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DIASPORA FESTIVAL

of BLACK and INDEPENDENT FILM

OUR DIASPORA: WHERE EVERY LIFE IS AN EPIC STORY



Since 2004, the Stone Center's annual Diaspora Festival of Black and Independent Film has showcased films from across the African diaspora, including North Carolina and U.S. premieres. Screenings feature lively Q&As and thoughtful dialogue with filmmakers, scholars, and audiences. Over the years, the festival has built strong partnerships with campus and community groups such the African Studies Center, the African, African-American and Diaspora Studies Department (AAADS), the Women and Gender Studies Department, The History Department, the Center for the Study of the American South (CSAS), the Alliance (Carolina Latinx, American Indian, and Asian-American Centers), Ngozi Design Collective, the Hayti Heritage Center, the Rogers-Eubanks Community Center, Palace International and Providence 1898, among others. The 2025 festival will present about two dozen films of all genres selected from hundreds of global submissions.



TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 23 | 12:05PM



JE NE SUIS PAS ELLE, JE SUIS L'AUTRE

Dir: Céline BERNABÉ, Kevin MACEDOT | Short | Guadeloupe | 28 MIN

A woman artist, struggling with a mental illness following her mother's death, tries to overcome society's judgment and the obstacles caused by her health condition, to regain custody of her daughter.

"AFTER THOUGHTS"

Dir: Cortez Mack | Short | USA | 10 MIN

An inspirational story about PTSD awareness

HEAT OF THE BORDER

Dir: Robert Rafael dos Santos | Documentary | 19 MIN

This film addresses the difficulties faced by two immigrant families in Foz do Iguaçu, a city known for its rich linguistic and cultural diversity. Through stories, the film follows the challenges of these families. Even in a multicultural city like Foz do Iguaçu, bridges to true integration can be difficult to build.

CRUZANDO EL DARIÉN

Dir: Xochil Pamela Vergara | Documentary | Panama (2025) | 20 MIN

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 30 | 6:30PM

HARM IN THE WATER

Dir: Kendall Moore | Documentary | USA (2025) | 90 MIN

HARM IN THE WATER delves into the critical issue of water pollution affecting Black communities along the Mississippi River. This documentary weaves together historical context, scientific insights, and the urgent call for environmental justice

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 9 | 6:30PM

MERCY

Dir: Phillip Szporer | Short | Canada (2025) | 15 MIN

This poetic short film voices issues of race, place, and identity, and dives into the double-voiced discourses of a particular Black literary tradition concerning the complication of the slave learning their captor's language.

FROM RODEO TO POLO: THE FIRST HBCU POLO TEAM

Dir: Kendi King | Documentary | USA | 9 MIN

The first Black collegiate polo team at Morehouse College chases national USPA certification, training a rag-tag team of charismatic cowboys into pioneering polo stars.

"RUNAWAY"

Dir: Donya A.R Conley | Short | USA | 10 MIN

Ms. Edna spends the night in the police station based on the assumption of her daughter's disappearance. She begins to plead with the Officer who gives her a hard time regarding the justification for her daughter's missing.

FOOD FOR THE SOUL

Dir: Chisom Chieke | Short | USA | 17 MIN

As cultures clash and insufferable parents meddle, a first generation Nigerian American and her Black American boyfriend must decide between being true to themselves or trying to live up to their families' expectations...a risk to their happily ever after.

HARLEM TO HARVARD

Dir: Zuzelin Martin | Short | USA | 14 MIN

An inspirational short documentary about a teacher, Edouard E. Plummer, who helped over 600 students from Harlem attend the most elite boarding schools in the country creating countless ripples of generational impact.

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 14 | 12:05PM



PHOTO CREDIT: THE MOST QUIET NOISE

MAMAYA

Dir: Prince Adablah | Short | Ghana/Guinea (2025) | 10 MIN

A fearless Guinean drummer and singer breaks centuries-old taboos to rise on the world stage—and brings her rhythm to Austin in a powerful journey of resistance and rhythm.

MAWONS - SOLITUDE (MAROONS)

Dirs: Bp Neneb, Christophe Agelan | Short | Martinique (2025) | 19 MIN

In 1802, after Napoleon reinstated slavery in the French colonies, escaped Black and mixed-race slaves fled into the forests of the Caribbean. These maroons formed hidden mountain communities. Among them, Solitude, a young woman of mixed heritage, seeks refuge. But one day beneath the canopy, a violent encounter will force her to confront her past—and shape the future of their fragile resistance. Inspired by a true story of resilience and sacrifice.

THE MOST QUIET NOISE

Dir: Joanne Flovella | Short | USA (2025) | 7 MIN

A young woman perpetually distracted by social media is set on a new course when she finds out she gains a supernatural ability.

LOCUS

Dir: C S DeBose | Short | USA (2025) | 6 MIN

A poetic narrative of a woman's reluctant search to find a tree that may turn out to be a site of power - connecting her to the family she drifted away from long ago. Told as a series of inner musings and phone calls.

GUARDIAN OF THE WELL

Dirs: Bentley Brown, Tahir Ben Mahamat Zene | Documentary | Chad (2025) | 5 MIN

Amid a historic drought in the southern reaches of Chad's Sahara Desert, a well-goer recalls his lost cattle and contemplates his plans for a change in livelihood.

A NEW CREATION STORY

Dirs: Dane Figueroa Edidi, J Mase III, Audria LB | Short | USA (2025) | 5 MIN

Since the ancient world, Creation Stories have been told to help us not simply imagine the way the world was formed, but our divine place within it. Blending animation, poetry, music, stories rooted in various cultures and live elements, A New Creation Story celebrates Black Trans community and retells the making of the Universe — taking us on a journey from before the first molecule was crafted until the precise moment where everything has truly come to be.

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 21 | 6:30PM



PHOTO CREDIT: MEGNOT (TWO HEARTS)

MEGNOT (TWO HEARTS)

Dir: Abel Regasa | Feature | Ethiopia (2025) | 97 MIN

MEGNOT is a compelling drama that bridges the personal and the universal. Set against the breathtaking landscapes of Arba Minch and the vibrant streets of Addis Ababa, it follows a young woman navigating the tension between tradition and modernity as she faces a forced marriage imposed by her grandfather, challenging societal norms in search of love and self-determination. A chance meeting with a stranger on his own journey of healing sparks a bond that reshapes their futures.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 30 | 6:30PM

MUZIZI

Dir: Jamila Pomeroy | Documentary | Canada (2025) | 85 MIN

MUZIZI takes viewers on a cross-cultural, multigenerational journey into Vancouver's African diasporic culinary scene. Through cooking segments, commentary, and interviews, the film, guided by director Jamila Pomeroy, explores cultural preservation, sovereignty, and food security, showcasing powerful stories of immigration, resilience, and joy.

HOMECOMING OPEN HOUSE: SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 8 | 12:05PM

PAW PAW & DAYJA

Dir: Gregory Alan Williams | Feature | USA (2025) | 60 MIN

PAW PAW and DAYJA follows the adventures of a Bigfoot obsessed ten-year old who, with the help of her widowed grandfather, learns that each of us sees the world a little differently and that everyone's view has value.

SPECIAL SCREENING: THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 20 | 6:30PM



LUMBEELAND

Dir: Montana Cypress | Short | USA (2024) | 30 MIN

LUMBEELAND follows one family that must reckon with the harm they have caused, discovering what happens when we reap what we sow. A tragic tale exploring how we hurt the ones we love, even when we want to protect them - that anger and greed lead us to betray those we are closest to, even ourselves.

This special screening, cosponsored with the American Indian Center, features *Lumbeeland* Writer Malinda Maynor Lowery.



**SONJA HAYNES STONE CENTER FOR
RESEARCH IN BLACK CULTURE AND HISTORY**

RSVP NOW



The Film Festival and all events associated with it are free and open to the public. The Stone Center is ADA compliant. Free visitor parking is available in the Bell Tower parking deck behind the Stone Center after 5 PM. Call for directions and for visitor parking before 5 PM.

The Sonja Haynes Stone Center For Research In Black Culture And History



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Our Mission

To encourage and support the critical examination of all dimensions of African American and African diaspora cultures through sustained and open discussion, dialogue and debate, and to enhance the intellectual and socio-cultural climate at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and in communities beyond the campus boundaries. Our work and activities support the university's objectives to “serve as a center for research, scholarship and creativity and to teach a diverse community of undergraduate, graduate and professional students to become the next generation of leaders” and to “extend knowledge-based services and other resources of the university to the citizens of North Carolina and their institutions to enhance the quality of life for all people in the state.”

