September 2023 Newsletter

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Thanks for joining us at the Welcome Events!

(Dr. Novotny Lawrence and BFCA Staff)
During the last week of August, we celebrated the arrival of our new Director Dr. Novotny Lawrence with two lively welcome events. Special thanks to our caterer Chef Lee for the delicious food! The staff provided tours as visitors moved in, out, and around our office space. We also gave away Malcolm X hats and Black Filmmaker Hall of Fame sweaters, dated 1992, to those who wanted to take a little history home with them.

(Photo by McKenna Cardona, IU Media School student)

The BFCA team is excited to build partnerships and collaborate with the leaders who visited us from all over campus, the city of Bloomington, and beyond. We were thrilled to open our doors to those of you who were curious about the BFCA as well as attendees in search of community. We know the “What’s your favorite film?” question on the survey stumped a few of you, but we’re still here to listen if you settle on one!
Ja Quita Joy Roberts and Dr. Novotny Lawrence visited the massive Student Involvement Fair in Dunn Meadow, where there are hundreds of student organizations, departments, social clubs, and more each year. Their subheading reads, “Bring your curiosity. Find your community.” The Student Involvement Fair provides students with opportunities to get involved at IU,
while making meaningful connections, powerful change, and lifelong friends.

Dr. Lawrence met students that shared in the excitement of his arrival as the new director of the Black Film Center & Archive and expressed their interest in working with the BFCA in various capacities. We look forward to hosting a table at this amazing event, next year!
BFCA participates in the NMBCC's Freshman Pinning Ceremony

Dr. Novotny Lawrence and Ja Quita Joy Roberts will participate in this year's Neal-Marshall Black Culture Center Freshmen Pinning Ceremony, today at 7:30pm. The NMBCC partners with several university entities to provide academic and other resources that help students navigate the college experience, support their academic success, and enable them to overcome obstacles that might hinder their studies.

(Dr. James Wimbush, IU President Whitten, and others during a previous year's pinning ceremony.)

This ceremony welcomes first-year students into academic life at Indiana University Bloomington. It is an opportunity for students to recognize their place
within the legacy of Black academe at Indiana University, as well as provide an introduction to Black student leaders, faculty, staff, and community members.

Screening this Friday at the 2023 Black y Brown Arts Festival

The Black y Brown Arts Festival is back this weekend bolstering artists of color in the city of Bloomington. At the Kickoff on Friday, September 8th, the BFCA and Cicada Cinema are partnering to bring you two shorts *Hi De Ho* (Roy Mack 1937) and *Valerie, A Woman, An Artist, A Philosophy of Life* (Monica J. Freeman 1975), plus the animated feature *Chico and Rita* (Tony Errando, Javier Mariscal, and Fernando Trueba 2010).

Come out to the 4th Street Storefront Gallery, enjoy the films and the art on display on day one, then rest up for the market, grand stage performances, and more on day two in Switchyard Park! All ages are welcome.
September 13-16th, the Century of 16mm celebrations culminate with a conference hosted here on IU Bloomington’s campus. The conference will feature discussions of films archived in BFCA collections including Sambizanga (Sarah Maldoror 1972) and Black Economic Power (Jessie Maple 1977). Past BFCA guests, South Side Home Movie Project Archivist Justin Williams and
Guggenheim Fellow Crystal Z Campbell, will also present work!

The BFCA is excited to offer tours of our space to conference participants and to meet 16mm scholars and filmmakers from all over the world. To learn more about this IU Libraries Moving Image Archive and Media School collaboration, please visit centuryof16mm.com.

(Preparation for the Century of 16mm exhibit in the BFCA Phyllis Klotman Classroom, December 2022)
Film Screenings in BFCA's Waiting Area

Check out our new set up in the waiting area! Each morning, BFCA staff selects a film to screen throughout the day, displaying the breadth of our collection and the richness of Black film history. We've spent the day with Miss Juneteenth (Channing Godfrey Peoples 2020), Naked Acts (Bridgett M. Davis 1996), Aaron Loves Angela (Gordon Parks Jr. 1975), and more. Next time you stop by the office, you may just find us playing that one film you can recite beginning to end!

(Miss Juneteenth playing in the BFCA's waiting area)
Black Women's Research Community

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

Deadline: September 12, 2023

Use [this url](#) to access the easy application form. Who can apply: Black women graduate students in any field, pursuing any graduate program

Over the course of the 2023-2024 academic year, this IU Libraries initiative provides opportunities to foster community and increase research impact and visibility among Black graduate women at IU. The events and activities are designed to help BWRC cohort members network across specializations and raise the profile of their work. We combine learning opportunities with other events focused on enriching members' experience and relationships at IU. Cohort members learn about an array of resources at IU Libraries, build skills with research tools, and make meaningful connections. See a full list of activities and other details [here](#).
WFIU will host a lively onstage discussion with Eric Deggans, NPR's TV Critic and Media Analyst, on Wednesday, September 27 at IU Cinema. Deggans will unpack the actors’ and writers’ strike, chat about the best and worst television has to offer, and discuss what the landscape of TV will look like in the future during this onstage discussion with WFIU’s InnerStates host Alex Chambers. The evening will include a Q&A where Eric will field questions from the audience. Admission is free, but seating is limited. Reserve your seat here!
On August 21, we celebrated the birthday of pioneering documentarian, producer, and director William D. Alexander (1916-1991)! Among the earliest successful African American producers, Alexander’s production company made over a dozen all-Black features and musical shorts throughout the 1940s, in addition to 250+ “All-American News” newsreels chronicling Black servicemen, for the U.S. government during World War II. In the ’50s and ’60s, Alexander Productions won international acclaim (including a Short Film Palme d’Or from the Cannes Film Festival) for a series of documentaries on newly-decolonized African states (Alexander himself was named official filmmaker of Ethiopia and Liberia). The Black Film Center & Archive retains copies of several Alexander productions, including his newsreel work and one of his only directorial
credits, *Burlesque in Harlem* (1949), a unique filmed vaudeville show of Black comedians, singers, and striptease performers.

(Headshot from the Mary Perry Smith Collection; VHS screenshot of *Burlesque in Harlem* from the BFCA General Collection)
August 27 marked the birthday of screen and stage actor Janet MacLachlan (1933-2010)! Ms. MacLachlan began her career on stage in the 1950s/60s in venues across Harlem, L.A., and Minneapolis, and was an active member in racial equity committees. A 1964 contract with Universal Studios jumpstarted her television career, and she would eventually appear on over 75 shows, including *Star Trek* (1967), *The Mary Tyler Moore Show* (1970), and *Good Times* (1978). Rejecting roles in 1970s Blaxploitation films, MacLachlan took prominent supporting parts in dramas like *Uptight* (1968), *…tick…tick…tick* (1970), *Sounder* (1972), and *The Man* (1972), where she appeared alongside performers such as Jim Brown and James Earl Jones.
(Headshot and 16mm screenshots from *Sounder* and *The Man* from the Black Film Center & Archive’s General Collection)
Anita W. Addison

On September 6, we recognized the birthday of acclaimed television director Anita W. Addison (1952-2004)! One of the few Black women executives working in U.S. network TV in the 1990s, Addison produced shows like *Sisters* (1991) while directing episodes on a wide span of genre shows, including *Quantum Leap* (1991-92) and *ER* (1995). Deeply influenced by the radical spirit of the L.A. Rebellion during her schooling at UCLA, Addison’s directorial film work tackled issues such as sexual assault, Black feminism, and African spirituality across two shorts (1976’s *Eva’s Man* and 1984’s *Savannah*) and two TV movies (1993’s *There Are No Children Here*, starring Oprah Winfrey and Maya Angelou, and 1999’s *Deep in My Heart*). Last year, University of Iowa professor Hayley O’Malley published a lovely post through UCLA’s Film & Television Archive blog exploring Addison’s career and significance: [https://tinyurl.com/yekwczjz](https://tinyurl.com/yekwczjz)
(Headshot and VHS screenshot from Savannah [1984] from the Black Film Center & Archive’s Mary Perry Smith Collection)

In Memoriam

Ron Cephas Jones
The Black Film Center & Archive celebrates the life of veteran stage and screen actor Ron Cephas Jones (1957-2023), who passed on August 19. A regular performer both On and Off Broadway since the 1990s, Jones achieved wider notice (and 2 Emmys) for his work on the series *This Is Us* (2016-2022). In one of his first screen roles, Jones gave a nuanced portrayal of an independent director negotiating a nude scene with his lead actress in Bridgett M. Davis’s feature *Naked Acts* (1996).

(DVD screenshots from *Naked Acts* from the BFCA General Collection)

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**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