



## December 2022 Newsletter

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### Season's Greetings & Winter Break Hours

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Season's greetings to you and your families, from all of ours! Thank you for all of your love and support in 2022! We hope that you've had a great year and wish you the best into the new year, as well!

The Black Film Center & Archive will be closed to walk-in visitors and only open limited days and hours for scheduled appointments, during winter break. Please be sure to email us at [bfca@IU.edu](mailto:bfca@IU.edu) to schedule an appointment.

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## Visit from Prof. Colleen Ryan and Dr. Fred Kuwornu

We had the pleasure of meeting Dr. Fred Kuwornu, Italian-Ghanian Director, and Prof. Colleen Ryan, IU Department of French and Italian, and welcoming them to the Black Film Center & Archive. Dr. Kuwornu was in town for the screening of his film, "*Blaxploitation: 100 Years of Blackness in Italian Cinema*." Congratulations on all of your success and best wishes into the future.



## Media Services Screenings

In collaboration with 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, December 16, to see more titles from the BFCA's collections!

### NOW SHOWING:

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



**Congratulations to our Graduate,  
MarQuis Bullock,  
and to all of the other Graduates!!**

*Class of*   
**2022**



October 20th, 2022 marked the last day as an archival assistant at the Black Film Center & Archive for MarQuis Bullock, who was with us from February 2021 to October 2022. MarQuis accepted a new position as a Product and Sales Development Associate with Adam Matthew Digital, a digital publishing company and a subsidiary of SAGE publications. He will primarily work forging partnerships with archival and other information institutions to procure materials for the company's new digital collections platforms and facilitate and close sales interactions for the company's digital products. Because the position is remote, upon graduating in December, MarQuis will be making a big move to North Texas to be closer to family. Though change is inevitable, leaving the BFCA is quite bittersweet for MarQuis.

He writes of his time here at the BFCA, "This place has meant so much to me and has truly been a second home. To be able to work in and contribute to an institution that centers the work and perspective of Black people in cinema, who

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still remain marginalized in the cinema landscape, was beyond significant and I will carry the invaluable skills, experiences, and lessons with me everyone I go as I continue my career beyond IU. Working at the BFCA has without a doubt been the best part of my experience here on campus and I am forever changed by the institution and the people I feel very blessed to have worked with here. I thank them for advocating for me, making space for me to be here, and for nurturing me as a fledgling archivist. This place is and the people within it are a treasure and I hope nothing ever gets in the way of the BFCA being all that it can be and more. I will truly miss it, especially since I will have to complete the rest of my semester here and will no longer be able to use my key and come in through the staff entrance. I will always support and advocate for the BFCA as it did for me in so many ways."

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## Social Media Highlights

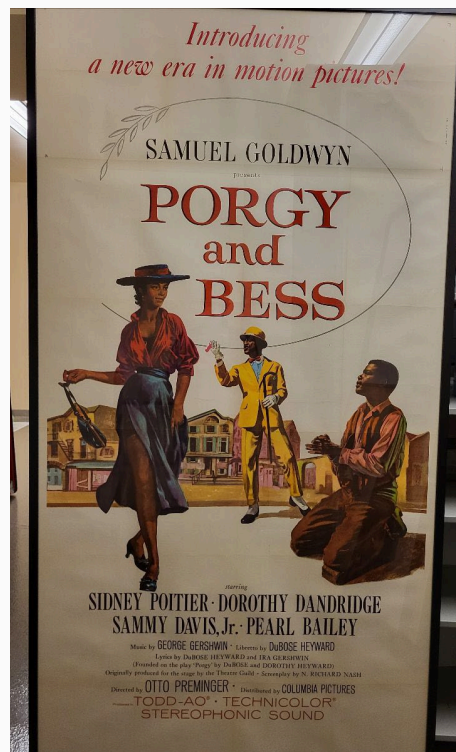
### Dorothy Dandridge





On November 9th, we wished happy birthday to the legendary Dorothy Dandridge (1922-1965)! Emerging as a singer on the nightclub circuit (both as a solo act and with her older sister Vivian), Dorothy began supplementing her income with small (often uncredited) roles in film productions and musical shorts starting in the late 1930s. Dandridge's meteoric, if brief, rise to mainstream Hollywood stardom began when she was cast in the title role of 1954's *Carmen Jones* and became the first Black performer nominated for a Best Actress Oscar.

She would appear in several other high-profile roles (like 1957's *Island in the Sun* and 1959's *Porgy and Bess*), but her film career was hampered by financial difficulties, abusive men, and industry racism (Dandridge openly refused to accept many stereotypical and minor roles after her Oscar nomination). She found a wider range of roles overseas, including in the British crime drama *Malaga* (1960), and the French-Italian slave drama *Tamango* (1958) where she broke taboos against interracial kissing. One of the earliest Black stars to be widely marketed for her beauty and sexuality, Dandridge's iconoclastic and diva-like persona has been rightly celebrated in the decades following her death for helping expand the range for acceptable Black female representation.



(Portrait of Dandridge from the Mary Perry Smith Collection; posters for *Carmen Jones*, *Tamango*, and *Porgy and Bess* from the Edward Mapp and Black Film Center & Archive's General Collections)

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## Lisa Bonet



We wished a happy birthday to actor and fashion icon Lisa Bonet (born November 16, 1967). Most recognizable to TV audiences as Denise Huxtable on *The Cosby Show* (1984-1991) and its spin-off *A Different World* (1987-1989), Ms. Bonet bravely fought against typecasting and charted her own path in the industry beyond family-friendly roles as she aged. Provocative appearances in *Rolling Stone* and *Interview* magazines and a Saturn Award-nominated role in the horror thriller *Angel Heart* (1987) attracted considerable controversy at their time. In addition to other roles in *Enemy of the State* (1998) and *High Fidelity* (2000), Ms. Bonet has also directed music videos for Angel Haze, Cree Summer, and Lenny Kravitz. Her daughter Zoë Kravitz continues her legacies in film, television, and fashion.



(Portrait of Bonet from the Black Film Center & Archive's General Collection; Color photo by Amy Sussman via Getty Images)

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## Janelle Monáe



On December 1st, we wished a happy birthday to musician, actor, activist, and all-around Electric Lady Number One, Janelle Monáe (born 1985)! Blending R&B, pop, space rock, and other musical influences with an Afrofuturist bent, Monáe's concept albums *The ArchAndroid* (2010), *The Electric Lady* (2013), and *Dirty Computer* (2018) have netted 8 Grammy nominations and considerable critical and popular acclaim. Since 2016, Monáe has expanded their talents to the silver screen, starring in *Moonlight* (2016), *Hidden Figures* (2016), *Harriet* (2019),



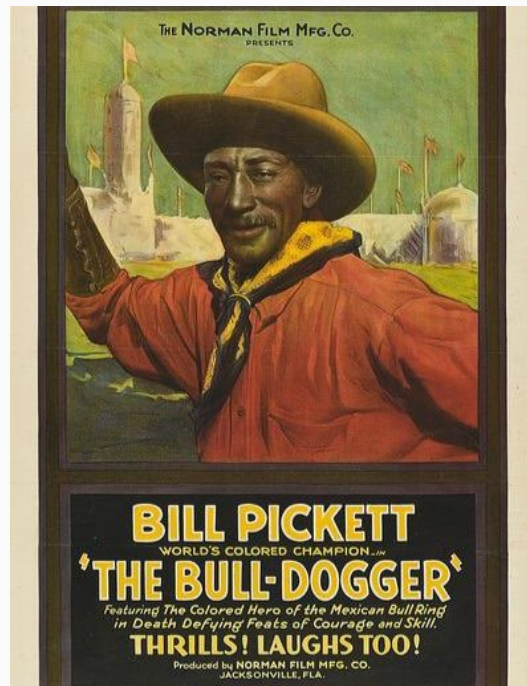
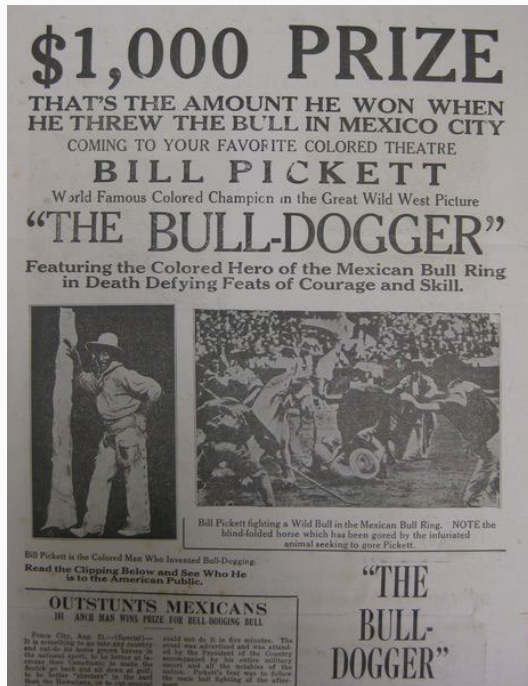
Antebellum (2020), and the upcoming sequel to Knives Out. An outspoken social justice advocate, Monáe's 2015 protest song "Say Her Name (Hell You Talmbout)" has been a frequent soundtrack to Black Lives Matter and racial justice movements, and was described by David Byrne as "one of the most moving political songs that I'd ever heard."



(Hidden Figures poster part of the Black Film Center & Archive's General Collection; Moonlight publicity photo by Araya Dohney via Getty Images)

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## Bill Pickett



On December 5th, we wished happy birthday to rodeo star and early Black film cowboy Bill Pickett (1870-1932)! Raised in Texas by his formerly enslaved father Thomas, Bill Pickett built a national name as a rodeo stunt performer and inventor of a cattle-wrestling technique called bulldogging. This caught the interest of film producer Richard E. Norman, who hired Pickett to headline the all-Black westerns *The Bull-Dogger* (1921) and *The Crimson Skull* (1922). Unfortunately, no complete print remains of either film, but surviving film fragments and publicity materials testify to the legacy of Bill Pickett as one of cinema's first Black cowboys.

(Photos from the Black Film Center & Archive's Richard E. Norman Collection)

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## Eslanda Goode Robeson

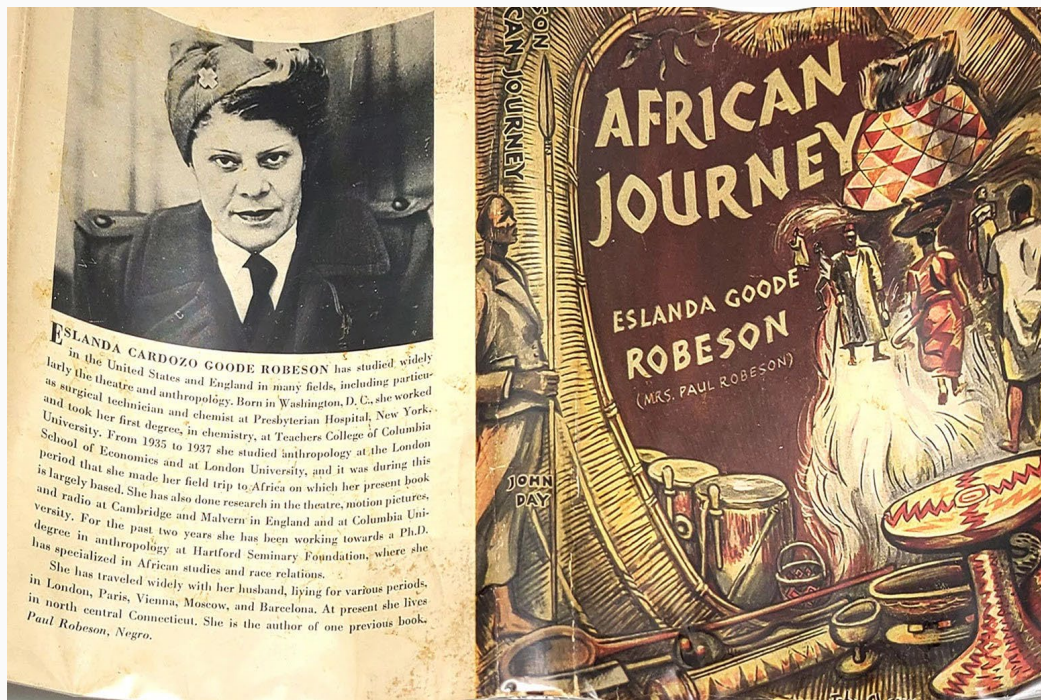


We wished a happy birthday to activist, scientist, writer, and actor Eslanda Goode Robeson (December 15, 1895-1965)! The wife, initial business manager, and first biographer of the legendary Paul Robeson, “Essie” made her own career as a lifelong activist against racism, sexism, colonialism, and Cold War-era McCarthyism. After earning a Ph.D. in anthropology in 1946, Robeson published her book *African Journey*, which broke ground not only for its Black female perspective, but also its celebration of South and East African customs. In 1930, Robeson made a rare lead acting appearance alongside her husband in the independent silent feature *Borderline*, which dared to explore then-taboo topics of Black sexuality and interracial relationships.



(Screenshots of Eslanda in *Borderline* from the Black Film Center & Archive's General Collection)



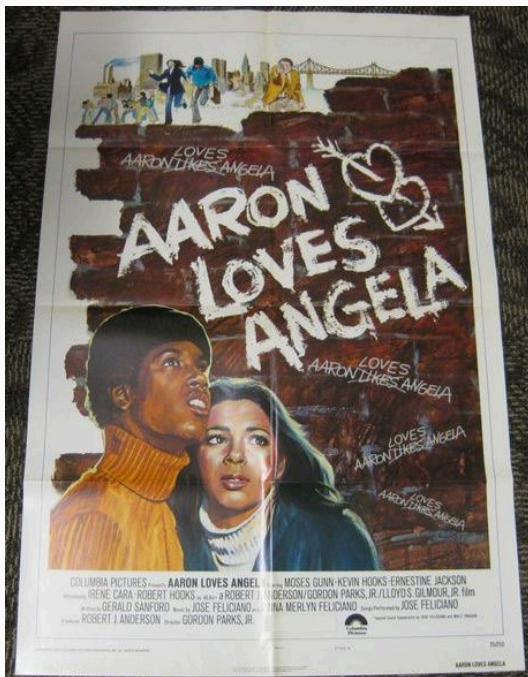


## In Rememberance

Irene Cara



The Black Film Center & Archive celebrates the life and work of Irene Cara (1959-2022). One of the most iconic voices of the early 1980s, Ms. Cara's performances of the title songs for *Fame* (1980) and *Flashdance* (1983) won two Academy Awards for Best Original Song. Prior to becoming an internationally-acclaimed musician, Ms. Cara's place in Black film history was cemented by her starring roles in beloved '70s classics like *Aaron Loves Angela* (1975) and *Sparkle* (1976). Our condolences to her loved ones.



(Portrait and poster images of Irene Cara from the Black Film Center & Archive Collection.)

## 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](http://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

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THE MEDIA SCHOOL

# BLACK FILM CENTER & ARCHIVE

Indiana University Bloomington

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