



# **BLACK FILM CENTER & ARCHIVE**

## **May 2022 Newsletter**

**The BFCA celebrated IU Day, on 4.20.2022!**





On April 20, the BFCA joined other programs across the Indiana University campuses and alumni worldwide in recognizing IU Day. In addition to open house tours of our office throughout the afternoon, we also participated in the IU Day block party by the Showalter Fountain, where we met hundreds of undergrads and passed out BFCA-branded pens, magnets, buttons, bookmarks, and other cool swag. Thank you to everyone who donated or stopped by our table to say hi! If you missed us, feel free to stop by our office at Wells 044 and pick up some swag. Additionally, you can still donate! Please click the link below, to support our mission.

## Donate to the BFCa



**Congratulations to all of the 2022 Graduates!!**

## **Jerald Harkness visit/Steppin' Screening**

On April 6, the BFCA, in partnership with the Media School, hosted a special screening of IU alumnus Jerald Harkness's 1992 documentary *Steppin'* as part of the Past and Present screening series, curated by Media School senior, Taiah Wilson. Filmed on the IU Bloomington campus, this 55-minute film examines step shows then popular among Black fraternities and sororities. It won the Gold Apple Award for the National Educational Film and Video Festival and remains a unique document not only of IU campus life in the 1990s, but also of African American music and dance history.

The screening was followed by a discussion and Q&A lead by Taiah Wilson with Mr. Harkness and Tony Favors, who appeared in the documentary. The discussion included topics such as Harkness's filmmaking practices, why he chose to document step shows, the on-going legacy of step shows, Favors's experiences making the film, and how the process of making *Steppin'* impacted their future lives and careers.

Prior to the screening, Mr. Harkness paid a return visit to the BFCa office, where he toured our facilities and reminisced about the many changes in film production since the 1990s.





## Archival Spotlight 1 of 2

**Interviews from the BFCA Interview and Events Collection are now available to IU constituents in Media Collections Online**

Starting in April, we have edited and published audio and video interviews from our Interviews and Events Collection to Media Collections Online. The interviews offer rich angles and perspectives into the landscape of cinema, particularly Black cinema, across the 20th and 21st centuries. The interviews range from conversations with well-known, pivotal figures in cinema such as groundbreaking directors Julie Dash and Spike Lee, legendary actors Ossie Davis and Ruby Dee, literary titans Toni Morrison and Maya Angelou, musician and activist Bernice Johnson Reagon, and film scholar Donald Bogle. In making the interviews accessible to the IU community, we hope they will foster deeper insights into the complex multidimensionality of Black cinema and the creatives from all backgrounds and concentrations who served on the frontlines of its creation and advocacy.

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## The BFCA's *Frame by Frame* Podcast Is Now Available!



Frame by Frame is a limited podcast series of conversations with scholars and filmmakers who visited the BFCA between 2018 and 2020 (including Numa Perrier, Philana Payton, Jessie Maple, Esther Figueroa, and TreaAndrea Russworm). Hosted by former BFCA director Dr. Terri Francis and edited/produced by BFCA graduate assistant David Carter, each episode overviews the interviewees' professional careers and published work. Available to stream for free on your podcast app of choice.

<https://bfca.indiana.edu/the-center/podcast.html>

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## Archival Spotlight 2 of 2

### **Archivist Amber Bertin attends Association of Moving Image Archivists (AMIA) Workshop**

On April 13, Archivist Amber Bertin attended a workshop hosted by the Association of Moving Image Archivists (AMIA) on applying Describing Archives: A Content Standard (DACS) and Encoded Archival Description (EAD) to audiovisual and mixed material collections. The workshop, led by Harvard Film Archive's Collections Archivist, Amy Sloper, and independent archivist, Megan McShea, offered ideas and examples for how to create better finding aids for collections containing or entirely composed of audiovisual materials. These principles and ideas for making more robust and user-focused finding aids will be employed in future BFCA descriptive resources to the benefit of all our patrons.

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## InLight Film Festival 2022



**Curated by graduate students Cole Nelson and Mallika Khanna of The Media School,**

**with support from IU Cinema and Center for Documentary Research and Practice**

InLight (Human Rights Documentary) Film Festival is an entirely student-run festival aimed at promoting interaction between students, scholars, and practitioners who all share an investment in the many struggles for human rights occurring around the world. Inaugurated in 2015, the fifth edition of ILFF, took place on April 14–16, 2022, and featured eight screenings and a series of lectures, workshops, and roundtables by filmmakers, scholars, and community members. Their mission is to promote powerful films that speak to contemporary issues and to bring the knowledge and experience of a diverse group of filmmakers to the attention of the IU and Bloomington communities. Guest filmmakers and scholars were present at each screening to participate in a post-film discussion. Additionally, Pamela Sporn who is a Bronx-based documentary filmmaker, educator, and producer of *Detroit 48202: Conversations Along a Postal Route* among other incredible films made a special visit to the BFCA, for a tour. Thanks for coming by!

Visit [InLight Film Festival's website](#) for more information on the festival.

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## Social Media Highlights

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### Boots Riley



On April 1, we recognized the 51st birthday of activist, filmmaker, and The Coup vocalist Boots Riley. Mr. Riley visited the IU campus in October 2018 as part of the Jorgensen Guest Filmmaker Series for a screening of his acclaimed debut feature *Sorry to Bother You*. As part of the visit, he sat down with IU Cinema founding director Jon Vickers to record an exclusive conversation on his influences and career.

### Final Draft: Boots Riley on Film

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## Billy Dee Williams



On April 6, we wished a happy 85th birthday today to Billy Dee Williams, star of *The Final Comedown* (1972), *Lady Sings the Blues* (1972), *Hit!* (1973), *Mahogany* (1975), and *The Empire Strikes Back* (1980). Mr. Williams was handprinted by artist Casper Banjo in 1984 during his induction into the Black Filmmakers Hall of Fame, and the BFCA retains this handprint along with dozens of other Black film artists who were inducted into the Hall of Fame from the 1970s through the 1990s. (Promotional photograph of Billy Dee Williams in *Lady Sings the Blues* from the BFCA's General Collection.)

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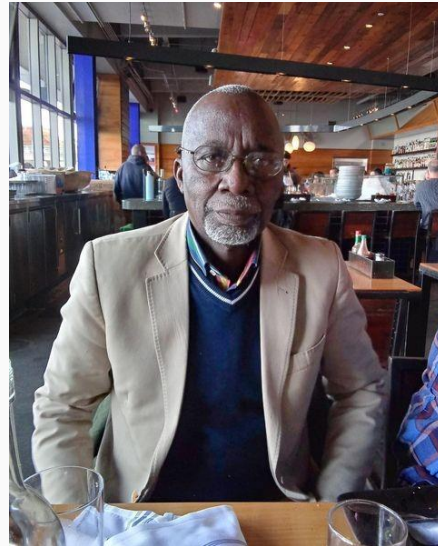
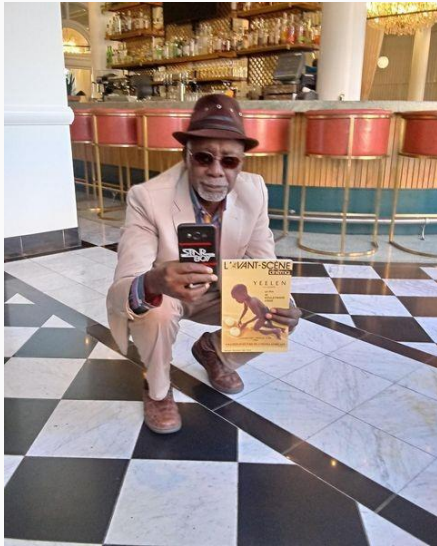
## Duane Jones



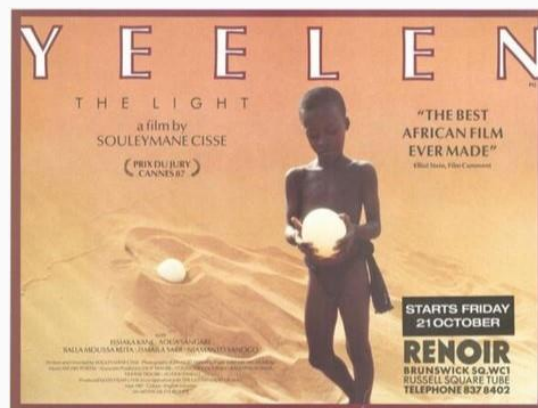
On April 11, we celebrated the birthday of actor Duane Jones (1937-1988). In addition to his groundbreaking role in *Night of the Living Dead* (1968), Mr. Jones was a respected theater director who lent his acting talents to Bill Gunn's *Ganja & Hess* (1973) and Kathleen Collins's *Losing Ground* (1982). (*Ganja & Hess* promotional photograph from the BFCA's General Collection.)

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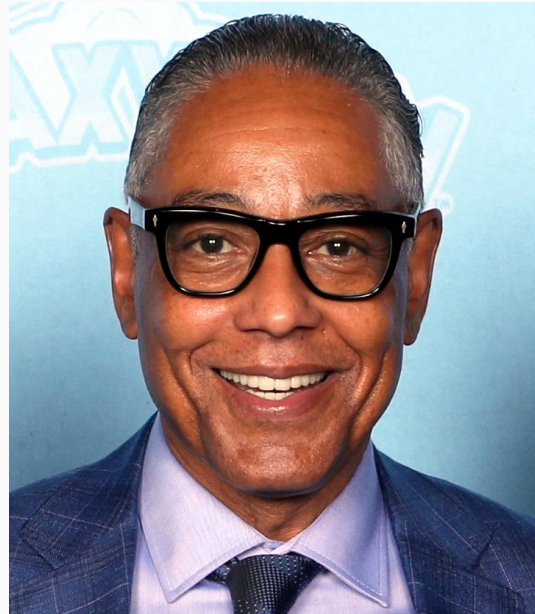
## Souleymane Cissé



On April 21, we wished a happy 82nd birthday to Malian director Souleymane Cissé, whose *Finye* (1982) and *Yeelen* (1987) are masterworks of world cinema. Appearing here as guest of BAMPFA in March 2020, where he was photographed by BFCA director Akin Adesokan. (*Yeelen* poster from the Josef Gugler African and Middle Eastern Film Collection.)



## Giancarlo Esposito



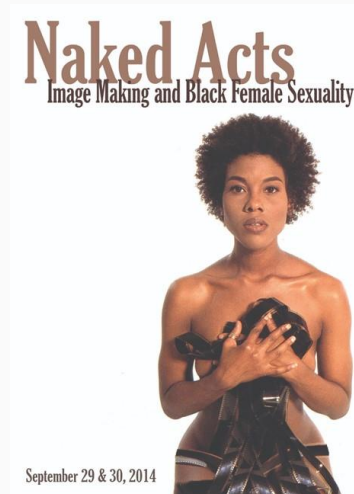
On April 26, we wished a happy 64th birthday to prolific character actor Giancarlo Esposito, born in 1958. Best known in recent years for his TV work in series like *Breaking Bad*, *Dear White People*, and *The Mandalorian*, Esposito has also had many fruitful collaborations with Spike Lee, appearing in the director's early films *School Daze* (1988), *Do the Right Thing* (1989), *Mo' Better Blues* (1990), and *Malcolm X* (1992). (Promotional photograph of Esposito in *Do the Right Thing* from the BFCA's General Collection. Headshot photo courtesy of Super Festivals.)

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## Bridgett M. Davis's film *Naked Acts* premiere



On May 5, we recognized the 26th anniversary of Bridgett M. Davis's film *Naked Acts*, which premiered at the Boston Festival of Women's Cinema in 1996. A landmark feminist exploration of Black women's sexuality and body image, the film would play to critical and popular acclaim at festivals throughout the late 90s, breaking box office records for a single-screen release at the Thalia Theater in New York City during its four-week run in 1998. Davis donated the original production elements for *Naked Acts* to the Black Film Center & Archive in 2013 and was honored with a two-day symposium at Indiana University in 2014 on the film's legacy within the history of independent African American cinema.





## Gabourey Sidibe



On May 6, we wished happy birthday to Gabourey Sidibe, born in 1983! Acclaimed for her debut performance as the title character in *Precious* (2009), a role which earned her Golden Globe and Academy Award nominations, Sidibe has also co-starred in the television series *American Horror Story* and *Empire*, as well as films such as *Yelling to the Sky* (2011), *White Bird in a Blizzard* (2014), *Come As You Are* (2019), and *Antebellum* (2020). A pencil and acrylic portrait of Sidibe in her iconic *Precious* role, painted by artist Adele Stephenson in 2012 under commission for the journal *Black Camera*, proudly hangs near the entrance of our BFCA office. [Photo credit: Earl Gibson via Getty Images, 2017]

**Reminder: We have a New Name, a New Logo,  
and a New Website!**

**Starting January 18, 2022, we are officially the Black Film Center & Archive. Our new name can be abbreviated as “BFCA”. We are also proud to debut a new logo design and a fully updated website,**



featuring a cleaner, more user-friendly interface for exploring the BFCA's history and collections. Visit us at [bfca.indiana.edu](https://bfca.indiana.edu) to check it out. An example of our new logo is in the title above. We also invite you to email us at [bfca@indiana.edu](mailto:bfca@indiana.edu) with any feedback about the new site's appearance or usability, or if you encounter a technical problem.

## 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



THE MEDIA SCHOOL

## BLACK FILM CENTER & ARCHIVE

Indiana University Bloomington



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