



Black American Cinema (AFI Film Readers)

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This is the first major collection of criticism on Black American cinema. From the pioneering work of Oscar Micheaux and Wallace Thurman to the Hollywood success of Spike Lee, Black American filmmakers have played a remarkable role in the development of the American film, both independent and mainstream.

In this volume, the work of early Black filmmakers is given serious attention for the first time. Individual essays consider what a Black film tradition might be, the relation between Black American filmmakers and filmmakers from the diaspora, the nature of Black film aesthetics, the artist's place within the community, and the representation of a Black imaginary. *Black American Cinema* also uncovers the construction of Black sexuality on screen, the role of Black women in independent cinema, and the specific question of Black female spectatorship. A lively and provocative group of essays debate the place and significance of Spike Lee

Of crucial importance are the ways in which the essays analyze those Black directors who worked for Hollywood and whose films are simplistically dismissed as sell-outs, to the Hollywood "master narrative," as well as those "crossover" filmmakers whose achievements entail a surreptitious infiltration of the studios. *Black American Cinema* demonstrates the wealth of the Black contribution to American film and the complex course that contribution has taken.

Contributors: Houston Baker, Jr., Toni Cade Bambara, Amiri Baraka, Jacquie Bobo, Richard Dyer, Jane Gaines, Henry Louis Gates, Jr., Ron Green, Ed Guerrero, bell hooks, Phyllis Klotman, Ntongele Masilela, Clyde Taylor, and Michele Wallace.

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