



# TREASURES FROM THE YALE FILM ARCHIVE

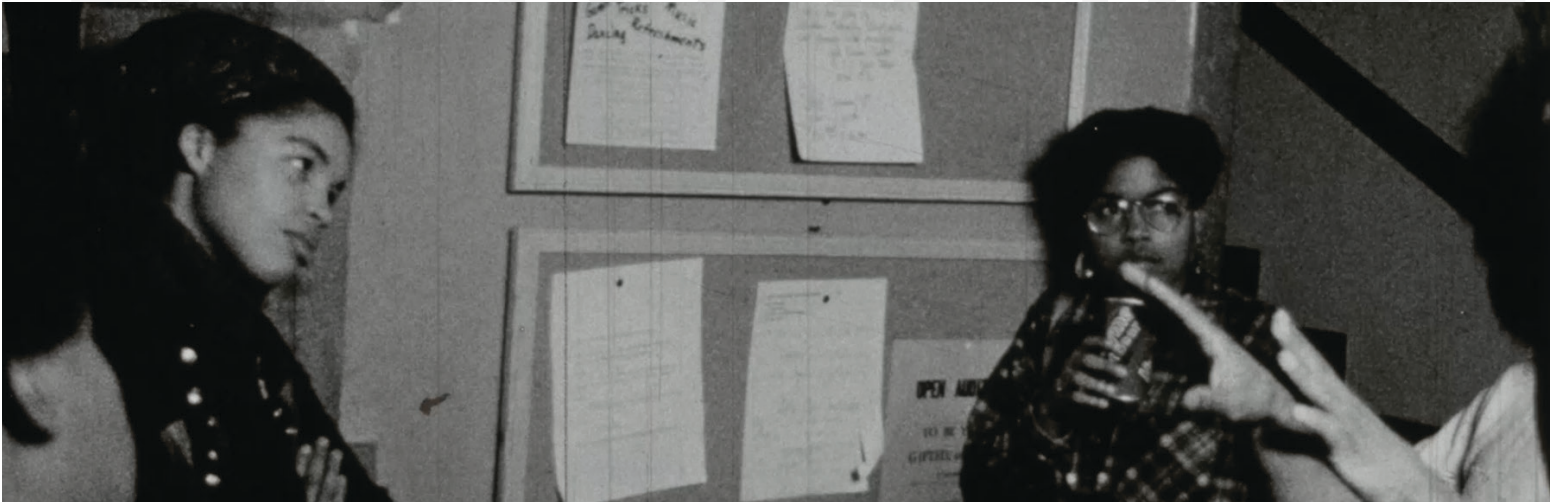
AN ONGOING SERIES OF CLASSIC AND CONTEMPORARY FILMS PRESENTED IN 35MM BY THE YALE FILM STUDY CENTER

FRIDAY  
OCTOBER 6, 2017  
8:00PM • WHITNEY  
HUMANITIES CENTER

## BLACK AT YALE: A FILM DIARY

CELEBRATING THE BLACK STUDENT ALLIANCE AT YALE'S 50TH ANNIVERSARY

PRESENTED WITH SUPPORT FROM  
PAUL L. JOSKOW '70 M.PHIL., '72 PH.D.



In 1966, Yale graduated six black students. By the fall of 1968, more than ten times that number entered as freshmen. Five years later, Ezra Stiles College senior Warrington Hudlin set out to make a film about the experiences of black students at Yale as the culminating project for the prestigious Scholars of the House program. He titled his project **BLACK AT YALE: A FILM DIARY**, as a nod to his plan to make the film a kind of survey of the variety of experiences among black students around Yale. But one event changed the trajectory of his project: a question-and-answer session with civil right activist and former SNCC chairman Stokely Carmichael. As he sat in on the Q&A, Hudlin observed one participant moving the conversation deeper than might be expected and engaging with Carmichael on topics including, as Hudlin put it, "the primacy of matter." He approached the questioner afterward, and asked if he was a graduate student at the university. "No," and nor was he an undergraduate. "Do you go here?" Hudlin asked, and the young man's response was "Kind of." Hudlin knew in an instant that the man, Eugene Rivers, would become one of his primary subjects. "Documentary is all about improvisation, being willing to be flexible and change direction," Hudlin said later.



In addition to Rivers, Hudlin also focused on the experiences of Erroll McDonald '75, and more than forty years later, both men have remained in the spotlight. McDonald has worked at Random House since 1977, now serving as the Vice President, Executive Editor in the Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group of Penguin Random House, and has worked with authors including Toni Morrison, Wole Soyinka, James Baldwin, and Salman Rushdie. Years after Hudlin was first impressed by his intellectual curiosity, Eugene Rivers is a well-known community activist and pastor of the Azusa Christian Community Center in Dorchester, Massachusetts, and cofounder of the Boston TenPoint Coalition.

Key to the development of Hudlin's project were three other notable names in Yale film history: first, Michael Roemer, who was Hudlin's advisor in the Scholars of the House program. The legendary filmmaker and educator, whose film **NOTHING BUT A MAN** celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2014, retired from teaching at Yale in the spring of 2017. Murray Lerner, who passed away last month at the age of 90 and whose film **TO BE A MAN** (1966) the Yale Film Study Center preserved in 2016, taught a course at Yale which was Hudlin's introduction to the world of documentary film. Finally, Lerner's teaching assistant in that course, Nick Doob '69, was also an influence on Hudlin's filmmaking education; the Film Study Center has just completed preservation of three of his early short films made at Yale, funded by a grant from the National Film Preservation Foundation.

*New York Times* film critic Vincent Canby praised **BLACK AT YALE: A FILM DIARY** in a February, 1978 review coinciding with a screening of the film at the Whitney Museum of American Art. "Mr. Hudlin approaches his subjects directly, without condescension, never imposing his own ideas on them. The result is a good, straightforward record of some particular experiences. 'Black at Yale' is a film limited only by the resources of money and time available to the director. One would like more of it."

PRODUCED, DIRECTED, AND EDITED BY

**WARRINGTON HUDLIN**

CINEMATOGRAPHY BY **WARRINGTON HUDLIN**

AND **BOB SLATTERY**

SOUND BY **GEORGE CUNNINGHAM, BOB**

**SLATTERY, AND CHRISTOPHER HUDLIN**

(1974) 53 MINS.

WITH **ERROLL McDONALD, EUGENE RIVERS,**

**GLENN deCHABERT, AND STOKELY**

**CARMICHAEL**

**DID YOU KNOW: BLACK AT YALE: A FILM DIARY WAS BUT THE FIRST STEP IN WHAT HAS BEEN A LONG AND FRUITFUL CAREER FOR WARRINGTON HUDLIN IN THE WORLD OF FILM. HUDLIN PRODUCED, AMONG OTHER PROJECTS, THE FILMS HOUSE PARTY (1990), BOOMERANG (1992), AND BÉBÉ'S KIDS (1992); IS THE FOUNDER OF THE BLACK FILMMAKER FOUNDATION; AND IS THE VICE CHAIRMAN AND SECRETARY OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE MUSEUM OF THE MOVING IMAGE IN NEW YORK.**

**NEXT UP:** TWENTY YEARS AFTER ITS RELEASE, ERROL MORRIS' DOCUMENTARY ABOUT A LION TAMER, AN ANIMAL TOPIARY ARTIST, A HAIRLESS MOLE-RAT EXPERT, AND AN M.I.T. ROBOT DESIGNER HAS LOST NONE OF ITS UNIQUE CHARM. SEE **FAST, CHEAP & OUT OF CONTROL** IN 35MM ON **SUNDAY, OCTOBER 8 AT 2:00 PM.**