

Fall 2026

DIASPORA FESTIVAL OF BLACK AND INDEPENDENT FILM



PHOTO CREDIT: MOVING MASCULINITY



The University of
North Carolina
at Chapel Hill

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 2026 festival will present 13 films of all genres selected from hundreds of global submissions.



PHOTO CREDIT: VIVA YURUMANGUÍ

THURSDAY, SEPT. 10 | 6:30 PM | HITCHCOCK ROOM



PHOTO CREDIT: THE DEVIL WEARS MADRAS

THE DEVIL WEARS MADRAS

Dir.: Céline Bernabé, Kévin Macedot | Guadeloupe | Narrative | 47 MIN

A young man from Guadeloupe who left for France to study decides to return home with his partner, born in the Paris suburbs and originally from Martinique. But once they arrive, the young man's mother intrudes into their relationship and turns their lives upside down. Nothing goes as planned. Excitement gives way to disillusionment. How far can one go for love?

PRAYER

Dir.: Sofia Geweiler | Portugal | Short | 14 MIN

In a techno club in Lisbon, immigrant worker Abdul is on a video call with his wife, Aliyah, who is going into labor and begs him to be present, at least over the phone. At the same time, his colleague Maria desperately needs his help. Caught between work's demands and his son's birth, Abdul grapples with the fear of losing his job and the challenge of becoming a father from afar. On top of all that, he fights with his strict father-in-law for his right to perform the sacred tradition of reciting the Adhan for his newborn son.

DRIFTWOOD

Dir.: Temi "TMI" Oluokun | Nigeria, United Kingdom | Short Narrative | 7 MIN

Caught between her late father's Yoruba traditions and her mother's devout Christianity, a young woman embarks on a mystical journey along the English coast.

THURSDAY, SEPT. 17 | 6:30 PM | HITCHCOCK ROOM

WASHED, CLEANSED AND BURIED

Dir.: Sive Mbamatye | South Africa | Doc | 7 MIN

African cultural practices have many rules when it comes to the rituals that surround death. But what if the death is not what it seems?

WHAT WE CARRY

Dir.: Karl-Mary Akre | United States | Short Narrative | 14 MIN

Stranded in the rural American South, an Ivorian couple must fight to escape an unknown predator.

TALE OF A...SUNDOWN TOWN

Dir.: Shadrach Kugbay Akoi | United States | Short Narrative | 20 MIN

A narrator tells the story of a spring break road trip, 5 HBCU College students take a detour to visit one of their grandparents. After an encounter at a gas station, they learn it's a SUNDOWN Town and must survive the night at the grandparents' house.

THE GARDEN OF HEALING

Dir. Ozor Uche | Nigeria | Short Narrative | 31 MIN

A wealthy Yoruba family is nearly torn apart from within by grief, anger, resentment and waning intimacy... then a young boy takes matters into his own hands and accepts help from a mysterious stranger.

THURSDAY, OCT. 1 | 6:30 PM | HITCHCOCK ROOM



HEADLINER FILM

MOVING MASCULINITY

Dir. Esther A. Armah | Ghana, USA | Doc | 58 MIN

MOVING MASCULINITY is a film on memory, masculinity, race and Emotional Justice, narrated and directed by Esther A. Armah. Weaving poetry, sound, story and ceremony, it brings together Black men and boys aged 16 to 60 from myriad professions - from educators and artists to activists, writers and community leaders.

THURSDAY, OCT. 22 | 6:30 PM | HITCHCOCK ROOM

REVERENCE: RECLAIMING THE FORGOTTEN

Dir.: John Mills | United States | Short Docu | 33 MIN

A Connecticut genealogist works to reclaim the lives of African Americans erased from history, reuniting descendants, restoring memorials, and bringing forgotten stories back into the American narrative.

WAY BACK HOME

Dir. Chad B. Hamilton | United States | Short Narrative | 20 MIN

Jared and Van inherit their grandmother's dilapidated brownstone. The siblings have opposing views on what to do with the house until a surprise offer forces one to make arrangements behind the other's back.



PHOTO CREDIT: GOOD HOME TRAINING

GOOD HOME TRAINING

Dirs. Evelyn Brooks, Riche Holmes Grant | United States | Short Doc | 12 MIN

Good Home Training explores the legacy, resistance, and joy Black women have long cultivated in domestic spaces. Through storytelling, a shared meal, and a hands-on baking session, the film honors Malinda Russell—believed to be the first Black person to self-publish a cookbook – while connecting her legacy to modern creatives.

THURSDAY | NOV. 5 | 12:05 PM | HITCHCOCK ROOM

VIVA YURUMANGUÍ

Dirs.: Emma Christopher, Sergio Leyva Seiglie | Colombia | Doc | 80 MIN

The people of Yurumanguí palenque in Colombia have a 300-year chain of struggle stretching back to Africa. As their determination to live freely on their own terms is threatened more than ever, a group heads to a major music competition to sing for peace and remind the outside world that they still exist.



TUESDAY, NOV. 10 | 6:30 PM | HITCHCOCK ROOM

ESEUSEU: THE ETERNAL SONG

Dir.: Zaya Benazzo, Maurizio Benazzo | Kenya, United States | Doc | 61 MIN

Land: Olosho le Maa (Kenya)

The Eternal Song: Eseuseu opens a portal into the ancestral wisdom and Indigenous traditions of the Olosho le Maa community in Kenya, calling us to remember, grieve, heal, and act.



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."