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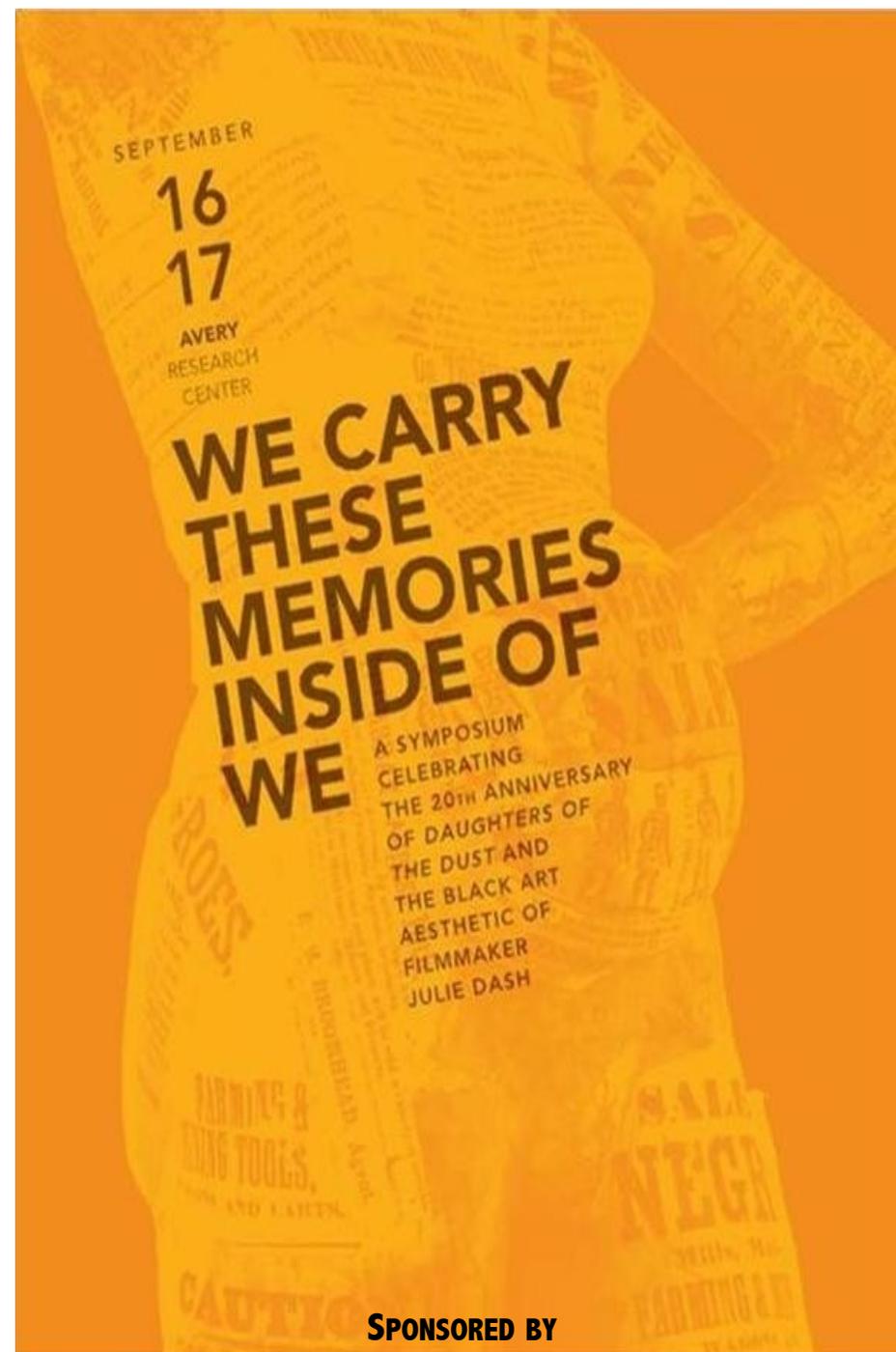
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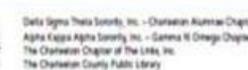
Julie Dash

“We Carry These Memories Inside of We” Symposium Moderators and Volunteers

Avery Research Center Staff and Graduate Students



SPONSORED BY



Yvonne Welbon

Dear Symposium Participants,

Welcome to The College of Charleston's Avery Research Center for African American History and Culture! We are delighted you have joined us for our celebration of the 20th anniversary of Julie Dash's seminal film, *Daughters of the Dust*.

We would like to thank the dynamic executive leadership of The College of Charleston—President P. George Benson, Provost George Hynd, and Dean David Cohen for their continued support of The Avery Research Center and The African-American Studies program. Their support of important programs such as this one exemplifies their commitment to our collective examination of how African-American experiences shape American history overall.

Twenty years ago, Julie Dash broke new ground in the American film industry when she became the first African-American woman to write, direct, and produce a film that opened with a nationwide release. Dash, who studied film at the University of California at Los Angeles, broke with American tradition by producing a film replete with lush images of black beauty, sensuality, and Gullah family traditions set against the backdrop of the opulent Lowcountry landscape. Indeed, with *Daughters of the Dust*, Dash offered the country a fresh way to see African Americans.

The heart of the Peasant family story is in many ways the quest for the American dream. Having persevered through decades of subjugation, first as enslaved Africans, then as marginalized “saltwater Negroes” of the Gullah Sea Islands, the family dreams of opportunity and self-determination, having been disillusioned by the failings of Reconstruction.

In essence, we are all Nana's offspring. Her wisdom, her words, and her strength are indeed what “we carry inside of we!”

Thank you,

Patricia Williams Lessane & Conseula Francis

Program Cover Art: *Unspeakable Horrors* Bernice Mitchell Tate
(57” decoupage sculptural collage)

Winner of the “We Carry These Memories Inside of We” Juried Art Exhibition

Yvonne Welbon is a Chicago-based, award-winning independent filmmaker and freelance producer. Since 1991, she has made eight films and produced a dozen others. Her independent films have screened on PBS, Starz/Encore, TV-ONE, IFC, Bravo, the Sundance Channel, and in over one hundred film festivals around the world.

Living with Pride: Ruth Ellis @ 100 has won ten best documentary awards—including the GLAAD Media Award for Outstanding Documentary. Her ongoing Sundance Documentary Fellow project is *Sisters in Cinema*, a documentary, Web site and forthcoming book based on her doctoral dissertation about the history of African-American women feature-film directors.

Her freelance producer projects include: John Pierson's *Split Screen*, Zeinabu Irene Davis's Sundance dramatic competition feature *Compensation*, Cheryl Dunye's HBO film *Stranger Inside*, Thomas Allen Harris's Berlin International Film Festival award-winning documentary *É Minha Cara/That's My Face*, and Catherine Crouch's directorial debut *Stray Dogs*, starring Guinevere Turner.

Yvonne Welbon received an undergraduate degree in History from Vassar College. Thereafter, she spent six years in Taipei, Taiwan, where she taught English, learned Mandarin Chinese, and founded and published a premiere arts magazine. She returned to the United States and completed a Master of Fine Arts from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and a PhD from Northwestern University. She is also a graduate of the American Film Institute's Directing Workshop for Women. She is currently the Department Chair and Assistant Professor of Journalism and Media Studies at Bennett College in Greensboro, North Carolina.

FILM SCREENING OF *THE CINEMATIC JAZZ OF JULIE DASH* BY YVONNE WELBON
SMART Classroom—Avery Research Center (1st Floor)
All Day

Julie Dash

Writer, producer and director **Julie Dash** received her B.A. degree in film production from City Colleges of New York and her MFA degree in film and television at the University of California Los Angeles. Dash was also a two-year Conservatory Fellow (Producing/Writing) at the American Film Institute's Center for Advanced Film Studies.

Prior to *Daughters of the Dust*, Dash wrote and produced a promotional documentary for the New York Urban Coalition called *Working Models for Success*; directed *Four Women*, a "choreopoem" based on the song of the same title by singer Nina Simone; and directed the film, *Diary of an African Nun*, which was shown at the Los Angeles Film Exposition and won her a Director's Guild Award for student filmmaking.

In 1983, Dash directed *Illusions*, a short film about a young African American woman passing for a white executive assistant in 1940s Hollywood. The film won her the 1989 Jury's prize for Best Film of the Decade by the Black Filmmaker Foundation.

Dash received her highest acclaim for the 1991 film, *Daughters of the Dust*, an original story and screenplay. The release of the film marked Dash as the first African American woman to have a full-length general theatrical release in the United States. In 1999, the 25th annual Newark Black Film Festival honored *Daughters of the Dust* as being one of the most important cinematic achievements in black cinema in the 20th century. In 2004, The Library of Congress placed *Daughters of the Dust* on the National Film Registry. This distinguished film joined 400 other American made films that are being preserved and protected as National Treasures.

The novel, *Daughters of the Dust* was published by Dutton Books in 1997; in paperback, Penguin Book. Although the novel is the continuing story of the Peazant family from the movie, and Dash wanted to have the novel titled *Geechee Recollections*, when going to press the publisher chose to go with the well-known title from the original movie.

Dash has directed multiple music videos, television commercial spots, shorts and long form movies for cable and network television including the double NAACP Award-winning CBS network television movie, *The Rosa Parks Story*, *Funny Valentines*, *Love Song*, *Incognito* and "Sax Cantor Riff" a segment of HBO's *SUBWAYStories: Tales from the Underground*. She has directed music videos for music artists including Raphael Saadiq, Tony, Toni, Tone, Keb 'Mo, Peabo Bryson, Adriana Evans, Sweet Honey in the Rock, and Tracey Chapman's "Give Me One More Reason".

Friday, September 16, 2011

8:30am–9:00AM: REGISTRATION

9:00AM—WELCOME

Provost George Hynd (College of Charleston)

9:05AM—OPENING ADDRESS

Dr. Patricia Williams Lessane (Executive Director, Avery Research Center, College of Charleston)

9:10AM—"WHY WE ARE HERE"

Dr. Conseula Francis (Program Director, African-American Studies Program, College of Charleston)

**9:15AM–10:45AM: SESSION I (CONSEULA FRANCIS, MODERATOR)
Dreaming Julie Dash: Situating *Daughters of the Dust* within
the Black Film Aesthetic**

NANA PEAZANT'S HANDS: INDIGO, COLONIAL BOUNDARY BLURRING, AND
HUMANISM IN DASH'S *DAUGHTERS OF THE DUST*
Tiffany Lethabo King (University of Maryland)

FROM EXALTED TO ABJECT: FRAMING BEAUTY AND BLACK WOMEN IN
AFRICAN-AMERICAN CINEMA
Cauleen Smith (University of California—San Diego)

REMEMBERING THE PAST, SEEING THE FUTURE: JULIE DASH'S *DAUGHTERS OF
THE DUST*
Paula J. Massood (Brooklyn College, CUNY)

10:45AM–11:00AM: BREAK

The Bottle Tree

11:00AM–12:30PM: SESSION II

In Search of Our Mothers: Movement and Migration in *Daughters of the Dust* (David Moscovitz, Moderator)

TRAVELING WITH YELLOW MARY: GULLAH CULTURE, MIGRATION, AND THE
SENSORY IN JULIE DASH'S *DAUGHTERS OF THE DUST*

Katie White (University of Maryland)

IN SEARCH OF SOLID GROUND: ORAL HISTORIES OF THE GREAT
MIGRATION—FROM THE CAROLINAS TO NEW ENGLAND

Marcella De Veaux (California State University)

CONSCIOUS DAUGHTERS: PSYCHOLOGICAL MIGRATION, INDIVIDUATION, AND
THE DECLARATION OF BLACK FEMALE IDENTITY IN *DAUGHTERS OF THE DUST*

Sharon D. Johnson (Pacifica Graduate Institute)

12:30PM–12:45PM: BREAK/LUNCH BEGINS

12:45PM–1:45PM: KEYNOTE LUNCHEON ADDRESS

**“BEHIND THE SCREEN: THE MAKING, MARKETING, AND DISTRIBUTION OF
DAUGHTERS OF THE DUST”**

YVONNE WELBON (BENNETT COLLEGE FOR WOMEN)

1:45PM–2:00PM: BREAK

ADINKRA SYMBOL OF KNOWLEDGE AND LIFELONG LEARNING



According to primarily West-African traditions, bottle trees are used to keep evil spirits—“haints” or “wooly boogers,” for example—out of one’s home. They even are effective on a particularly nasty goblin known as a “plat eye”—in Gullah culture, the evil spirit of someone improperly buried...

The spirits come out at dusk and are beckoned inside by slanting light refracted through the sparkling blue bottles. Once inside, the spirits are trapped. Some say they are vaporized when the bottles are flooded with morning sun. Others say the spirits simply cannot escape the bottle and that you can hear them moaning in agony when the wind blows through the tree branches.

Though today the trees are adorned with bottles of many colors, blue is particularly popular and particularly true to the tree’s origins. Rosalyn Browne of the Penn Center in Beaufort, SC says the color blue long has been believed to ward off evil spirits.

In fact, the aspect of using colors and symbols—related to good spirits and bad sprits—came with the Africans themselves, as they came to the Americas from Africa or the Caribbean.

Art taken from *The Beaufort Gazette* December 11, 2009:

<http://www.islandpacket.com/2009/12/11/1066748/blue-bottle-trees-a-throwback.html#ixzz1XxlSSsNM>

Arianne King-Comer is a local Charleston artist who also creates bottle trees and looks upon bottle trees as an expression of spiritual protection and practice from West Africa that has rooted itself in American folklore.

*The impact of the bottle tree in *Daughters of the Dust* inspired me to create at least several trees in collaboration of other artists in the Lowcountry.*

**FILM SCREENING OF *BOTTLE TREE* BY PORTIA COBB
SMART Classroom—Avery Research Center (1st Floor)
All Day**

12:15PM–12:30PM: BOTTLE TREE DEDICATION

Helen Phillips (Priestess)

12:30PM–12:45PM: BREAK/LUNCH BEGINS

12:45PM–1:45PM: KEYNOTE LUNCHEON ADDRESS
JULIE DASH (FILMMAKER, *DAUGHTERS OF THE DUST*)

1:45PM–2:00PM: BREAK

2:00PM–3:15PM: SESSION VIII (PATRICIA W. LESSANE, MODERATOR)
Reflections: “We Carry These Memories Inside of We”

Julie Dash (Filmmaker)

M. Cochise Anderson (Actor, St. Julien Lastchild)

Vertamae Grosvenor (Actress, Hairbraider)

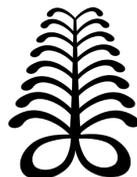
Tommy Redmond Hicks (Actor, Mr. Snead)

Alva Rogers (Eula)

3:15PM–7:00PM: BREAK

7:00PM: FILM SCREENING OF *DAUGHTERS OF THE DUST*
Hampton Park—Charleston, SC

AYA: ADINKRA SYMBOL OF IMPORTANCE OF ENDURANCE AND RESOURCEFULNESS



2:00PM–3:30PM: SESSION III (JOY VANDERVORT-COBB, MODERATOR)
How I’ve Come by My Name

THE FAMILIAR: WHO I KNOW I AM

Portia Cobb (University of Wisconsin—Milwaukee)

FROM EXALTED TO ABJECT: FRAMING BEAUTY AND BLACK WOMEN IN
AFRICAN-AMERICAN CINEMA

Cauleen Smith (University of California—San Diego)

WHERE THE SPIRIT MOVES

Juanita Anderson (Wayne State University)

EMPOWERING THE EYE: THE LEGACY OF TONI CADE BAMBARA, MUSIC, AND
THE *DAUGHTERS OF THE DUST*

Zeinabu Irene Davis (University of California—San Diego)

3:30PM–3:45PM: BREAK

3:45PM–5:15PM: SESSION IV (TINA ROSCA, MODERATOR)
Gullah Art: Presentation, Preservation, and Interpretation

Jonathan Green (Independent Artist)

Arianne King-Comer (Independent Artist)

Ade Ajani Ofunniyin (Anthropologist and Independent Artist)

Dale Rosengarten (College of Charleston)

Henrietta Snype (Sweetgrass Basket maker)

Thomasena Stokes-Marshall (Sweetgrass Cultural Arts Festival Association)

5:15PM–5:30PM: BREAK

Saturday, September 17, 2011

5:30PM–6:30PM: SESSION V (JON HALE, MODERATOR) Novel Interpretations of *Daughters of the Dust*

“I ARRIVED LATE TO THIS BOOK”: TEACHING SOCIOLOGY WITH JULIE DASH’S
*DAUGHTERS OF THE DUST: THE NOVEL**

Karen M. Gagné (University of Wisconsin–Platteville)

*Previously published by *Human Architecture: Journal of the Sociology of Self-Knowledge* 6(2):39–72 (2008)

MOTHERLANDS AS GENDERED SPACES: IDENTITY AND WHOLENESS IN JULIE
DASH’S *DAUGHTERS OF THE DUST*

Silvia Pilar Castro-Borrego (University of Málaga–Spain)

6:30PM–7:00PM: BREAK/RECEPTION BEGINS

7:00PM–8:30PM: RECEPTION

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SANKOFA: ADINKRA SYMBOL OF IMPORTANCE OF LEARNING FROM THE PAST



9:00AM–10:30AM: SESSION VI (BERNARD POWERS, MODERATOR) From *The Color Purple* to *For Colored Girls*: Film as the New Literary Genre

VISUAL LITERACY OF BLACK PEOPLES: SEEN AND HEARD FROM AFRICAN
ORAL TRADITIONS TO AFRICAN AND DIASPORA CINEMA

Nicole Shivers (Smithsonian National Museum of African Art)

FROM SLAVERY TO THE AGE OF TECHNOLOGY: THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL
CONDITIONS AND LITERACY RATES AMONGST AFRICAN AMERICANS

Pier Penic (Culture at Home)

POLEMIC PERSPECTIVE ON THE VISUAL TRANSLATIONS OF *THE COLOR PURPLE*,
BELOVED, *THEIR EYES WERE WATCHING GOD*, AND *PRECIOUS*

Robert A. Lee (Independent Education Consultant)

10:30AM–10:45AM: BREAK

10:45PM–12:15PM: SESSION VII (JON HALE, MODERATOR) Weaving a Tapestry: *Daughters of the Dust* and Material Culture

“DECORATING THE DECORATIONS”: *DAUGHTERS OF THE DUST* AND THE
AESTHETICS OF THE QUILT

Corrie Claiborne (Morehouse College)

DAUGHTERS OF THE DUST AND THE AESTHETICS OF RECOLLECTION: JULIE
DASH, LORNA SIMPSON, KARA WALKER, AND CARRIE MAE WEEMS

Lokeilani Kaimana (University of Texas–Austin)