



BLACK FILM CENTER & ARCHIVE

February 2023 Newsletter

[Click here to see previous newsletters.](#)

Bridgett M. Davis to Visit: 25th Anniversary Screening of Naked Acts

The Black Film Center & Archive is honored to welcome back multi-talented writer, novelist, teacher, and filmmaker Bridgett M. Davis on Thurs., Feb. 23. Ms. Davis is Professor of Journalism and the Writing Professions at Baruch College, CUNY, where she instructs classes in creative writing and screenwriting. She is the author of two novels, *Shifting Through Neutral* (2004) and *Into the Go-Slow* (2014), as well as the New York Times Editors' Choice memoir *The World According to Fannie Davis: My Mother's Life in the Detroit Numbers* (2019). Her film directorial debut *Naked Acts* (1996) was a landmark feminist exploration of Black women's sexuality and body image, capturing a rich period of '90s independent cinema when increasing numbers of BIPOC film artists were expanding the range of acceptable Black screen representations.

Master Class with Bridgett M. Davis

A multi-talented writer, teacher, curator, and filmmaker, Bridgett Davis is Professor of Journalism and the Writing Professions at Baruch College, CUNY. She is the author of two novels, as well as the 2019 New York Times Editors' Choice memoir, *The World According to Fannie Davis: My Mother's Life in the Detroit Numbers*. Her critically acclaimed and award-winning directorial debut, *Naked Acts*, was a landmark feminist exploration of Black women's sexuality and body image, capturing a rich period of '90s independent cinema when increasing numbers of BIPOC film artists were expanding the range of acceptable Black screen representation. During this masterclass to celebrate the 25th anniversary of *Naked Acts*, Ms. Davis will lead participants in an intimate conversation about her writing and filmmaking techniques as well as her experiences as an independent filmmaker.



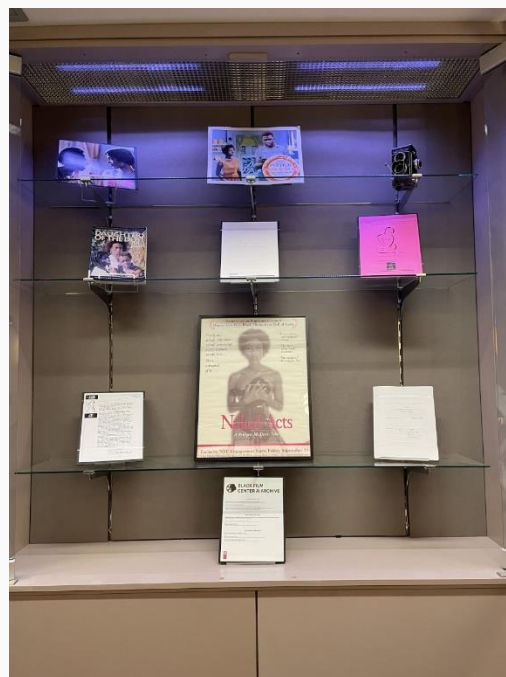
**Indiana University Bloomington
Wells Library, L1044B
Thursday, February 23rd, 2023
11:00am - 12:30pm**

BLACK FILM CENTER & ARCHIVE

Ms. Davis will lead a special Master Class from 11am-12:30pm at the BFCA office (Wells 044) on Thurs, February 23, where she will lead participants in an intimate conversation about her writing and filmmaking techniques and experiences as an independent filmmaker. The event is free and open to the public.



Long difficult to find, Davis's film *Naked Acts* will screen at the IU Cinema at 7:00pm on Thurs, February 23. A Q&A with Bridgett Davis and IU Prof. Elena Guzman will follow the show. Info and ticketing information available [here](#).



A special exhibit from the BFCA including original materials from the production of *Naked Acts* is currently available to view in the IU Cinema's basement level.

Black Filmmaker Interviews

The Black Film Center & Archive holds hundreds of rare interview recordings documenting the stories of Black film artists. In our ongoing series, "The Black Film Center & Archive Presents: Black Filmmaking Interviews," we are widely publishing one previously-unreleased interview from our collections monthly from January through July.

In honor of her upcoming visit to the BFCA, our series continues this month with a recorded conversation with Bridgett M. Davis. Recorded September 29, 2014 during a visit to IU, Ms. Davis talks about her career and the challenges of independent filmmaking with then-BFCA director Michael T. Martin and graduate assistant Noelle Griffis.

https://media.dlib.indiana.edu/media_objects/z603rk780

A full list of published interviews in this series to date is available on [our website](#).



Bridgett M. Davis courtesy photo.

Black ArchiveZ Pop-up Exhibit at the Lilly Library

On Wed, February 15, IU's Lilly Library (in partnership with the Neal-Marshall Black Culture Center) will host a Black History Month pop-up exhibit highlighting the history and legacy of the Black Panther Party. The BFCA will be contributing materials to the exhibit, with our archivists onsite to answer questions.

Exhibit exploration will run from 5:00-6:00pm at the Lilly Library's Slocum Room. A faculty talk with Dr. Jakobi Williams, chair of the Department of African American and African Diaspora Studies, will follow the exhibit from 6:00-7:00pm, proceeded by a reception at the Neal-Marshall Bridgewaters Lounge.

IU LIBRARIES CELEBRATES
BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Black ArchiveZ
Pop-up exhibit + Faculty talk
February 15

Pop-up exhibit
Lilly Library
Slocum Room, 4-7 p.m.

Lecture
Dr. Jakobi Williams
Lilly Lecture Hall, 6-7 p.m.

Reception
Neal-Marshall Black Culture Center
Bridgewaters Lounge, 7 p.m.

LIBRARIES
LILLY LIBRARY

DEPARTMENT OF AFRICAN
AMERICAN AND AFRICAN DIASPORA STUDIES

NEAL-MARSHALL BLACK CULTURE CENTER
DIVERSITY, EQUITY & MULTICULTURAL AFFAIRS

BLACK FILM
CENTER & ARCHIVE

Black Lit 2023

Archival Assistant Essence London is a featured artist in this year's Black Lit Exhibit hosted by IU Arts & Humanities Council and the Neal-Marshall Black Culture Center Library. Her poem "Suggested Questions to Ask Your Father" will be on display in Maxwell Hall, alongside the work of other writers, until March 10, 2023. If you'd like to hear her read, stop by Cook Center this Friday, February 10 at 6:00 p.m. Other presenters include Ellise Smith, PDVNCH, Maria Hamilton Abegunde, Gloria Howell, and Elena Guzman. Drinks and catering will be provided by One World Catering and Big Red Liquors.



(Photo courtesy of Essence London.)

BFCA Staff attending the Black Lit 2023 Opening Night, on February 3rd.

Again, a special reading, along with performances, will be on February 10th, at 6pm.

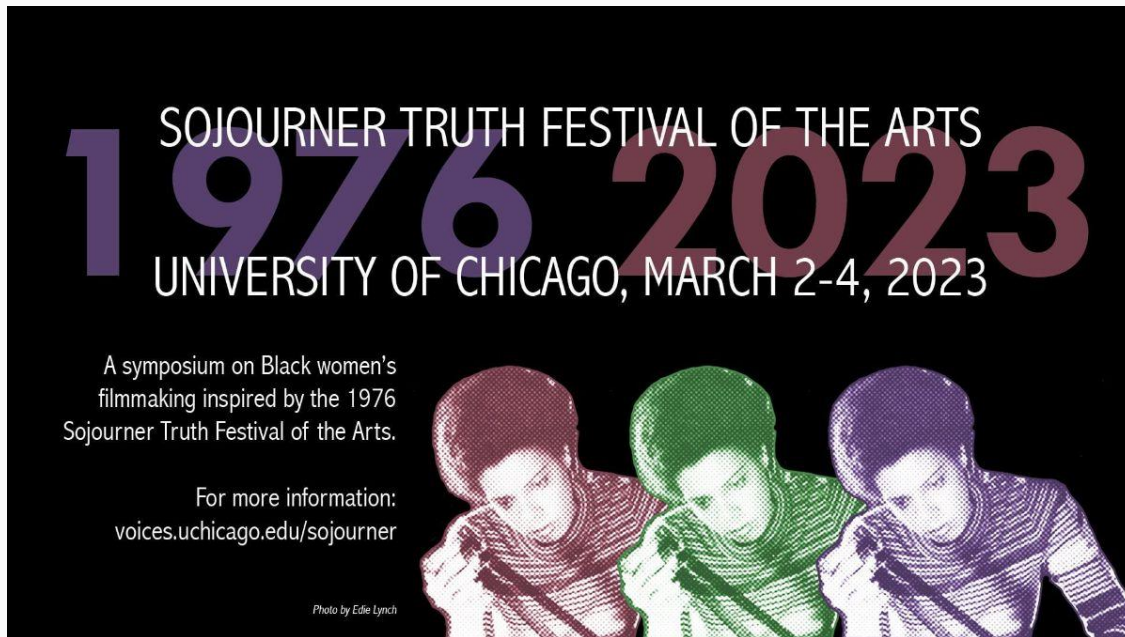


(Ja Quita Joy Roberts, BFCA Finance & Office Administrator; Eva Stuart, BFCA Archival Assistant; Photos by Ja Quita Joy Roberts.)

BFCA Co-sponsors Sojourner Truth Festival of the Arts at Univ. of Chicago

For the spring 2023 term, the BFCA is proud to cosponsor the University of Chicago's Sojourner Truth Festival of the Arts. The event commemorates an historic 1976 festival of the same name, held at New York's Women's Interart Center, that brought together pioneering groups of Black feminist artists and activists to celebrate, analyze, and advocate for the then-emerging body of work by Black women filmmakers. The first festival focused on Black feminist film issues (predating the rise in Black women filmmaking output in the 1980s and 1990s), this '76 event featured screenings, performances, lectures, and panel discussions with figures such as Camille Billops, Monica Freeman,

Madeline Anderson, Ayoka Chenzira, Carol Munday Lawrence, and many others.



The 2023 Sojourner Truth Festival includes a free 9-week "open classroom" series of screenings and discussions held in conjunction with Dr. Allyson Nadia Field's University of Chicago course on 1970s Black Women's Filmmaking. From March 2-4, the series concludes with a symposium of keynote lectures and roundtable discussions with both original festival participants and contemporary directors exploring the past, present, and future of Black women filmmaking. In addition to contributing films and research assistance for the event, the BFCA will host a workshop on archival practices led by interim director Rachael Stoeltje.

Please visit <https://voices.uchicago.edu/sojourner> for more info on this special event, including screening dates and symposium participants. Consider joining if you are in or near the Chicago area!

Franklin Hall Screenings

In celebration of Black History Month, the BFCA is programming a series of pop-up screenings of films from our collections each day in February on the 24x12 foot video wall in the Franklin Hall Commons. For screening times and more information, [click here](#).

<https://mediaschool.indiana.edu/news-events/news/item.html?n=bfca-at-franklin-hall>



FILM SCREENINGS

- FEB. 1** Tree Shade (dir. Lisa Collins, 1998)
- FEB. 2** Within Our Gates (dir. Oscar Micheaux, 1920)
- FEB. 3** A Symbol of the Unconquered (dir. Oscar Micheaux, 1920)
- FEB. 6** Killing Time/Fannie's Film (dir. Fronza Woods, 1979/1981)
- FEB. 7** The Flying Ace (dir. Richard E. Norman, 1926)
- FEB. 8** Black Theatre: The Making of a Movement (dir. Woodie King, Jr., 1978)
- FEB. 9** The Scar of Shame (dir. Frank Peregrini, 1927)
- FEB. 10** Black Press: Soldiers Without Swords (dir. Stanley Nelson, 1999)
- FEB. 13** A Pictorial Review of Idlewild (dir. Unknown, 1927)
- FEB. 14** Body and Soul (dir. Oscar Micheaux, 1925)
- FEB. 15** The Passionate Pursuits of Angela Bowen (Jennifer Abod, 2016)
- FEB. 16** Color Adjustment (dir. Marlon Riggs, 1991)
- FEB. 17** Placido, Blood of the Poet (dir. Sergio Giral, 1986)
- FEB. 20** Intermittent Delight/Split Ends, I Feel Wonderful/Me Broni Ba (dir. Akosua Adoma Owusu, 2007/2012/2009)
- FEB. 21** Mapantsula (dir. Oliver Schmitz, 1987)
- FEB. 22** Bamako Sigi-Kan (dir. Manthia Diawara, 2002)
- FEB. 23** Detroit 48202: Conversations Along a Postal Route (dir. Pam Sporn, 2018)
- FEB. 24** Siren of the Tropics (dir. Mario Nalpas, Henri Etievant, 1927)
- FEB. 27** The Rapture Family (dir. Philip Stockton, 1976)
- FEB. 28** In the Rapture (dir. Philip Stockton, 1976)



Visit the Black Film Center & Archive at Wells Library Room 044



Media Reserves Screenings

In collaboration with IU Media Services, once a month, films from the Black Film Center & Archive's collections will be shown on the large screen in Media Services' public area, conveniently located right outside our main entrance on the ground floor of the Wells Library. Stop by Media Services on Friday, Feb. 17 to see titles from the BFCA's collections!

NOW SHOWING:

*A Selection of Films from the
Black Film Center & Archive's Collections*



Summer of Soul Screening

On Saturday, January 21, the BFCA hosted a screening of Ahmir "Questlove" Thompson's Oscar-winning documentary *Summer of Soul (...Or, When the Revolution Could Not Be Televised)* (2021) in the Wells Library Screening

Room. Chronicling the 1969 Harlem Cultural Festival, the film showcases stunning footage of performances by artists like Stevie Wonder, Nina Simone, and the Staple Singers that had not been widely available for over 50 years.



(Panel discussion; Dr. & Mrs. Charlie Nelms, with Ja Quita Joy Roberts)

This screening was sponsored by the Indiana University NAACP, Monroe County NAACP, the Neal-Marshall Black Culture Center, and Department of African American and African Diaspora Studies. A discussion panel followed the screening, featuring Dr. Audrey McCluskey (former BFCA director and AAADS Professor Emerita), Dr. Olivia Ekeh (Postdoctoral Fellow at the Center for Research on Race and History), and Brother William Morris (attorney and host of the WFIU radio program Soul Kitchen).

(Event photos by Ja Quita Joy Roberts.)



(BFCA Administrator, Ja Quita Joy Roberts, along with the Neal-Marshall Black Culture Center Director, Dr. Gloria Howell & Former BFCA Director, Dr. Audrey McCluskey.)

BFCA partnered with Cicada Cinema on Screening of *Love Jones* (1997)



(BFCA Archivist, Amber Bertin; Jazz Trio, Aja Essex, Nick Romy, & Lewis Rogers.)

On February 5, the BFCA partnered with Cicada Cinema for a screening of the 1997 classic *Love Jones* at the Blockhouse Bar in downtown Bloomington, which started with a live Jazz Session! Thank you to everyone who turned out for this screening!

Cicada Cinema is a volunteer-run and community driven, local pop-up cinema with the mission to provide high-quality screenings of underrepresented cinema. If you would like to learn more about their programming, you can visit their website: cicadacinema.com.

IU Cinema Open House



(BFCA Administrator, Ja Quita Joy Roberts, with BFCA Archival Assistant, Essence London; IU Cinema & IULMIA, Noni Ford & Cicada Cinema, Aja Essex, with JJR and EL.)

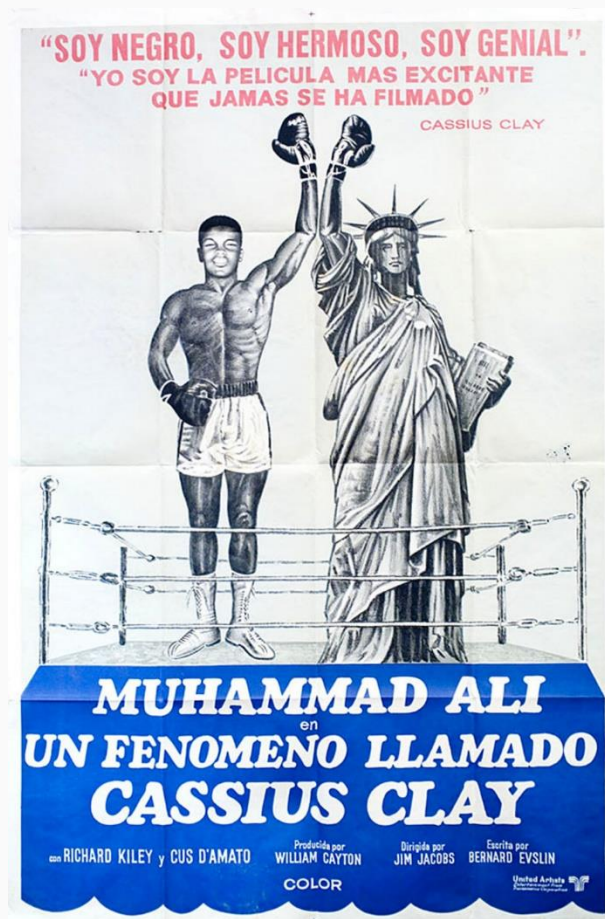
BFCA Staff attended the IU Cinema's Open House and were joined by partnering friends from IU Libraries Moving Image Archive and Cicada Cinema.

Be sure to check out their website for upcoming events and screenings!

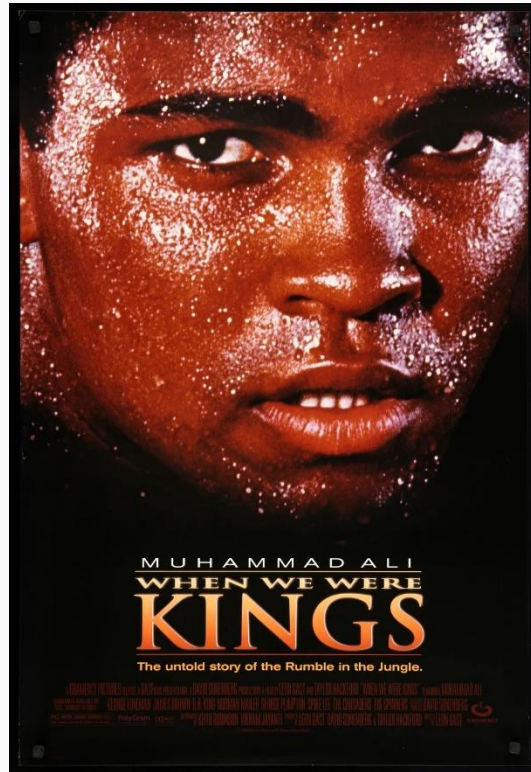
[Indiana University Cinema: Indiana University Bloomington](#)

Social Media Highlights

Muhammad Ali



On January 17, we observed the birthday of the one and only Muhammad Ali (1942-2016)! One of the 20th century's most iconic athletes and countercultural figures both in and out of the boxing ring, Ali has had considerable impact on film and media culture. Ali's boxing career has been extensively chronicled in documentaries like A.K.A. Cassius Clay (1970) and the Oscar-winning When We Were Kings (1996). Ali also took several scripted acting roles, including playing himself in The Greatest (1977), an adaptation of his own autobiography, and starring as a former slave-turned-politician in the miniseries Freedom Road (1978). Many actors, including Will Smith in Ali (2001) and Eli Goree in One Night in Miami... (2020), continue to step into Ali's larger than life shoes. "



(Posters and promo photos from the BFCA's General and Edward Mapp collections)

George Tillman, Jr.

On January 26, we wished happy birthday to filmmaker George Tillman, Jr. (born 1969)! Raised in Wisconsin and educated at Columbia College in Chicago, Tillman's industry breakthrough came with the commercial success of *Soul Food* (1997), which he wrote and directed. Since then, Tillman has dabbled in a variety of genres, helming big-budget productions like the drama *Men of Honor* (2000), biopic *Notorious* (2009), and romance *The Longest Ride*, in addition to producing Dee Rees's *Mudbound* (2017) and the *Barbershop* film series (2002-2016). A long-standing advocate for racial justice and diversity in the film industry, Tillman achieved considerable critical acclaim in 2018 for directing the Black Lives Matter-inspired YA adaptation *The Hate U Give*, one of the most prominent wide releases at the time to address police brutality.



(Photo by Randy Shropshire via Getty Images; Films from the BFCA's General Collection)



Kevin Jerome Everson

February 1 marked the birthday of multi-faceted artist, filmmaker, photographer, and painter Kevin Jerome Everson (born 1965)! A prolific chronicler of working class and Black American life, Mr. Everson has completed over 100 short and feature-length film projects that have screened at festivals and museums worldwide, including projects on automobile factories, the 1973 Tombigbee River flood in Mississippi, and the 2016 U.S. presidential election. In 2019, he visited Indiana University for a symposium about his 16mm film *Rough and Unequal*, which screened as an installation at the Grunwald Gallery. In 2021, the Black Film Center & Archive was proud to publish an edited volume through IU Press dedicated to the *Rough and Unequal* project.



(Photos of Everson are from the BFCA's Interviews and Events Collection, Sam House - The Media School, and Annette Hornischer)

Dee Rees



On February 7, we wished happy birthday to master filmmaker Dee Rees (born 1977)! A graduate of NYU's Tisch film program (where she was mentored by Spike Lee), Rees worked for nearly five years to finance and complete a feature-length version of her semi-autobiographical thesis film, *Pariah*, about a Black teenage girl's emerging lesbian identity.

The feature version of *Pariah* won universal acclaim after its 2011 debut at Sundance, quickly cementing itself as a landmark work of queer cinema. Rees followed up *Pariah* with the Emmy-nominated *Bessie* (2015) and Oscar-nominated *Mudbound* (2017). She continues to be a prominent industry advocate for greater racial and gender parity both in front of and behind the camera.



(Pariah poster from the BFCA's General Collection; photo of Ms. Rees by Neilson Barnard via Getty)

Matterport Scan - We've Gone 3D!

Can't physically visit our office? How about a virtual visit instead? The BFCA office on IU Bloomington's campus was recently given a Matterport 3D scan courtesy of the Indiana University IU3D Team. Check out this unique interactive virtual tour, featuring our space, amenities, and several featured items from our archival collections, such as the item pictured below! (Simplex 35mm Projector donated by Jon and Jennifer Vickers from the Vickers Theatre and the collection of Kenneth Marks).

Click the link below and then the play button in the bottom left corner for an automated tour or click around and explore the space at your leisure.

<https://bfca.indiana.edu/about/virtual-tour.html>



For more information about the BFCA, please visit our website www.bfca.indiana.edu. To subscribe to our blog, please visit our blog page <https://blogs.iu.edu/bfca/> and click on "Subscribe" in the bottom right of the screen. *Please consider ways to give*, to continue our efforts and supporting our *mission*. We sincerely thank you all for your support. We would not be able

to complete all of our wonderful programs and awesome events, without your help.

Warmest regards,
BFCA Interim Director and Staff



THE MEDIA SCHOOL

BLACK FILM CENTER & ARCHIVE

Indiana University Bloomington



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