

# Afro Promo Discussion Guide

Invite a film historian or someone knowledgeable in African American Studies to facilitate a post-screening discussion; or use a few of these questions below to help prompt audience discussion after your screening.

## **Afro Promo can be used by:**

Black Community Centers  
Middle Schools  
High Schools  
Universities

Black Film Series  
Libraries  
Senior Centers  
Community Groups

## **To explore:**

Film History  
Black Culture  
Black History

Black Identity & Images  
African American Studies  
Media Studies

## **Discussion Questions**

- Which of the trailers did you like best? What are your favorite African American films and why?
- Do you remember the first, or an early memorable, African American themed film that you saw? Where and when did you see it? How did it make you feel?
- How has Blackness been represented in of American culture and media? What examples from film, television, plays, books and cartoons can you think of? How has this changed throughout American history and in your lifetime?
- How do you feel about the historical representation of Blacks in American film?
- What stereotypes or negative images appear in these trailers? Is it important to have “visibility at any cost”? What films transcend these stereotypes? Can stereotypes be used in a positive way? How do you feel about Blaxploitation films, for example?
- There are several important African American-themed films not represented here. Was there any one special film missing that you would have liked to have seen included?
- In your opinion, does Hollywood do a better job today of putting Black images on screen than it did ten years ago? Twenty-five years ago?

- What is a “Black” film? Does it have to have a specifically African American setting, theme, and characters? Or does it have to be made by Black actors, directors or producers?
- Do you remember seeing these films when they were first released in theaters? Were they empowering images at the time? Or not?

## Online Resources for African American Film

- **Black Film Research Online**

<http://bfro.uchicago.edu/index.shtml>

Resources for researching Black film culture - from the works of early pioneers (Oscar Micheaux, Spencer Williams) to contemporary filmmaking from across the African Diaspora (Spike Lee, Ousmane Sembene, Euzhan Palcy); issues of Black film distribution, exhibition and spectatorship; and Black representation in cinema from the late 19th century to the present.

- **Sisters in Cinema: African American Lesbian Produced Films and African American Women Directors**

<http://www.sistersincinema.com/pages/lesbianfilms.html#a->

The only African American Lesbian Film Database on the net, complete with historical timelines and plot summaries. In addition to the database, there is a historical timeline of feature films directed by African American women.

- **Array**

<http://bherc.org/Resources/articles.html>

Independent film distribution and resource collective founded by filmmaker Ava DuVernay.

- **BlackFilm.com**

<http://www.blackfilm.com>

Online resource which links the Black film community while cultivating national and international audiences interested in their work. The site provides a forum for filmmakers, scholars and organizations to present information and promote artistic expression.

- **Blackflix.com**

<http://www.blackflix.com>

A site dedicated to various facets of the entertainment industry. Accessible consumer interest information for contemporary feature films and music.

- **Moving Image Source - African American Issues in Media**

<http://www.movingimagesource.us/research/guide/290>

- **Black Film Center/Archive**

<http://www.indiana.edu/~bfca/home/>

The first archival repository dedicated to collecting, preserving, and making available historically and culturally significant films by and about black people.

## Further Reading on African American Film

- Berry, Torriano, and Venise T. Berry. *The A to Z of African American Cinema*. Lanham, MD: Scarecrow, 2009. Print.
- Mask, Mia. *Contemporary Black American Cinema: Race, Gender and Sexuality at the Movies*. New York: Routledge, 2012. Print.
- Seewood, André. *Slave Cinema: The Crisis of the African-American in Film*. Philadelphia: Xlibris, 2008. Print.

- *African Americans in Cinema the First Half Century*. Champaign, IL: University of Illinois, 2003. Print.
- Anderson, Lisa M. *Mammies No More: The Changing Image of Black Women on Stage and Screen*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 1997. Print.
- Bernardi, Daniel. *The Birth of Whiteness: Race and the Emergence of U.S. Cinema*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers UP, 1996. Print.
- Bogle, Donald. *Bright Boulevards, Bold Dreams: The Story of Black Hollywood*. New York: One World Ballantine, 2005. Print.
- Reid, Mark A. *Black Lenses, Black Voices: African American Film Now*. New York, NY, Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2005. Print.