

TATE FILM

L.A. REBELLION: CREATING A NEW BLACK CINEMA

10–25 April 2015, Tate Modern



Haile Gerima *Child of Resistance* 1972. Courtesy of UCLA Film & Television Archive

TATE
MODERN



Ben Caldwell *Medea* 1973, film still
Courtesy of UCLA Film & Television Archive



Barbara McCullough *Shopping Bag, Spirits and Freeway Fetishes: Reflections on Ritual Space* 1981, video still.
Courtesy of UCLA Film & Television Archive

L.A. REBELLION: CREATING A NEW BLACK CINEMA

Starr Auditorium & East Room, Tate Modern
10–25 April 2015

£5 Adults, £4 Concessions per screening

Pioneering, provocative and visionary, the L.A. Rebellion films form a crucial body of work in post-war cinema. In the late 1960s a number of African and African American students entered UCLA School of Theatre, Film and Television, and from the first class through to the 1990s came to represent the first sustained undertaking to forge an alternative black cinema practice in the United States.

This season will provide the first opportunity in the UK to explore the full extent of this remarkable period and encounter the artists who pioneered counter-cultural and community based approaches to filmmaking from the 1960s to the 1990s. Drawing on the dynamic social and political climate of the period, the films emerged from the context of the black liberation and anti-Vietnam movements and in solidarity with the international Third Cinema.

Ground breaking films from Charles Burnett's *Killer of Sheep* 1977 to Haile Gerima's *Bush Mama* 1975 are unique reflections on life in the black

communities of Los Angeles and are recognised as some of the most important films of the 1970s. Other films re-worked conventions of Hollywood cinema to reflect on the black experience from the subtle dramas of Julie Dash to the explosive films of Jamaa Fanaka. Newly discovered masterpieces, from Larry Clark's *Passing Through* 1977, one of the best jazz films ever made, to Billy Woodberry's *Bless Their Little Hearts* 1984, a remarkable ensemble drama set in south Los Angeles, have been restored and recognised as landmark films.

Filmmakers such as Ben Caldwell, Larry Clark, Zeinabu irene Davis, Barbara McCullough and Bernard Nicolas pioneered experimental approaches, bridging cinema and the visual arts of the time with strong links to community organisations such as Larry Clark's Performing Arts Society of Los Angeles (PASLA) or Ben Caldwell's KAOS Network. Extending this community engagement to London the closing event of the season will feature a live performance by Ben Caldwell with Roger Guenveur Smith that has been developed in collaboration with Tate Collectives, London (p.19).

The defining achievements of this period are found not only in breakthrough feature films but in the many works proposing new forms and



Billy Woodberry *Bless Their Little Hearts* 1984, film still
Courtesy of UCLA Film & Television Archive



Zeinabu irene Davis *Cycles* 1989, film still
Courtesy of UCLA Film & Television Archive

new aesthetics that most clearly anticipate later generations of artists working across media. The seminar developed with Kodwo Eshun and Anjalika Sagar will explore how these works emerged from discussions across visual art, music and politics of the time (p.6). As influential theorist and UCLA tutor Teshome H. Gabriel argued, 'Black filmmakers break constraints and cross borders; they are not oppositional but proactive in their creative work. They create their own aesthetic terms in film discourse. Call them ethnobiographies, film essays, film poems, film lore or a combination thereof. They incorporate 'in clear rhythm with Africa' long-term memories and heritages.' [1]

At Whitney Museum of American Art during a survey of these films in 1986, the cultural critic Clyde Taylor predicted that by 'the turn of the next century, film historians will recognize that a decisive turning point in the development of black cinema took place at UCLA ... By then, persuasive definitions of black cinema will revolve around images encoded not by Hollywood, but within the self-understanding of the African-American population.' [2] From the 1965 uprising in Watts, following which UCLA started a programme to support students from minority communities to enter the film school, to the breakthrough success of Julie

Dash's *Daughters of the Dust* 1991, the first feature film by an African American woman to be commercially released in the US, this series highlights one of the most remarkable turning points in the cinema of the twentieth century.

George Clark

1. Teshome H. Gabriel, 'Thoughts on Nomadic Aesthetics and the Black Independent Cinema' in *Traces of a Journey, from Out there: Marginalization and contemporary cultures* Ed. Russell Ferguson, MIT Press, Cambridge, 1990

2. Clyde Taylor, programme notes, 'The L.A. Rebellion: A Turning Point in Black Cinema', Whitney Museum of American Art, January 3 – 19, 1986

L.A. Rebellion: Creating a New Black Cinema is a project by UCLA Film and Television archive developed as part of *Pacific Standard Time: Art in L.A. 1945–1980*. The original series took place at UCLA Film and Television archive in October – December 2011, curated by Allyson Nadia Field, Jan-Christopher Horak, Shannon Kelley and Jacqueline Stewart.

Curated at Tate Modern by George Clark,
Assistant Curator, Film, Tate Modern.

CHARLES BURNETT: KILLER OF SHEEP**Friday 10 April 19.00–21.00****KILLER OF SHEEP**

Charles Burnett, USA 1977, 35 mm, b/w, 81 min

'*Killer of Sheep* was not supposed to entertain the spectators. The film had eighty-seven scenes, which I reduced to twenty-three while shooting. I wanted to shoot enough of reality to give the feeling of its existence. I wanted to preserve a manner of living that has been destroyed. I'm not trying to be romantic about the ghetto, but wanted to remember how it was. It's changed a lot. There are things that I liked about Watts, that forged my character.'

- Charles Burnett, 'Black Independent American Cinema,' *Cinéma*, December 1980

One of the most influential independent films of the 1970s, Charles Burnett's *Killer of Sheep* is a remarkable picture of life in south Los Angeles attuned to the poetry of the everyday. Set in the ravaged post-manufacturing neighbourhood of Watts, the film captures the community worn down by unemployment and poverty yet still animated by moments of grace and tenderness. Filmed in real locations on weekends over several years, *Killer of Sheep* is built from brilliantly observed scenes of daily life featuring an expansive cast of adults and children.

Centred around Stan, played by the novelist and playwright Henry Gayle Sounders, who makes his humble living in a slaughterhouse, the film follows his attempts to improve his lot, capturing the complexity of family life, filled with frustrations and thwarted desire yet also remarkable moments of tenderness and love. To accompany this multifaceted picture of life in Watts, Burnett assembled an incredible soundtrack to celebrate the history of African American music ranging from Dinah Washington and Paul Robeson to Earth, Wind and Fire.



Charles Burnett, *Killer of Sheep* 1977 film still.
Courtesy of BFI

CHILD OF RESISTANCEHaile Gerima, USA 1972, 16mm,
b/w & colour, 36 min*

'I create characters consciously to represent certain symbolic struggles within a social context. I'm more concerned with character than gender. In *Child of Resistance*, for me, that could be a man or woman. Although the story is almost a tribute to Angela Davis, it is equally a man's experience.' - Haile Gerima, 'Radical Departures to a New Black Cinema,' *Journal of the University Film and Video Association*, 1983

Haile Gerima's *Child of Resistance* 1972 is one of the breakthrough films of the period. Drawing on the radical black power movement of the late 1960s and inspired by a dream the filmmaker had after seeing Angela Davis in handcuffs, it features a powerful performance by Barbara O. Jones as an imprisoned activist. Celebrated as a manifesto for the emerging new black cinema of the time, Gerima's film is a call to arms, balancing its radical fragmented construction with allusions to the anti-colonial writings of Frantz Fanon.

BILLY WOODBERRY: BLESS THEIR LITTLE HEARTS**Saturday 11 April 19.00–21.00****BLESS THEIR LITTLE HEARTS**Billy Woodberry, USA 1984, 35 mm, b/w, 84 min*
Preservation funded by the National Film
Preservation Foundation and the Packard
Humanities Institute

'I didn't think to make a feature. I thought I would make a 45 minute movie or something like that, based on a short story by James Baldwin or a Faulkner story... Then Charles Burnett offered me the script, the story for this movie. I didn't think of it as making a feature, I thought, well it takes as long as it takes, it involves a lot of work and you probably learn a lot of things... Because the point is do your work, do what you set out to do, do it seriously, do it thoroughly, and that's it.' - Billy Woodberry, interview with George Clark, August 2014

Bless Their Little Hearts is one of the defining films about Los Angeles; an impassioned study of the life and pressures exerted on a married couple in the working class neighbourhood of Watts. The intense performances by Kaycee Moore and Nate Hardman are captured in luminous black and white photography in a series of elegant long takes that chart with rare emotional honesty their struggle to keep their family from falling apart. Made in the same neighbourhood as *Killer of Sheep* and set just a few years later, the film depicts the drastic effects of the diminishing opportunities for the community. The result of a remarkable collaboration between its small team and lead actors, working from an original scenario by Charles Burnett, Woodberry carved out a rigorous work of unparalleled intensity and compassion.



Billy Woodberry *Bless Their Little Hearts* 1984, film still
Courtesy of UCLA Film & Television Archive

THE POCKETBOOKBilly Woodberry, USA 1980, 35 mm, b/w, 13 min*
Preservation funded in part by a grant from
the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts

'[I]n *The Pocketbook* I emphasized the fact that the woman is a worker. So I was sort of committed to trying to put these people in movies. When we came up with this story, it made sense.... it's the problems of this class of people, this kind of people that interested me.' - Billy Woodberry, Interview by Luís Mendonça, *À pala de Walsh*, March 2014

Billy Woodberry's early film *The Pocketbook* 1980 looks at the loneliness of an abandoned child who is forced to confront his situation by an older woman when he attempts to steal her purse. Adapted from the short story *Thank You, Ma'am* by poet and novelist Langston Hughes. The film's high contrast black and white photography draws on the history and legacy of socially conscious modernist photographers such as Paul Strand and Helen Levitt (to whom film is dedicated).

Presented and followed by Q&A
with Billy Woodberry.

*Prints courtesy of the UCLA Film & Television Archive.

L.A. REBELLION SEMINAR

Sunday 12 April 14.00–17.00

'Can you call us a 'New Wave'? No. We're not a single school of filmmakers sharing the same ideas. We are very independent. The only points we have in common is that we are Black and we feel close to the Third World. What is relatively new is that Blacks in greater numbers have the possibility to make movies, but everyone goes in his own direction.'

– Charles Burnett, 'Black Independent American Cinema,' *Cinéma*, December 1980

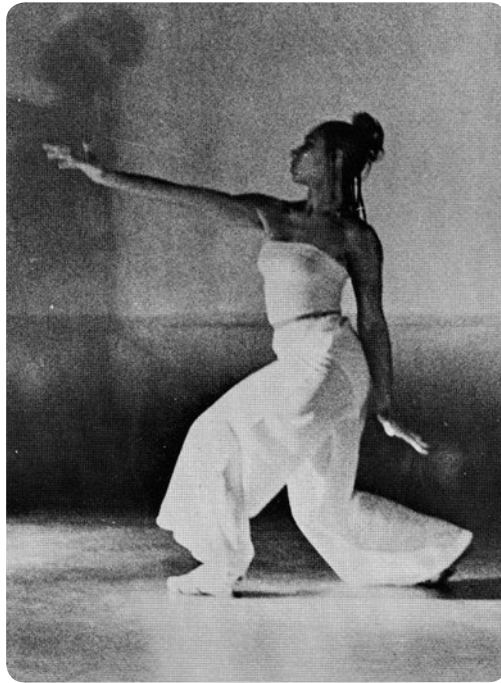
This seminar will look at the international legacy of the L.A. Rebellion films and seek to situate these works in the broader history of politics, music and visual arts. This illustrated session chaired by Kodwo Eshun and Anjalika Sagar of The Otolith Collective will include contributions from visiting filmmakers Billy Woodberry and Barbara McCullough and screenings of rare early works by Julie Dash, Haile Gerima and Barbara McCullough. Presentations by Jacqueline Stewart will draw on her research as co-curator of L.A. Rebellion project at UCLA and June Givanni will reflect on the impact of these films drawing on rare material from her Pan African Cinema Archive.

Attendees to the seminar will receive free admission to the following screening BARBARA MCCULLOUGH: SHOPPING BAG SPIRITS AND FREEWAY FETISHES at 17.30.

FOUR WOMEN

Julie Dash, USA 1975, 16mm, colour, 7 min*

'I was not free to explore the possibilities of filmmaking because the early '70s, of course, were very much the same in thought and in action as the '60s. And as students, we would submit ideas of what we would like to do. And one of mine was of the four women that I drew from Nina Simone's ballad, and which



Julie Dash *Four Women* 1975, film still
Courtesy of UCLA Film & Television Archive

I eventually did as a dance piece. I wanted to do that as early as '69, and at the Studio Museum of Harlem and at City College I was discouraged because it was considered 'fluff.' 'Why would you do that? Why would you waste *the people's* film stock for something like that?... *Four Women*? It's a great song, but, sister, you need to get out there and do something.' – Julie Dash interviewed by Houston A. Baker, Jr., 'Not Without my Daughters,' *Transition*, 1992

Julie Dash's dazzling film was developed with the dancer Linda Martina Young who performs the story of four different African American women taken from Nina Simone's iconic song. Meticulously designed and beautifully filmed in colour, *Four Women* is both a critical response to female stereotypes and one of the most brilliantly released films about dance.

WATER RITUAL #1: AN URBAN RITE OF PURIFICATION

Barbara McCullough, USA 1979, 35 mm,
b/w, 6 min*

Preservation funded with a grant from the National Film Preservation Foundation's Avant-Garde Masters Grant Program funded by The Film Foundation

'In their different ways, Dash's *Four Women* 1975 and McCullough's *Water Ritual #1: An Urban Rite of Purification* 1979 honour the interior complexity of black women, a dimension virtually denied in American cultural expression. In both cases, this interiority is all the more focused by the absence of narrative and dialogue... *Water Ritual #1*, through visual incantation, alludes to the vital sources of cultural survival and identity among African-American women in African and Third World orientations toward nature, man-made environments, magic, and art. Grounded in the concrete, it is nevertheless provocatively metaphysical.' – Clyde Taylor, programme notes, 'The L.A. Rebellion: A Turning Point in Black Cinema', Whitney Museum of American Art, January 1986

Barbara McCullough's *Water Ritual* is one of the most original films from UCLA and a landmark work blending black feminism and experimental cinema. Working in collaboration with the performer Yolanda Vidato and filmed by Ben Caldwell and Peter Blue, *Water Ritual* explores the struggle to mark and create spiritual space within the blighted urban landscapes of Los Angeles. Consisting of a series of symbolic actions drawing on African traditions and iconography, the film seeks to activate the viewer as a participant and as McCullough has stated 'extract the magical from the seemingly mundane.'



Barbara McCullough *Water Ritual #1: An Urban Rite of Purification* 1979, film still. Courtesy the artist.

HOURLASS

Haile Gerima, USA 1971, Digital video
transferred from 16mm, b/w & colour, 14 min*

'My characters must struggle, both to define themselves and to overcome their oppression and exploitation. As a result, they are transformed, because any individual is capable of doing something about his or her condition. My characters symbolically represent the larger issues that concern me.' – Haile Gerima, 'Storyteller of Struggles: An Interview with Haile Gerima', *Independent*, October 1985

Haile Gerima's first student film at ULCA reveals many themes of his later works; the awakening of black consciousness, the dialectics of liberation and anti-colonial politics. It is a symbolic rendering of the struggle of a young African American basketball player troubled by his role as entertainment for white spectators. Brilliantly editing between black and white and colour, the highly stylised film employs bold compositions featuring the red, white and blue of the American flag.

* Prints courtesy of the UCLA Film & Television Archive

BARBARA MCCULLOUGH: SHOPPING BAG SPIRITS AND FREEWAY FETISHES
Sunday 12 April 17.30–19.00

SHOPPING BAG SPIRITS AND FREEWAY FETISHES: REFLECTIONS ON RITUAL SPACE

Barbara McCullough, USA 1981, video, colour, 60 min*

Featuring: David Hammons, Betye Saar, Houston and Kinshasha Conwill, N'Senga Nengudi, K. Curtis Lyle, Ojenke, Kamaau Da'oud and Kenneth Severin

'As a film and video artist, it is my goal to utilize the technology of visual media as a means of exploring those things unique to the expression of my cultural environment yet expose that which is universal to the human condition. I aim to use the media of film and video to touch the textures and essences of those segments of society that are never considered beyond a brief stereotypic glance'. - Barbara McCullough, artists statement, 1984

Shopping Bag Spirits and Freeway Fetishes explores nine Los Angeles-based artists reflecting on ritual in their lives and art. Artist David Hammons discusses the role of chance and improvisation while working on sculpture on a waste site while N'Senga Nengudi talks about staging her performances in freeway underpasses. Spanning performance to spoken word, environmental sculpture to music, this experimental essay intercuts interviews, documentation and photographs with music seeking to adjust the criteria and language used to talk about artists of colour. Barbara McCullough was one of the key figures bridging visual arts and cinema at UCLA, experimenting with film and video to create a unique body of work fusing her interest in performance and ritual with feminist and post-colonial theory. *Shopping Bags* is a result of these varying influences whose inventive form matches its expansive and far reaching inquiry.



Elyseo J. Taylor *Black Art, Black Artists* 1971, film still.
 Courtesy of UCLA Film & Television Archive

BLACK ART, BLACK ARTISTS

Elyseo J. Taylor, USA 1971, 16mm transferred to digital video, colour, 16 min*

'When I came to Los Angeles, at that time in Hollywood there were 'race movies,' like *Hallelujah!*, *The Green Pastures*, or *Cabin in the Sky*. But I didn't know there were films directed by Blacks until people like Elyseo Taylor and Willie Bell organized a festival at the university.' - Charles Burnett, interview with Michel Cieutat & Michel Ciment, *Positif*, November 1990

Tracing the under-documented history of art made by black artists since the 19th century, this essay film explores the demands and criteria imposed on artists to conform to established tastes and histories. Featuring the artist Van Slater, the film was made by the highly influential theorist Elyseo J. Taylor, one of the first black teachers at UCLA who helped to politicise and open up the department.

Presented and followed by Q&A with Barbara McCullough.

* Prints courtesy of the UCLA Film & Television Archive

The Energetic Impulse

Even though the films made by the young filmmakers attending the School of Theater, Film and Television at University of California, Los Angeles, are rightly historicised as projects of cinematic self-determination from Hollywood and the generic satisfactions of Blaxploitation, the experiments with form and process carried out by directors such as Ben Caldwell, Larry Clark, Julie Dash, Charles Burnett, Barbara McCullough, Billy Woodberry, Haile Gerima and many others can be productively illuminated when considered with the visual arts, music and politics of the era.

Through presentations, screenings and conversations, the seminar will explore the aspirations and ambitions of a generation that set out to invent a self-conscious art-cinema. It investigates the ways in which the filmmakers, of what became known as the L.A. Rebellion, conceived of cinema, through engagements with performance, poetry, music and sculpture, that aimed to rethink the encounter with the cinema screen as a form of resistance and resilience against white supremacist fictions.

In the L.A. Rebellion, filmmakers turned to music for the possible forms of a new cinema. Films such as Julie Dash's *Four Women* 1975 and Bernard Nicolas's *Daydream Therapy*, 1977, treated Nina Simone's exquisite compositions as intimations of a future cinema. In concert, Simone would describe her song 'Four Women', 1966, as 'a picture of four different women, Negro women,' each of which 'has a different colour.' The frustrations that bear down upon the figures of Aunt Sarah, Saffronia, Sweet Thing and Peaches were personified in Dash's film as characters that performed the choreography of their encumbered lives.

As Jacqueline Stewart writes, Nicolas' *Daydream Therapy* 'connected Nina Simone's vivid 1964 rendition of 'Pirate Jenny' from Bertolt Brecht and Kurt Weill's *The Threepenny Opera* 1928, to the rise of contemporary black militancy.' [1] Simone's corruscating version of the scrubwoman Pirate Jenny's revenge fantasy seems to narrate the fate of the office cleaner of *Daydream Therapy* trapped in the black and white world of the Los Angeles office, who awakens into a dream of Third Worldist armed struggle evoked by Kwame Nkrumah's *Class Struggle in Africa* 1970, immediately recognisable to audiences of the time by its bold blue and white block colour front cover.

Like *Daydream Therapy*, Haile Gerima's first year *Hour Glass* 1971 also shifted from expressionist black and white to vivid Pan-Africanist Pop-Art while integrating music as varied as The Last Poet's stinging jeremiad, 'Niggers are scared of Revolution' 1970 stark musique concrete and 'Seize the Time' 1969 sung by Elaine Brown who was soon to become Chairman of The Black Panther Party for Self Defence

Gerima, Dash and Nicolas' experiments with colour, musicality and symbolism, like *Medea* 1973, Ben Caldwell's astonishing rapid eye montage of archival images combined with Amiri Baraka's homonymic poem articulated a cultural nationalist-formalism developed through classes taught by Elyseo J. Taylor. Taylor's film *Black Art, Black Artists*, 1971 reconstructed the forgotten histories of black fine arts in America. In his position as Professor at the School of Theater, Film and Television, Taylor had initiated programmes for engaging with young artists from Asian, Black, Latino and Native American communities that allowed the filmmakers to enter the school.



Image shows Senga Nengudi's performance *Ceremony for Freeways Fets*, featured in Barbara McCullough *Shopping Bag, Spirits and Freeway Fetishes: Reflections on Ritual Space* 1981. Photograph by Roderick Kwaku Young courtesy of Barbara McCullough

Barbara McCullough's *Shopping Bag Spirits and Freeway Fetishes: Reflections on Ritual Space*, 1981 offered a contemporary generational portrait that yields intriguing insights into the preoccupations discussed by African-American artists during the late 1970s and early 1980s.

Just three months after both *Alt*, Senga Nengudi's first solo exhibition at White Cube in Bermondsey, and David Hammons' untitled debut solo exhibition at White Cube Masons Yard, closed in January 2015, it is compelling to watch Nengudi and Hammons, alongside peers such as Betye Saar and Kinshasa and Houston Conwill defining and demonstrating their conception of art as a praxis of ritual.

McCullough's inquiry into art conceived as the performance of invented rituals is introduced by alternate scenes from *Water Ritual #1: An Urban Rite of Purification* 1979. An unnamed woman sits on derelict ground strewn with concrete

rubble. In front of her is a circle of medium sized stones, evenly spaced. She grinds a wooden stick around what looks like a coconut shell, pours the resulting powder into her hands, rubs it between her palms, pours the powder from one hand to the other, before blowing the granules into the air and repeating the action three times.

Although these 'symbolic actions' actually take place, as Jacqueline Stewart clarifies, 'in an abandoned area of Watts that had been cleared to make way for the I-105 freeway' [2], McCullough takes pains to remove all dates and names so that the desolate and dehistoricised landscape becomes a vision of what Tom Holert calls the 'desert of the political' familiar from Pasolini's *Porcile* 1969.

What heightens this geography of dispossession is the way McCullough in *Shopping Bag Spirits and Freeway Fetishes* colourised scenes from *Water Ritual No 1: An Urban Rite of Purification* 1979 so

that the original black and white footage became vivid purple and scorching red. As the film cuts to the now naked anonymous woman walking, she squats and urinates in a transgressive action of body art that is a quotidian and psychedelic act of 'water ritual' that symbolically brings the rain to the 'soul desert' evoked by Malcolm Mooney of Can in their 1970 song.

The scope and scale of *Shopping Bag Spirits and Freeway Fetishes* is summarised in its title which hybridizes the spiritual with the everyday in the 'shopping bag spirits' and syncretizes the urban with the animist in 'freeway fetishes'. The latter alludes to *Ceremony for Freeway Fets*, Senga Nengudi's first full length performance which took place under a section of the freeway near to the Los Angeles Convention Center in the south west area of downtown Los Angeles in March 1978.

As Nengudi described to Kellie Jones 'I really liked the space because there were little tiny palm trees and a lot of dirt... For me, it had the feel of what I imagined an African village to be. Because it was under the freeway, it was kind of cloistered in a sense. You could have this rural atmosphere in the midst of an urban setting.' [3] McCullough punctuates the film with edited passages from *Codona 1* and *Codona 2*, the albums recorded in September 1978 and May 1980 by Codona, the multi-instrumentalist trio led by Collin Walcott, Don Cherry and Nana Vasconcelos. In their music, style and interviews, Codona articulated an attitude of Universal Folklore that paralleled the urban ritualism valorised by Nengudi, McCullough, Betye Saar and the Conwill.

In *Shopping Bag Spirits and Freeway Fetishes* film and video meet performance, poetry, song and sculpture. What harmonises these rival media was a discourse of energetics capable of synthesising ancestralisms with Africanisms and conjoining cosmism with Third Worldisms.

Instead of talking about revolution or Black Power, the artists talk about energy as a force capable of shaping and holding space that is simultaneously psychic, aesthetic, poetic and political.

To revisit the films of the L.A. Rebellion is to be struck by the seriousness of their methods for transmitting energy, repeating ritual, maintaining space, inventing liberation and practising autonomy during the Civil Rights era of Lyndon B. Johnson, the rightwing repression of Richard Nixon to the Clinton-era deregulation and the permanent war-economy of George Bush Senior. To encounter the films made by Ben Caldwell, Larry Clark, Julie Dash, Charles Burnett, Barbara McCullough, Billy Woodberry, Haile Gerima and others is to confront the continuities and discontinuities between the futures envisioned by these films and the presences of the present.

Kodwo Eshun

1. Jacqueline Stewart, 'Defending Black Imagination: The 'L. A. Rebellion' School of Black Filmmakers' in *Now Dig This: Art & Black Los Angeles 1960-1980*, eds. Kellie Jones, Hammer Museum Delmonico Prestel, 2011, p. 47.

2. Jacqueline Stewart, 'Defending Black Imagination: The 'L. A. Rebellion' School of Black Filmmakers' in *Now Dig This: Art & Black Los Angeles 1960-1980*, eds. Kellie Jones, Hammer Museum Delmonico Prestel, 2011, p. 43.

3. Kellie Jones, 'Black West, Thoughts on Art in Los Angeles', in *New Thoughts on the Black Arts Movement*, eds. Lisa Gail Collins and Margo Natalie Crawford. Rutgers University Press, 2006, p. 64.

HAILE GERIMA: BUSH MAMA**Friday 17 April 19.00–21.00****BUSH MAMA**

Haile Gerima, USA 1975/79, 16mm, b/w, 97 min*

'[I]n *Bush Mama*, I cut from a man leaving for a job interview to a scene with him in prison. Now, one of the experiences of being Black in America is not going where you want to go, being stopped. When I used to edit my films at night at UCLA, I was always stopped by police as I passed through Beverly Hills. It is a truthful representation to cut from him leaving for the job interview to a prison scene without justifying how he got in jail.' - Haile Gerima in Tony Safford & William Triplett, 'Radical Departures to a New Black Cinema,' *Journal of the University Film and Video Association*, 1983

'Haile Gerima's *Bush Mama* is another movie about the police, but it is one of the first to show cops entirely from the other side, from the viewpoint of the brutalized, the black people of south Los Angeles, who are made to feel they live in an occupied territory... Dorothy, the *Bush Mama*, is a seer, not an actor. There is a crack in the world of appearances, and she is defenceless before a vision of everyday reality that is unbearable.' - from *Los Angeles Plays Itself*, Thom Anderson, USA 2003

Bush Mama powerfully captures the anger of America when the dream envisioned by Martin Luther King met with violent suppression and the stark reality of inner city neglect exposed by the uprising in Watts in 1965. Haile Gerima's iconic film shows the black community under siege, harassed and starved of opportunities. A powerful portrait of the political awakening of a mother struggling to survive on welfare and raise her daughter. Deftly staged within the community, *Bush Mama* draws on a range of topical events from police killings and the treatment of Vietnam veterans to the militant



Haile Gerima *Bush Mama* 1975/79, film still
Courtesy of UCLA Film & Television Archive

liberation movement in Africa. The mesmerising performance of Barbara O. Jones shows her shift from passivity to empowerment by vividly conjuring her interior world, a fractured reality filtered by memories and anxieties.

SEVERAL FRIENDS**Charles Burnett, USA 1969, 35mm, b/w, 22 min***

'I never told anyone in my neighborhood that I was taking courses to become a director. They would all have died laughing. So I went my way all the while telling people that I wanted to become a cameraman. I had written a script that was about the life of some of the young people in my neighborhood. It was called *Several Friends* and the subject was this sensation you get sometimes when you reach the point where you have the feeling that you're worthless.' - Charles Burnett, interview with Michel Cieutat & Michel Ciment, *Positif*, November 1990

Charles Burnett's first student film is an affectionate character study taking place in everyday environments and attentive to the idiosyncrasies of its cast. Made in opposition to films offering solutions to the problems of the working class, Burnett sought instead to show a slice of life in Watts attuned to the humour as much as the frustrations of the community.

LARRY CLARK: PASSING THROUGH**Saturday 18 April 16.00–18.00****PASSING THROUGH**

Larry Clark, USA 1977, 16mm, b/w & colour, 111 min*

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

'If you look at *Passing Through*, the first 15 minutes of that film is what I call Africana cinema. What African American cinema is capable of, it's a jazz cinema literally. It's a cinematic structure that is jazz. You can see for the first time in the history of film, that an African American filmmaker makes a film' - Haile Gerima in Diane D. Turner & Muata Kamdibe, 'In Search of an Africana Cinema,' *Journal of Black Studies*, 2008

'I wanted the film to be about something, not just the relationship between an old musician and a young musician... I wanted it to have some kind of political content on a number of levels. One is in terms of the struggle that black people were going through: civil rights movement, the national liberation movements, I just had to have that. We talked to Horace [Tapscott], and we talked about the problem of distribution. That was one of the subplots in the film, this whole question of music and having control of the music.' - Larry Clark, interview with Steven L. Isoardi 2000 from *The Dark Tree: Jazz and the Community Arts in Los Angeles*, 2006

Passing Through 1977 is one of the most vivid and compelling responses to African American music in cinema. Larry Clark's masterpiece proposes a unique visual language to depict the riches, rhythms and cultural importance of music featuring Eric Dolphy, Charlie Parker, John Coltrane, Sun Ra and live performances by Horace Tapscott's *Pan African People's Arkestra*.



Larry Clark *Passing Through* 1977, film still
Courtesy of UCLA Film & Television Archive

After being released from prison, the musician Eddie Warmack reconnects to the African roots of jazz, linking its liberation from the commercial music industry to the black liberation movements in Africa and America. Innovatively mixing a range of film stocks from vibrant colour to black and white, *Passing Through* riffs off the character's memories and broader histories of African exploitation. Seeking to readdress the history of post-war jazz and the legacy of many unacknowledged musicians, *Passing Through* is an incantatory reflection on the dividing line between expression and violence and the connections between music and liberation.

WORLD SAXOPHONE QUARTET**Barbara McCullough, USA 1980, digital video, colour, 4 min**

An energetic portrait of the innovative founded by free-jazz saxophonists Hamiet Bluiet, Oliver Lake, Julius Hemphill and David Murray, the group are depicted in McCullough's early video by rapidly cutting between them in concert and in conversation.

*Prints courtesy of the UCLA Film & Television Archive



Jamaa Fanaka *Welcome Home Brother Charles* 1975, film still
Courtesy of UCLA Film & Television Archive

JAMAA FANAKA:
WELCOME HOME, BROTHER CHARLES
Saturday 18 April 19.00–21.00

WELCOME HOME, BROTHER CHARLES
Jamaa Fanaka, USA 1975, 35mm, colour,
91 min*

‘[E]veryone thought I was crazy to try and do this. A feature film as a Project 2 was unheard of. I was very serious about being a student and felt very blessed and needed to take advantage of this blessing and if I didn’t I wasn’t worthy of it. Now I knew I could make the film I wanted to make without anyone telling me what to do. ... I really wanted to tackle that myth regarding the size of black man’s sexual equipment and the idea of sexual power.... Somebody’s got to take a pin and burst that balloon and that’s what I did with *Brother Charles*, which I still consider the most artistic film I ever made.’

- Jamaa Fanaka, interview with Jeff Brummett, Nerdtorius.com, 2010

‘Jamaa Fanaka, he did the *Penitentiary* series. I helped him do those things. I don’t consider those blaxploitation. It was a black man’s rendition of what he saw in that world. But anybody else who emulates that and writes

that as supposed to be our story... that reeks exploitation to me, because they’re exploiting something that they caused in the first place.’
- Ben Caldwell, Southern Oral History Program, Smithsonian Institution, 2013

Welcome Home, Brother Charles is a brutal and at times surreal allegory of endemic racism in America in the 1970s. Setting out to challenge persistent myths around black male sexuality, the film combines genre conventions with social commentary to create a highly symbolic exploration of the psycho-sexual politics of the time. Although later marketed as a Blaxploitation film (and released on video with the title *Soul Vengeance*), Fanaka’s first feature is a subversive revenge tale of an African American man humiliated and framed by the corrupt white establishment. Fanaka’s cult film plays out the revenge as a commentary on white fears of inter-racial relationships, masculine insecurity and the persistent objectification of black bodies.

DAYDREAM THERAPY

Bernard Nicolas, USA 1977, 16mm transferred to digital video, b/w & colour, 8 min*

Activist-turned-filmmaker Bernard Nicolas’s *Daydream Therapy* 1977 is a fantasy of black resistance to everyday exploitation. Structured in parallel to its striking soundtrack, the film escalates from Nina Simone’s restrained version of ‘Pirate Jenny’ to the Afrocentric free-jazz of Arche Schepp’s ‘Things Have Got to Change’. A fantastic response to everyday oppression and a militant call to arms.

HAILE GERIMA: HARVEST: 3,000 YEARS
Tuesday 21 April 18.30–21.30

HARVEST: 3,000 YEARS / MIRT SOST SHI AMIT
Haile Gerima, Ethiopia 1976, 16mm, b/w,
150 min*

‘The first film I made in Ethiopia, *Harvest: 3000 Years*, shows you the actual footprints of my youth, of where I grew up with my father and the rest of my family. It’s a small town, Gondar, and like most Ethiopian families, we had one foot in town and the other foot in rural, peasant society. ... My father was one of the only people who read and wrote, one of the few people who became a writer, a playwright, and a historian... But in terms of storytelling, my grandmother was also important, as was my mother. Where I grew up, it was around the fire that you were acculturated into storytelling.’ - Haile Gerima ‘Decolonizing the Filmic Mind,’ *CALLALOO: A Journal of African Diaspora Arts and Letters*, 2010

Harvest: 3,000 Years is an epic picture of peasant life in contemporary Ethiopia and a milestone in African cinema. Centred on farmers’ resistance to feudal land owners, the film blends oral narrative traditions with revolutionary film form. Gerima’s first feature set in Africa is a passionate and personal work, produced in the midst of the Ethiopian civil war. The film is a post-colonial allegory of class exploitation and tribute to the collective struggle for justice of an entire nation. The masterful film tells its story as if it were a documentary observing the working life of its characters. Filmed in Amharic with a local cast, the film shifts between observed scenes of the farmers’ lives to polemical depictions of corrupt colonialists and political speeches in order to tell its impassioned story of collective resistance.



Haile Gerima *Harvest: 3,000 Years / Mirt sost shi amit*, 1976, film still
Courtesy of UCLA Film & Television Archive

THE DIARY OF AN AFRICAN NUN
Julie Dash, USA 1977, 16mm transferred to digital video, b/w, 15 min*
Preservation funded in part with a grant from the National Film Preservation Foundation.

‘This particular story about a black nun in Africa shrouded in whiteness and working as a tool of the missionaries but leading a very austere, barren, tormented life was a very unique story. It had a very special quality about it and I wanted to see this particular nun come to life, I wanted to see her on the screen, I wanted to visualise her conflict and the struggle that she was going through.’
- Julie Dash, interviewed by Barbara McCullough, *The View*, UCLA student cable programme, c. 1979

Julie Dash’s early film reworks a short story by Alice Walker about a Ugandan nun’s crisis of faith to explore the divisions between culture and spirituality. Shot in stark black and white with striking compositions and an intense performance by Barbara O. Jones, it tackles the legacy of British colonialism.

* Prints courtesy of the UCLA Film & Television Archive

JULIE DASH: DAUGHTERS OF THE DUST**Friday 24 April 19.00–21.00****DAUGHTERS OF THE DUST**

Julie Dash, USA 1991, 35mm, colour, 112 min

'I want to show black families, particularly black women, as we have never seen them before. I want to touch something inside of each black person that sees it, some part of them that's never been touched before.' - Julie Dash, *The Making of Daughter of the Dust*, The New Press, 1992

'The film is about Black Americans coming into being. In a way it's about when Africans ceased to be Africans and became Americans. So as a cinematographer I started to think about how we translate that into some kind of structural filmic concern. To suggest some of the indeterminacy of who black people were at that point in the Americas we ended up using what I call declensions which are playing around with the speed... there are quite a few instances where you see people walk out at one speed and then they'll change to another speed in camera, actually slow down without the camera stopping. Not really freeing the image but arresting it and allowing people to look and then going into another state... to suggest the notion of people at this transitory state, the sense of loss, longing, memory. - Arthur Jaffa, *Black Film Bulletin*, 1993–94

Daughters of the Dust is an enchanting visual poem, an impressionistic history of the Gullah people. Descendants of slaves who lived in isolation off the Southern U.S. coast, the Gullah people maintained strong connections to African cultural and linguistic traditions. Focusing on the extended Peazant family in summer of 1902, the film explores the spiritual conflicts between different generations of women as they discuss the consequences of relocation to the mainland.



Julie Dash *Daughters of the Dust* 1991, film still
Courtesy of BFI

With cinematographer Arthur Jaffa, Dash developed a lush and experimental cinematic language to address the complexity of African culture. Told from the perspective of an unborn child, the characters are equally influenced by family as their distant ancestors. Deeply lyrical, the film doesn't shy away from the legacy of slavery and injustice yet it seeks to celebrate the persistence of African culture and the generations of woman who have and continue to act as its custodians.

CYCLES**Zeinabu Irene Davis, USA 1989, 16mm transferred to digital video, b/w, 17 min***

Drawing on Caribbean folklore, *Cycles* follows a woman awaiting her overdue period, who performs rituals of purification calling on the spirit of the Orishas (deities of the Yoruba religion). With a rich soundtrack combining Haitian singers and trumpeter Clora Bryant, the film playfully mixes still images and live action. An exuberant and playful celebration of sisterhood.

Introduced by artist and curator Barby Asante.

*Print courtesy of the UCLA Film & Television Archive

BEN CALDWELL & LARRY CLARK**Saturday 25 April 16.00–18.00**

The early works by Ben Caldwell and Larry Clark show the range of formal innovation of two of the most visionary filmmakers associated with the L.A. Rebellion. Unified by their interest in collaboration; both filmmakers developed their unique bodies of work in dialogue with their communities; Larry Clark through PASLA (The Performing Arts Society of Los Angeles) and Ben Caldwell through the ongoing KAOS network in Leimert Park.

Presented and followed by Q&A with Ben Caldwell.

MEDEA**Ben Caldwell, USA 1973 16mm transferred to digital video, colour, 7 min***

'What if I did the history of African people in like three or four minutes... and make that all the information that goes inside this Mother-figure, and then have her give birth. And, at the end of that birth, I say, 'a culture provides identity, purpose, and direction. If you know who you are, then you know what your purpose is.' - Ben Caldwell, Southern Oral History Program, Smithsonian Institution, April 2013.

'By respecting my culture's rituals, my films gain spirituality. When African artists create, they work in a special way; not only do they depict people, but they also add the spirit of their ancestor's world. This is what we called 'surrealism', and this is how my films are qualified, they are not called 'experimental.' - Ben Caldwell, 'Black Independent American Cinema', *Cinéma*, December 1980

Medea is an epic film that combines symbolic images of clouds and a pregnant woman with densely animated drawings and photographs,



Ben Caldwell *I & I: An African Allegory* 1979, film still
Courtesy of UCLA Film & Television Archive

spanning the history of African people. Featuring Amiri Baraka's polemical poem *Part of the Doctrine*, the film explores connections between race, culture and spirituality.

I & I: AN AFRICAN ALLEGORY**Ben Caldwell, USA 1979, 16mm, colour, 32 min* Preservation funded in part by a grant from the National Film Preservation Foundation**

The only thing that I wanted to say about *I and I* is first that a lot of people think it's a Rastafarian concept, it's only because that has been the most publicised view of it. It is word that has gone back as far as Sanskrit as far as Egyptian mythology. It is a concept that basically deals with a lack of division of people... In the beginning I have a poem that speaks to that, it says: 'In the beginning there was one concept and that was the concept of I. Then rose up early on the devil claimed it was you and I and from that day on there has been trouble in the world and the world has gone astray'. - Ben Caldwell, *The View*, UCLA student cable programme, c. 1979

'The distinct contribution of *I & I* to the repertory of music-based black cinema is its impact on improvisation. Still photos of urban and rural black life are interspersed among explicitly funky dramatic vignettes and



Larry Clark *As Above So Below* 1973
Courtesy of UCLA Film & Television Archive

lyrical-prophetic stagings in an order hovering between narrative closure and abstract association. One idea or image gives birth to another in the manner of an instrumental jazz soloist's far-flung, highly colored variations on a traditional blues theme.' - Clyde Taylor 'New U.S. Black Cinema' *Jump Cut*, April 1983

A veteran of the Vietnam war Caldwell looks to ancient history and culture in *I & I: An African Allegory* to explore the past unity between people brutally ruptured by the legacy of slavery, conflict and war. With this visually striking and immersive film Caldwell sought to change the dominant rhythm of cinema and express anger at the violent separation between people. As Caldwell has stated 'to me films needed to be infused with what has been called 'soul' in music.'

TAMU

Larry Clark, USA 1970, 16mm transferred to digital video, colour, 12 min*

'When we open our eyes today and look around America, we see America not through the eyes of someone who has enjoyed the fruits of Americanism. We see America through the eyes of someone who has been

the victim of Americanism. We don't see any American dream. We've experienced only the American nightmare.' - Malcolm X, 1964

Larry Clark's rarely screened film *Tamu* draws on two icons of black power: Malcolm X and Angela Davis. It is a portrait of south Los Angeles through the eyes of a young African American man and woman who we follow as they move through the city and think about racism and revolution.

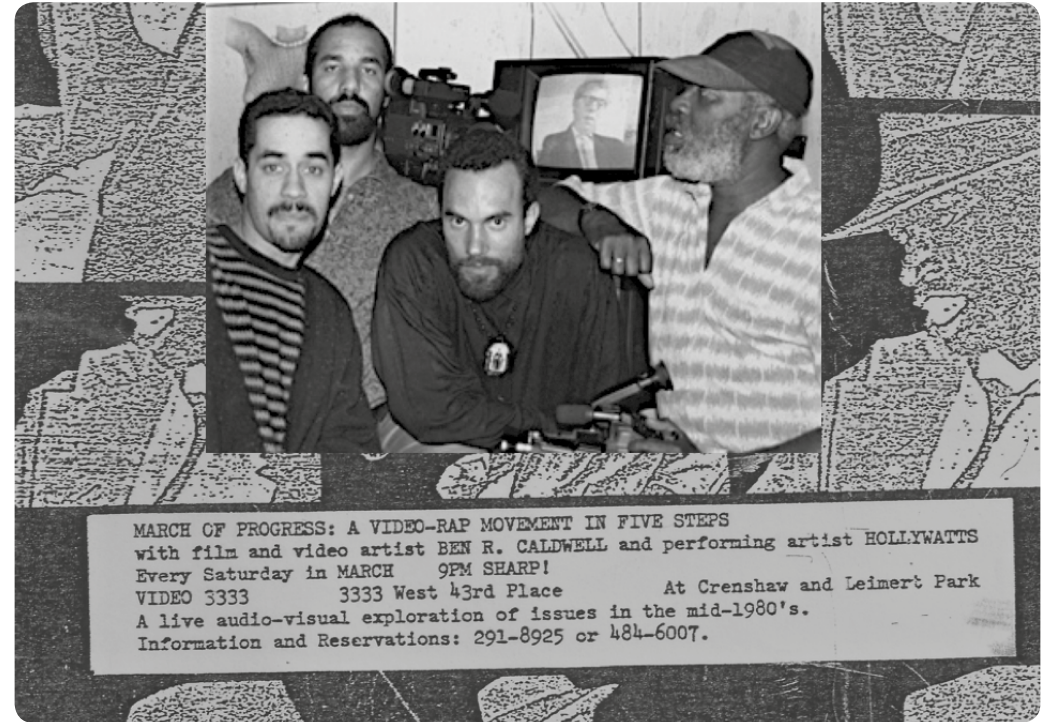
AS ABOVE, SO BELOW

Larry Clark, USA 1973, 16mm, colour, 52 min*

'[As Above, So Below is a] really raw film. One of the professors at UCLA wanted to report me to the House of Un-American Activities Committee, never mind that they had been disbanded.' - Larry Clark interview with Steven L. Isoardi 2000, *The Dark Tree: Jazz and the Community Arts in Los Angeles*, The University of California Press, 2006

Larry Clark's astonishingly potent film reveals a black revolutionary group preparing to rise up and overthrow a corrupt federal government that thrives on their oppression. Tracing the origins of this black insurgency over several decades the film follows its central character caught in what Malcolm X called 'psychological warfare', preached at by a prosaic church and corrupt capitalist society. A political critique of U.S. foreign and domestic policy, the film draws on the legacy of guerrilla warfare in Vietnam to imagine a black underground plotting to bring revolution to North America.

* Prints courtesy of the UCLA Film & Television Archive



Original poster for *March of Progress: A Video-Rap Movement in Five Steps* by Ben Caldwell and 'Hollywatts' / Roger Guenveur Smith.
Courtesy of Ben Caldwell

L.A. REBELLION: CLOSING EVENT Saturday 25 April 19.30-22.00 East Room, Tate Modern

'[V]oudou - a spell conjured to heal Africans from their long sleep, so they may once again trust their spirit into supersymmetry. Archetypal images are used for picture writing that help to untie past confusion, because as Carl Jung states in the book *Man and His Symbols* 'symbols always stand for more than their obvious and immediate meaning.' - Ben Caldwell, artist statement c. 1983

Ben Caldwell will present his expanded performance *Spaces Looking In Looking Out*, conceived in collaboration with actor Roger Guenveur Smith in 1985. Featuring live performance, spoken word and moving

images, this unique evening will draw on Caldwell's extensive archive and from his video collage *Babylon is Falling* 1983.

Caldwell and Smith have collaborated on a series of politically-charged multimedia performances since the early 1980s. This performance will speak to the current American moment and closes a thematic and tragic circle which was first drawn with their early collaborations and articulated in such titles as *March of Progress*, *Endurance* and *United States of Emergency*.

This event is realised in collaboration Tate Collectives, London and will feature additional guest performances and music.



Julie Dash *Diary of an African Nun* 1977, film still. Courtesy of UCLA Film & Television Archive

THE STRUGGLE THAT MUST BEAR ON THE MEDIUM ITSELF: WRITERS AND FILMMAKERS ON L.A. REBELLION

CLYDE TAYLOR

The Los Angeles Rebellion is recognisable in a determination to expose the irresponsibility of Hollywood portrayals of black people by developing a film language whose bold even extravagant, innovation sought filmic equivalents of black social and cultural discourse. Every code of classical cinema was rudely smashed - conventions of editing, framing, storytelling, time, and space. As a body of work it is explicitly more realistic and/or more theatrical than films coming out of the major studios. Sound tracks carry needling surprises. Characters speak easily of things never heard in popcorn movies. To this day, among the films of the black independent movement, those coming out of the Los Angeles

Rebellion stand out for the assurance with which they say 'black cinema spoken here!' [From 'The L.A. Rebellion: A Turning Point in Black Cinema', programme notes, Whitney Museum of American Art, January 3 - 19, 1986]

HAILE GERIMA

I define myself - or, I fight to define myself - within the context of the community. And the community is composed of individuals.... Ultimately, I hope that seeing my films can be therapeutic, can help an individual to participate actively in a struggle rather than to sit back passively or drop out. I hope that my films will make people think, will give them ideas, will get them to actually work for change. [From 'Storyteller of Struggles: An interview with Haile Gerima', by Rob Edelman, *Independent*, Oct 1985]

CHARLES BURNETT

When we all went to UCLA, we tried to form groups at different times to facilitate filmmaking. But it wasn't a 'school' of Black filmmakers, or a conscious effort. Things just happened. Of course, everybody was more or less rebellious at that time. It was the late sixties, the early seventies. The Viet Nam War was still being fought, and people were disillusioned. What UCLA did was to inspire a certain amount of dissension and critical analysis, a certain desire to be original. And you had to be able to put a group of people together in order to get a film done. This may have given the impression that we were involved in a 'movement.' But when we look back, we don't see it that way. We were just trying to do films at the time as well as we could. [From 'An Interview with Charles Burnett', by Bérénice Reynaud, *Black American Literature Forum*, Summer 1991]

BILLY WOODBERRY

People talk about 'rebellion,' but I say let's have some humility. In fact, the people of Watts rebelled, they rioted or they did whatever but the authorities said it was an insurrection and a rebellion; that was how they perceived them. What happened, as a consequence they created a pressure and brought attention and some people started to notice that the exclusion of this population from access to resources, to jobs, to education, to all of these things was neither desirable nor viable to continue like that. So space must be opened. It was a revolt with the suspicion that possibilities and opportunities exist. It was optimistic, and in fact, we are the beneficiaries of that. And to the extent that we had some ethical charge, or challenge, we had to be mindful of that. That was the connection to the people, to where you come from. They didn't come to the school, they came to see the movies. They came to take it back. [From interview with George Clark, August 2014]

GILLES DELEUZE

After the 1970s, black American cinema makes a return to the ghettos, returns to this side of a consciousness, and, instead of replacing a negative image of the black with a positive one, multiplies types and 'characters', and each time creates or re-creates only a small part of the image which no longer corresponds to a linkage of actions, but to shattered states of emotions or drives, expressible in pure images and sounds: the specificity of black cinema is now defined by a new form, 'the struggle that must bear on the medium itself' (Charles Burnett, Robert Gardner, Haile Gerima, Charles Lane). [From *Cinema 2, The Time Image*, The University of Minnesota Press, 1989]

JULIE DASH

What we have to say is so personal and so very different that there is no way anyone else can say it, or say it for us and when they do it is no more than an external statement made about us or about our condition. But when we say it it is very personal and it is very different. [From interview with Barbara McCullough, *The View*, UCLA student cable programme, c. 1979]



Billy Woodberry *The Pocket Book* 1980, film still. Courtesy of UCLA Film & Television Archive

THOM ANDERSEN

But there is another city... And another cinema. A city of walkers, a cinema of walking. It begins with *The Exiles* [1961] by Kent MacKenzie. You could call it neorealist... MacKenzie, who died too young after making just one more feature, was the pioneer. Fifteen years later, there was finally a neorealist movement in Los Angeles led by young black film-makers from the south: Haile Gerima from Ethiopia, Charles Burnett from Mississippi, Billy Woodberry from Texas... Neorealism also posits another kind of time, a spatialized, nonchronological time of meditation and memory.... Charles Burnett's *Killer of Sheep* seems suspended outside of time. Burnett blended together the decades of his childhood, his youth, and his adulthood, and added an idiosyncratic panorama of classic black music, from Paul Robeson to Lowell Fulsom. So a portrait of one family and their neighborhood became an epic of black endurance and heroism. [From script for *Los Angeles Plays Itself*, USA 2003]

SERGE LE PÉRON

It is useless to look for the foundations of a new school in African-American contemporary cinema. At least, judging from certain films screened at Nantes, we can speak about a movement (which is at once more problematic and more interesting): a *movement* within American cinema, a series of waves that push it, the implementation of a different cinematic language, with at times dislocations, cracks, accents... In *Bush Mama* (and also in *Street Corner Stories* and *Killer of Sheep*) there is a troubling of the rules of the cinematic game. It is not a deconstruction of narrative (on the contrary, they are stories, magnificently told) but the introduction of narratives affected by a new complexity.

[From 'Black cinema, broken cinema', *Cahiers du cinéma*, February 1980, translation by Philippe Bettinelli & Alethea Rockwell]

TESHOME H. GABRIEL

Working within the debris of culture and discourse, black independent cinema moves not in between the two opposing poles but around it towards its own axis. Here the authority of the margins is born, in those blind spaces where the hierarchy of oppositions do not hold complete sway, where language confounds itself and where liberated culture resides. In those liberated spaces outside of Hollywood and oppositional cinema, a new, newly born cinema is emerging, a cinema not-yet-here but no-longer-there, a traveling cinema - nomadic cinema. It is only in open free spaces that a new cinema can both deconstruct and construct this cinema. It is only through work of nomadic sensibility that black cinema, independent, feminist, exile and Third World cinema will capture its axis. That is why an authentic black cinema cannot be but a new, newly born, post-cinema, with new realities. We are thus witnessing a time when one cinema is dying and another one is being born in its place.

[From 'Thoughts on Nomadic Aesthetics and the Black Independent Cinema: Traces of a Journey,' *Out there: Marginalization and contemporary cultures* Ed. Russell Ferguson, MIT Press, 1990]



Image from *Bush Mama* shows the director Haile Gerima and crew when stopped by police during the film's production. Haile Gerima's *Bush Mama* 1975/1979 film still. Courtesy of UCLA Film & Television Archive

SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

Ben Caldwell is an independent filmmaker and arts educator. He first moved to Los Angeles to study film at UCLA and resided in Leimert Park, the epicenter for the African American art scene in the city. After teaching film and video at Howard University, Washington, D.C. 1981-84, Caldwell returned to Leimert Park and created an independent studio for video production and experimentation that became the KAOS Network, the only organisation of its kind in south central Los Angeles. He founded the legendary Project Blowed in 1994, longest-running hip hop collective in the U.S. that gave birth to rappers and groups such as Aceyalone, Medusa, Busdriver, Freestyle Fellowship and Jurassic Five.

June Givanni is a film curator, archivist and international consultant in African and African diaspora cinema: a leader in this sector for more than 30 years. She set up and ran the BFI's African and Caribbean Film Unit; created the Black Film Bulletin with Gaylene Gould; programmed *Planet Africa* at the Toronto International Film Festival; and is recognised as a leading expert in the field. June has worked to stage major events including the 1983 GLC *Third Eye Film Festival* and the 1995 BFI Screen Griots Programme and Conference on African cinema. June has worked as an advisor on Focus Features *Africa First* programme and programmes with international film festivals. June is currently developing an archive based on collections from decades of working in this field. junegivannifilmarchive.com

Roger Guenveur Smith is an acclaimed actor, director and writer. He adapted his Obie Award winning solo performance of *A Huey P. Newton Story* into a Peabody Award-winning film, directed by his long-time colleague Spike Lee in 2001. With Ben Caldwell, Smith created a series of multimedia presentations including *Frederick Douglass Now* 1990, played by Smith at the ICA and the seminal

Keskidee Arts Centre. His many screen credits include Spike Lee's *Do The Right Thing* 1989 and *Malcolm X* 1992 as well as roles in *Eve's Bayou* 1997, *All About The Benjamins* 2002, *American Gangster* 2007, and the HBO series *OZ* and *K Street*. For the international stage, he has also created and performed works including *Who Killed Bob Marley?*, *In Honor Of Jean-Michel Basquiat*, *Christopher Columbus* 1992, *Inside The Creole Mafia* (with Mark Broyard) and most recently *Rodney King*.

Barbara McCullough is an experimental film and video artist seeking to 'tap the spirit and richness of her community by exposing its magic, touching its textures and trampling old stereotypes while revealing the untold stories reflective of African American life.' Her film and video projects include: *Water Ritual #1: An Urban Rite of Purification*, *Shopping Bag Spirits* and *Freeway Fetishes: Reflection on Ritual Space, Fragments*, and *The World Saxophone Quartet*. Currently, she is completing a film project, *Horace Tapscott: Musical Griot*, a documentary on the musical genius, community activist and mentor to a generation of accomplished jazz musicians. A twenty-year-plus veteran of the visual effects industry, McCullough is currently Chair of the Visual Effects Department at Savannah College of Art and Design – SCAD.

Jacqueline Stewart is Professor in the Department of Cinema and Media Studies at the University of Chicago. She is the author of *Migrating to the Movies: Cinema and Black Urban Modernity* (University of California Press, 2005), and her essays have appeared in *Critical Inquiry*, *Film Quarterly*, *Film History* and *The Moving Image*. She is completing a study of African American actor/writer/director Spencer Williams. She is co-curator of the L.A. Rebellion project at the UCLA Film and Television Archive. Her film work in Chicago includes founding the South Side Home Movie Project, and serving as Curator of Black Cinema House, a neighborhood-based film exhibition venue run by Theaster Gates' Rebuild Foundation.

Billy Woodberry is an independent filmmaker who has taught at the California Institute of the Arts since 1989. His feature film *Bless Their Little Hearts* 1984 won the Interfilm ecumenical jury award at the Berlin Film festival and was added to the Library of Congress' 2013 National Registry of Films. Woodberry has appeared in Charles Burnett's *When It Rains* 1995 and provided narration for Thom Andersen's *Red Hollywood* 1996 and James Benning's *Four Corners* 1998. Woodberry's two-hour video, *The Architect, the Ants, and the Bees*, was part of 'Facing the Music', a 2004 group exhibition at REDCAT gallery documenting the building of the Walt Disney Concert Hall and the transformation of downtown Los Angeles. His work has screened at the Camera Austria Symposium, Harvard Film Archive, Human Rights Watch Film Festival and Museum of Modern Art, New York.

The Otolith Collective is the name adopted by Kodwo Eshun and Anjalika Sagar of The Otolith Group for its curatorial and programming activities. Recent exhibitions co-curated by The Otolith Collective include *It took forever getting ready to exist: UIQ (the unmaking of)* by Silvia Maglioni and Graeme Thompson, The Showroom, 2015 and *On Vanishing Land* by Mark Fisher and Justin Barton, The Showroom, 2013. Recent film programmes include *Anand Patwardhan: A Cinema of Songs and People*, Tate Modern, 2013, *Peter Watkins: The Journey*, Tate Modern 2013 and the screening series *The Militant Image*, International Institute of Visual Arts, 2011-2013.

CREDITS

L.A. Rebellion: Creating a New Black Cinema is a project by UCLA Film and Television archive developed as part of *Pacific Standard Time: Art in L.A. 1945–1980*. The original series took place at UCLA Film and Television archive in October – December 2011, curated by Allyson Nadia Field,

Jan-Christopher Horak, Shannon Kelley and Jacqueline Stewart.

Curated at Tate Modern by George Clark, Assistant Curator, Film, Tate Modern.

L.A. Rebellion Seminar was developed in collaboration with The Otolith Collective. Supported using public funding by Arts Council England.

Tate Film is supported by LUMA Foundation

Booklet edited & programme notes by George Clark
Research assistance: Philippe Bettinelli, Jack Jeans & Alethea Rockwell
Tate Collectives, London: Mark Miller, Leyla Tahir & Laura Turner

Thank you:
Barby Asante, Steven Adams, Thom Andersen, Karen Alexander, BFI, Judith Bowdler, Charles Burnett, Ben Caldwell, Larry Clark, Stoffel Debuysere & Pieter-Paul Mortier (Courtsane festival), Julie Dash, Zeinabu Irene Davis, Dennis Doros (Milestone Films), Kodwo Eshun, Kristen Fitzpatrick (Women Make Movies), Haile Gerima, June Givanni, Twyla Gordon-Louis (The Gordon Family Trust), KAOS network, Andrea Lissoni, Barbara McCullough, Hansi Momodu-Gordon, Mypheduh Films, Bernard Nicolas, Morgan Quaintance, Lucas Quigley, Andy Rector, Sankofa Video & Bookstore, Anjalika Sagar, Roger Guenveur Smith, Jacqueline Stewart, Frank Tan (Third World Newsreel), Peter Taylor, Renate Taylor, Billy Woodberry & Allyson Nadia Field, Steven K. Hill, Jan-Christopher Horak, Shannon Kelley & Todd Wiener (UCLA Film & Television Archive).



Julie Dash *Daughters of the Dust* 1991, film still
Courtesy of UCLA Film & Television Archive



Charles Burnett, *Killer of Sheep* 1977 film still.
Courtesy of UCLA Film & Television Archive

SCREENING SCHEDULE

CHARLES BURNETT: KILLER OF SHEEP Friday 10 April 2015, 19.00

Haile Gerima, *Child of Resistance*,
USA 1972, 16mm, b/w & colour, 36 min

Charles Burnett, *Killer of Sheep*,
USA 1977, 35mm, b/w, 81 min

BILLY WOODBERRY: BLESS THEIR LITTLE HEARTS Saturday 11 April 2015, 19.00–21.00

Presented by Billy Woodberry

Billy Woodberry, *The Pocketbook*,
USA 1980, 35mm, b/w, 13 min

Billy Woodberry, *Bless Their Little Hearts*,
USA 1984, 35mm, b/w, 84 min

L.A. REBELLION SEMINAR Sunday 12 April 2015, 14.00–17.00

With June Givanni, Barbara McCullough,
Jacqueline Stewart and Billy Woodberry chaired
by Kodwo Eshun and Anjalika Sagar of
The Otolith Collective. Including screenings of:

Julie Dash, *Four Women*,
USA 1975, 16mm, colour, 7 min

Haile Gerima, *Hour Glass*, USA 1971, 16mm
transferred to digital video, b/w & colour, 14 min

Barbara McCullough, *Water Ritual #1: An Urban
Rite of Purification*, USA 1979, 35mm, b/w, 6min

BARBARA MCCULLOUGH: SHOPPING BAG SPIRITS AND FREEWAY FETISHES Sunday 12 April 2015, 17.30–19.00

Presented by Barbara McCullough

Elyseo J. Taylor, *Black Art, Black Artists*, USA 1971,
16mm transferred to digital video, colour, 16 min

Barbara McCullough, *Shopping Bag Spirits and
Freeway Fetishes: Reflections on Ritual
Space*, USA 1981, digital video, 60 min

HAILE GERIMA: BUSH MAMA Friday 17 April 2015, 19.00–21.00

Charles Burnett, *Several Friends*,
USA 1969, 35mm, colour, 22 min

Haile Gerima, *Bush Mama*, 1975/1979,
16mm, b/w, 97 min

LARRY CLARK: PASSING THROUGH Saturday 18 April 2015, 16.00–18.30

Barbara McCullough, *World Saxophone Quartet*,
USA 1980, video, 5 min

Larry Clark, *Passing Through*, USA 1977,
16mm, b/w & colour, 111 min



Haile Gerima *Hour Glass* 1971, film still
Courtesy of UCLA Film & Television Archive



Bernard Nicolas *Daydream Therapy* 1977, film still
Courtesy of UCLA Film & Television Archive

JAMAA FANAKA: WELCOME HOME, ROTHER CHARLES Saturday 18 April 2015, 19.00–21.00

Bernard Nicolas, *Daydream Therapy*,
USA 1977, 16mm transferred to digital video,
b/w & colour, 8 min

Jamaa Fanaka, *Welcome Home, Brother Charles*,
USA 1975, 35mm, colour, 91 min

HAILE GERIMA: HARVEST: 3,000 YEARS Tuesday 21 April 2015, 18.30–21.30

Julie Dash, *The Diary of an African Nun*, USA 1977,
16mm transferred to digital video, b/w, 15 min

Haile Gerima, *Harvest: 3,000 Years / Mirt Sost
Shi Amit*, Ethiopia 1976, 16mm, b/w, 150 min

JULIE DASH: DAUGHTERS OF THE DUST Friday 24 April 2015, 19.00–21.00

Introduced by Barby Ashante

Zeinabu Irene Davis, *Cycles*, USA 1989, 16mm
transferred to digital video, b/w, 17 min

Julie Dash, *Daughters of the Dust*, USA 1991,
35mm, colour, 112 min

BEN CALDWELL AND LARRY CLARK Saturday 25 April 2015, 16.00–18.30

Presented by Ben Caldwell

Ben Caldwell, *Medea*, USA 1973, 16mm
transferred to digital video, colour, 7 min

Ben Caldwell, *I & I: An African Allegory*,
USA 1979, 16mm, colour, 32 min

Larry Clark, *Tamu*, USA 1970,
16mm, colour, 12 min

Larry Clark, *As Above, So Below*, USA 1973,
16mm, colour, 52 min

SPECIAL EVENTS

L.A. REBELLION: CLOSING EVENT Saturday 25 April 2015, 19.30–22.00

East Room, Tate Modern

Performance by Ben Caldwell and Roger
Guenveur Smith

SPIRIT OF REBELLION 10-25 April 2015

Starr Foyer, Tate Modern

Zeinabu Irene Davis's ongoing documentary
project, *Spirit of Rebellion*, 2011- will be on display
in the Starr Foyer throughout the season.

tate.org.uk/film

Thoughts, comments, reviews?

 Tatefilm  @tatefilm

TATE
MODERN



Julie Dash *Daughters of the Dust* 1991, film still. Courtesy of UCLA Film & Television Archive