

# OSCAR MICHEAUX SOCIETY

## NEWSLETTER

Volume 5 • Summer 1996

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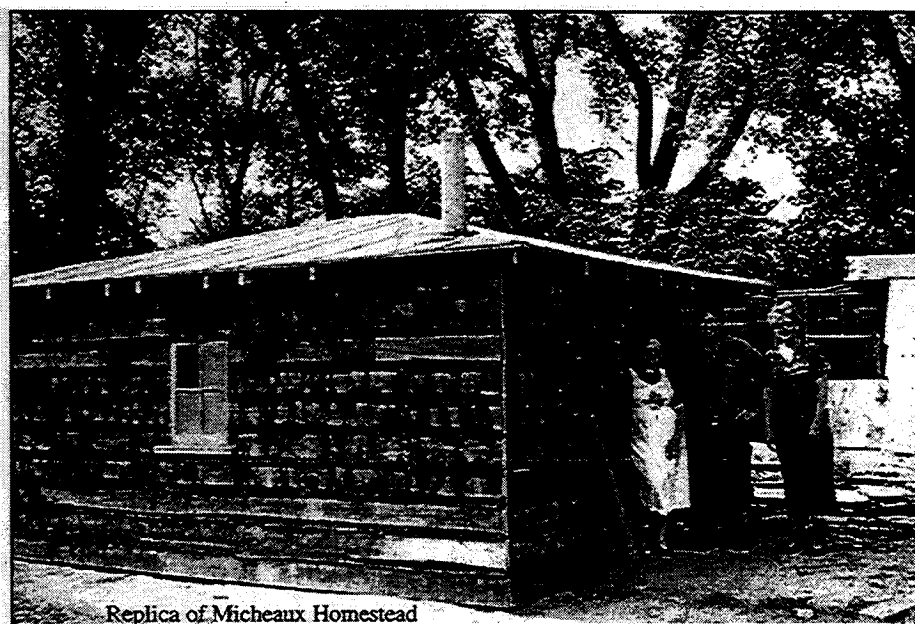
## MICHEAUX HOMESTEAD DISCOVERED!

### Gregory, South Dakota Plans First Annual Micheaux Film Festival

Residents of Gregory, South Dakota, have located one of Oscar Micheaux's two homestead sites. The land is untouched and beautiful, just as he left it over three quarters of a century ago, and many stories about the lone black homesteader are still alive in the community. For the first time this summer, a group of Gregory citizens will commemorate the life of the black pioneer, author, and filmmaker, with a screening of his work, which has never been shown in the town he left around the time of the publication of his first novel, *The Conquest* (1913).

The festival, set for the weekend of August 16 through 18, 1996, will center around a screening of *Within Our Gates* (1919) in the Ripp Theatre, a 35 mm facility built in the 1940s. The activities surrounding the festival are still in the planning stages, but will probably include a sunrise breakfast on the site where Micheaux's first sod house will be reconstructed, and a bus tour of places mentioned in his homestead novels. In addition, the residents plan a bake sale, square dance, and an arts and crafts fair. Entertainment may include Lakota Sioux and Oglala native dances.

The South Dakota planning committee thinks that the attraction of the Micheaux site may be that it is the antithesis of commercial tourist draws. Gregory County boasts no WalMart store, no McDonald's, no Pizza Hut, and no stop lights. Accommodations are plentiful and excellent due to another attraction that draws outsiders to Gre-



Replica of Micheaux Homestead

gory during the fall season—pheasant hunting. (The pheasant is the South Dakota state bird).

Gregory festival organizers encourage participation from Micheaux

fans around the country and the world. To help out in any way, before or during the event, call the offices of the city of Gregory: (605) 835-8270.

## TWO MICHEAUX FAMILY MEMBERS

by J. Ronald Green

In February this year (1996) I presented four of Micheaux's films as guest curator for the Wexner Center for the Arts, Columbus, Ohio. The film critic for the local paper produced an excellent feature article on the screenings, using graphic materials supplied by the Wexner Center. The article, with a large photograph of Micheaux, attracted the attention of one of Micheaux's relatives who lives in Columbus, Mildred Lucille Micheaux Lewis, who called me the day after the

first presentation. She and a friend came to lunch with me and my wife, Louisa, a day or two later; lunch extended to three hours and we exchanged much information.

Oscar Micheaux was Mrs. Lewis's grandfather's nephew. Her grandfather was Andrew Jackson Micheaux, born 17 February 1859, in Calloway County, Kentucky, married to Lillian Robinson on 29 May 1899, in Great Bend, Kansas, died 10 January 1942, in Great

(Continued on Page 2)

# MICHEAUX FAMILY

(Continued from Page 1)

Bend. He was the brother of Oscar Micheaux's father, Calvin Swan Micheaux, born about 1847 in Kentucky, married to Belle Willingham (or Williamham) 7 January 1872, in Metropolis, Illinois, and died 24 January 1932 in Great Bend.

Mrs. Lewis remembers Oscar's visits to Great Bend in the 1930s and 40s, and her sisters can remember him too. Lewis remembers going to see Oscar's film, **The Homesteader**, at a black theater in Topeka, probably the Dunbar, in the 1950s. Because she remembers the film as a sound film that was set in the homesteading landscapes of the midwest, it is possible that the film was actually **The Betrayal** [or even the **Exile**-1931], made in 1948,

which treats the same material as **The Homesteader**, a silent film made thirty years earlier. Mrs. Lewis recalls that Swan, Oscar's brother, was burned in a fire in New York before he moved to Great Bend. She has the strong impression that Oscar and all of his brothers and sisters except Swan were "very fair," light-complexioned. She was impressed that the photograph in the newspaper article about the Wexner Center screenings "did not look like Oscar;" it made him too dark. If her memory is accurate, it would contradict current assumptions by scholars. (Oscar does appear in two extant films—he is the larger detective who inspects the body of the murdered woman in **Murder in Harlem**, 1935, and he may play another plain-clothes policeman in **Ten Minutes to Live**, 1932—so, one can judge for oneself). Mrs. Lewis does not know much about Oscar's wife, Alice B. Russell, and does not have much knowledge of Os-

car, but she can provide considerable information about the extended family. At the moment she prefers to guard her privacy somewhat and look over the family information she has, with an eye to (possibly) sharing some of it eventually.

Mrs. Lewis's sister, Alfreda Micheaux, called me a few days later from Wichita, Kansas, and we talked for some time. She too is very interested in learning more about Oscar, and has been actively inquiring among family members. She has what is possibly a shooting script for one of his films; it is currently in the possession of her son, who is away at college. When she can, she will have a copy made for me; if there are no objections from the family, I will see that it is placed in a research center and publicized so that it is accessible to all scholars. Ms. Micheaux's business address is 1133 S. Rock Road, Suite #3114, Wichita, KS, 67207.

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## MINUTES FOR OSCAR MICHEAUX SOCIETY MEETING

SOCIETY FOR CINEMA STUDIES CONFERENCE • MARCH 10, 1996 • DALLAS, TEXAS

The meeting was convened at 9:00am with Corey Creekmur, Jane Gaines, Ron Green, John Hess, Adam Knee, Arthur Knight, Jan Loveland, Sarah Madsen, Charles Musser, Charlene Regester, Jacqueline Stewart and Melissa Wye attending.

### I. Correction to 1995 Minutes:

The previous newsletter (vol. 4) incorrectly reported that Arthur Knee attended last year's meeting. Unfortunately, there is no such person as Arthur Knee. Adam Knee affirmed that while he was there in spirit, his body was "asleep in the East Village."

### II. Reports:

1. **Touring Package:** The package (which includes early all-black cast silent films) is moving forward, though a bit more slowly than the principle initiators would like: a) Jane Gaines reported that funds are needed for restoring **Symbol of the Unconquered**; the Packard Fund turned down a request made last year, as did the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences; b) Charles Musser said that the organizers are working to unify the several streams of their endeavor -- the film component (35mm and 16mm), the catalogue, etc. but reports that: c) the package has already had an effect; initially MOMA refused the deposit of Micheaux material on 35mm, but because of the package, decided to accept it in this format; they have rented the material several times and are now revising their policies on holding and renting 35mm material in general.
2. **Delicia Dunham's Report:**
  - a) Dunham, Editorial Assistant for the Newsletter, received an inquiry from an unnamed college reporting that they were completing another musical score for **Within Our Gates** (See Dunham's "Keeping Score" elsewhere in the Newsletter);
  - b) It was noted that included on the Society's membership rolls are: Harry Belafonte, Reginald Hudlin, Spike Lee, Robert Townsend, and Melvin Van Peebles. Melissa Wye offered to contact an acquaintance who works with John Singleton, to see if we can add Singleton to the mailing list. Tim Reid was mentioned as a potential subscriber if he is not already a member;
  - c) Dunham will resign her position to enter law school at the end of the semester.

### 3) Screenings:

a) Musser reported that there was a screening of **Scar of Shame** with live musical accompaniment at Yale University last December (unfortunately, he was unable to attend the screening); b) Ron Green curated a Micheaux series at the Wexner Center last fall in Ohio; c) Gaines reported that on April 17, 1996 a Duke Alumni group (in association with several other groups) will hold a screening of **Within Our Gates** at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. (See **Screenings**); d) Charlene Regester reported that she had been contacted by someone from the South Dakota Historical Society; Micheaux's home site has been discovered and the Historical Society is planning a festival this summer at which they hope to screen some of his films.

### 4) Sightings:

a) Green met Mildred Lucille Lewis Micheaux (order of names may be incorrectly reported), the grand daughter of one of Micheaux's father's brothers (this makes her either a second cousin or a first cousin once removed to Micheaux); b) The niece of Lucia Lynn Moses, star of **Scar of Shame**, approached Gaines at a local screening of the film; c) Regester suggests vetting people's kinship claims carefully before relying on any claims they might make.

### 5) Publications:

a) Adam Knee has an overview of academic books on Black film forthcoming in the April issue of *Independent* (See page 4) b) Jayna Brown, a Yale graduate student, has completed a MA thesis on Micheaux's novels.

### 6) Next Year's Conference:

Arthur Knight announced that the African American Caucus of SCS was looking for suggestions for screenings at next year's conference. Musser suggested that Bill Greaves, who was trained in Canada, might be featured.

### 7) More Scores:

Gaines reported that Chip Crawford, a musician from Durham, N.C., provided excellent musical accompaniments for several of Micheaux's films.

### 8) Newsletter:

Gaines reported that the *Oscar Micheaux Society* has applied to AMPAS for funding for the Newsletter. The question of whether to expand the newsletter was raised but not resolved.

### 9) Richard Maurice (early black filmmaker):

Corey and Jan reported that they have not discovered any evidence that Maurice worked in Detroit. (Gaines noted that interest in Maurice continues to grow; Duke art historian, Rick Powell, has recently been writing on his work).

## III. ACTION

### 1. Richard Maurice:

a) place a query in the newsletter; b) place queries in the Detroit and Chicago Black Newspapers

### 2. Still Service:

The Oscar Micheaux Society will initiate a service for selling stills to interested parties — if it can get the funding to have copies of Micheaux photos made.

### 3. American Studies Association 1997

Knight will propose a Micheaux panel for the 1997 American Studies Association Conference. Gaines urged that those interested in Micheaux propose similar panels at other conferences.

### 4. Newsletter Items:

a) query on Richard Maurice (see III.1.a); b) Reprint of Adam Knee's piece from *The Independent* (See II.5.a and elsewhere in the *Newsletter*); c) begin an index of World Wide Web sites of interest (e.g. Julie Dash's homepage, the Indiana Black Film Archive homepage, etc.); d) Corey Creekmur will supply a comparative, qualitative review of some of the Micheaux films on videotape (and 16mm?), call for other interested in doing such reviewing; e) query: what libraries have copies of Micheaux's novels?

The meeting adjourned about 10:30am. These minutes were respectfully submitted by Arthur Knight, American Studies Program, College of William & Mary, P.O. Box 8795, Williamsburg, VA 23187-8795, (804) 221-1281-phone, (804) 221-1287-fax, iaknig@mail.wm.edu

## CALL FOR RICHARD D. MAURICE

Richard D. Maurice, an African American filmmaker who worked in Detroit and produced **Eleven PM** among other films, has come to the attention of the society in view of the paucity of sources that exist regarding his works. Therefore, we are issuing a call to anyone who might have information on Maurice to please contact the *Oscar Micheaux Society Newsletter* so that we can construct a more complete profile of this filmmaker. Maurice's films are among those to accompany the proposed touring package.

# WHAT'S NEW IN BLACK AMERICAN FILM STUDIES

by Adam Knee

Although as recently as 1990 there were relatively few books available on African American filmmaking, there has now been a surge in interest and publishing on the topic. Two pioneering works on Black filmmaking and Black screen images have recently been reissued — Thomas Cripps' *Slow Fade to Black: The Negro in American Film 1900-1942* (Oxford University Press, 1977/1993) and Donald Bogle's *Toms, Coons, Mulattoes, Mammies & Bucks: An Interpretive History of Blacks in American Films* (Continuum, 1973/1994) — while many new studies and first-hand accounts of African American filmmaking have also appeared. In order to gauge what kinds of materials are available and useful, *The Independent* talked with professors from around the country in departments of communication, film, English, and African American Studies.

Both the Bogle and Cripps books — along with Cripps's more recent *Making Movies Black: The Hollywood Message Movie from World War II to the Civil Rights Era* (Oxford UP 1993) — continue to get high marks from teachers. Cripps's work is known for its in-depth, original historical research on Black involvement in the film industry, while Bogle's book offers a readable and comprehensive overview that serves well as a college text. Another overview recommended by several interviewees is Ed Guerrero's *Framing Blackness: The African American Image in Film* (Temple UP, 1993). Tyrone Williams, as associate professor of English at Xavier University, recommends the text for the wide range of films it examines, both modern and historical, commercial and independent, while Jesse Rhines, an assistant professor in the Department of African American Studies at Rutgers, praises its "deconstruction of the way African Americans are imaged by whites in the film industry and how in turn these images influence the ways Blacks view and represent themselves."

Rhines is particularly interested in tracing the complex operations of "Anglo-American hegemony" in the film industry; his own forthcoming book, *Black Film/White Money* (Rutgers UP), does just this by analyzing the economics of the entry of Blacks into Hollywood. Rhines examines "how one does or does not move from being independent into being part of the Hollywood system. How and why do some Black filmmakers remain independent? Why are certain Black males getting studio financing while certain Black women, such as Julie Dash, do not receive the same kind of support?"

For a first-hand account of Black films and filmmaking by someone who has been directly involved in the industry, both Rhines and Arthur Knight, an instructor in American Studies and English at William and Mary College, recommend Nelson George's *Blackface: Reflections on African Americans and the Movies* (Harper Collins, 1994). In teaching about the African American reception of American films, Knight also uses *The Devil Finds Work: An Essay* (Dell, 1976/1990), James Baldwin's personal memoir of movie-going experiences.

For more in-depth critical discussions of individual works and specific issues in Black filmmaking, Michele Wallace, an associate professor of English and Women's Studies at New York's City College and the CUNY Graduate Center and the author of *Invisibility Blues: From Pop to Theory* (Verso, 1990), recommends among other texts, Manthia Diawara's anthology *Black American Cinema* (Routledge, 1993) and a posthumously published collection of essays by James Snead titled *White Screen/Black Images* (Routledge, 1994), which deals with various ways Blackness has been codified in both Hollywood film and Black independent film. For a wideranging theoretical approach to race in the media that synthesizes a number of differing perspectives, Wallace also recommends Ella Shohat and Robert Stam's *Unthinking Eurocentrism: Multiculturalism and the Media* (Routledge, 1994). On the whole, however, Wallace is hardly sanguine about the current state of scholarship on African American filmmaking, noting that there are many gaps and that in particular, "on topics of women, gender, and sexuality, it's pretty awful." Shari Roberts, an assistant professor of communication at Penn State University and author of the forthcoming *Seeing Stars: Spectacles of Difference in World War II Hollywood Musicals* (Duke UP), concurs, and both she and Wallace cite bell hooks' *Black Looks: Race, Gender and Cultural Politics* (South End Press, 1992) as one of the very few works that focus on issues of African American women's sexuality.

Sheril Antonio, Assistant Dean for Film and Television at New York University's Tisch School of the Arts, also suggests that despite the recent volume of scholarship in the field, substantial work remains to be done. "It's really very early for critical views on Black film," she explains. "We first need to establish a solid historical perspective." Thus far, Antonio has found the aforementioned Bogle and Diawara books, along with Bogle's *Blacks in American Films and Television: An Illustrated Encyclopedia* (Fireside, 1989) most helpful for teaching: "The Bogle books offer a useful historical survey, while the Diawara anthology gives the students a necessary critical perspective on that history."

Wallace, who is at work on a book on race in early cinema, is likewise adamant about the need for more in-depth and rigorous approaches to African American film history and is specifically concerned about "a sanitizing of Black history,

in which what is connected to stereotypes, what is seen as unpleasant, gets set aside. The willingness to dismiss certain figures and texts is amazing."

One somewhat controversial figure who is being definitively wrested from obscurity is the pioneering African American filmmaker and novelist Oscar Micheaux. While much of Micheaux's output of more than 40 Black-cast films, dating from the silent era, has been lost, scholars are now examining his career in detail. Jane Gaines, Director of the Film and Video Program at Duke University, stresses the significance of this scholarship for "reconfiguring the canon" of texts in film studies: "Through this kind of archaeology, we are coming to realize more fully the extent of the African American presence in the early years of film production. Now, when *The Birth of a Nation* (1915) is taught in film classes, more and more professors are also teaching Micheaux's *Within Our Gates* (1919) as a kind of response to Griffith's work." Gaines is now co-editing (with Pearl Bowser and Charles Musser) an anthology on the director's work, entitled *Oscar Micheaux and His Circle* (Smithsonian, forthcoming), and several scholars are preparing book-length studies of Micheaux as well.

Lastly, several instructors also make use of filmmaking accounts by Black directors themselves, such as Julie Dash's *Daughters of the Dust: The Making of an African American Woman's Film* (The New Press, 1992) and Spike Lee's *By Any Means Necessary: The Trials and Tribulations of the Making of Malcolm X* with Ralph Wiley (Hyperion, 1992). In one more indication of the current growth in interest on the topic, one of the earliest and most fascinating personal accounts of Black filmmaking, Melvin Van Peebles's *The Making of Sweet Sweetback's Baadasssss Song* (1972), was reissued last year by Ann Arbor's Neo Press, with a new introduction and afterword.

#### Also of interest:

Jacqueline Bobo, *Black Women as Cultural Readers* (Columbia UP, 1995) • Gina Dent, ed., *Black Popular Culture: A Project by Michele Wallace* (Bay Press, 1992) • *Five For Five: The Films of Spike Lee* (Stewart, Tabori & Chang, 1991) • Krin Gabbard, ed., *Representing Jazz* (Duke UP, 1995) • Thelma Golden, ed., *Black Male: Representations of Masculinity in Contemporary American Art* (Whitney Museum/Abrams, 1994) • John Kisch and Edward Mapp, *A Separate Cinema: Fifty Years of Black Cast Posters* (Noonday, 1992) • Phyllis Rauch Klotman, ed., *Screenplays of the African American Experience* (Indiana UP, 1991) • Michael T. Martin, ed., *Cinemas of the Black Diaspora: Diversity, Dependence, and Oppositionality* (Wayne State UP, 1995) • Richard M. Merelman, *Representing Black Culture: Racial Conflict and Cultural Politics in the United States* (Routledge, 1995) • Mark A. Reid, *Redefining Black Film* (University of California Press, 1993) • Valerie Smith, ed., *Black Issues in Film and Media* (Rutgers UP, 1996).

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## KEEPING SCORE

by Delicia Dunham

There has been much activity of late in the realm of Micheaux film score compositions. In particular *Scar of Shame* and *Within Our Gates* have both enjoyed the recent attentions of talented American composers.

*Scar of Shame* was screened on Saturday, February 3, 1996 at the Yale Repertory Theatre. A key, one-performance-only event, the screening launched Black History Month celebrations. Don Byron, a clarinetist under commission by the American Museum of the Moving Image, accompanied the film with simultaneous jazz improvisation as he led an eight-member jazz ensemble. Though this was Byron's first film score, he has been a regular participant in the New York jazz scene since 1985. He trained at the New England Conservatory of music in Boston, where he was a member of the Gunther Schuller New England Ragtime Ensemble.

As part of the celebrations of the 20th anniversary of the University of Massachusetts Fine Arts Center and the centennial of the moving image, *Within Our Gates* enjoyed a similar screening. The University of Massachusetts Film Studies program and the Fine Arts Center Office of Multicultural Programs together commissioned David Dion, graduate student in the Music Department Jazz Studies Program, to compose. Dion was selected for the project by Horace Clarence Boyer, Professor of Music and Associate Director of the University Fine Arts Center. The event, free and open to the public, was held in Bowker Auditorium at the University of Massachusetts on Monday, May 13, 1996. A reception and gallery exhibition of stills from the film followed the screening.

The commission of musicians to accompany silent Micheaux features has proven a functional way to increase interest in and around early African American cinema. Such outreach is expected to continue and grow, and we here at the Micheaux Newsletter will endeavor to bring you all details. *We are keeping score.*

Note: Readers interested in the Dion score (or in soliciting his services) may contact: David Dion • 76 Grantwood Drive • Southington, CT 06489 • Phone (860) 621-5451

## UPCOMING CONFERENCES:

**UNIVERSITY FILM & VIDEO ASSOCIATION 50th ANNUAL CONFERENCE, August 6-10, 1996, Chapman University, Orange, California.** Conference panels and papers will explore historical and contemporary issues in film, video, television, and new technologies. Of special interest are the finding of current research and and cultural issues related to these media, their teaching and professional practice. For more information contact: Bob Bassett, Chapman University Film and Television Department, Orange, CA 92666 Phone (714) 997-6765, FAX (714) 997-6700.

**VISIBLE EVIDENCE IV: STRATEGIES AND PRACTICES IN DOCUMENTARY FILM AND VIDEO, August 15-18, 1996, Centre for Journalism Studies at the University of Wales, Cardiff, UNITED KINGDOM.** This is the first time that the conference will be held outside of the United States and in an European venue. For further information contact: Michael Renov, School of Cinema-Television, University of Southern California, Los Angeles, CA 90089-2211, Fax 001-213-740-9471, E-mail: renov@usc.edu. or Roberta E. Pearson, Centre for Journalism Studies, Univ. of Wales, Cardiff, Bute Building, Cathays Park, Cardiff, CF1 3NB, UK, Fax 44(0) 1222238832, E-mail senrep@cardiff.ac.uk.

**FILM, CULTURE, HISTORY CONFERENCE, August 26-28, 1996, Aberdeen University Cultural History Group and Drambuie Edinburgh Film Festival** are sponsoring this International Conference to be held jointly at the **University of Aberdeen, UNITED KINGDOM.** For further information contact: Colin Whatford, Conference Director, Film: Culture: History, Cultural History Group, Old Brewery, Aberdeen University, Regent Walk, Aberdeen AB9 2UB, UK, Telephone (01224) 272457, Fax (01224) 272369, E-Mail: C. Whatford@abdn.ac.uk

**FOURTH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF DOMITOR, December 16-19, 1996, Domitor, the international association** to promote the study of early cinema, will hold its upcoming conference in **Paris, France.** The conference will be held in the main auditorium of the Palais de Chaillot, and there will be simultaneous translation from and to French and English for the four days. For further information contact Michel Marie, 4 rue Moufle, 75011 Paris, France.

**SOCIETY FOR CINEMA STUDIES CONFERENCE 1997, May 15-19, 1997, Ottawa, Ontario, CANADA.** The special focus for the 1997 conference will be Cinema in Canada. Up to 25% of the work presented at the conference will reflect this special focus.

—The special topic "Cinema(s) in Canada" calls for a frame of reference which includes, but is much broader than, Canadian cinema itself. Panels and papers are invited which speak to the variety of narrative, generic, stylistic, linguistic, and cultural practices that have informed the past and present of the production and circulation of the cinema, television, and video in Canada.

—The deadline for submitting proposals is **October 1, 1996.** For further information contact: Chair of the 1997 Host Committee—Mark Langer, SSAC - Film Studies, Carleton University, 1125 Colonel By Drive, Ottawa, Ontario K1S 5B6 CANADA, Office phone 613/788-2600, ext. 3793, Home phone 613/565-00215, E-mail mlanger@ccs.carleton.ca.

**22ND ANNUAL FILM AND LITERATURE CONFERENCE, January 30-February 1, 1997, Florida State University, Tallahassee, Florida,** entitled "Virtual Reality in Film and Literature. Abstracts of papers (approximately 250 words, with an explicit thesis) and proposals for seminars and workshops (specifying participants and titles of presentations) must be submitted by Monday, **October 7, 1996.** For further information contact: Carol DeLoach, Center for Professional Development, Florida State University, Tallahassee, Florida 32306-2027.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY UPDATE:

*Screening Noir: A Newsletter of Film and Video Culture* published its first issue, Vol. 1 Nos. 2 & 3 (Double Issue), 1995-96. This newsletter is published by editor Anna Everett and members of the African American Caucus of the Society of Cinema Studies. Jessie Rhines (Rutgers University) was president of the caucus during the 1995-1996 year. For more information contact: Editor, Anna Everett, 1743 Butler Avenue, #2, Los Angeles, CA 90025, E-mail: everett@scf.usc.edu.

*La Feuille: The Best of Afro-Film* is a new film catalogue that reports on festivals, interviews, history, poetry, portraits, and films available in France. Many of the films mentioned in this catalogue are representations of blacks throughout the diaspora. For further information contact: Thierry Sinda, 4 rue du Colonel Domine, 75013, Paris, France, Telephone 45.65.47.37.

*The Birth of Whiteness: Race and the Emergence of United States Cinema* ed. by Daniel Bernardi (Rutgers UP, 1996). In this first anthology on race in early cinema, fourteen scholars examine the origins, dynamics, and ramifications of racism and Eurocentrism and the resistance to both during the early years of American motion pictures. The contributors to this work address such subjects as biological determinism, miscegenation, Manifest Destiny, assimilation, and nativism and their impact on early cinema.

*Movie Censorship & American Culture* ed. by Francis Courvares (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1996). This anthology of essays focuses on censorship endured by the motion picture industry and contains an essay on Oscar Micheaux's relationship with film censor boards in New York, Chicago, and Virginia.

*Me Jane: Masculinity, Movies and Women* ed. by Pat Kirkham & Janet Thumim (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1995). This anthology of essays contains an essay on Oscar Micheaux and masculinity entitled "Oscar Micheaux's Multifaceted Portrayals of the African American Male: The Good, The Bad and The Ugly" by Charlene Regester.



## SCREENINGS:

**SCAR OF SHAME**, Durham, North Carolina, January 1996, was screened at the African American Film Festival sponsored by the Carolina Theater. The film was introduced by Jane Gaines (Duke University) and the musical accompaniment was provided by Chip Crawford.

**WITHIN OUR GATES, BODY AND SOUL, MURDER IN HARLEM, AND SWING**, Columbus, Ohio, February 1996, were screened at the Wexner Center for the Arts in Columbus. Ron Green was interviewed by the Columbus Dispatch regarding the screening of Micheaux's films in view of his forthcoming work on Micheaux, Straight Lick With a Crooked Stick: The African-American Middle-Class Cinema of Oscar Micheaux. Green stated of Micheaux, "his audience was caught between the high production values and demeaning images of the Hollywood product, and the direct, honest but flawed films of Micheaux."

**SULPHUR SPRINGS, TEXAS EARLY FILMS (1898-1906), MOTHERHOOD: LIFE'S GREATEST MIRACLE, AND BLOOD OF JESUS** (produced by Spencer Williams), Dallas, Texas, March 1996, were screened at the Society for Cinema Studies Conference.

**WITHIN OUR GATES**, Washington, D.C., April 1996, was screened at the Kennedy Center as part of an event sponsored by the Duke and Yale alumni associations of Washington, D.C.

**MIDNIGHT RAMBLE**, 1996, was screened in Paris, France on May 11, 1996, by the Cinematheque de la Danse in the context of the homage to black American cinema by the Cinematheque Francaise.

## WORLD WIDE WEB SITINGS:

(Compiled by Delicia Dunham)

It's a bird. It's a plane. No, it's the internet. The Internet has fast become the gateway to the future, and the past. As it moves us forward, it simultaneously shifts us backward. The general computer-literate public is now able to discover truths about Oscar Micheaux and other early African American filmmakers at the mere touch of a button or click of a mouse. Below are many of the existing websites featuring information on Micheaux, along with a brief summary of what each site has to offer.

*The International Black Cinema (IBCN) Network Homepage:* <http://www.coe.uncc.edu/~ibcnhp/>

The IBCN homepage is where, once completed, you will be able to access Oscar Micheaux information and materials. (After the *Oscar Micheaux Society Newsletter* is compiled, it too will be linked to the IBCN). Current links include a reprint of the March, 1995 article in *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (Volume LXI, Number 25) on the renewed interest among scholars on Micheaux. To join the IBCN Micheaux newsgroup, be sure to subscribe to the Micheaux Listserver. Simply address mail to **LISTERV@UNCCVM.UNCC.EDU**, and in the body of the message type **<SUBSCRIBE IBCN-L Oscar Micheaux>** For more information about the International Black Cinema Network? Listserver, contact: IBCN-L Administrator • English/Communications Department • The University of North Carolina at Charlotte • 206 Garinger • Charlotte, North Carolina 28223 • (704) 547-4211 Phone • (704) 547-3961 FFax • **aburton @unccsun.uncc.edu**

*Oscar Micheaux Homepage:* <http://www.pacificnet.net/geechee/Micheaux.html>

This particular page is being constructed by Floyd Webb and Julie Dash with the assistance of American Film Institute fellow Lori Dawn Perkins. Any corrections or additions to the page are welcome. Be sure to follow the links for hidden treasures.

*UC Berkeley:* <http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/MRC/Micheauxbib.html>

A bibliography of University of California-Berkeley library holdings on Oscar Micheaux.

*Black Is ... Black Ain't:* <http://www.actwin.com/ITVS/programs/BIBA/index.html>

An informational page on Marlon Riggs' final film.

*Daughters of the Dust:* <http://www.pacificnet.net/geechee/Daughter1.html>

This page includes film rental and VHS purchase information, and links to other likely sites of interest including the Julie Dash Filmography page.

*Indiana University Black Film Center/Archive:* <http://www.indiana.edu/~bfca/index.html>

The BFC/A is a repository of films and related materials by and about African Americans. This page includes the following links: Who we are; Sponsors of the Black Film Center/Archive; About the Black Film Center/Archive; Holdings and Facilities; Exhibitions and Events; Visiting the Black Film Center/Archive; BFC/A Publications; A Selected List of African American and Film-Related Internet Resources; Reviews of this Web Site.

*Smithsonian Institute African American Studies Center:* <http://www.si.edu/youandsi/tsa/aasc.htm>

This site features calendar events hosted by the African American Studies Center, including performances, art exhibits, scholarly symposia and film screenings.

*The Scar of Shame:* <http://pantheon.cis.yale.edu/~catseye/interact/mscarbkb.html>

This page features in depth background information on **The Scar of Shame** and the Colored Players Film Corporation. It includes links to information on race movies, composer Don Byron and early black film classics available on video.



The Oscar Micheaux Society Newsletter is dedicated to providing a medium through which we can promote discourse, debate, and discovery about filmmaker and novelist Oscar Micheaux and others who were active in early African American cinema. Unfortunately, much of their work remains inaccessible. It is through this medium that we hope to provide an avenue for inquiry into Micheaux and others who were active in early African American cinema.

The Oscar Micheaux Newsletter is a publication of the Film and Video Program, Duke University. We welcome your contributions, questions and comments. Information and articles for editorial review should be sent to:

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