

# U.S. Black Women Directors

FMS-0194-01

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This course examines the development of film- and video-making by Black women directors comparatively across geographic and historical contexts, tracing their connections to major debates in film studies. The course is not meant to be comprehensive. Rather, we will direct ourselves toward intensive study of a selection of work by Black women film- and video-makers working in the United States to examine the formal and thematic strategies they employ in telling a variety of stories. We will think through the challenges they face in a Eurocentric, white- and male-dominated industry, as well as the challenges their works pose to that industry. Our investigations will draw from our close examinations of film form as well as our application of a variety of theoretical approaches, including feminist film theory, queer of color critique, and contemporary Black studies methodologies.

While our course of study is loosely categorized according to genre, form, and/or tradition, our work in part will be to draw out and analyze connections (and, at times, contradictions) across categories. The tradition of mentorship, citation and “roll call” of Black artists and intellectuals in Black creative and intellectual work is a long and powerful one. Toni Cade Bambara has noted that such practices of citationality are particularly characteristic of Black women filmmakers and artists, who, in recognizing the tremendous struggles of their predecessors, aim to pay tribute to Black “womanish” mentors and artists in their works (Bambara herself attributes this observation to filmmaker Zeinabu irene Davis). As we move across generations of filmmakers in our studies, we will consider the relationship of citationality and “intertextuality” to Black women’s film and video-making practices, to the development of shared and differing cinematic forms and thematics, and to processes of Black archive building.

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## Details

Upper Level Course: M, 1:20-4:20, Virtual  
Recitation/Screening: W, 6:30-10:00, Hybrid  
Instructor: Jamie Ann Rogers

**Pre-Req:** Prior introductory film course recommended, junior/senior, or department permission. For permission, please contact [gina.o\\_connor@tufts.edu](mailto:gina.o_connor@tufts.edu). Please note that lecture is virtual and recitation/screening is hybrid

