



Black Film Center/Archive

Phil Moore and the Film Industry

[Full powerpoint available upon request]

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Wells Library, Rm. 044

Appt.: M-F @ 9-5



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What Is an Archives?

- Acquire historic documents
- Protect and preserve documents
- Make documents discoverable
- Provide access to researchers, teachers, community members, and the public.



Unprocessed archival collection



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Why do this?

- Preservation of cultural heritage
- Documents the past
- Primary sources
- Sometimes the only source on a topic
- Illuminate gaps in secondary sources
- Illuminates connections between past and present



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Julie Dash's *Daughters of the Dust*
(1992)

Beyoncé's *Lemonade* (2016)





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History of the Black Film Center/Archive

- Founded in 1981 by Dr. Phyllis Klotman
- IU Professor of African and African American Diaspora Studies
- Research area in film but had problem locating sources
- Couldn't find a Black Film Archives, so she decided to build her own



BFC/A founding director Phyllis Klotman with former US poet laureate, Maya Angelou



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Formats

- Films (16 mm and 35 mm)
- Posters
- Lobby cards
- Pressbooks and press kits
- Oral history, interview, and lecture recordings with filmmakers and artists
- Papers of filmmakers
- Organizational records (Black Filmmakers Hall of Fame)

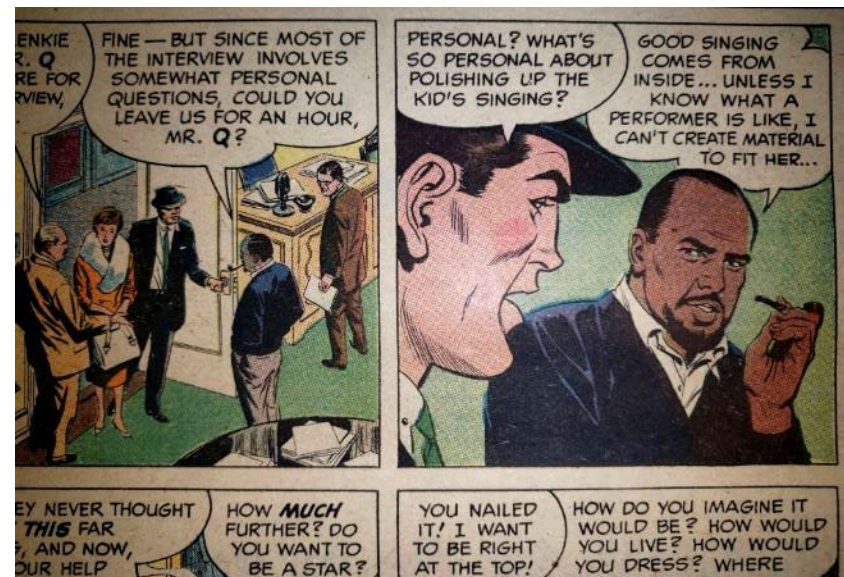




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Phil Moore Collection, 1918-1987

- Invisible roles
 - Composers, lyricists, arrangers, vocal coaches, rehearsal pianists, ghost performers
- How did minorities enter the film industry?
- How were minorities treated in Hollywood?
- What are additional challenges they faced and continue to face?





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Who Was Phil Moore?

- Dorothy Dandridge
- Lena Horne
- Marilyn Monroe
- Judy Garland
- Frank Sinatra
- Ava Gardner
- Quincy Jones
- Gladys Bentley
- Goldie Hawn
- Ethel Waters
- Lavern Baker
- Bobby Short
- Alan Freed
- Diahann Carol

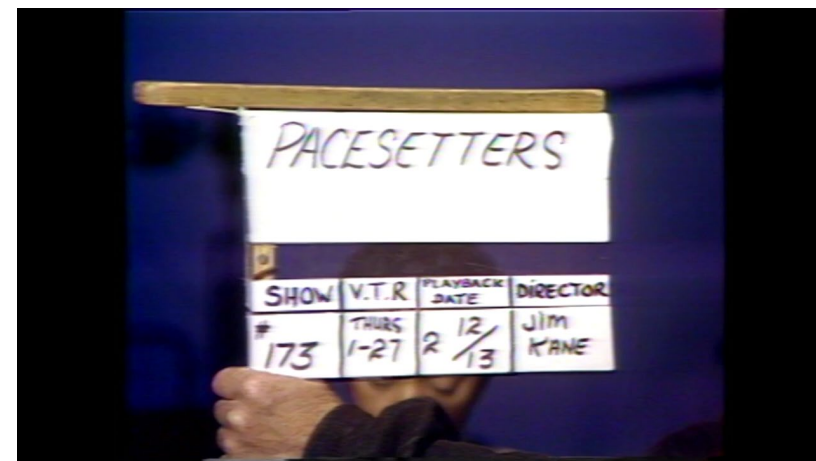




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Who Was Phil Moore?

Adopted by upper middle class black family in 1918 and raised in all-white neighborhood in Portland, Oregon.
Classically trained.



Began playing Seattle speakeasies and burlesque house after the Seattle stock market crash.





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How Did Minorities Enter the Film Industry?

- Talent – Classical, jazz, improvisation, site reading
- Determination – Moore returned to MGM's music department for days waiting for job interview
- Musical performance as a point for crossover
- Trail blazing for other performers and actors/actresses
- Large talent pool in LA due to concert/variety show circuit



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How Were Minorities Treated in Hollywood?

- Didn't receive credit for their work
Ex. *Dumbo*
- Relegated to disposable roles
Ex. Southern censorship
- Relegated to invisible roles
Ex. Lena Horne and Ava Gardner in *Showboat* (1951)
- Active discrimination and segregation
Ex. Phil Moore leaving MGM





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What Are Some of the Major Challenges?

- Stereotypes
 - The Mammy, Uncle Toms, Mulattas, Savages, Sapphires
- Race Bechdel Test
 - Are there 2+ named people of color?
 - Do they talk to each other?
 - Do they talk about something other than White people?
 - Do they survive to the end of the film?



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What Are Some of the Major Challenges?

- Musical pigeon-holing
 - What genres are composers and musicians asked to create?
 - Are they asked to compose for films and TV programs that don't feature an all-black cast or specifically black subject matter?
- Distribution
 - Are they more likely to be rejected for distribution?
 - Are they more likely to be targeted for distribution solely to black audiences?



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