

RiverRun's free discussions, panel events include black pros

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

The RiverRun International Film Festival will hold free tribute, discussion and panel events during the upcoming festival April 16-26, starting today, Thursday.

These free events featuring conversations with renowned filmmakers and educational panels include:

NC Filmmakers Panel, Sunday, April 19 / 1 p.m. / at a/perture 3

Sit down with some of the N.C. filmmakers from RiverRun features and shorts screened at this year's Festival to further discuss their films and filmmaking in North Carolina. Presented in conjunction with the Made in Winston-Salem film series coordinated by a/perture cinema, New Winston Museum, and Piedmont Triad Film Commission.

Spotlight Conversation with Charles Burnett & Robert Townsend

Monday, April 20 / 6 p.m. / Milton Rhodes Center for the Arts - Mountcastle Forum

In conjunction with RiverRun's 2015 Spotlight on Black American Cinema 1971-1991, a six-film series exclusively featuring cinematically significant films directed by black filmmakers, RiverRun will also host a discussion with Charles Burnett and Robert Townsend, two of the Spotlight film selection directors.

Everything But the Burden: Black Film & the Politics of Representation Panel

Tuesday, April 21 / 7 p.m. / Winston-Salem State University - Diggs Gallery

As part of RiverRun's 2015 Spotlight program on Black American Cinema, this public conversation panel will bring together artists and scholars to discuss the complex issues around race and representation in film and in filmmaking. Hosted by Winston-Salem State University.

Pitch Fest & Panel

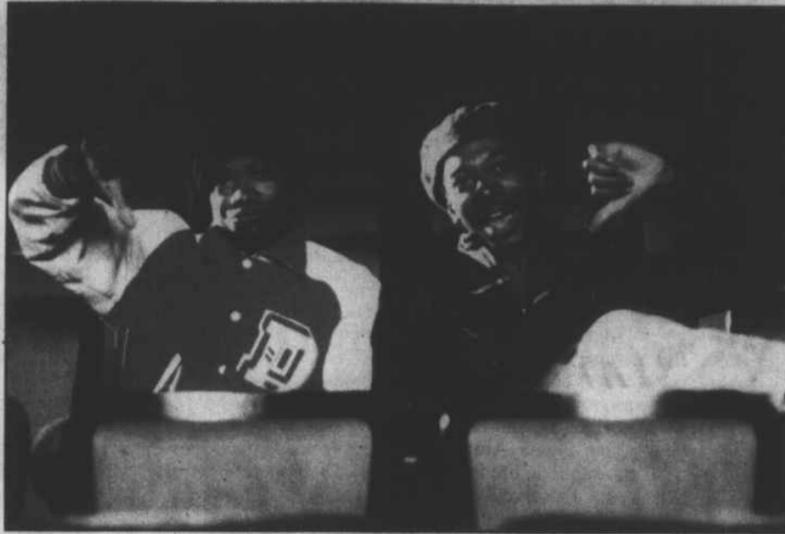
Friday, April 24 / 10 a.m. / Hanesbrands Theatre

In an effort to further promote the development of new filmmaking talent, RiverRun is again partnering with universities around the state to present the annual Pitch Fest competition. Pre-selected student filmmakers will pitch their documentary shorts projects to a panel of industry experts, receive advice on how to proceed, and vie for the chance to win prizes and industry recognition. This panel is free and open to the public. Sponsored by Wells Fargo.

Conversation with Stanley Nelson (Master of Cinema Award)

Friday, April 24 / 2 p.m. / Milton Rhodes Center for the Arts - Mountcastle Forum

RiverRun will host an on-stage moderated conversation and tribute to award-winning director Stanley Nelson, Jr. (Freedom Summer, Freedom Riders, The Murder Of Emmett Till) with a film clip



Robert Townsend, right, starred in and directed "Hollywood Shuffle."

overview of his career following at a Conversation with Stanley Nelson, following the screening of "Black Panthers: Vanguard Of The Revolution."

Conversation with Heidi Ewing & Rachel Grady (Emerging Masters Awards)

April 25 / 1 p.m. / Milton Rhodes Center for the Arts - Mountcastle Forum

Directing duo Rachel Grady and Heidi Ewing of Loki Films will be honored with RiverRun Emerging Masters Awards at the Festival. RiverRun will host a tribute ceremony, with an on-stage moderated conversation with the honorees and a film clip overview of their accomplished careers.

Also, as part of its six-film Spotlight on Black American Cinema from 1971-1991, exclusively featuring films directed by black filmmakers, RiverRun will feature the following films (Tickets are required for film screenings. Purchasing information is below):

"Shaft," 7:30 p.m. Friday, April 17 | UNCSA Gold

Director: Gordon Parks
USA / 1971 / 100 MIN. / Rating: R / 35mm

Private detective John Shaft is a bad mother-well, you know the rest—in this touchstone of the blaxploitation genre by director Gordon Parks, featuring a classic score by Isaac Hayes. Hired by a Harlem mobster to find his kidnapped daughter, Shaft enlists the help of gangsters and African nationalists to get the job done. Widely considered a prime example of the Blaxploitation genre, Shaft was selected in 2000 for preservation in the National Film Registry by the Library of Congress for being "culturally, historically, or aesthetically significant."

"Killer of Sheep," 7 p.m. Saturday, April 18 | UNCSA Gold

Director: Charles Burnett
Director Charles Burnett will attend

screening.
USA / 1979 / 83 + 10 MIN. / Rating: MT / 35mm

In this standout work of neorealism from Charles Burnett, a Watts, LA slaughterhouse worker must negotiate the neighborhood's retrograde influences and fight his own personal demons in order to keep from going under in the ghetto. Killer of Sheep was one of the first 50 films to be selected for the Library of Congress's National Film Registry and listed as one of the "100 Essential Films" by the National Society of Film Critics. The UCLA Film & Television Archives carefully restored the film on 35mm.

"She's Gotta Have It", 7 p.m. Sunday, April 19 | UNCSA Gold

Director: Spike Lee
USA / 1986 / 84 MIN. / Rating: R / 35mm

An early Spike Lee joint, She's Gotta Have It gets personal with Nola Darling, who's having simultaneous sexual relationships with three different men. All three fellows want her to commit solely to them, though Nola resists being "owned" by a single partner. As Spike Lee's first feature-length film as a writer and director, this film was the catalyst for the beginning of his influential career. It is also considered a landmark film in independent American cinema and was a welcome change in the representation of African-Americans in cinema.

"Hollywood Shuffle," 7:30 p.m. Friday, April 24 | UNCSA Gold

Director: Robert Townsend
Director and star Robert Townsend will attend screening.

USA / 1987 / 78 MIN. / Rating: R / 35mm

An actor limited to stereotypical roles because of his ethnicity, dreams of making it big as a highly respected performer. As he makes his rounds, the film takes a satirical look at African-American actors in Hollywood. Through comedy this film was

able to shine a much needed light on the lack of substantial roles for black actors and the misrepresentation of people of color in film and television ad was a resounding independent success, grossing more than \$5 million in the first 10 months of release.

"Daughters of the Dust," 7 p.m. Saturday, April 25 | UNCSA Gold I

Director: Julie Dash
USA / 1991 / 112 MIN. / Rating: MT / 35mm

Set in 1902, this film takes a languid look at the Gullah culture of the sea islands off the coast of South Carolina and Georgia. African folkways were maintained well into the 20th Century in this isolated region, and it was one of the last bastions of these mores in America.

As the first feature film by an African-American woman distributed by Hollywood theatrically in the United States, this film opened to great critical acclaim, played at Sundance and Toronto film festivals, and in 2004 was added the National Film Registry.

"Boyz n the Hood," 1:30 p.m. Sunday, April 26 | UNCSA Main

Director: John Singleton
USA / 1991 / 112 MIN. / Rating: R / 35mm

The film debut for both Ice Cube and Morris Chestnut, this life-in-the-hood drama highlights a group of interrelated subjects as they struggle to either accept or deny the fate of their South Central Los Angeles upbringing. Also starring Cuba Gooding, Jr., Laurence Fishburne, Nia Long and Angela Bassett. John Singleton was the first African-American nominated for an Academy Award for both Best Director and Best Original Screenplay.

Also, "David's Reverie," a short film by Neil Creque Williams, who is from Winston-Salem, will be shown 7 p.m. Sunday, April 19 at SECCA and 7:15 p.m. Friday, April 24 at Hanesbrands Theatre. In "David's Reverie," a jazz musician struggles to prevent his epilepsy diagnosis from derailing his emerging jazz career.

Tickets and information: RiverRun's Ticket Samplers, which include 10 film vouchers for the price of nine, are now on sale at the Stevens Center Box Office. General tickets can be purchased at the Stevens Center Box Office via www.river-runfilm.com or over the phone at 336-721-1945.

The RiverRun International Film Festival is a non-profit cultural organization dedicated to the role of cinema as a conduit of powerful ideas and diverse viewpoints. Founded in 1998, RiverRun is a competitive event that annually showcases new films from both established and emerging filmmakers around the world. Each spring, RiverRun screens new narrative, documentary, short, student and animated films, offering both audience and jury prizes in competition categories.

DCCC's spring fling brings back memories of the 1970s

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THOMASVILLE - Davidson County Community College students stepped back to the 1970s era of bellbottoms, flower children and peace signs during the annual Spring Fling celebration

sponsored by the college's Student Government Association held Wednesday, April 8, on the Davidson Campus.

"We always try to do something new for Spring Fling and thought dressing up for the '70s would be fun," says SGA President

Yesika Zelaya. "We hold these events for students to show that DCCC is more than just classrooms - it's a community."

Students, faculty and staff participated in activities such as guessing '70s television theme songs, bouncing through the

inflatable Ironman obstacle course, riding the self-propelled G-Force Twin Spin and mechanical bull, and on a more serious note, talking with representatives of four-year colleges concerning transfer options.

"I love Spring Fling. It gets more exciting every

year," said student Angela Handy. "The best part about the event is the mechanical bull. I love that bull!"

The Total Image Cosmetic Arts Club was one of the many student clubs and organizations raising funds for projects

and activities through sales of food and other items. The esthetics and cosmetology students contributed to the theme by selling floral head wreaths and bracelets that reflected the flower power culture of the decade.

Worst

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keeping struggling families in their homes.

***New assaults on reproductive freedom** - Will Pat McCrory get another chance to equivocate and waffle on his seemingly iron-clad 2012 campaign promise to support no further restrictions on a woman's right to obtain a safe, legal abortion? He will, if lawmakers move forward with recently introduced legislation to radically alter state law in a way that would make abortions almost completely inaccessible.

Go to <http://pulse.ncpolicy-watch.org/2015/04/02/new-legislation-would-all-but-end-access-to-safe-legal-abortions-in-north-carolina/> to read the list of "horribles" in the new legislation.

***Further degrading the environment** - On the "regulatory reform" front, there's the "Regulatory

Reform Act of 2015." As the good folks at the North Carolina League of Conservation Voters point out, this 34-page measure includes provisions:

*****...abolishing the Sedimentation Control Commission;** requiring the Coastal Resources Commission to relax its rules on those huge beachfront "sandbag" walls; repealing university energy audit requirements; creating a new loophole for polluters to get out of paying penalties by reporting their own violations; and other creative tools for fun, pollution, and profit."

***Reversing a 150-year-old ban on garnishment wages** - Quick: What's the best way to dramatically increase the number of North Carolinians who file bankruptcy each year? If you answered "allow credit card companies and predatory national 'debt buyer' outfits to garnish the wages of average people" give yourself a gold star.

As veteran Raleigh bankruptcy lawyer William

Brewer explained in this essay yesterday, a huge spike in bankruptcies is exactly what will happen if state lawmakers repeal a 150-year-old law that allows North Carolina families to avoid garnishment by run-of-the-mill creditors if the money in their bank accounts is necessary to meet basic family needs.

***Jacking up rates yet again on small, high interest loans** - And speaking of vulnerable consumers who stand to fall even further behind if some in the General Assembly get their way, don't forget the recent Senate proposal described in this Raleigh News & Observer article that would send already absurd interest rates on small loans into the stratosphere.

The proposal - which would drive the effective interest rates on some loans to 60 percent or more - is enough to make a body wonder how the bottom-feeding usurers behind it find the courage to look in the mirror each morning.

***Rewriting the U.S. Constitution** - Every time you start to think that the state's Tea Partying far right has been tamed by the corporate-funded politics calling the shots in Raleigh, you're brought back to reality by proposals like the one detailed in this recent Greensboro News & Record editorial. As the paper explained earlier last week:

"We thought the state legislature convened in Raleigh. Last week, it apparently met in Fantasy Land." How else to explain the House Judiciary I committee debating for an hour whether North Carolina should join the call for a 'Convention of the States' to discuss amendments to the U.S. Constitution that would limit the federal government's power?"

***Meddling in U.S. foreign policy** - And speaking of extreme, fringe ideas, one can always count on Lt. Governor Dan Forest and his friends to weigh in to keep things interesting. Three weeks ago, Forest

co-announced the introduction of legislation in the Senate (along with Senator Rick Gunn) that is billed as the "Iran Divestment Act." The proposal was clearly pushed forward as part of the far right's ongoing and often improper national resistance to the President's authority to conduct foreign policy in dealings with Iran. It's good to know that local conservative pols are still taking their marching orders from Fox News.

***Guns, guns and more guns!** - And in case you thought state leaders had succeeded in putting killing machines into every conceivable nook and cranny of the state, think again. A House proposal would make sure that guns could be lawfully brought to a host of new places by numerous people currently barred from doing so.

***Denying health care to hundreds of thousands of people** - And finally, no list of dreadful General Assembly actions and proposals would be close to complete without the

year's most obvious and destructive policy omission - the ongoing failure to close the Medicaid gap that is preventing hundreds of thousands of working people from securing decent and affordable health coverage. As was explained in a recent excellent article (<http://www.newsobserver.com/opinion/editorials/article17346896.html>), North Carolina's stubborn and ideologically based decision to turn down billions of federal dollars is literally costing us tens of thousands of jobs and bringing on the early deaths of thousands of people each year.

Send your suggestions for ideas and proposals that should have been included in this list to <http://pulse.ncpolicy-watch.org/>. We'll publish a supplemental list on The Progressive Pulse blog in the near future.

Rob Schofield is policy director for N.C. Policy Watch. Find his columns at <http://pulse.ncpolicy-watch.org/>.