however, to our curatorial team. After the group, including myself and head programmer Shannon Kelley, had formulated our original concept, Professor Allyson Nadia Field joined the faculty of the School of Theater, Film and Television. Since she wrote her dissertation on African American political modernism in cinema, it was only natural that she join the curatorial team. Just as serendipitous, Professor Jacqueline Stewart, a member of the Radio/Television/Film and African American Studies departments at Northwestern University, asked to spend a year at UCLA Film & Television Archive and the Moving Image Archives Program learning about film archiving. Her book, *Migrating to the Movies: Cinema and Black Urban Modernity*, has become a standard text in film studies since its publication in 2005.

Jacqueline not only kick-started the whole project as part of her “internship” work for the Archive, but she has remained a vital member of the curatorial team. Next, the Archive hired Moving Image Archive Studies graduate Tony Best, who had previously volunteered on the L.A. Rebellion project and has played an important role in coordinating all our efforts. Numerous graduate students have done a great job of supporting the curatorial effort, including Robyn Charles, Samantha Sheppard, Nina Lavelanet, Michelle Geary, Kevin McMahon, Michael Bright, Michael Kmet, Jane'a Johnson, Kelly Lake, Maya Smukler, Samuel Prime, Yasmin Damshenas and Diamond McNeil.

Finally, we welcomed a new dean of the School of Theater, Film and Television, Teri Schwartz, whose strategic goals of humanistic storytelling, global diversity, and social and civic responsibility have informed this project almost from the beginning. The institutional vision she has brought has allowed the Archive to realize its mission to recuperate and restore the cinematic legacy of the L.A. Rebellion, and make it publicly accessible.

Then the period of discovery began. The first Getty grant called for oral histories with the participants, and it was through the process of talking to one L.A. Rebellion filmmaker, then another, capturing each one's story, that the sheer size of the movement became apparent, as each narrator mentioned names we were previously unfamiliar with. Even at this writing, we are still trying to contact some of our missing filmmakers. Sadly, we lost our beloved UCLA School of Theater, Film and Television colleague Teshome Gabriel, who was a teacher, mentor and cohort member of the Rebellion. And unfortunately, the talented Anita Addison and Melvonna Ballenger have also passed, as has former cohort member Akintunde Ogunleye.

Research into publicly available film sources, as well as discussions with the L.A. Rebellion filmmakers, made us realize that any film program would have

to rely on a massive effort by all departments of the Archive to find, recover, restore or reconstitute, catalog, preserve and protect the films of these first generations of Black UCLA film students. Over three years, we have gotten to know the filmmakers, collected their work and seen the amazing expression of a unified and utopian vision of a community.

Unfortunately, less than 40 years after most of the L.A. Rebellion films were made, many have been lost, damaged, faded to red, or survived only as video copies. As I told my curatorial team, we are engaging essentially in an archeological project, where we have to consider every L.A. Rebellion film and tape we receive as possibly the only surviving material. It therefore becomes a prospect for preservation, even if it is a bad video transfer of a beat-up work print on a three-quarter-inch tape that we have to literally bake to retrieve a signal.

The film program is therefore a compromise between the ideal and the possible. We will be premiering several new restorations, as well as a few more new preservation prints. In other cases, the fragile nature of the original media has lead to the production of digital copies, some of them digitally restored. Indeed, never has the Archive shown as much digital work as in this series. That too is a sign of the times.

As we discovered one filmmaker at a time and one film after another, the curatorial team realized that this was not just a matter of a few isolated students who had made good in the film world, but a movement, a social phenomenon. What made them a discovery worth putting back onto the historical map was their youthful exuberance; their utopian vision of a better society; their sensitivity to children and gender issues; their willingness to question any and all received wisdom; their identification with all the young liberation movements in the Third World; and their expression of Black pride and dignity.

As in the case of the UCLA Festival of Preservation, which has toured North

American cities including New York, Berkeley, Chicago, Columbus, Houston, Portland, Seattle, Vancouver and Washington D.C., an abridged version of “L.A. Rebellion: Creating a New Black Cinema” will tour selected venues in North America in 2012 and 2013. This first comprehensive film program of the L.A. Rebellion and its subsequent tour is only the first iteration of a continuing dialogue between the Archive, the filmmakers and our audience. Our new L.A. Rebellion website will continue to expand, eventually functioning as a portal to some of the films. A symposium is planned for Nov. 12, 2011. A book-length study of the L.A. Rebellion will follow in the coming years, as will our efforts to preserve more of the work and make it accessible in analog and digital formats.

Happily, our project has expanded in scope and depth thanks to the generous support of many institutions. First and foremost, the Getty Foundation supported research, film series, and publications, while further programming funds were contributed by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the Andy Warhol Foundation. The last named also provided preservation funds as did the National Film Preservation Foundation, the Stanford Theatre Foundation, and the Packard Humanities Institute. The California Council for the Humanities, along with the Getty Foundation, provided invaluable support to the development of our L.A. Rebellion web page. Finally, we have to thank the L.A. Rebellion filmmakers themselves for their wonderful work and for their enthusiastic cooperation in making this program a success.

Dr. Jan-Christopher Horak
Director

INTRODUCTION TO THE PROGRAM

“L.A. Rebellion” is a handy and appealing designation for something far too momentous to contain in a name. Nevertheless one is faced with an extraordinary single fact: At a particular time and place in American cinema history, a critical mass of filmmakers of African origin or descent together produced a rich, innovative, sustained and intellectually rigorous body of work, independent of any entertainment industry influence. This, in the interest of realizing a new possibility for “Black” cinema, stated in its own terms on the good authority of its creators, and sensitive to the real lives of Black communities in the U.S. and worldwide.

This is the first comprehensive exhibition of the moving image legacy of the L.A. Rebellion, as well as the first sustained intellectual engagement with the movement as a social phenomenon. Bits and pieces of the story have been told before, in articles and chapters of books on minority film practice, in panel discussions and at retrospective screenings of key films. A group of African and African American students entered the UCLA School of Theater, Film and Television, many specially recruited under a concerted “ethno-communications” initiative designed to be responsive to communities of color (including also Asian American, Chicano and Native American communities). In this setting, they would be given access to equipment, instruction and—implicitly, eventually—the distribution and marketing mechanisms of mainstream film practice, which (it was hoped) would in turn be enriched by the needed and salutary messages these young talents would bring.


The legacy of these film and video works tells another story (not a contradiction, but an extension). As a body of work, its surprising narrative suggestions about everyday life and feelings, its resourceful adaptations of international cinema techniques and energies, its introduction of new distinctions in form, its political astuteness and determination, and above all the clarity of purpose that infuses its very diverse individual contributions, bespeak a group project that is every bit as critical of the assumptions of mass media institutions as it is glad for the access to tools with which to confront those institutions and assumptions. Furthermore, it reveals a group of students/filmmakers/

citizens who came to the opportunity of film school so versed in complex issues, artistic influences and life experiences as to make them the fulfillment of the school’s wishes seemingly upon arrival. Their frequent collaborations with other students of color, and concerted engagements with cinemas and concerns of the Third World, enlarged the significance of their work perhaps further than anyone might have anticipated, demonstrated by a trail of international awards. The extension of their legacies to the present day, in commercial markets, alternative distribution enterprises, public educational settings and the festival circuit, further demonstrates their longevity and permanence.

In this exhibition, we proudly present more than 50 representative works from their careers. Ranging from well-known films whose place is secure in the canon to student films seldom seen since school days, the series reveals a panoply of visions that do honor to individuals as well as the collective. Given the two decades during which their presence was especially felt at UCLA, and the decades since that period, one senses a continued unfolding as individual artists focus on diverse topics and respond to evolving political and artistic thought. Explorations of class, considerations of historical legacies, stories attentive to concerns of local communities and appreciations of other Black arts are only some of the areas of inquiry. Happily, the films also display a diversity of forms, including irreverent reconfigurations of well-worn genre types and groundbreaking experiments with cinematic language. Certain works, long out of circulation, represent rediscoveries that will bring joy and certainly much future scholarship. Many works are presented here in new prints and restorations undertaken by UCLA Film & Television Archive.

It has been an honor to prepare this exhibition with the involvement of so many of the filmmakers. To them we are grateful, and we commend audiences to their work and this program with great excitement.

Shannon Kelley
Head of Public Programs



“L.A. Rebellion: Creating a New Black Cinema” represents a compilation of both well-known and extremely rare works in a wide variety of moving image formats. In some cases we will be presenting the only surviving viewing prints, containing visible damage accumulated over the years. In many cases we will be making brand new prints for the first time in decades. For selected titles we will be undertaking full restoration, utilizing both photochemical and digital technologies. When no projectable print survives and new prints have not yet been created, we will be showing new (unrestored) digital transfers. New film prints and full restorations are noted under their respective catalog listings.

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**UJAMII UHURU SCHULE COMMUNITY
FREEDOM SCHOOL**
DEFINE

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**“L.A. REBELLION CLOSING
NIGHT EVENT”**



10.07.11 | 7:30 PM OPENING NIGHT

Preservation funded by the Packard Humanities Institute.

Directed by Julie Dash

Producer: J. Dash. **Screenwriter:** J. Dash. **Cinematographer:** A. Jaffa Fielder. **Editors:** Amy Carey, Joseph Burton. **With:** Cora Lee Day, Alva Rogers, Barbara-O (Barbara O. Jones), Adisa Anderson, Kaycee Moore, Cheryl Lynn Bruce, Tommy Hicks.
35mm, color, 112 min.

DAUGHTERS OF THE DUST 1991

Julie Dash's 1991 masterpiece was her first feature, and the first American feature directed by an African American woman to receive a general theatrical release. It announced a formidable talent, and in the grandeur and intricacy of its formal construction and themes, powerfully emblemized its director's purposeful commitment to cinema.

Abounding with surprise, the film transports us to a little-known setting to unfold a universal tale. The year is 1902, in the home of an extended family of Gullah people, descendants of African Captives living on islands off the coast of South Carolina and Georgia where they maintain strong connections to African linguistic and cultural traditions. Here, many members of the Peasant family are on the verge of a planned migration to the U.S. mainland, where American modernity seems, vaguely, to offer a better life.

However, family members clash over the meaning of this move. Viola, who has lived up North and returned as a Christian convert, views the crossing as a step out of bankrupt African superstitions into a kind of light. Scandal-tinged "Yellow Mary," returning to the family from a long self-exile, still asserts her independence but fears losing the touchstone of home. Nana Peasant, the aged matriarch, refuses to migrate and frets over the possibility of broken family ties and lost traditions. Eulah, young and with child, fears that the family's plan represents a futile flight from intractable legacies of pain.

A brilliant cast enacts these negotiations with exceeding depth, befitting the weight of the decision the Peasants face: to embrace the land that other Africans once fled. Dash constructs their home as a rarefied world, possibly soon a "paradise lost," through a masterful interplay of mise-en-scène, symbolic markers and magical realist gestures. All of this is graced by the luminous cinematography of A. Jaffa Fielder and John Barnes' stunningly original score. Named to the National Film Registry in 2004 by the Library of Congress, *Daughters of*

the Dust eloquently frames concerns that have preoccupied many independent filmmakers of Dash's generation: the place of family and tradition in ameliorating historical wrongs, the hope of spiritual escape from a history of trauma, and the elusive possibility of finding deliverance together.

Shannon Kelley

Fully timed second answer print struck from original 35mm color internegative. Laboratory services provided by Janice Allen, Cinema Arts, Inc.

Preceded by:

FOUR WOMEN 1975

Directed by: Julie Dash. **Producer:** Winfred Tennison. **Screenwriter:** J. Dash. **Cinematographer:** Robert Maxwell. **Editor:** J. Dash. **With:** Linda Martina Young.
16mm, color, 7 min.

Set to Nina Simone's stirring ballad of the same name, Julie Dash's dance film features Linda Martina Young as strong "Aunt Sarah," tragic mulatto "Saffronia," sensuous "Sweet Thing" and militant "Peaches." Kinetic camerawork and editing, richly colored lighting, and meticulous costume, makeup and hair design work together with Young's sensitive performance to examine long-standing Black female stereotypes from oblique, critical angles.

Jacqueline Stewart

New print struck from the original 16mm color negative alb rolls and the original 16mm track negative.

10.08.11 | 4:00 PM

Directed by Zeinabu irene Davis

Producer: Z. irene Davis, Andy Rice. **Cinematographer:** A. Rice.

Editor: A. Rice.

Digital video, color, approx. 60 min.



SPIRITS OF REBELLION: BLACK FILM AT UCLA 2011

This documentary work-in-progress by Zeinabu irene Davis provides intimate access to several filmmakers identified with L.A. Rebellion, including Charles Burnett, Ben Caldwell, Julie Dash, Haile Gerima, Barbara McCullough, Billy Woodberry and Davis herself, at work and in discussion. The film's topics include the origins of the name "L.A. Rebellion," the importance of public education to this group and in today's world, and the intriguing question, "What is a Black film?" Convening these artists for a review of their experiences as students and fellow filmmakers, and working with them to historicize their legacy on film and in society, Davis creates a moving document and an important extension of their story.

Shannon Kelley

10.08.11 | 7:30

Directed by Haile Gerima

Producer: H. Gerima. **Screenwriter:** H. Gerima. **Cinematographers:**

Charles Burnett, Roderick Young. **Editor:** H. Gerima. **With:** Barbara-O

(Barbara O. Jones), Johnny Weathers, Susan Williams, Cora Lee Day.

16mm, b/w, 97 min.



BUSH MAMA 1975

Inspired by seeing a Black woman in Chicago evicted in winter, Haile Gerima developed *Bush Mama* as his UCLA thesis film. Gerima blends narrative fiction, documentary, surrealism and political modernism in his unflinching story about a pregnant welfare recipient in Watts. Featuring the magnetic Barbara O. Jones as Dorothy, *Bush Mama* is an unrelenting and powerfully moving look at the realities of inner city poverty and systemic disenfranchisement of African Americans. The film explores the different forces that act on Dorothy in her daily dealings with the welfare office and social workers as she is subjected to the oppressive cacophony of state-sponsored terrorism against the poor. Motivated by the incarceration of her partner T.C. (Johnny Weathers) and the protection of her daughter and unborn child, Dorothy undergoes an ideological transformation from apathy and passivity to empowered action. Ultimately uplifting, the film chronicles Dorothy's awakening political consciousness and her assumption of her own self-worth. With *Bush Mama*, Gerima presents a piercing critique of the surveillance state and unchecked police power. The film opens with actual footage of the LAPD harassing Gerima and his crew during the film's shooting.

Allyson Nadia Field

New print struck from a 16mm b/w duplicate negative and the original 16mm track negative.

Preceded by:

DAYDREAM THERAPY 1977

Directed by: Bernard Nicolas. **Producer:** B. Nicolas. **Screenwriter:** B.

Nicolas. **Cinematographer:** B. Nicolas. **Editor:** B. Nicolas. **With:** Marva

Anderson, Keith Taylor, Gay Abel-Bey, Larry Bell, Jeff Cox.

Digital video transferred from 16mm, b/w and color, 8 min.

Daydream Therapy is set to Nina Simone's haunting rendition of "Pirate Jenny" and concludes with Archie Shepp's "Things Have Got to Change." Filmed in Burton Chace Park in Marina del Rey by activist-turned-filmmaker Bernard Nicolas as his first project at UCLA, this short film poetically envisions the fantasy life of a hotel worker whose daydreams provide an escape from workplace indignities.

Allyson Nadia Field

10.09.11 | 4:00 PM

L.A. REBELLION: CREATING A NEW BLACK CINEMA— FILMMAKER PANEL

As we inaugurate this screening series, a number of representative filmmakers will convene for a panel discussion to mark the occasion and to discuss various issues and ideas surrounding “L.A. Rebellion.” The wide-ranging discussion will touch on topics such as the shared and individual goals of the group’s members, their view of its legacy and its implications for the idea of “Black Cinema” today.

Panel moderated by Jacqueline Stewart.

10.09.11 | 7:00 PM

WATER RITUAL #1: AN URBAN RITE OF PURIFICATION 1979

Preservation funded with a grant from the National Film Preservation Foundation’s Avant-Garde Master’s Grant Program funded by The Film Foundation.

Directed by: Barbara McCullough. **Producer:** B. McCullough. **Screenwriter:** B. McCullough. **Cinematographers:** Peter Blue, Ben Caldwell, Roho. **Editor:** B. McCullough. 35mm, b&w, 6 min.

Made in collaboration with performer Yolanda Vidato, *Water Ritual #1* examines Black women’s ongoing struggle for spiritual and psychological space through improvisational, symbolic acts. Shot in 16mm black-and-white, the film was made in an area of Watts that had been cleared to make way for the I-105 freeway, but ultimately abandoned. Though the film is set in contemporary L.A., at first sight, Milanda and her environs (burnt-out houses overgrown with weeds) might seem to be located in Africa or the Caribbean, or at some time in the past. Structured as an Africanist ritual for Barbara McCullough’s “participant-viewers,” the film addresses how conditions of poverty, exploitation and anger render the Los Angeles landscape not as the fabled promised land for Black migrants, but as both cause and emblem of Black desolation. Inspired in part by the mental breakdown of a female friend of McCullough’s who retreated into “her own internal being,” the film nonetheless suggests that sites of urban blight can be activated as consecrated ground. *Water Ritual #1* honors Black/Third World women’s beauty and self-possession, and has been recognized as a pioneering work in Black feminist and experimental filmmaking.

Jacqueline Stewart

Preserved from the original 16mm bw reversal alb rolls, the original 16mm magnetic soundtrack and a 16mm composite print, by UCLA Film & Television Archive’s preservation department. Laboratory services by Stanford Theatre Film Laboratory, Audio Mechanics, and DJ Audio.

L.A. IN MY MIND 2006

Directed by: O.Funmilayo Makarah. **Producer:** O.Funmilayo Makarah. **Screenwriter:** O.Funmilayo Makarah. **Cinematographer:** O.Funmilayo Makarah. **Editor:** O.Funmilayo Makarah. Digital video, color, 4 min.

A captivating montage of notable Los Angeles sites, laced with free-floating names of places and people and accompanied by street noises, becomes a delightful and personal canon of spiritually sustaining quantities.

Shannon Kelley

SHOPPING BAG SPIRITS AND FREEWAY FETISHES: REFLECTIONS ON RITUAL SPACE 1981

Directed by: Barbara McCullough. **Producer:** B. McCullough. **Screenwriter:** B. McCullough. **Cinematographers:** B. McCullough, Bernard Nicolas, John Simmons, Roderick Young. **Editor:** B. McCullough. Digital video, color, 60 min.

Barbara McCullough’s journey as a film and videomaker has focused less on finished products and more on processes, at once aesthetic and spiritual. *Shopping Bag Spirits and Freeway Fetishes: Reflections on Ritual Space* represents a significant stretch along McCullough’s path, where she conversed with other L.A.-based Black artists (including David Hammons, Senga Nengudi and Betye Saar) about the role of ritual in Black life and creative practice. McCullough uses video footage, still photographs, interview audio and musical selections by Don Cherry to explore how her own film and video practice fits into Black traditions of performance and visual arts. McCullough opens *Shopping Bag Spirits* with footage from her own project, *Water Ritual #1: An Urban Rite of Purification*, enhanced with video effects. Blighted urban ruins become enchanted with glowing purples and blues, as video technologies (explored in courses with Shirley Clarke), add new dimensions to McCullough’s repertoire.

Jacqueline Stewart



CYCLES 1989

Directed by: Zeinabu irene Davis. **Producer:** Z. irene Davis. **Screenwriter:** Doris-Owanda Johnson. **Cinematographer:** Pierre Hermann Désir. **Editor:** Z. irene Davis. **With:** Stephanie Ingram, Darryl Munyungo Jackson, Marc Chéry, Doris-Owanda Johnson, Z. irene Davis. Digital video transferred from 16mm, b/w, 17 min.

As a woman anxiously awaits her overdue period, she performs African-based rituals of purification. She cleans house and body, and calls on the spirits (Orishas in the Yoruba tradition), receiving much needed inspiration and assurance in a dream. The film combines beautifully intimate still and moving images of the woman’s body and home space, along with playful stop-motion sequences.

Jacqueline Stewart

A PERIOD PIECE 1991

Directed by: Zeinabu irene Davis. **Producers:** Z. irene Davis, Casi Pacilio. **Screenwriter:** Z. irene Davis. **Editors:** Z. irene Davis, Casi Pacilio. **With:** Z. irene Davis, Quinta Seward, Sandra Sealy, Judy Hoy. Digital video, color, 5 min.

In this video work, Zeinabu irene Davis and collaborator Quinta Seward perform a comic rap (old-school style) about the false promises in ads for feminine hygiene products. Lampooning the classic embarrassing scenarios (getting your period at the prom, exercise class or walking down the aisle), the rap’s feminist refrain reminds us that “confidence” comes from within, not from a box or tube.

Jacqueline Stewart

10.13.11 | 7:30

Directed by Charles Burnett

Producer: C. Burnett, Gaye Shannon-Burnett. **Screenwriter:** C. Burnett. **Cinematographer:** C. Burnett. **Editor:** Tom Pennick. **With:** Everette Silas, Jessie Holmes, Gaye Shannon Burnett, Dennis Kemper, Ronald E. Bell.
Digital video, color, 82 min.



MY BROTHER'S WEDDING 1983

When we first see Pierce Mundy (Silas) in Charles Burnett's feature follow-up to *Killer of Sheep* (1977) he's on the move. Making his way on a summer afternoon down a cracked sidewalk in South Los Angeles, he's heading to see the mother of his best friend about to return from prison. A voice from behind catches him up short: "Hey, Pierce!" In the long shot that introduces him, Pierce turns mid-stride, looks to the woman calling him and in a single fluid move, looks away, exasperated, back toward his intended destination. "Come see my sister's baby!" Though he's tall and lean, we feel the petulant weight in his every step as he retreats in the direction he's just come.

This sequence, though brief, deftly establishes the major themes of *My Brother's Wedding*, and the power of Burnett's unadorned style. Pulled in opposing directions by loyalty to family and friends, Pierce feels suspended in place. Recently laid off from his factory job, he marks time working at his family's dry cleaning store under the watchful eye of his mother (Holmes) and swapping loaded jabs with his brother's upper-middle-class fiancée (Shannon-Burnett). In the face of a diminished future, the return of Pierce's best friend, Soldier (Bell), holds out a nostalgic escape to childhood, albeit one burdened by the decimation of his generation through violence and incarceration. "Where is everyone?" Soldier asks of the old crew. "It's you and me," Pierce replies.

While the contour of Pierce's situation is familiar, Burnett fleshes it out with richly observed detail. Shooting on location, Burnett doesn't simply capture locales; he reveals, through incidents and episodes both humorous and poignant, the network of relationships that pull and tug at the lives on screen. The revelation of character comes seamlessly bound to the revelation of community. When, in the film's finale, Pierce once again faces a choice of which

direction to turn, both literally and metaphorically, his decision resonates well beyond his personal history.

After a troubled production, *My Brother's Wedding* premiered at New Directors/New Films in 1984 in a 115-minute rough-cut version which wasn't released theatrically until 1991. More than a decade later, Burnett cut 30 minutes from the film for its 2007 re-release in a version that reflects his original intentions. The shorter director's cut is the version being presented in this series.

Paul Malcolm

Preceded by:

A LITTLE OFF MARK 1986

Directed by: Robert Wheaton. **Producer:** R. Wheaton. **Screenwriter:** R. Wheaton. **Cinematographer:** S. Torriano Berry. **Editor:** R. Wheaton. **With:** Peter Parros, Lee Daniels, Carol Porter, Robin R. Robinson, Debi Tinsley.
Digital video transferred from 16mm, b/w, 9 min.

Writer-director Robert Wheaton's story of a shy guy, Mark (Parros), trying all the wrong moves to meet the right girl rides high on a romantic sensibility. Although at first it's hard to imagine the handsome Mark having trouble with the ladies, Parros gives a charming performance as the nice guy who finishes last. UCLA's north campus features prominently as this would-be Romeo's ever-hopeful hunting ground.

10.14.11 | 7:30 PM

Directed by Jamaa Fanaka

Producer: J. Fanaka. **Screenwriter:** J. Fanaka. **Cinematographer:** Marty Ollstein. **Editor:** Betsy Blankett. **With:** Leon Isaac Kennedy, Thommy Pollard, Gloria Delaney, Donovan Womack, Hazel Spear.
35mm, color, 99 min.



PENITENTIARY 1979

After being framed for the murder of a white biker, Martel "Too Sweet" Gordone is incarcerated in prison, where he learns to box himself to freedom. Shot in seven weeks primarily at the L.A. Lincoln Heights jail and partially financed through a New York State Council on the Arts grant, *Penitentiary's* prison yard was filmed on UCLA's back lot, behind Melnitz Hall. Leon Isaac Kennedy was first brought in as a producer, then offered himself as star when Glynn Turman (*Cooley High*) became unavailable. The picture went on to become the most commercially successful film of the L.A. Rebellion.

If *Passing Through* and *Bush Mama* see the United States as a giant prison for African American males, then Jamaa Fanaka's *Penitentiary* depicts prison as a microcosm of Black America. Considered to be a late paradigmatic example of Blaxploitation, *Penitentiary* allegorizes African American life, seeing the prison system as a site of continual violent struggle against both external (the prison itself) and internal (fellow prisoners) forces, played out on the bodies of inmates, who are either sexual "sissies" (the exploited) or "beasts" (the exploiters). Within the conventions of exploitation cinema, whether the Blaxploitation, prison or boxing genre—the latter two categories having histories that go back to the early silent period—Fanaka visualizes the physical punishment of African American male bodies and the threat of rape that has been endemic to their existence since slavery days, and is still a fact of life in the present, both in prison and outside of it. Fanaka zooms in on the ritualistic establishment of pecking orders among African American gang members, carved out in blood on their bodies, to which in prison is added the continual threat of anal rape, violence and violent sex, contributing to their dehumanization. In a prison that is almost exclusively filled with Black inmates, Fanaka sketches out a

crisis in African American masculinity, which though the result of white racism, now perpetuates itself almost exclusively through "Black on Black" crime, thus returning to one of the themes of the filmmaker's *Emma Mae*.

Jan-Christopher Horak

New print struck from a 35mm color reversal intermediate and the original 35mm track negative.

Preceded by:

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF WILLIE FAUST, OR DEATH ON THE INSTALLMENT PLAN 1972

Directed by: Jamaa Fanaka (as Walt Gordon). **Producer:** J. Fanaka. **Screenwriter:** J. Fanaka. **Cinematographers:** Gary, Glenn & Boots. **Editor:** J. Fanaka. **With:** Baby Katina, Walt, Lynn, Carmen, Boots, Snooks, Gary.
Digital video, color, 16 min.

Jamaa Fanaka's first project plays off the Blaxploitation's genre conventions, an adaption of Goethe's *Faust* presented with a non-synchronous soundtrack and superimposed over a remake of *Super Fly* (1972). Often out of focus with an overactive camera, the film immediately exudes nervous energy, but unlike Priest's elegant cocaine consumption in *Super Fly*, Willie's arm gushes blood as he injects heroin. A morality tale in two reels.

Jan-Christopher Horak

UJAMII UHURU SCHULE COMMUNITY FREEDOM SCHOOL 1974

Directed by: Don Amis. **Producer:** D. Amis. **Cinematographer:** D. Amis. **Editor:** D. Amis. Digital video transferred from 16mm, color, 9 min.

Ujamii Uhuru Schule (Swahili for Community Freedom School) is the day-in-the-life portrait of an Afrocentric primary learning academy located in South Los Angeles. Focusing on the virtues of the three Rs—Respect, Righteousness and Revolution—the curriculum also teaches the importance of cultural values and self-defense. Shot in high contrast to emulate the color spectrum of the Pan-African flag, Don Amis punctuates the documentary with African chants, syncopated drums and poignant narration by the school's faculty. Learn, baby, learn.

Tony Best

DEFINE 1988

Directed by: O.Funmilayo Makarah. **Producer:** O.Funmilayo Makarah. **Screenwriter:** O.Funmilayo Makarah. **Cinematographers:** Hiroko Yamazaki, Quinta Seward. **Editor:** O.Funmilayo Makarah. **With:** O.Funmilayo Makarah, Quinta Seward, Yreina D. Cervantez. Digital video, color, 5 min.

Oblique, episodic meditations on the semiotics and ethics of ethnic female identity are accompanied by a blandly cynical narrator explaining how to “win an invitation to the dominant culture.”

Kevin McMahan

Excerpt from THE DAWN AT MY BACK:

MEMOIR OF A BLACK TEXAS UPBRINGING 2003

Directed by: Carroll Parrott Blue, Kristy H. A. Kang. **Producer:** Marsha Kinder. **Writer:** C. Parrott Blue. **With:** C. Parrott Blue, Debbie Allen, Ruby Dee, Ossie Davis (narrators). Digital video, adapted from DVD-ROM, color, 10 min.

This evocative excerpt from the Labyrinth Project's DVD-ROM, based on a memoir by Carroll Parrot Blue, leads viewers on a rich visual and textual exploration of Blue's family history, and of the history of Houston's black community. Using her great-grandmother's quilt as an interface, Blue and co-director Kristy H. A. Kang create plateaus of historical and narrative interest in a series of visual “panscapes,” constructed from original photographs, video and archival materials, and the spoken word. Winner of an Online Film Festival Viewer Award at the 2004 Sundance Film Festival.

Shannon Kelley

SHIPLEY STREET 1981

Directed by: Jacqueline Frazier. **Producer:** J. Frazier. **Screenwriter:** J. Frazier. **Cinematographers:** Robert Holguin, Joseph Callaway, James Babig, James Jeffery, Dan Riesenfeld. **Editors:** Porsche Stewart, Janice Cook, J. Frazier. **With:** Leslie Smith, Don Maharry, Sandra Sprouling Jacques, Dwana Willis, Edith Barry. Digital video transferred from 16mm, color, 25 min.

A construction worker, frustrated with his inability to get ahead, decides with his wife to send their daughter to an all-white Catholic school, where the girl is confronted with harsh discipline and racist attitudes. Jacqueline Frazier's film neatly encapsulates the unthinking, everyday racism of white institutions and their trafficking in offensive racial stereotypes, paying particular attention to their effects on young children.

Jan-Christopher Horak

BRICK BY BRICK 1982

Directed by: Shirikiana Aina. **Producer:** S. Aina. **Screenwriter:** S. Aina. **Cinematographers:** Ellen Sumter, Norma Blalock. **Editor:** S. Aina. **With:** Lester Wakefield (narrator). 16mm, color, 33 min.

Brick by Brick documents a late-'70s Washington, D.C., ignored by the media, and from which poor Black residents are being pushed out. Images of monuments contrast with prescient images of gentrification and homelessness. An alternative is provided by the Seaton Street project, in which tenants united to purchase buildings. Participants discuss their effort as part of a worldwide struggle against displacement.

Kevin McMahan

RICH 1982

Directed by: S. Torriano Berry. **Producer:** S. Torriano Berry. **Screenwriter:** S. Torriano Berry. **Cinematographer:** Iverson White. **Editor:** S. Torriano Berry. **With:** Steve T. Berry, Susann Akers, Haskell V. Anderson III, Krystoffer Fields, Joey Murray. 16mm, b/w, 22 min.

On the day of his high school graduation, an African American youth battles for self-determination as a convergence of forces, including his family and the neighborhood gang where he lives, attempt to shuttle him toward a future of lowered expectations. At once gritty and tender, the character study features an intimate scene shot chiaroscuro on location at the Watts Towers.

Mark Quigley



10.22.11 | 7:30 PM

Preservation funded by the National Film Preservation Foundation and the Packard Humanities Institute.

Directed by Billy Woodberry

Producer: B. Woodberry. **Screenwriter:** Charles Burnett. **Cinematographer:** C. Burnett. **Editor:** B. Woodberry. **With:** Nate Hardman, Kaycee Moore, Angela Burnett, Ronald Burnett, Kimberly Burnett. 35mm, b/w, 84 min.

BLESS THEIR LITTLE HEARTS 1984

Bless Their Little Hearts represents the closure and pinnacle of a neo-realist strand within what's now described as the L.A. Rebellion, which dates to Charles Burnett's *Several Friends* (1969). Billy Woodberry's film chronicles the devastating effects of underemployment on a family in the same Los Angeles community depicted in *Killer of Sheep* (1977), and it pays witness to the ravages of time in the short years since its predecessor. Nate Hardman and Kaycee Moore deliver gut-wrenching performances as the couple whose family is torn apart by events beyond their control. If salvation remains, it's in the sensitive depiction of everyday life, which persists throughout.

By 1978, when *Bless'* production began, Burnett, then 34, was already an elder statesman and mentor to many within the UCLA film community, and it was he who encouraged Woodberry to pursue a feature length work. In a telling act of trust, Burnett offered the newcomer a startlingly intimate 70-page original scenario and also shot the film. He furthermore connected Woodberry with his cast of friends and relatives, many of whom had appeared in *Killer of Sheep*, solidifying the two films' connections.

Yet critically, he then held back further instruction, leaving Woodberry to develop the material, direct and edit. As Woodberry reveals, "He would deliberately restrain himself from giving me the solution to things." The first-

time feature director delivered brilliantly, and the result is an ensemble work that represents the cumulative visions of Woodberry, Burnett and their excellent cast.

Whereas Burnett's original scenario placed emphasis on the spiritual crisis of Hardman's Charlie Banks, the then-married Woodberry, alongside Moore and Hardman, further developed the domestic relationships within the film and articulated the depiction of a family struggling to stay alive in a world of rapidly vanishing prospects.

In retrospect, the film's ending can be seen as a spiritual goodbye not just for Banks, but for Burnett, who would move away from his neo-realist work with his next film, the classic *To Sleep With Anger* (1990); for Woodberry, who moved into documentary; and for Hardman, who left acting shortly after. The film remains an unforgettable landmark in American cinema.

Ross Lipman

Preserved from the original 16mm blw negative alb rolls and the original 16mm optical soundtrack by UCLA Film & Television Archive's preservation department. Laboratory services by Stanford Theatre Film Laboratory, Audio Mechanics and NT Picture and Sound.

Preceded by:

THE POCKETBOOK 1980

Preservation funded in part by a grant from the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts.

Directed by: Billy Woodberry. **Producer:** B. Woodberry. **Screenwriter:** B. Woodberry. **Cinematographers:** Mario DeSilva, Gary Gaston, Charles Burnett. **Editor:** B. Woodberry. **With:** Ella "Simi" Nelson, Ray Cherry, David Jenkins, Al Williams, Christopher Thompson, Phillip Weatherspoon. 35mm, b/w, 13 min.

In the course of a botched purse-snatching, a boy comes to question the path of his life. Billy Woodberry's second film, and first completed in 16mm, adapts Langston Hughes' short story, *Thank You, M'am*, and features music by Lead-belly, Thelonious Monk and Miles Davis.

Ross Lipman

Preserved from the original 16mm blw reversal alb rolls and the original 16mm mag track by UCLA Film & Television Archive's preservation department. Laboratory services by Stanford Theatre Film Laboratory, Audio Mechanics and NT Picture and Sound.



10.23.11 | 7:00 PM

Directed by Haile Gerima

Producer: H. Gerima. **Screenwriter:** H. Gerima. **Cinematographer:** Augustin E. Cubano. **Editor:** H. Gerima. **With:** Evelyn A. Blackwell, John Anderson, Norman Blalock, Kathy Flewellen, Uwezo Flewellen. 16mm, color, 129 min.

ASHES & EMBERS 1982

Nay Charles is an African American Vietnam veteran who no longer fits in, can't find a job and has difficulty establishing a connection with his politically committed girlfriend. Suffering from depression, he leaves Washington, D.C. for a new, better life in Los Angeles. There, the film's antihero ends up arrested by the police.

Like his protagonist, Haile Gerima is both drawn to and skeptical of the Black nationalist ideology espoused by Nay Charles' girlfriend and her discussion group. Nay's alienation from both middle-class African Americans who have accommodated themselves to the system and radicals willing to change society is rooted in the institutionalized racism of white society, which for the most part remains an invisible but powerful presence. Like other L.A. Rebellion filmmakers, Gerima illustrates that racism, as well as Third World Liberation struggles, through photo and film montages of news film material. Nay's grandmother represents the tough fighting spirit of a generation that survived slavery and Jim Crow, her lush, green farm returning us metaphorically to the rural Ethiopia of Gerima's youth. In the end, Gerima places his faith in African American youths, who represent a future in which they stand tall, a final vision of utopia after the grim lessons of contemporary race relations in America.

Before completing production on *Ashes & Embers*, Gerima founded Mypheduh Films to distribute both his own work and that of other African filmmakers

whose work was being ignored by American art film distributors. Opening at New York's Film Forum, *Ashes & Embers* has been screened widely on the festival circuit.

Jan-Christopher Horak

Preceded by:

HOURLASS 1971

Directed by: Haile Gerima. **Producer:** H. Gerima. **Screenwriter:** H. Gerima. **Cinematographers:** H. Gerima, Larry Clark. **Editor:** H. Gerima. **With:** Mel Rosier. Digital video, b/w and color, 14 min.

A young African American male rethinks his role as a basketball player for white spectators as he begins reading the works of Third World theoreticians like Frantz Fanon, and contemplates the work of Martin Luther King Jr., Malcolm X and Angela Davis. Highly metaphoric rather than realistic, Haile Gerima's Project One visualizes through montage the process of coming to Black consciousness.

Jan-Christopher Horak



10.27.11 | 7:30 PM



MEDEA 1973

Directed by: Ben Caldwell. **Producer:** B. Caldwell. **Screenwriters:** B. Caldwell, Leroy Jones. **Cinematographer:** B. Caldwell. **Editor:** B. Caldwell.

Digital video transferred from 16mm, color, 7 min.

Ben Caldwell's *Medea*, a collage piece made on an animation stand and edited entirely in the camera, combines live action and rapidly edited still images of Africans and African Americans which function like flashes of history that an unborn child will inherit. Caldwell invokes Amiri Baraka's poem "Part of the Doctrine" in this experimental meditation on art history, Black imagery, identity and heritage.

Allyson Nadia Field

I & I: AN AFRICAN ALLEGORY 1979

Preservation funded in part by a grant from the National Film Preservation Foundation.

Directed by: Ben Caldwell. **Producer:** B. Caldwell. **Screenwriter:** B. Caldwell. **Cinematographer:** B. Caldwell. **Editor:** B. Caldwell. **With:** Pamela B. Jones, Al Cowart, Marcia Bullock, Pearl Collins, Byron Simmons. 16mm, color, 32 min.

Ben Caldwell designed *I & I* as a "résumé piece" to showcase his skills in experimental filmmaking, dramatic filmmaking and documentary. Drawing from Ayi

Kwei Armah's novel, *Two Thousand Seasons*, Caldwell meditates on reciprocity and on the concept of "I and I" which postulates no division between people, whereas the splitting of "you" from "I" is an invention of the devil designed to brew trouble in the world.

Allyson Nadia Field

Scheduled to be preserved from the original 16mm color and blw reversal alb rolls, a 16mm color internegative, the original 35mm magnetic soundtrack and the original 35/32mm track negative.

CHILD OF RESISTANCE 1972

Directed by: Haile Gerima. **Producer:** H. Gerima. **Screenwriter:** H. Gerima. **Cinematographer:** Reed Hutchinson. **Editor:** H. Gerima. **With:** Barbara O. Jones, James Dougall. 16mm, color/b/w, 36 min.

Inspired by a dream Haile Gerima had after seeing Angela Davis handcuffed on television, *Child of Resistance* follows a woman (Barbara O. Jones) who has been imprisoned as a result of her fight for social justice. In a film that challenges linear norms of time and space, Gerima explores the woman's dreams for liberation and fears for her people through a series of abstractly rendered fantasies.

Allyson Nadia Field

10.28.11 | 7:30 PM

Directed by Jamaa Fanaka

Producer: J. Fanaka. **Screenwriter:** J. Fanaka. **Cinematographer:** James Babij. **Editor:** J. Fanaka. **With:** Marlo Monte, Reatha Grey, Stan Kamber, Tiffany Peters, Ben Bigelow. 35mm, color, 99 min.



WELCOME HOME, BROTHER CHARLES 1975

A remarkable testament to the ambition, talent and sheer will of its creator, *Welcome Home, Brother Charles* was independently produced, written, directed and edited by Jamaa Fanaka as an improbable undergraduate project at UCLA. With a budget cobbled together by Fanaka from competitive grants and his parents' savings, the film's production ran 17 months, with shooting limited to weekends to allow unfettered access to university cinema equipment. Further cutting expenses by eliminating sets, Fanaka shot the film entirely on location in South Los Angeles and at UCLA (with fellow student and L.A. Rebellion auteur Charles Burnett serving as camera operator).

Strongly advised against attempting a feature film as a class project, Fanaka saw his completed picture through to a national theatrical distribution deal with Crown International Pictures. By 1976, *Variety* heralded Fanaka's auspicious debut in a profile titled, "Birth of a Black Director" and reported that his student film had grossed more than \$500,000 in its first six months of exhibition. The wunderkind went on to complete two more released features while still a student: his graduate thesis project, *Emma Mae* (1976), and the franchise-launching cult classic, *Penitentiary* (1979).

Marketed as a Blaxploitation film (and later released to home video in edited form under the exploitative title, *Soul Vengeance*), *Welcome Home, Brother Charles* subversively co-opts expected genre conventions in order to examine plantation-born racial myths surrounding Black male sexuality and white fears of "miscegenation." From the film's foreshadowing opening image of a wood-carved African sculpture under titles to its cult-favorite ultra-shock climax,

Fanaka unblinkingly drives his thematic raison d'être home with raw conviction and verve. On its surface a revenge tale of an African American man framed and abused by the white establishment, Fanaka's exaggerated symbolism and subtext elevates the film to unexpected parallel tracks of surrealism and social commentary.

Mark Quigley

Preceded by:

GIDGET MEETS HONDO 1980

Directed by: Bernard Nicolas. **Producer:** B. Nicolas. **Screenwriter:** B. Nicolas. **Cinematographers:** Don Amis, Ben Caldwell. **Editor:** B. Nicolas. **With:** Peggy Skomal, Reginald Bruce, John Paspachel, Marie Contin, Michael Friend, B. Nicolas. Digital video transferred from 16mm, color, 8 min.

Filmed in response to the LAPD's killing of Eula Love in 1979, *Gidget Meets Hondo* opens with stills taken by Bernard Nicolas of a demonstration against Love's killing. Nicolas' *Gidget* is a self-absorbed young white woman who remains clueless to the violence erupting around her, ultimately to her own peril. The film asks whether such police brutality would be tolerated if the victim were a middle-class white woman.

Allyson Nadia Field

11.05.11 | 7:30 PM

Preservation funded by the Ahmanson Foundation in Association with the Sundance Institute with additional funding by Milestone Film and Video.

Directed by Charles Burnett

Producer: C. Burnett. **Screenwriter:** C. Burnett. **Cinematographer:** C. Burnett. **Editor:** C. Burnett. **With:** Henry Gayle Sanders, Kaycee Moore, Charles Bracy, Angela Burnett, Eugene Cherry. 35mm, b/w, 81 min.

KILLER OF SHEEP 1977

Like a slow crescendo, *Killer of Sheep* became one of L.A. Rebellion's most widely celebrated films over the course of many years. Its extended 16mm production (completed piecemeal on spare weekends beginning in 1972) led to initial critical acclaim at the Sundance and Berlin film festivals in the early 1980s and acceptance into the National Film Registry in 1990. Although it was preserved in 35mm in 2000 by the UCLA Film & Television Archive (using high-tech means that finally gave the original negative its full due), it took seven more years to clear the music rights for commercial distribution. The momentum might have waned if it wasn't for the gravitational force of filmmaker Charles Burnett's captivating vision of Watts in post-manufacturing decline, a community heroically finding ways to enjoy and live life in the dusty lots, cramped houses and concrete jungles of South Los Angeles.

The focus is slaughterhouse worker Stan (novelist, playwright and actor Henry Gayle Sanders) whose dispiriting job wears him down, alienates him from his family and becomes an unspoken metaphor for the ongoing pressures of economic malaise. Drawing inspiration from Jean Renoir's sun-dappled and racially sensitive *The Southerner* (1945, also preserved by the Archive) as well as the poetic documentaries of Basil Wright (one of Burnett's teachers at UCLA), such as *Song of Ceylon* (1934) and *Night Mail* (1936), *Killer of Sheep* achieves a deeply felt intensity with nonprofessional actors and handheld location shooting. The film also creates a sense of immediacy and spontaneity (though much of *Sheep* was storyboarded) as well as quiet moments of humor and despair. Burnett finds lyricism by combining quotidian images—children playing on rooftops or Stan and his wife slow-dancing in their living room—with a highly evocative soundtrack of African American music. It's both a time capsule and a timeless, humanist ode to urban existence.

Doug Cummings

Preserved from the original 16mm b/w negative alb rolls and the original 16mm and 35mm magnetic soundtracks by UCLA Film & Television Archive's preservation department. Laboratory services by Film Technology Company, Audio Mechanics and DJ Audio.

Preceded by:

SEVERAL FRIENDS 1969

Preservation funded by the National Film Preservation Foundation and Milestone Film and Video.

Directed by: Charles Burnett. **Producer:** C. Burnett. **Screenwriter:** C. Burnett. **Cinematographer:** Jim Watkins. **Editor:** C. Burnett. **With:** Andy Burnett, Eugene Cherry, Charles Bracy, Donna Deitch, Cassandra Wright.

35mm, color, 22 min.

In Charles Burnett's first student film, eccentric and endearing young people interact in a variety of everyday settings: outside a liquor store, in a living room, fixing a car. Burnett's ability to draw out vivid characterizations from an ensemble of actors—as well as his sensitivity to the expressive potential of working class props and spaces—is already in ample evidence.

Doug Cummings

Preserved from the original 16mm b/w negative alb rolls and the original 16mm magnetic soundtrack by UCLA Film & Television Archive's preservation department. Laboratory services by Film Technology Company, Fotokem, Audio Mechanics and NT Picture and Sound.



11.12.11 | 8:30 AM — 5:30 PM

L.A. REBELLION: CREATING A NEW BLACK CINEMA— SYMPOSIUM

This one-day symposium, bringing together critics and scholars, is the first of its kind dedicated to the L.A. Rebellion. Organized by Allyson Nadia Field (UCLA) and Jacqueline Stewart (Northwestern University), the symposium features panels and screenings of rarely seen footage. Sessions include a panel on the social and political concerns and contexts of L.A. Rebellion filmmaking; a panel on the interface between filmmakers and Black creative practices in other media; and a closing round table discussion placing the movement in multiple historical perspectives. Presenters include Ed Guerrero (NYU), Jan-Christopher Horak (UCLA Film & Television Archive), David James (USC), Chuck Kleinhans (Northwestern University Emeritus/ Jump Cut), Michael T. Martin (Indiana University), Paula Massood (CUNY), Samantha Sheppard (UCLA), Cauleen Smith (filmmaker, UCLA alumna), Clyde Taylor (NYU Emeritus), Monona Wali (filmmaker, UCLA alumna) and Morgan Woolsey (UCLA).

The symposium is free and open to the public.

11.12.11 | 7:30 PM

ILLUSIONS 1982

Directed by: Julie Dash. **Producer:** J. Dash. **Screenwriter:** J. Dash. **Cinematographer:** Ahmed El Maanouni. **Editors:** J. Dash, Charles Burnett. **With:** Lonette McKee, Rosanne Katon, Ned Bellamy, Jack Radar, Fernando Lundi Faust. 16mm, b/w and color, 36 min.

Set in Hollywood during WWII, *Illusions* tells the story of Mignon Duprée, a studio executive passing for white, and Ester Jeeter, an African American singer hired to dub the voice of a white movie star. The film is a gripping critique of the power of the movies to shape perception as it explores the multiple illusions created by Hollywood and the very illusion of racial identity.

Allyson Nadia Field

FRAGRANCE 1991

Directed by: Gay Abel-Bey. **Producer:** G. Abel-Bey. **Screenwriter:** G. Abel-Bey. **Cinematographer:** Steven S. Poitras. **Editors:** G. Abel-Bey, S. Torriano Berry. **With:** Fumilayo, Leslie Rainey, Roy Fegan, Raymond Dunmore, Tony Ginn. Digital video transferred from ¾" videotape, b/w, 38 min.

When George visits his family before heading off to the Vietnam War, he is confronted by the conflicting ideals of his veteran father, who encourages his patriotism, and his militant brother, who urges him to stay home in protest. The complex issue of whether African Americans should be fighting for justice at home or abroad is registered most poignantly in the youngest son Bobby, a schoolboy torn between the political allegiances of his father and older brothers.

Michele Geary

AS ABOVE, SO BELOW 1973

Directed by: Larry Clark. **Producer:** L. Clark. **Screenwriter:** L. Clark. **Cinematographer:** L. Clark. Editor: L. Clark. **With:** Nathaniel Taylor, Lyvonne Walder, Billy Middleton, Gail Peters, Kodjo. 16mm, color, 52 min.

A rediscovered masterpiece, Larry Clark's *As Above, So Below* comprises a powerful political and social critique in its portrayal of Black insurgency. The film opens in 1945 with a young boy playing in his Chicago neighborhood and then follows the adult Jita-Hadi as a returning Marine with heightened political consciousness. Like *The Spook Who Sat By the Door* and *Gordon's War*, *As Above, So Below* imagines a post-Watts rebellion state of siege and an organized Black underground plotting revolution. With sound excerpts from the 1968 HUAC report "Guerrilla Warfare Advocates in the United States," *As Above, So Below* is one of the more politically radical films of the L.A. Rebellion.

Allyson Nadia Field

New print struck from a new 16mm internegative off the original 16mm color reversal alb rolls, and a new 16mm track negative off the original 16mm magnetic soundtrack mix.

RAIN 1978

Directed by: Melvonna Ballenger. **Producer:** M. Ballenger. **Screenwriter:** M. Ballenger. **With:** Evlynn Braithwaite, Bernard Nicolas, Ijeoma Iloputaife, Michael Friend, Keith Williams. Digital video, transferred from ¾" video tape, b/w, 16 min.

Melvonna Ballenger's *Rain* shows how awareness can lead to a more fulfilling life. In the film, a female typist goes from apathetic to empowered with the help of a man giving out political fliers on the street. Using John Coltrane's song "After the Rain," Ballenger's narration of the film meditates on rainy days and their impact. The rain in this short film doesn't signify defeat, but offers renewal and "a chance to recollect, a cool out."

Trisha Lendo



11.13.11 | 7:00

Directed by Larry Clark

Producer: L. Clark. **Screenwriters:** David Hentz, L. Clark. **Cinematographers:** Alexandra Cantin, Ruben O'Malley. **Editor:** L. Clark. **With:** Albert Harris, Cesar E. Flores, Robert Earl Crudup, Melissa Cellura, Rufus Norris.
35mm, color, 124 min.

CUTTING HORSE 2002

Larry Clark's revisionist Western, and second independent feature, appropriates and reconfigures genre tropes to tell the emotional story of a man struggling to put things right in his life, and in the place he once called home. Tyler is called back to the community where his former boss Sanchez still breeds horses. A strong, silent Black man, as stalwart as the freed slaves who had once worked with Mexican cattle-herding *vaqueros* in the old West, Tyler arrives with a reputation as an exceptional trainer of "cutting horses" (those that are cultivated to isolate and rein in unruly cattle). It is because of that talent that he has been summoned again, this time to train two specific horses as competitive champions. There he joins Doc Pete and Ray, two other members of Sanchez' team.

Unfortunately, Tyler also carries the taint of having once assaulted the unruly son of local political boss Neil Stone, himself a prominent landowner and industrialist who envies Sanchez' property and horses. Never mind that Tyler's former violence had actually been vengeance for the younger Stone having molested Sanchez' daughter Rosa (once Tyler's lover, since then married to

Ray). Now the passionate Tyler must walk a straight and narrow line in order to achieve his principal aim. Obstacles emerge in many forms, as the industrialist attempts to sabotage Sanchez, trip up Tyler and even buy the loyalty of the less insightful Ray. Gratifyingly, not only skill and hard-earned wisdom, but also honor, prove to be effective counterbalances to the schemes of powerful Stone as the competitive "cutting horse" event nears. Mercifully, even new love seems a possibility for Tyler.

The American West is a far cry from the settings of most L.A. Rebellion pictures. However, it offers a serviceable (not to mention beautiful) field against which to enact a story with resonance for Black audiences, one of a man who must be better than his peers, do battle with specters from the past and seek means other than violence to prevail in his worthy goal.

Shannon Kelley

New print struck from the original 35mm blow-up negative and the original 35mm track negative.

Preceded by:

THE HORSE 1973

Preservation funded in part with a grant from the National Film Preservation Foundation.

Directed by: Charles Burnett. **Producer:** C. Burnett. **Screenwriter:** C. Burnett. **Cinematographer:** Ian Conner. **Editor:** C. Burnett. **With:** Gordon Houston, Maury Wright, Gary Morrin, Roger Collins, George Williams.
16mm, color, 14 min.

In this haunting coming-of-age tale that Charles Burnett has described as a "kind of allegory of the South," an African American boy gently tends to a horse that is to be shot as a group of white men passively look on. Burnett artfully employs a sparse lyricism, juxtaposing the stillness of the rural setting against the disquiet imbued by the impending violence.

Mark Quigley

Preserved from the original 16mm color reversal alb rolls and the original 16mm magnetic soundtrack by UCLA Film & Television Archive's preservation department. Laboratory services by Fotokem and NT Picture and Sound.





11.19.11 | 7:30 PM

Directed by Haile Gerima

Producer: H. Gerima. **Screenwriter:** H. Gerima. **Cinematographer:** Augustin Cubano. **Editor:** H. Gerima. **With:** Kofi Ghanaba, Oyafunmike Ogunlano, Alexandra Duah, Nick Medley, Mutabaruka. 35mm, color, 124 min.

SANKOFA 1993

Powerful, moving and highly acclaimed, Haile Gerima's *Sankofa* is a masterpiece that has had a transformative impact on audiences since its release in 1993. This empowering film tells a story of slavery and of the African Diaspora from the perspective of the enslaved, challenging the romanticizing of slavery prevalent in American culture. *Sankofa* was developed from twenty years of research into the trans-Atlantic slave trade and the experiences of African slaves in the New World. The film represents complex characters and empowering moments of resilience that assert humanity in the face of subjugation. Unlike Hollywood's depiction of slavery, Gerima presents the often suppressed history of slave resistance and rebellion and represents the enslaved as agents of their own liberation. The story begins with Mona (Oyafunmike Ogunlano), an African American model on a fashion shoot at the former slave castles in Cape Coast, Ghana. Mona undergoes a journey back in time and place to a slave plantation in North America where she becomes Shola, a house slave, and experiences the suffering of slavery firsthand. In becoming Shola and returning to her past culture and heritage, Mona is able to recover her lost slave identity and confront her ancestral experience. Shola's interactions with her fellow slaves are marked with humanity and dignity, most notably with Shango (Mutabaruka), a rebellious field slave, and Nunu (Alexandra Duah), one of the few slaves to remember her life in Africa before being stolen by Europeans. The film's narrative structure follows the concept of "Sankofa," an Akan word that signifies the recuperation of one's past in order to comprehend the present and find one's future.

Allyson Nadia Field

Preceded by:

THE DIARY OF AN AFRICAN NUN 1977

Preservation funded in part with a grant from the National Film Preservation Foundation.

Directed by: Julie Dash. **Producer:** J. Dash. **Based on the short story by:** Alice Walker. **Cinematographer:** Orin Mitchell. **Editor:** J. Dash. **With:** Barbara O. Jones, Barbara Young, Makimi Price, Ron Flagge, Renee Carraway. 16mm, b/w, 15 min.

A nun in Uganda weighs the emptiness she finds in her supposed union with Christ. Adapted from a short story by Alice Walker, the film was a bold first move by its director toward narrative filmmaking. Its graphic simplicity and pantomimed performance by Barbara O. Jones give it an intensity that anticipates Julie Dash's work on *Daughters of the Dust*.

Shannon Kelley

Preserved from the original 16mm b/w negative a/b rolls (blown up from Super 8 reversal camera original) and the original 16mm optical soundtrack by UCLA Film & Television Archive's preservation department. Laboratory services by Fotokem, Audio Mechanics and NT Picture and Sound.

BLACK ART, BLACK ARTISTS 1971

Directed by: Elyseo J. Taylor. **With:** Van Slater.
Digital video transferred from 16mm, color, 16 min.

As the only Black faculty member in UCLA's film school, Elyseo Taylor was an influential teacher and advocate for students of color. In voiceover dialogue with woodcut printmaker Van Slater, Taylor's film examines the status of contemporary Black artists. A visual survey of Black art since the 19th century, punctuated with jazz and blues selections, it outlines pressures to prove artistic capability, to suit white and middle-class Black tastes and to make explicit political statements.

Jacqueline Stewart

FESTIVAL OF MASK 1982

Directed by: Don Amis. **Producer:** D. Amis. **Screenwriters:** D. Amis, Jennifer Amis. **Cinematographers:** D. Amis, Ben Caldwell, Dan Riesenfeld, Don Cropper, Jeff Fazio. Editor: D. Amis. **With:** Carmen Stetson (narrator).
Digital video transferred from 16mm, color, 25 min.

Don Amis was one of the very few Black student filmmakers at UCLA (including Carroll Parrott Blue, Stormé Bright and Denise Bean) working in a documentary mode. In this film, preparations, parade and performances from the Craft and Folk Art Museum's annual Festival of Mask illustrate L.A.'s diverse racial and ethnic communities (African, Asian, Latin American) expressing themselves through a shared traditional form.

Jacqueline Stewart

VARNETTE'S WORLD: A STUDY OF A YOUNG ARTIST 1979

Directed by: Carroll Parrott Blue. **Producers:** C. Parrott Blue, D. Loxton. **Screenwriter:** C. Parrott Blue. **Cinematographer:** Daniel Riesenfeld. **Editor:** Linda Dove. **With:** Varnette Honeywood.
Digital video transferred from 16mm, color, 26 min.

Carroll Parrott Blue's profile of L.A.-based painter Varnette Honeywood (1950-2010) presents the artist years before she became famous for works appearing in *The Cosby Show's* Huxtable residence. Blue connects Honeywood's colorful and inspiring scenes of everyday Black life to her active community involvement, including Rev. James Cleveland's Cornerstone Baptist Church, arts education projects with local youth and a Black artists collective.

Jacqueline Stewart

TRUMPETISTICALLY, CLORA BRYANT 1989

Directed by: Zeinabu irene Davis. **Producers:** Z. irene Davis, Marc Arthur Chéry. **Screenwriters:** Z. irene Davis, Lillian E. Benson. **Cinematographers:** Katherine Engstrom, Willie Dawkins, Charles Burnett, S. Torriano Berry, Yasu Tsuji, Biya Ababulga, Pierre Desir. **Editor:** Lillian E. Benson. **Co-Editor:** Katherine Engstrom. **With:** Clora Bryant, Dizzy Gillespie, James Newton, Helen Cole, Teddy Edwards.
Digital video, b/w and color, 57 min.

This film presents a fond and informative portrait of pioneering female jazz trumpeter Clora Bryant, a proponent of West Coast jazz whose early stints with the International Sweethearts of Rhythm led eventually to collaborations with Dizzy Gillespie and Charlie Parker, among others. Rich with tunes and anecdotes, the documentary handsomely details Bryant's long journey in music and her influence on generations of musicians.

Shannon Kelley



A DIFFERENT IMAGE 1982

Directed by: Alile Sharon Larkin. **Producers:** Claudine Mitchell, Dankwa Khan. **Screenwriter:** A. Sharon Larkin. **Cinematographer:** Charles Burnett. **Editor:** A. Sharon Larkin. **With:** Margot Saxton-Federella, Adisa Anderson. 16mm, color, 51 min.

An African American woman living away from her family in Los Angeles yearns to be recognized for more than her physical attributes. In cultivating the friendship of a male office mate, she aspires to a relationship where sex is not a factor, seeking someone who can “see her as she is,” rather than see only what he wants to see.

Samuel B. Prime

CREATING A DIFFERENT IMAGE: PORTRAIT OF ALILE SHARON LARKIN 1989

Directed by: O.Funmilayo Makarah. **Producer:** O.Funmilayo Makarah. **Cinematographers:** Marie Angela Kellier, Hiroko Yamazaki. **Editor:** O.Funmilayo Makarah. **With:** Alile Sharon Larkin. Digital video, color, 5 min.

A jubilant affirmation of self-identity, *Creating a Different Image* is Alile Sharon Larkin in her own words defiantly declaring, “I am an artist.” Learn more about the personal life and professional aspirations of the filmmaker behind *Your Children Come Back to You* (1979), *A Different Image* (1982), *Dreadlocks and the Three Bears* (1991) and many more.

Samuel B. Prime

DREADLOCKS AND THE THREE BEARS 1991

Directed by: Alile Sharon Larkin, Armandilo Cousin. **Producer:** A. Sharon Larkin. **Screenwriter:** A. Sharon Larkin. **Cinematographer:** Melvonna Ballenger. **Editor:** A. Cousin. **With:** A. Sharon Larkin (narrator). Digital video, color, 12 min.

A contemporary reimagining of the timeless “Three Bears” fairy tale, *Dreadlocks and the Three Bears* tells the story we all heard as children, but with an African American protagonist replacing the tale’s original blond-haired belle. An animation composed of construction paper cut-ups, *Dreadlocks* is at once both an extremely playful and yet undeniably political work of art aimed at younger generations.

Samuel B. Prime

YOUR CHILDREN COME BACK TO YOU 1979

Directed by: Alile Sharon Larkin. **Producer:** A. Sharon Larkin. **Screenwriter:** A. Sharon Larkin. **Cinematographer:** Charles Burnett. **Editors:** A. Sharon Larkin, C. Burnett. **With:** Angela Burnett, Patricia Bentley King, Simi Nelson, Sabu Zawadi. Nashay Brady. 16mm, b/w, 30 min.

A single mother ekes out a living from welfare check to welfare check, struggling to provide for her daughter. She is faced with the decision to look after her personally or to allow her sister-in-law to provide “more than enough” to go around. Larkin’s film masterfully presents a child’s perspective on wealth and social inequality.

Samuel B. Prime

New print struck from the original 16mm b/w negative alb rolls and the original 16mm track negative.



12.07.11 | 7:30 PM

Directed by Charles Burnett

Producers: Caldecot Chubb, Thomas S. Byrnes, Darin Scott. **Screenwriter:** C. Burnett. **Cinematographer:** Walter Lloyd. **Editor:** Nancy Richardson. **With:** Danny Glover, Paul Butler, DeVaughn Nixon, Vonetta McGee, Sheryl Lee Ralph, Carl Lumbly.
35mm, color, 102 min.



TO SLEEP WITH ANGER 1990

Charles Burnett's first feature to be widely released by a major distributor enjoyed universal critical acclaim, with stellar reviews appearing in the *Chicago Reader*, *Los Angeles Times*, *New Yorker* and *Variety*. Despite a virtually nonexistent studio marketing campaign that led to disappointing box office, the film received a significant number of prestigious accolades, including several top honors at the Independent Spirit Awards, a Special Jury Prize at the Sundance Film Festival and a National Society of Film Critics Award for best screenplay.

Featuring a highly accomplished ensemble cast headed by the film's executive producer, actor Danny Glover, *To Sleep With Anger* concerns a transplanted African American family's metaphorical and metaphysical tug-of-war between their comfortable life in Los Angeles and the age-old superstitions and cultural traditions native to their former home in the South. The catalyst for this mortal conflict is a beloved family friend from back home, Harry Mention (Glover), a "trickster" who arrives unexpectedly with a twinkle in his eye and a soul-rooted connection to the more sinister aspects of Southern folklore. As Harry's initially charming, but ultimately devilish, conjuring gradually infiltrates three

generations of the family unit, deep-seated fractures in their interrelationships are forced to confrontation.

A wholly original work that draws closely from Burnett's personal ties to the South (the director was born in Mississippi) and to South Central Los Angeles where he grew up, *To Sleep With Anger* is a singular artistic achievement that transcends categorization, seamlessly incorporating elements of family drama, dark comedy and magical realism. Within this densely layered framework, Burnett incisively, yet subtly, examines the complexities of modern middle-class Black life amid the challenges of reconciling the past with the present. The result is an indelibly humanistic fable, rich in poetic symbolism and firmly grounded in a recognizable reality.

Mark Quigley

Preserved by Sony Pictures Entertainment from the original camera negative. Laboratory services by Cinetech.

12.09.11 | 7:30 PM

Directed by Haile Gerima

Producer: H. Gerima. **Screenwriter:** H. Gerima. **Cinematographer:** Eliot Davis. **Editor:** Phillip Kuretsky. **With:** Kasu Asfaw, Gebru Kasa, Worke Kasa.
16mm, b/w, 150 min.



HARVEST: 3,000 YEARS 1976

Haile Gerima's first feature work to be set in Africa employs visions of his native Ethiopia to construct a post-colonial allegory of class exploitation. Filmed in the tumultuous days following the overthrow of Haile Selassie, the portrait of an abject peasant family toiling under the scornful eye of a wealthy landowner exhibits the spontaneity of a documentary. But it also displays the assuredness and authority of a master storyteller in the sweep of its conceptual rigor and moral stand.

We are exposed to several characters, as it were, without introduction. They are members of a poor family who rise and begin their day tending cattle and plowing fields. Their feudal lord, a Western-attired tyrant, barks orders and criticism from a seat on his shaded front porch. Another figure, a meagerly dressed man, calls out insults to the landowner. These almost archetypal figures take on more specific identities as we learn that the bothersome heckler once owned property now expropriated and held by the landowner, and that although the peasant family may toil dutifully, its members seethe with memories and visions of another way of life. In time, a critique of modern Ethiopia

(and by implication, neocolonial Africa) emerges that criticizes coming political reconfigurations as just the latest way in which others may now exploit the land and the poor.

Gerima unfolds several loosely connected episodes (indeed, the "action" of the film often seems trained on an ever-more subtle understanding of certain facets of daily life, rather than on a plot), but the film also employs freewheeling shifts in register, such that political speeches in public spaces contrast with exclamatory addresses to the camera, and verbal abuse of workers alternates with fairly Buñuelian images of workers being driven by a whip, with no qualification of the "reality" of any situation, all to the accompaniment of an evocative musical soundscape. When the "plot" finally offers its fulfillment, the effect is devastating. In this early work, Gerima strove for something more than an individual story, achieving a bracing polemic and an impassioned narrative of bleak and haunting beauty.

Shannon Kelley

12.10.11 | 7:30 PM

Preservation funded in part by a grant from the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts and the Packard Humanities Institute.

Directed by Larry Clark

Producer: L. Clark. **Screenwriters:** L. Clark, Ted Lange. **Cinematographers:** Roderick Young, George Geddis. **Editor:** L. Clark. **With:** Nathaniel Taylor, Clarence Muse, Pamela Jones, Johnny Weathers, Della Thomas. 35mm, color, 111 min.

PASSING THROUGH 1977

Eddie Warmack, an African American jazz musician, is released from prison for the killing of a white gangster. Not willing to play for the mobsters who control the music industry, including clubs and recording studios, Warmack searches for his mentor and grandfather, the legendary jazz musician Poppa Harris. Larry Clark's film theorizes that jazz is one of the purest expressions of African American culture, embodying the struggles of generations of Black people going back to slavery times, but now hijacked by a white culture that brutally exploits jazz musicians for profit. The opening seven-minute credit sequence is accordingly an homage to jazz and jazz musicians, privileging the raw energy of the music, while the concert footage appears virtually abstractly as a riot of blues, reds and whites. The film repeatedly returns to scenes of various musicians improvising jazz, as well as flashback scenes (in black-and-white) in which Poppa teaches Warmack to play saxophone, leading a French critic to call *Passing Through* "the only jazz film in the history of cinema."

It is the Africanism of Poppa, as the spiritual center of *Passing Through*, that ties together Black American jazz and the liberation movements of Africa and North America. In the early flashback sequences in sepia, Clarence Muse appears in African dress and teaches saxophone under the sky. Poppa teaches Warmack that the music comes from the soil, from the earth, leading Warmack to bury his saxophone to improve his playing. The film's final montage incorporates shots of African leaders with a close-up of Poppa's eye and close-ups of Black hands holding the soil, thus semantically connecting jazz, Africa and the earth in one mystical union, and by extension justifying the liberation of the earth through violent struggle, whether in Africa or Los Angeles.

Clark completed the film while participating in the fellows program at the American Film Institute. The film's world premiere took place at "Filmex,"



the Los Angeles Film Festival in 1977, subsequently won a special jury prize at the Locarno Film Festival (Switzerland) and played film festivals in Edinburgh (1978), Perth (1978) and Moscow (1979).

Jan-Christopher Horak

Scheduled to be preserved from the original 16mm color reversal alb rolls, and the original 16mm magnetic soundtrack, by UCLA Film & Television Archive's Media Licensing and Digital Initiatives department. Laboratory services by Point 360, Stanford Theatre Film Laboratory, Audio Mechanics, DJ Audio.

Preceded by:

WHEN IT RAINS

Directed by: Charles Burnett. **Producer:** Chantal Bernheim. **Screenwriter:** C. Burnett. **Cinematographer:** C. Burnett. **Editor:** C. Burnett. **With:** Ayuko Babu, Kenny Merritt, Charles Bracy, Soul, R. Ray Barness. 16mm, color, 13 min.

On New Year's Day, a man tries to help a woman pay her rent and learns a lesson in connecting with others in a community. Ayuko Babu, founding director of the Pan African Film Festival of Los Angeles, assumes the lead role in a pleasingly empathic reading.

Shannon Kelley

12.11.11 | 7:30 PM

Directed by Charles Burnett

Producers: Paul Heller, William Lawrence Fabrizio, John Remark, Eric Mitchell. **Screenwriter:** Anthony C. Winkler. **Cinematographer:** John Ndiaga Demps. **Editor:** Nancy Richardson. **With:** James Earl Jones, Lynn Redgrave, Margot Kidder, Tommy Hicks, Linden Chiles. 35mm, color, 102 min.



THE ANNIHILATION OF FISH 1999

Charles Burnett performs a delightful directorial turn with this funny and tender study of outsiders finding love and happiness through a healthy dose of tolerance--but not the kind of tolerance that movies usually sell!

Poinsettia (Lynn Redgrave) is a former housewife, living alone with unrequited dreams of romance that only her imagined lover, the nineteenth-century composer Giacomo Puccini, can fulfill. Disgusted at a world that scoffs at her love and her plans of marriage to Puccini, she moves to Los Angeles for a change of scene. Taking a room in the boarding house of feisty Mrs. Muldroone (Margot Kidder), Poinsettia meets the other new tenant: Fish (James Earl Jones), a Jamaican widower recently released from an overcrowded mental institution despite his daily physical bouts with an unseen, demonic assailant who attacks him without warning, nor any visible trace.

It's not long before these neighbors become lovers. What happens next is very special, as Poinsettia and Fish, each regarding the other as nuts, move steadily

toward the light of love past all imaginary inconveniences, finally participating fully in each other's worlds, regardless that this leads to new peaks of imaginative excess.

Burnett's cast give their all to these tasty roles; particularly Redgrave and Jones, who demonstrate a hilarious commitment to the pantomime required, and a keen instinct for those moments when emotional need becomes the story's compass. Margot Kidder as Mrs. Muldroone is all wry, understated discretion; if anything, happy for the human interest her house attracts and fosters. The prospect of love across racial barriers is the smallest challenge to happiness in this rarefied world, where Poinsettia can joyfully answer Fish's challenge, "what we got in common?" with the quick (and sane) response, "old! Old is what we've got in common!" Making them young again is an ensemble's and a director's triumph.

Shannon Kelley

12.14.11 | 7:30 PM

Directed by Zeinabu irene Davis

Producers: Z. irene Davis, Marc Arthur Chéry. **Screenwriter:** M. Arthur Chéry. **Cinematographer:** Pierre H. L. Désir. **Editors:** Dana Briscoe, Z. irene Davis. **With:** John Earl Jelks, Michelle A. Banks, Nirvana Cobb, Kevin L. Davis, Christopher Smith. 16mm, b/w and color, 90 min.



COMPENSATION 1999

Zeinabu irene Davis' first feature depicts two Chicago love stories, one set at the dawn of the 20th century and the other in contemporary times, featuring a deaf woman and a hearing man. Played by the same actors (Michelle A. Banks and John Earl Jelks), both couples face the specter of death when the man is diagnosed with tuberculosis in the early story, and the woman with AIDS in the contemporary one. Inspired by a poem by Paul Laurence Dunbar (who died of tuberculosis in 1906, at the age of 33), the film considers the ephemeral nature of love and life, while illustrating the enduring challenges of race, and racism, over the course of a century. At the same time, Arthur and Malindy/Malaika and Nico confront intraracial differences across lines of gender, class, education and ability, emphasizing the diversity of Black experience and the necessary work of building meaningful lines of communication within the Black community.

One of the most striking aspects of *Compensation* is its unusual narrative approach. Upon casting deaf actress Banks, Davis and screenwriter Mark Arthur Chéry modified the film to incorporate sign language and title cards, making it accessible to both deaf and hearing audiences. The film's relative silence and use of ornate title cards also function as an homage to Black filmmakers of the silent era, to whom Davis nods when she sends Arthur and Malindy to the movies to see William Foster's *The Railroad Porter* (1913), thought to be the first fiction film by a Black filmmaker. Davis' re-enactment of this long

lost film, as well as her extensive use of archival photographs and a ragtime score by Reginald R. Robinson, make visible the creative efforts required to reconstruct and understand the under-documented Black past.

Jacqueline Stewart

Preceded by:

DARK EXODUS 1985

Directed by: Iverson White. **Producer:** I. White. **Screenwriter:** I. White. **Cinematographer:** Lindy Laub. **Editor:** I. White. **With:** John Jelks, Harold House, Jeffrey Dixon, Geraldine Dunston, Starletta DuPois, Neal Jimenez.

16mm, b/w and color, 28 min.

Subjected to Jim Crow laws and an overtly racist white population that still sees Black people as property, an African American family in the South sends its sons away to a better life. Visualizing the migration of African Americans from the rural South to the urban, industrial North in sepia tones, Iverson White's period film captures the atmosphere of early 20th century America.

Jan-Christopher Horak

New print struck from the original 16mm b/w negative alb rolls and the original 16mm track negative.

12.16.11 | 7:30 PM

Directed by Jamaa Fanaka

Producer: J. Fanaka. **Screenwriter:** J. Fanaka. **Cinematographer:** Stephen Posey. **Editor:** Robert A. Fitzgerald. **With:** Jerri Hayes, Ernest Williams II, Charles D. Brooks III, Leopoldo Mandeville, Malik Carter. 35mm, color, 100 min.



EMMA MAE 1976

Some viewers may know this film as *Black Sister's Revenge*, the title under which it has been distributed on video by Xenon. However, Jamaa Fanaka's original title—*Emma Mae*—better captures its status as a sympathetic portrait of a young Black woman from the South and her difficult adjustment to life in the big city. After the death of her mother, Emma Mae (Jerri Hayes) travels by bus from Mississippi to Los Angeles, her rough country edges on full display. She also possesses an extraordinary ability to beat down anyone who disrespects her or those she loves. Emma Mae's proficiency in kicking ass echoes traits found in super-mama heroines populating other character-named films of this Blaxploitation era (e.g., *Foxy Brown*, *Coffy*, *Cleopatra Jones*), not surprising given Fanaka's (successful) aspiration to distribute this student film theatrically. But Emma Mae is not presented as an impossibly glamorous vixen. To the contrary, her plain looks and shy demeanor seem to necessitate her physical and emotional strength, particularly when dealing with those who mistakenly underestimate her. It is as if Emma Mae can tap directly into a wellspring of Black women's latent powers in order to protect and serve her own.

Emma Mae quickly falls for Jesse, a smooth-talking ne'er-do-well who breaks her heart despite her selfless efforts to bail him out of jail, first by running a laborious car wash under the watchful eyes of racist L.A. police, then by making a foray into bank robbery. Fanaka initially primes us for a Cinderella story, in which Emma Mae's sophisticated, college student cousins mock her backward ways and she's separated from her Prince Charming just minutes after they

come together at a big dance. But Fanaka reverses the formula. Emma Mae's broken romance, and her L.A. family's stumble from bourgeois status, forge a powerful sisterly bond virtually absent from Blaxploitation fare.

Jacqueline Stewart

New print struck from a 35mm color reversal intermediate and the original 35mm track negative

Preceded by:

BELLYDANCING—A HISTORY & AN ART 1979

Directed by: Alicia Dhanifu. **Producer:** A. Dhanifu. **Screenwriter:** A. Dhanifu. **Cinematographer:** Gary Gaston. **Editor:** Jerry Weissman. **With:** A. Dhanifu.

Digital video, color, 22 min.

Alicia Dhanifu, who appears in Jamaa Fanaka's *Emma Mae*, constructs a rigorous and beautifully rendered history of belly dancing—its roots and history, forms and meanings. The filmmaker performs this art as well, alone and with other dancers.

Shannon Kelley

12.17.11 | 4:00 PM

Directed by Julie Dash

Producers: Pearl Devers, Elaine Eason Steele. **Screenwriter:** Paris Qualles. **Cinematographer:** David Claessen. **Editor:** Wendy Hallam-Martin. **With:** Angela Bassett, Peter Francis James, Tonea Stewart, Van Coulter, Dexter Scott King, Cicely Tyson. Digital video, color, 95 min.



THE ROSA PARKS STORY 2002

There are times when one small act can change the world. In *The Rosa Parks Story*, Julie Dash chronicles the life and legacy of the “mother of the Civil Rights Movement.” The film premiered on the CBS network on Feb. 24, 2002. Relaying the social and cultural climate in Montgomery, AL, in 1965, the film juxtaposes the famous event of Parks’ refusal to relinquish her seat on a bus to a white patron with the lesser-known history of Parks’ personal background. With flashbacks into the history of a woman who has become a symbol of civil disobedience and human dignity, *The Rosa Parks Story* offers a glimpse into Parks’ childhood, upbringing and family life. Focusing on her relationships with her husband Raymond Parks and her mother, the weighted shadow of Rosa Parks as an American icon is lifted to reveal the person, principles, pleasures and pains of Parks as an individual human being. Reminding us that every

historical figure has a human story, the film balances the history of the Civil Rights Movement—particularly the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) boycott of Montgomery buses—with a focus on the internal and external forces that shaped Parks’ belief in equality and human dignity. In this sense, the film does not shy away from mentioning the tales of racial injustice that haunt American history. In a story about challenging segregation and the events leading up to and after Dec. 1, 1955—when Parks was arrested for refusing to give up her seat—we are reminded that it was the audacious hope and courageous action of Rosa Parks that influenced local, and relatively unknown, religious leader Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and changed the American cultural, social and political landscape forever.

Samantha Sheppard

Directed by Charles Burnett

Producer: Christopher Seitz. **Screenwriter:** Cynthia Whitcomb, based on the book by Sheyann Webb and Rachel West Nelson as told to Frank Sikora. **Cinematographer:** John Simmons. Editor: Nancy Richardson. **With:** Mackenzie Astin, Junee Smollett, Clifton Powell, Ella Joyce, Yolanda King. Digital video, color, 94 min.



SELMA, LORD, SELMA 1999

“Human progress,” Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. explained, “is neither automatic nor inevitable. ... Every step toward the goal of justice requires sacrifice, suffering and struggle; the tireless exertions and passionate concern of dedicated individuals.” In Charles Burnett’s film *Selma, Lord, Selma*, the youthful eyes of 11-year-old female protagonist Sheyann Webb is the lens in which we see the determined bravery and compassionate humanity that was the hallmark of the Civil Rights Movement. Set against the backdrop of the racially tumultuous 1960s, *Selma, Lord, Selma* is based on Sheyann Webb and Rachel West Nelson’s memoir *Selma, Lord, Selma: Girlhood Memories of the Civil Rights Days* (1997). Produced by Walt Disney Pictures, the film premiered on the ABC network on Jan. 17, 1999, one day before King’s national holiday. Chronicling the events leading up to the 1965 Selma to Montgomery marches led by King and many notable Black and white civil rights leaders, Burnett’s film eloquently

dramatizes African Americans’ fight to exercise their constitutional right to vote. Based on these historical events, including the horror of Bloody Sunday at the Edmund Pettus Bridge on March 7, 1965, the film celebrates the triumph of American humanity and nonviolent civil disobedience. Starring the late Yolanda King, daughter of King, the film honors King’s legacy of equality, love, change and courage in the face of bigotry, racism and hatred. In taking a child’s point of view, Burnett employs a narrative strategy common to the L.A. Rebellion. Through the eyes of an innocent young girl, we learn that the fight for freedom demands faith and fortitude, education and empathy, strength and service. A film for the whole family to reflect on not just the darkness of the past but on the eve of a new dawn in America’s history, *Selma, Lord, Selma* reminds us, as King proclaimed, that “the time is always right to do what is right.”

Samantha Sheppard

12.17.11 | 8:00 PM CLOSING NIGHT

Co-presented with the Mayme A. Clayton Library & Museum, in collaboration with the Pan African Film Festival



CLOSING NIGHT MULTIMEDIA PERFORMANCE EVENT!

This closing event includes a special presentation by Ben Caldwell of his multimedia performance work *Spaces Looking In Looking Out*, conceived in 1985 in collaboration with Roger Guenveur Smith. Performed with members of Project Blowed, and calling upon the energies of jazz, blues and hip-hop, the experience also incorporates spoken word performance and visual media (including Caldwell's own 1983 film *Babylon Is Falling*) in an explosive response to the inequities introduced by the so-called "First World."

Please note: this event will take place at the Mayme A. Clayton Library & Museum. For more information and directions to the venue, please visit www.claytonmuseum.org

Dean Teri Schwartz and the UCLA School of Theater, Film and Television warmly congratulate our cherished alumni, the filmmakers honored in the UCLA Film & Television Archive screening series

L.A. REBELLION CREATING A NEW BLACK CINEMA

Their leadership as humanistic storytellers, committed to innovation and global diversity, upholds our highest ideals and continues to inspire audiences and fellow filmmakers worldwide.



CREATING WHAT'S NEXT



L.A. REBELLION ON THE WEB

In conjunction with “L.A. Rebellion: Creating a New Black Cinema,” UCLA Film & Television Archive is launching a new area of its website devoted to L.A. Rebellion filmmakers and films. This resource features a compendium of film clips, photos, timelines and reference materials, as well as the latest news and information about the Archive’s L.A. Rebellion initiative. We invite you to explore this resource at www.cinema.ucla.edu/la-rebellion.

The L.A. Rebellion website project was made possible with support from the Getty Foundation and the California Council for the Humanities, an independent non-profit organization and a partner of the National Endowment for the Humanities. For more information, visit www.calhum.org.



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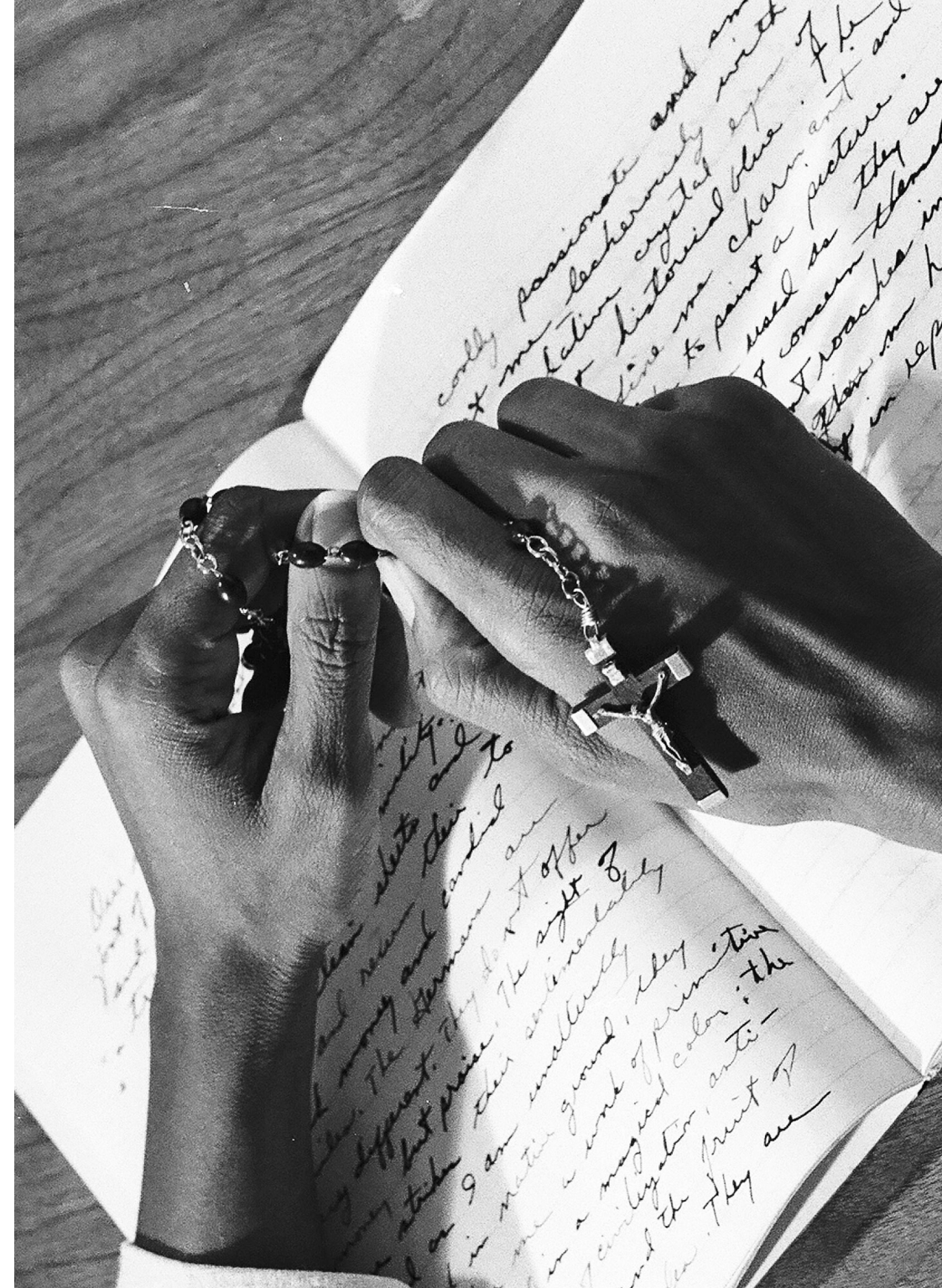
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