

The Museum of Modern Art

It's All in Me: Black Heroines
February 20-March 5, 2020
The Roy and Niuta Titus Theaters

Thursday, February 20

- 4:00pm *All by Myself: The Eartha Kitt Story*. 1982. USA. Directed by Christian Blackwood. 87 min.
- 7:00pm *Illusions*. 1982. USA. Directed by Julie Dash. 34 min.
- The Watermelon Woman*. 1996. Directed by and starring Cheryl Dunye. 90 min.

Friday, February 21

- 4:00pm *Nice Coloured Girls*. 1987. Australia. Directed by Tracey Moffatt. 16 min.
- Xica da Silva*. 1976. Brazil. Directed by Carlos Diegues. In Portuguese; English subtitles. 107 min.
- 7:00pm *Sambizanga*. 1972. Angola/France. Directed by Sarah Maldoror. In Portuguese; English subtitles. 102 min.

Saturday, February 22

- 1:00pm *La petite vendeuse de soleil (The Little Girl who Sold the Sun)*. 1999. Senegal. Directed by Djibril Diop Mambéty. 35 min. In French, Wolof; English subtitles. 45 min.
- Pick Up Your Feet: The Double Dutch Show*. 1981. USA. Directed by Skip Blumberg. 28 min.
- 3:30pm *Thirteen*. 1997. USA. Directed by David D. Williams. 87 min.
- 6:30pm *Support the Girls*. 2018. USA. Directed by Andrew Bujalski. 93 min.

Sunday, February 23

MoMA

1:00pm *Hair Piece: A Film for Nappyheaded People*. 1984. USA. Directed by Ayoka Chenzira. Narrated by Carol-Jean. Still photography by Ann Chapman. 10 min.

On Becoming a Woman: Mothers and Daughters Talking Together. 1987. USA. Directed by Cheryl Chisolm. With animation by Ayoka Chenzira. 90 min.

4:00pm *Inside and Out: Shorts Program 1*. Program approx. 116 min.

7:00pm *Lillian*. 1993. USA. Directed by David D. Williams. 82 min.

Monday, February 24

4:00pm *Josephine Baker Excerpts, 1925–35*. 1935. France. Uncredited. 9 min.

Zou Zou. 1934. France. Directed by Marc Allegret. In French; English subtitles. 92 min.

6:30pm *Black and Tan Fantasy*. 1929. USA. Directed by Dudley Murphy. 17 min.

One Mile from Heaven. 1937. USA. Directed by Allan Dwan. 67 min.

Tuesday, February 25

4:00pm *Laughing Gas*. 1907. USA. Directed by Edwin S. Porter. 9 min.

Gone Are the Days! 1963. USA. Directed by Nicholas Webster. Screenplay by Ossie Davis. 99 min.

7:00pm *Love as Disorder*. 1973. USA. Directed by Ben Maddow. 78 min.

Wednesday, February 26

4:00pm *Lillian*. 1993. USA. Directed by David D. Williams. 82 min.

7:30pm *All by Myself: The Eartha Kitt Story*. 1982. USA. Directed by Christian Blackwood. 87 min.

Thursday, February 27

4:00pm *Deafman Glance*. 1981. USA. Directed by Robert Wilson. 27 min.

Night of the Cobra Woman. 1971. USA/Philippines. Directed by Andrew Meyer. 85 min.

6:30pm *Each a Poem, Whether Told or Not: Shorts Program 2.* Program approx. 93 min.

Friday, February 28

4:00pm *Inside and Out: Shorts Program 1.* Program approx. 116 min.

7:00pm *Deafman Glance.* 1981. USA. Directed by Robert Wilson. 27 min.

Night of the Cobra Woman. 1971. USA/Philippines. Directed by Andrew Meyer. 85 min.

Saturday, February 29

2:00pm *La petite vendeuse de soleil (The Little Girl who Sold the Sun).* 1999. Senegal. Directed by Djibril Diop Mambéty. 35 mm. In French, Wolof; English subtitles. 45 min.

Pick Up Your Feet: The Double Dutch Show. 1981. USA. Directed by Skip Blumberg. 28 min.

4:00pm *Hair Piece: A Film for Nappyheaded People.* 1984. USA. Directed by Ayoka Chenzira. Narrated by Carol-Jean. Still photography by Ann Chapman. 10 min.

On Becoming a Woman: Mothers and Daughters Talking Together. 1987. USA. Directed by Cheryl Chisolm. With animation by Ayoka Chenzira. 90 min.

6:30pm *Thirteen.* 1997. USA. Directed by David D. Williams. 87 min.

Sunday, March 1

1:00pm *Black and Tan Fantasy.* 1929. USA. Directed by Dudley Murphy. 17 min.

One Mile from Heaven. 1937. USA. Directed by Allan Dwan. 67 min.

3:30pm *Laughing Gas.* 1907. USA. Directed by Edwin S. Porter. 9 min.

Gone Are the Days! 1963. USA. Directed by Nicholas Webster. Screenplay by Ossie Davis. 99 min.

6:30pm *The Omega Man.* 1971. USA. Directed by Boris Sagal. 98 min.

Monday, March 2

4:30pm *Strange Days.* 1995. USA. Directed by Kathryn Bigelow. 145 min.

7:30pm *Sunshine State*. 2002. USA. Directed by John Sayles. 141 min.

Tuesday, March 3

4:00pm *Each a Poem, Whether Told or Not: Shorts Program 2*. Program approx. 93 min.

7:00pm *Nice Coloured Girls*. 1987. Australia. Directed by Tracey Moffatt. 16 min.

Xica da Silva. 1976. Brazil. Directed by Carlos Diegues. In Portuguese; English subtitles. 107 min.

Wednesday, March 4

4:00pm *Support the Girls*. 2018. USA. Directed by Andrew Bujalski. 93 min.

6:30pm *Jackie Brown*. 1997. USA. Directed by Quentin Tarantino. 154 min.

Thursday, March 5

4:30pm *Miracle in Harlem*. 1948. USA. Directed by Jack Kemp. 71 min.

Lime Kiln Club Field Day. 1913/2014. Directed by T. Hayes Hunter, Edwin Middleton. 65 min.

Film Descriptions

All by Myself: The Eartha Kitt Story. 1982. USA. Directed by Christian Blackwood. With Eartha Kitt, Kitt Shapiro. DCP. 87 min. When Eartha Kitt takes the stage in this mid-career portrait, she doesn't sing a song so much as live it. Emanating from every underlying muscle, from her brow to her pointed toes, Kitt's unrelenting physicality and undulating voice animate each performance, as she seamlessly weaves personal musings into her campy renditions. Revealing Kitt to be as comfortable schmoozing at galas in sequins and fur as she is makeup-free and sporting a disarmingly cute bullfrog T-shirt in her sunlit kitchen, this documentary follows Kitt to every corner of her professional and private life. From enduring a traumatic deep-South upbringing to being blacklisted and investigated by the FBI for fearlessly criticizing America's presence in Vietnam at a 1968 White House luncheon, Kitt exemplified her own aphorism: "If you don't want the challenge, you have no business being here." Kitt's convictions are inextricable from her charisma and sense of humor; one can't help but imagine at least a dash of mischief when she sings "I Want to be Evil" at Ronald

Reagan's inaugural ball. Though the film suggests that loneliness is an inevitable product of such singularity, Kitt seems to embrace solitude as a source of freedom, a space in which to define herself through self-invention and self-love.

Thursday, February 20, 4:00

Wednesday, February 26, 7:30

Illusions. 1982. USA. Directed by Julie Dash. With Lonette McKee, Rosanne Katon. Digital projection. 34 min. Mignon Dupree (an enthralling Lonette McKee) is an ambitious, indispensable assistant to a Hollywood studio executive during the Second World War. A fair-skinned black woman, she doesn't correct her colleagues' assumption that she is white, though she's invested less in passing than in infiltrating an industry that quite literally leaves African Americans out of the picture. While she grapples with doubts about her impact, her commitment to her cause is reinvigorated when she meets the radiant Esther (Rosanne Katon), a black singer hired to be the extraordinary, uncredited voice of a middling white actor.

The Watermelon Woman. 1996. Directed by Cheryl Dunye. With Cheryl Dunye, Lisa Marie Bronson, Guinevere Turner, Valarie Walker, Cheryl Clarke, Irene Dunye. DCP. 90 min. Young, queer, and black, Cheryl Clark, played by writer-director Cheryl Dunye, is the perfect heroine to answer the rousing final call of *Illusions*: "There are many stories to be told and many battles to begin." An aspiring filmmaker, Cheryl saturates her life with the moving image, working a day job at a Blockbuster-style video store and side-hustling as a videographer. But her passion lies in filming her own project, unearthing the story of an actor who captured Cheryl's attention playing a mammy in a plantation-set 1930s drama, credited only as "Watermelon Woman." Dunye's inspired synthesis of documentary and narrative form pieces together the life of a forgotten artist and culminates in Cheryl's own revolutionary conclusion: Sometimes, you have to create your own history.

Thursday, February 20, 7:00

Nice Coloured Girls. 1987. Australia. Directed by Tracey Moffatt. With Gayle Mabo, Cheryl Pitt, Janelle Court, Fiona George. 16mm. 16 min. Through allegory, experimental techniques, and a witty use of voice-over, artist Tracey Moffatt subverts the colonial gaze in this short about three young Australian Aboriginal women out on the town with a "captain."

Xica da Silva. 1976. Brazil. Directed by Carlos Diegues. With Zezé Motta, Walmor Chagas, Altair Lima, Elke Wonder, Stepan Nercessian, Rodolfo Arena, Jose Wilker. In Portuguese; English subtitles. 107 min. Renowned singer and actor Zezé Motta became Brazilian cinema's first black female lead in the breakout role of Xica. Based on the life of the legendary Francisca da Silva, *Xica da Silva* offers a controversial but celebrated account of the pivotal transition in her life from slave to one of the richest Brazilians of the 18th century. Among Cinema Novo pioneer Carlos Diegues's most successful films, it imagines Xica's unprecedented rise, the historical record of which was largely destroyed by her townspeople who burned documents related to her. Made during the most difficult period of military rule in Brazil, this contentious sendup of colonialism drew audiences of millions upon its release, while it attracted criticism for its portrayal of Xica as a sexual being. Diegues and Motta bring to life a complex character who, understanding her perceived value to be solely as a physical object, cleverly exploits her appeal to orchestrate her sale to a Portuguese diamond miner she believes will grant her freedom. Both Xica's fearlessness and her missteps

are vividly rendered, as the film navigates her newly gained power and assimilation into white society.

Friday, February 21, 4:00

Tuesday, March 3, 7:00

Sambizanga. 1972. Angola/France. Directed by Sarah Maldoror. With Elisa Andrade, Domingos de Oliveira. 16mm. In Portuguese; English subtitles. 102 min. Based on *The Real Life of Domingos Xavier*, a novella about a political prisoner's brutalization during the Angolan revolution, Sarah Maldoror's *Sambizanga* is a groundbreaking drama focused on the arduous struggle of Domingos's wife Maria, whom he has kept in the dark about his activism. After Domingos's kidnapping, Maria bravely searches for him on foot, with their baby on her back, pressing on to preserve their family. The breadth of Maria's emotions are viscerally expressed by Cape Verdean economist and actor Elisa Andrade (who also appeared in Maldoror's 1969 short *Monagambée*, an anti-colonial documentary filmed in Algiers). Together, Andrade and Maldoror make Maria a symbol of the emerging consciousness of the Angolan people, and, specifically, of women's critical role in the revolution. Maldoror, who co-wrote the screenplay with her husband, Mário Pinto de Andrade, a prominent leader of the People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola, said of the film, "What I wanted to show in *Sambizanga* is the aloneness of a woman and the time it takes to march...." Winner of the Tanit d'or at the 1972 Carthage Film Festival.

Friday, February 21, 7:00

La petite vendeuse de soleil (The Little Girl who Sold the Sun). 1999. Senegal. Directed by Djibril Diop Mambéty. With Lissa Balera. 35mm. In French, Wolof; English subtitles. 45 min. Brave and determined Sili Laam, vibrantly portrayed by then 12-year-old Senegalese actor Lissa Balera, sells the *Sun* newspaper, a job usually undertaken by the local boys, to help support her family. She succeeds, unhindered by a dependence on crutches, upsetting the boys who threaten her and wish for her failure, and shining in the face of their opposition. This love letter to Dakar's street children is the second installment in an unfinished trilogy of dramatic shorts titled *Tales of Ordinary People*, and was the final film made by celebrated director Djibril Diop Mambéty. Special thanks to Metrograph Pictures.

Pick Up Your Feet: The Double Dutch Show. 1981. USA. Directed by Skip Blumberg. With the Fantastic Four, Double Dutch Tigers, Jumping Joints. Digital projection. 28 min. Shot and edited by prolific video pioneer Skip Blumberg, *Pick Up Your Feet* is a spunky, riveting document of the World Invitational Double Dutch Championship for junior-high schoolers, held at Lincoln Center in 1981. Blumberg's interviews with the African-American jump-ropers and their parents detail the pressures and pitfalls of athletic success in Koch-era New York. From endless practice drills through the final showdown, the documentary assumes the character of an Olympian drama, with milliseconds making the difference between bitter defeat and eternal victory.

Saturday, February 22, 1:00

Saturday, February 29, 2:00

Thirteen. 1997. USA. Directed by David D. Williams. With Wilhamenia Dickens, Lillian Folley. 16mm. 87 min. What begins as the fraught tale of a runaway's disappearance evolves into an unexpectedly compassionate story about Nina, a 13-year-old girl who, while exploring independence, discovers the supportive network of her community. A rarely depicted level of trust and respect for young people permeates

these relationships, with no one batting an eye when Nina says that she left home because she “wanted to be by myself for a few.” Nina’s mother, friends, and neighbors rally around her to encourage her ambitions, specifically her precocious obsession with buying a car; to save money for it, she seeks multiple jobs, from portrait sitter to dog groomer, even interviewing at a real estate agency, where her lack of experience doesn’t hinder her resolve. Throughout her industrious pursuits, Nina comes into her own in lovingly shot scenes of daily life that reveal a tender, introspective teenager. Filmed without a script by a crew of three people over the course of a year, *Thirteen* brims with ease and intimacy. Nina’s growth is lyrically observed as the seasons change—nestling herself to rest in a pile of autumn leaves during a sojourn in the mountains or tending to an infant amid a backdrop of blooming spring flowers.

Saturday, February 22, 3:30

Saturday, Feb 29, 6:30

Support the Girls. 2018. USA. Directed by Andrew Bujalski. With Regina Hall, Shayna McHayle (aka Junglepussey), Haley Lu Richardson, AJ Michalka. DCP. 93 min. Andrew Bujalski’s rib-bruising comedy concerns a crew of waitresses at a Texas sports bar called Double Whammies (un-subtly modeled after Hooters) who find cause to reevaluate their life choices over the course of one very long day. Lisa (Regina Hall) is the put-upon manager juggling call-outs, boorish regulars, a painfully uncommunicative boss, and a long-simmering breakup with her husband— and that’s all before a man gets trapped in the restaurant’s ventilation system during an aborted robbery attempt. Anchored by a career-best performance from Hall, *Support the Girls* is that rare A-list comedy unafraid to depict what it actually takes to make a living in the service industry, counterbalancing the drudgery of work with Lisa’s seemingly inexhaustible faith that employees will make better decisions for themselves when treated with respect and dignity.

Saturday, Feb 22, 6:30

Wednesday, March 4, 4:00

Hair Piece: A Film for Nappyheaded People. 1984. USA. Directed by Ayoka Chenzira. Narrated by Carol-Jean Lewis. Still photography by Ann Chapman. 16mm. 10 min. Originally a stand-up comedy piece, this riotous, insightful satire uses animation and collage to convey the self-image predicaments black women experience when pressured to conform to Eurocentric beauty standards.

On Becoming a Woman: Mothers and Daughters Talking Together. 1987. USA. Directed by Cheryl Chisolm. With animation by Ayoka Chenzira. 16mm. 90 min. Through candid conversations filled with humor and sensitivity, this documentary produced by the National Black Women’s Health Project thoroughly fulfills its declared vision of individual and group empowerment by “actively promoting the physical, spiritual, mental and emotional wellness of this and future generations.” Filmed during multiple workshops for mothers and teenage daughters that covered topics including menstruation, sexuality, and self-acceptance, *On Becoming a Woman* succeeds not only as an educational resource but as a record of breathtaking intimacy. Communication unfolds with increasing trust as inter-generational women exchange stories about their most personal experiences seemingly for the first time. Their heroic vulnerability is captured by an attentively roving camera which, in spite of being bound to a single room, reveals an expansive range of dynamics and emotions.

Sunday, February 23, 1:00
Saturday, Feb 29, 4:00

Inside and Out: Shorts Program 1. Program approx. 116 min.

And Still I Rise. 1993. Great Britain. Directed by Ngozi Onwurah. With Suzette Llewellyn, Buchi Emecheta, Stella Dadzie, Caron Wheeler. 16mm. 30 min. Mixing interviews with academics and artists, Onwurah's documentary, an unsparing dissection of British mass culture's love-hate relationship with Black sexuality in the 1980s, traces both fear and fetishization back to the colonial past.

Your Children Come Back to You. 1979. USA. Directed by Alile Sharon Larkin. With Angela Burnett, Patricia Bentley King, Simi Nelson. 16mm. 30 min. Alongside Billy Woodberry and Charles Burnett (who serves as cinematographer on this film), Alile Sharon Larkin was a pioneering member of the filmmaking movement now referred to as the LA Rebellion. This work provides a raw, revelatory glimpse of a single mother making ends meet, seen through the eyes of her precocious daughter.

Cycles. 1989. USA. Directed by Zeinabu irene Davis. With Stephanie Ingram. 16mm. 17 min. Blending stop-motion animation, live action, and African and diaspora spirituality and folklore, this short opens a sultry, playful window into the day of a young woman anticipating her period.

The Potluck and the Passion. 1993. USA. Directed by Cheryl Dunye. With Dunye, Jen Benoit, Shelita Birchett, Pat Branch, Nora Breen, Chris Daniels. Digital projection. 17 min. Race, sexuality, and politics are all up for conversation in this experimental melodrama, which invites the viewer to sit in as a guest at a lesbian couple's one-year anniversary potluck. As the party progresses, drama ensues and, in classic Dunye fashion, the characters direct their comedic expressions straight to camera.

Killing Time. 1979. USA. Directed by Fronza Woods. 16mm. 9 min. This indelible, darkly comic short follows a woman (credited as "Sage Brush") as she runs afoul of obstacles while planning her own suicide.

Fannie's Film. 1981. USA. Directed by Fronza Woods. 16mm. 15 min. Drolly challenging the art world's disinterest in the lives of working-class black people, this documentary short profiles Fannie Dayton, an elderly woman who insists on staying financially independent from her beloved husband while making a living cleaning the studio of a Manhattan dance company.

Sunday, February 23, 4:00
Friday, February 28, 4:00

Lillian. 1993. USA. Directed by David D. Williams. With Lillian Folley, Wilhamenia Dickens. 35mm. 82 min. A dedicated foster mother to several young children and caregiver to three elderly people who reside in her Virginia home, Lillian Folley embraces the infinite responsibilities that come with caring for those at their most vulnerable. A working-class woman in her mid-50s, Lillian's endless supply of attention and love emanates from her long-time desire to have a big family. David D. Williams's docudrama invites viewers to experience his friend Lillian's busy life over the course of an ordinary day, as she does everything from brushing her granddaughter's hair while she eats her sugar-coated cereal to putting a pesky real estate agent attempting to sell her house firmly in his place. Unafraid of being

opinionated, Lillian maintains an unwavering self-assuredness and sense of humor during challenging conversations about race, faith, and parenting with her social worker, friends, and daughter. Effortlessly adjusting to situations that call for reprimands at one moment and giving comfort the next, Lillian radiates warmth and integrity, especially in her absorbing narration. In her own words, she wishes to be remembered for nothing but what she is, and the film is an affectionate portrait that renders her beautifully.

Sunday, February 23, 7:00

Wednesday, February 26, 4:00

Josephine Baker Excerpts, 1925–35. 1935. France. Uncredited. 16mm. 9 min. A brief survey of the extraordinary Josephine Baker’s signature dances.

Zou Zou. 1934. France. Directed by Marc Allégret. With Josephine Baker, Jean Gabin. In French; English subtitles. 92 min. Bitingly witty yet light of touch, Marc Allégret’s sparkling backstage drama stars the inimitable Josephine Baker as Zou Zou, a circus laundress who gets a shot at the big time when she’s called in to replace a manic diva during a stage revue. She spends her newfound money to help Jean (Jean Gabin), the “foster brother” from her childhood, whom she secretly loves, after he’s been wrongly accused of a murder—and fallen for her best friend. Whereas Baker’s live shows were scandalizing for Parisians of the 1920s, this performance serves as a testament to her spectacular talent as both dancer and comedian. *Zou Zou*’s triumph is liberating and transgressive—and damning, in hindsight, as the first leading role in a major motion picture offered to a black woman inevitably came from a European production.

Monday, February 24, 4:00

Black and Tan Fantasy. 1929. USA. Directed by Dudley Murphy. With Fredi Washington, Duke Ellington. 16mm. 17 min. In her first film role, Fredi Washington stars as a performer who saves the day for a pianist (Duke Ellington) whose instrument is about to be repossessed. Despite her heart condition, Fredi insists she is capable of making it through that night’s show so they can bring in enough money to keep the piano. A feverish dance number culminating in a sublime finale announced Washington as both a dazzling entertainer and a compelling dramatic actor.

One Mile from Heaven. 1937. USA. Directed by Allan Dwan. With Fredi Washington, Claire Trevor, Bill Robinson, Joan Carroll. 35mm. 67 min. Feisty news reporter Lucy “Tex” Warren (Claire Trevor) travels to the black neighborhood of Maple Heights after being tipped off to a sensational story. When she arrives to discover she was sent on a wild goose chase by her competitive male colleagues, she encounters Flora Jackson (Fredi Washington), an African American woman who claims to be the mother of Sunny, an extremely light-skinned child. Relentless in her belief that Flora isn’t Sunny’s biological mother, Tex goes to great lengths to pursue an investigation. Though Trevor received top billing, Washington’s stirring performance is at the film’s center, transmitting the plight of a woman whose life is unfairly upended by the media’s ruthlessness. Simultaneously, the role afforded Washington the opportunity to play a steadfast, dignified, and independent woman unburdened by stereotypes—a characterization rarely offered to black women by studios at the time. Southern distributors protested the film which, though still riddled with the flaws of its time, poignantly unravels the indefensible logic of segregation. The film industry’s

obsessive anxiety over Washington's fair skin plagued her career, to the extent that producers forced her to re-shoot romantic scenes with Paul Robeson in *The Emperor Jones* with her body painted several shades darker so as to not unsettle white audiences with their pairing. But Washington was outspoken about her pride as a black woman and it's plausible that her racial militancy also caused studios to back away from her. Though *One Mile from Heaven* was her last screen appearance, Washington continued to be a committed theater actor and activist, co-founding the Negro Actors Guild a year after the film's release.

Monday, February 24, 6:30

Sunday, March 1, 1:00

Laughing Gas. 1907. USA. Directed by Edwin S. Porter. With Bertha Regustus. 16 mm6mm. 9 min. An extraordinarily unfettered, rollicking portrayal of a domestic servant's infectious, uncontrollable laughter during a nitrous oxide--infused trip to the dentist.

Gone Are the Days! 1963. USA. Directed by Nicholas Webster. Screenplay by Ossie Davis. With Ruby Dee, Davis, Beah Richards, Hilda Haynes, Godfrey Cambridge, Alan Alda. 16mm. 99 min. "Accept in full the sweetness of your blackness" is one of many subversive lines spoken in this adaptation of Ossie Davis's play *Purlie Victorious*, a sly, edgy satire set on a plantation in the segregated South. Reverend Purlie (Davis) enlists the impressionable Lutiebelle Gussie Mae Jenkins (Ruby Dee) to help him win back a church-turned-bar from a Confederate landowner who, through insurmountable debts, keeps inhabitants under his thumb. Dee's comedic gifts infuse her knowing portrayal of Lutiebelle, a wide-eyed maid who becomes increasingly resistant to the inequity surrounding her. Davis and Dee's political efforts in this film initially went under appreciated; though it was released in the same year as the March on Washington (which the couple emceed), it received mixed reviews and was a box office flop. But its clever brazenness was ahead of its time, anticipating the irreverent critiques of racism found in the work of directors like Spike Lee, who cast Dee and Davis—lifelong partners in marriage, art, and activism—in the integral roles of Mother Sister and Da Mayor in his 1989 classic *Do the Right Thing*. That film's urgent call to consciousness is similarly felt in the civil rights-era *Gone Are the Days!*, especially when Purlie invites his audience to "have faith in the future of our cause."

Tuesday, February 25, 4:00

Sunday, March 1, 3:30

Love as Disorder. 1973. USA. Directed by Ben Maddow. With Diana Sands, Kevin McCarthy, Viveca Lindfors, Lee Grant, Osceola Archer, Herbert Berghof. 35mm. 78 min. Shot on location in Manhattan, Ben Maddow's ensemble relationship drama was originally released in 1963 under the title *An Affair of the Skin*, starring Kevin McCarthy (*Invasion of the Body Snatchers*) as middle-aged lothario Allen and Viveca Lindfors as his beleaguered wife Victoria. A decade later, the film was re-edited and rereleased as *Love as Disorder*, placing greater emphasis on a voiceover narration from its sole character of color, a free-spirited photographer named Janice (unforgettably portrayed by Diana Sands, who died just a year after the film's re-release, at the age of 39). While Allen considers courting Janice before backing off, race is almost beside the point in these down-and-out bohemians' endless discussions about love and freedom (with Janice serving more as an observer than a participant). Commenting from the sidelines, her sly take on things is the pulse of the film, making it much more than just another post-beatnik curio.

Tuesday, February 25, 7:00

Deafman Glance. 1981. USA. Directed by Robert Wilson. With Sheryl Sutton, Jerry Jackson, Rafael Carmona. 27 min. (Digital projection) A grim yet graceful mother's actions are meticulously portrayed in a chilling performance by dancer and actor Sheryl Sutton in this made-for-TV version of the eponymous 1971 play by Sutton's long-time collaborator, acclaimed theater director Robert Wilson.

Night of the Cobra Woman. 1971. USA/Philippines. Directed by Andrew Meyer. With Marlene Clark, Joy Bang, Roger Garrett. 35mm. 85 min. A Roger Corman production shot on location in the Philippines, this rarely screened exploitation thriller stars Marlene Clark (*Ganja & Hess*) as Lena, a jungle priestess who's been in hiding since World War II, using the blood of tropical snakes to keep herself forever young. When an American biology student (Joy Bang) and her hapless boyfriend run afoul of the Cobra Woman, a love triangle ensues. *Night of the Cobra Woman* is schlocky fun, but it also creates a bizarre and ultimately haunting dreamscape; while supposedly the film's villain, Lena is also its center of gravity thanks to Clark's command of the screen (and her other-worldly robes, designed by Imelda Marcos's personal atelier).

Thursday, Feb 27, 4:00

Friday, February 28, 7:00

Each a Poem, Whether Told or Not: Shorts Program 2. Program approx. 93 min.

Thulani (Workprint). 1984. USA. Directed by and performed by Thulani Davis. Digital projection. 11 min. Among her archives, Thulani Davis uncovered this never-before-shown workprint of Doris Chase's 1984 video *Thulani*, a radical departure cut taken from different poems and without backing orchestration. It forms an unforgettable, stripped-down complement to Chase's more psychedelic final version.

Pull Your Head to the Moon: Stories of Creole Women. 1992. USA. Directed by Ayoka Chenzira. Written and choreographed by David Rousseve. Digital projection. 13 min. A young man who underestimates his grandmother's ability to understand his pain discovers her experiences of loss in a story told through memory, dance, and reenactment.

Picking Tribes. 1988. USA. Directed by Pearl Sharp. 16mm. 7 min. This charming, heartfelt animation uses vintage photographs and Carlos Spivey's vibrant watercolor images to create a vignette about a girl's search for identity as she honors ancestral connections within her African American and Native American heritages.

The Body Beautiful. 1991. Great Britain. Directed by Ngozi Onwurah. With Madge Onwurah, Sian Martin. 16mm. 24 min. A love letter from daughter to mother, this tender memoir explores racial and sexual identity, memory, and fantasy. Onwurah revisits her own life, plumbing the emotional depths of the relationship between a young mixed-race woman and her white mother, a breast cancer survivor who has undergone a mastectomy.

Baño Sagrado. 1991. USA. Directed by María Magdalena Campos-Pons. Sound by Neil Leonard. Digital projection. In English, Spanish. 31 min. A meditation on the healing benefits of a ritual sacred bath, expressed through experimental performance, indelible imagery, and anonymous African poems.

Thulani. 1984. USA. Directed by Doris Chase. Performed by Thulani Davis. Digital projection. 9 min. This collaboration between video artist Doris Chase and author Thulani Davis expands and explodes Davis's live performances at The Kitchen, where she breathed life into her fragmentary poems (culled from everyday conversations) with the backing of avant-garde jazz composer Anthony Davis. "If the world goes to hell all at once," Davis riffs, "we still go one by one...."

Thursday, February 27, 6:30

Tuesday, March 3, 4:00

The Omega Man. 1971. USA. Directed by Boris Sagal. With Rosalind Cash, Charlton Heston, Eric Laneuville, Paul Koslo, Anthony Zerbe. 35mm. 98 min. Though she's introduced nearly 40 minutes into *The Omega Man*, Rosalind Cash makes an arresting addition to a plague-ridden Los Angeles in which, to that point, scientist Robert Neville (Charlton Heston) had appeared to be the only human survivor. Having immunized himself with an experimental vaccine, Robert contends daily with a nefarious clan of diseased mutants intent on killing him. He appears to be doomed until the intrepid Lisa comes to his rescue toting a gun, clad in a red snakeskin pantsuit, and crowned by a mighty afro. When Robert discovers that Lisa is guardian to a group of uninfected children, he begins to imagine a life beyond the loneliness of this hellish landscape, and they form a complex partnership. One of the first studio productions to boldly feature an interracial romance, it also made Lisa one of sci-fi's earliest black leading ladies (as a character that didn't exist in the film's source material, the 1954 novel *I Am Legend*). Cash, an outspoken, uncompromising actor who died at the age of 56, was Heston's first choice for the part, and in his autobiography he recalled her as being "quite stunning." Her spirited performance makes one wish she had more screen time, but *The Omega Man* undoubtedly does her justice by amplifying Lisa's agency and prioritizing her survival, resolutely writing her into the future.

Sunday, March 1, 6:30

Strange Days. 1995. USA. Directed by Kathryn Bigelow. With Angela Bassett, Ralph Fiennes, Glenn Plummer, Juliette Lewis, Tom Sizemore, Vincent D'Onofrio. 35mm. 145 min. Set on the eve of a new millennium, Kathryn Bigelow's cyberpunk sci-fi imagines a near-future Los Angeles equally marked by the 1992 Rodney King riots and its history as point of origin for the noir genre. The film follows Lenny Nero (Ralph Fiennes), an ex-cop turned entrepreneur who illegally sells virtual-reality recordings of first-person memories, accessed directly via the cerebral cortex; . Angela Bassett stars as his far more capable limousine driver, Mace. After the murder of hip-hop activist Jeriko One (Glenn Plummer), Lenny and Mace have to figure out who is using the technology to terrorize innocent civilians (making them watch their own murders from the killer's perspective.) In a soul-baring, no-nonsense turn as action hero, Bassett makes Mace the conscience of Lenny's operation; her insistence that he get his head back to "Right here! Right now!" was immortalized on countless turn-of-the-millennium dance tracks.

Monday, March 2, 4:30

Sunshine State. 2002. USA. Directed by John Sayles. With Angela Bassett, Mary Alice, Edie Falco, James McDaniel, Bill Cobbs, Timothy Hutton, Jane Alexander. 35mm. 141 min. When writing *Sunshine State*, an ensemble piece that grew to accommodate over 50 speaking parts, John Sayles only imagined Angela Bassett and Edie Falco as the central characters. In this droll, Altman-esque drama, Plantation

Island, a formerly segregated Florida town, is targeted by developers who aggressively pursue its transformation into a sanitized leisure destination. As the daughters of parents with deep roots on the island's two main beaches, Bassett and Falco play Desiree and Marly, respectively, women whose lives have been overwhelmingly shaped by their families' expectations. While the resigned Marly begins to question whether she can stay anchored to running her parents' motel, Desiree returns home years after having been sent away by her mother (Mary Alice) who, in a misguided attempt to preserve her upstanding reputation, neglected her teenage daughter's need for support during a personal crisis. Initially, Desiree's reconnections with people from her past are tinged with trepidation and guilt, but as she spends more time in her hometown, she exudes fortitude and grace, and is finally able to reconcile her history with who she has become.

Monday, March 2, 7:30

Jackie Brown. 1997. USA. Directed by Quentin Tarantino. With Pam Grier, Samuel L. Jackson, Robert Forster, Robert De Niro, Bridget Fonda, Michael Keaton, Chris Tucker. 35mm. 154 min. Widely considered cinema's first female action hero, Pam Grier was so idolized by writer-director Quentin Tarantino that, when they met to discuss the titular role of *Jackie Brown*, Grier found herself surrounded by posters of her iconic 1970s films, which had long decorated his office walls. Adapting Elmore Leonard's novel *Rum Punch*, Tarantino had only Grier in mind as his lead, and in many ways the film is tailored to her talents. As an underpaid, middle-aged flight attendant caught smuggling money for menacing gun runner Ordell Robbie (Samuel L. Jackson), Grier's trademark style, grit, and intelligence are on full display as she concocts a complicated scheme to double-cross both Ordell and the cops, aiming to get away with half a million dollars in the process. In Isaac Julien's blaxploitation documentary *BaadAsss Cinema*, feminist theorist and cultural critic bell hooks both lauded Jackie Brown as a resistant modern black heroine and traced the character's cinematic lineage to *Coffy*, Grier's 1973 breakout. Perpetually ready to challenge any man who gets in her way, Grier's filmography is filled with women who can't be held down.

Wednesday, March 4, 6:30

Miracle in Harlem. 1948. USA. Directed by Jack Kemp. With Sheila Guyse, Hilda Offley, Sybil Lewis, William Greaves. 35mm. 71 min. Julie (Sheila Guyse) is an ambitious young woman with big ideas for her elderly Aunt Hattie's Harlem candy shop. Aunt Hattie (Hilda Offley) not only trusts Julie to take over, but she is so preoccupied by a premonition of her impending death that she rehearses her own funeral. When a corrupt competitor offers to help expand the store but instead swindles the women into signing it over to him, he unknowingly drags them into an entanglement of crimes and persecutions that they both courageously defend themselves against. Released during the twilight of race films—all-black productions geared to black audiences—*Miracle in Harlem* is an engrossing whodunit sprinkled with jazz performances, comedy, and romance. But what it most admirably expresses is the love and loyalty between two virtuous women who mean business.

Lime Kiln Club Field Day. 1913/2014. Directed by T. Hayes Hunter, Edwin Middleton. With Odessa Warren Grey, Bert Williams, John Wesley Jenkins, Walker Thompson, Henry Troy. DCP. 65 min. Odessa Warren Gray is the object of Bert Williams's affection in this early and rare cinematic document of joy and intimacy being shared freely between black people. Filmed just before *The Birth of a Nation* and the era of race films, this abandoned production's unedited footage was

discovered, researched, and assembled by MoMA, revealing images largely unmarked by bigotry and featuring the harmonious interaction of a black cast and white crew. Adorned with elegantly tailored costumes and glittering accessories, Gray, in her only film role, is remarkably glamorous. But her playful gestures and winsome smile suggest that this local beauty is more defined by her sincerity and tenderness. Rescued from obscurity, the film—and Gray—offer up one of cinema’s most luminous heroines.

Thursday, March 5, 4:30

Dates and times are subject to change; please refer to moma.org for the most up-to-date information.

Organized by Steve Macfarlane, Guest Assistant, Film, Department of Visitor Engagement; Dara Ojugbele, Guest Assistant, Film, Department of Visitor Engagement; and Marta Zeamanuel, Department Assistant, Department of Film.