

# Call for Close-Up Submissions

## “Oh, the Places It Did Go”: The Diasporic Journeys of Blaxploitation

In light of the international protests of the murders of Breonna Taylor and George Floyd in 2020, Tyre Nichols in 2023, the rise of the Black Lives Matter Movement, and the continued violent and unjust antagonisms between law enforcement and Black communities in the United States, we feel it necessary to revisit Black films made in the 1970s. The term “Blaxploitation” is considered an umbrella term, grouping all Black films made in the 1970s under one rubric, despite their breadth of genres. Questions of auteurship, black dramatic agency, and participants’ control over their careers within a notoriously segregated film industry need to be addressed in scholarship, especially regarding the adaptation of Blaxploitation across borders and scales. Regarding these films as one collective voice of solidarity positioned against “getting back at the (White) Man” leads to less nuanced, less focused, and problematic readings of the films. Rethinking “Blaxploitation” is an attempt to challenge these expectations and assumptions and appreciate the multiplicity of critiques within the films and different voices and different goals of each film.

*Black Camera* invites submissions on rethinking traditional framings or analyses for the study of films misrecognized as belonging to the genre known as “Blaxploitation.” Why are films made in the 1970s that have majority Black casts that were directed by Blacks or by Whites called “Blaxploitation” but films made after the 1970s that were directed by Blacks or by Whites that have a majority Black cast are not called “Blaxploitation”? How did Black actors/actresses and Black directors assert dramatic and/or political agency within the films that they created and/or performed in? What themes attracted international filmmakers towards U.S. Blaxploitation? How might we think about the distribution of so-called Blaxploitation as a commodity and critique across different scales? How were tropes of Blaxploitation semiotics as signifying methods deployed, internationally and nationally, through music, fashion, dialogue, rhyme, body gestures, and/or how were these messages translated and received by global audiences?

We invite writers to challenge the term “Blaxploitation” and consider its global reach by discussing the films as examples of established genre conventions and taking seriously the themes and concepts within the films. We

welcome analysis of under-discussed Black films from this era and their enduring engagement with themes of contemporary Black social reality:

- Class Conflict
- Psychoanalytics
- Auteurship(s)
- Media Industries
- Soundscapes
- Imaginaries
- International Reaches
- Athletes-Actors-Actresses
- Queernesses
- Sociologies
- Experiences of Watching Black Films from the 1970s, Before and Through Black Lives Matter

The guest editors welcome submissions for publication from a variety of disciplinary and analytical perspectives, including essays, commentaries, photo galleries, and interviews. Essays should not exceed 9,000 words; commentary and interviews should not exceed 4,000 words. Please submit completed essays, a 150-word abstract, as well as a 50- to 100-word author biography by **April 15, 2024**. Submissions should conform to the *Chicago Manual of Style*, 17th edition. Please see journal guidelines for more on the submission policy. Direct all questions, correspondence, and submissions to guest editors Joseph E. Roskos (jeroskos@iu.edu) and Andre Seewood (aseewood@gmail.com).

#### Suggested Films:

*Uptight* (dir. Jules Dassin, 1968)  
*100 Rifles* (dir. Tom Gries, 1969)  
*Halls of Anger* (dir. Paul Bogart, 1970)  
*The Bus Is Coming* (dir. Wendell Franklin, 1971)  
*Blacula* (dir. William Crain, 1972)  
*Bone* (dir. Larry Cohen, 1972)  
*Top of the Heap* (dir. Christopher St. John, 1972)  
*Buck and the Preacher* (dir. Sidney Poitier, 1972)  
*Trouble Man* (dir. Ivan Dixon, 1972)  
*Hell Up in Harlem* (dir. Larry Cohen, 1973)  
*Five on the Black Hand Side* (dir. Oscar Williams, 1973)  
*Abby* (dir. William Girdler, 1974)  
*Together Brothers* (dir. William Graham, 1974)  
*The Education of Sonny Carson* (dir. Michael Campus, 1974)

- Thomasine & Bushrod* (dir. Gordon Parks Jr., 1974)  
*Cooley High* (dir. Michael Schultz, 1975)  
*Dr. Black, Mr. Hyde* (dir. William Crain, 1976)  
*Norman . . . Is That You?* (dir. George Schlatter, 1976)  
*J.D.'s Revenge* (dir. Arthur Marks, 1976)  
*The Bingo Long Traveling All-Stars & Motor Kings* (dir. John Badham, 1976)  
*Short Eyes* (dir. Robert M. Young, 1977)  
*Youngblood* (dir. Noel Nosseck, 1978)  
*Bush Mama* (dir. Haile Gerima, 1979)  
*Dummy* (dir. Frank Perry, 1979)  
*Penitentiary* (dir. Jamaa Fanaka, 1979)