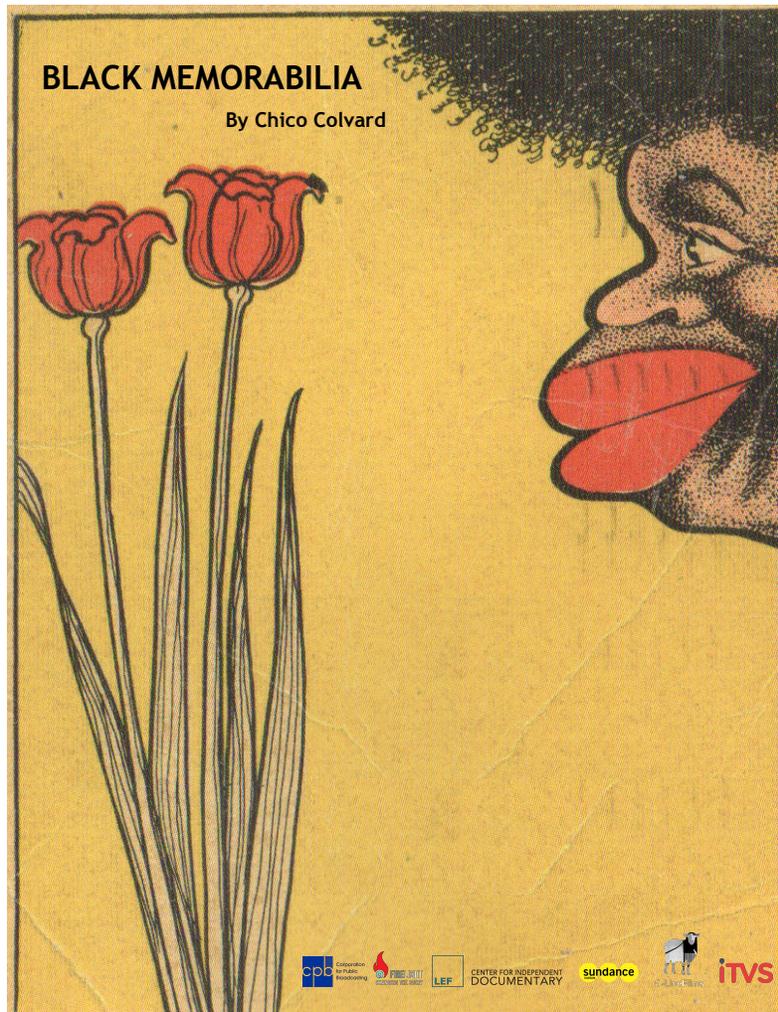


BLACK MEMORABILIA



Directed by: Chico Colvard
Not Yet Rated/RT: 54 minutes

SALES CONTACT:

C-LineFilms

Madison O'Leary

info.clinefilms@gmail.com

LOGLINE

BLACK MEMORABILIA moves beyond perverse attractions and absolute objections to collectibles and antiques that serve as reminders of America's troubled racial history. The film combats a set of generalized stereotypes by presenting an intimate and poetic portrait of the people who consume, manufacture and assume the identities of these objects.

SYNOPSIS

BLACK MEMORABILIA follows the propagation of demeaning representations of African Americans. From industrial China to the rural American south to contemporary Brooklyn, the viewer observes people and places that reproduce, consume and reclaim black memorabilia. This feature documentary takes us on a journey into the material culture of racialized artifacts and confronts us with the incendiary features of these objects. It also disrupts the comfortable notions about narrative – and calls into question who gets to tell what stories, and why – by revealing the storytelling machinations. In the midst of the roiling ethnic unrest in the US today, the film's confrontation of our feelings about these objects strikes at the heart of a pressing contemporary issue and opens a unique dialogue about the continuing legacy of racism in America.

The central questions in this film present one's relationship to black memorabilia as a moral decision. The issues raised are considered subtly in content and tend to abdicate judgement or a cathartic space for the viewer to relish. Most prominently, the inquiry into people's connection to black memorabilia – and the underlying feelings and motives that drive them – are intimately explored through the personal. In shaping this racial guise, certain film vectors are reimagined; leaving the viewer wondering whether it is possible to escape race – in the most positive sense of the term – while thoroughly investigating an alternative pathway toward racial reconciliation around deeply held fears and assumptions black memorabilia invoke. While avoiding a rude and catalytic approach in announcing the obvious injustices and racism that underlie the politics in contemporary America, it is, at times, necessary to provide the audience with cultural context for the

history of black memorabilia and an appreciation for the modernized reproduction and consumption of old stereotypes.

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

I grew up with the “cheerful designs” of the Zip Coon, Mammy, Buck, Sambo, Pickaninny, and blackface characters portrayed in subservient roles and mocking caricatures. From Uncle Remus and Aunt Jemima on cereal boxes and syrup bottles for breakfast, the Little Rascals, Shirley Temple and Bugs Bunny in blackface on Saturday morning TV, to the face of Uncle Ben staring at me from the cupboard for dinner – these exaggerated and demeaning representations of African Americans were alien to the hard working and dignified people I knew.

When examining race relations in America today, not much has changed. Though the images may be considered subtler, the message is still clear. In our current political climate, the deep roots of ‘legacy’ through racist memorabilia, statues and other confederate objects is overtly apparent. People’s desperate attempts to preserve such icons of racism is a powerful statement to the need and aggression of white supremacy and the material source of such inherent hate. With the public resurgence—arguably the continuation—of Neo-Nazis, Ku Klux Klan members and white supremacists, we see how directly and consistently the nation is effected by negative, violent and dehumanizing imagery and storytelling of black lives and characters.

The goal of the film is not to demonize or blame the people that hold these objects dear, but to understand the context and background in which they came to know them. Often times black memorabilia is seen as a connection to family, heritage and “the good old days” of one’s childhood. In many cases these objects aren’t even considered hateful, but rather historical or even cute. I once thought it possible to eradicate these images from the stream of commerce and curb peoples’ insatiable appetite for black memorabilia. I had underestimated the enormity of the problem. This was not simply a matter of rummaging through boxes of buried treasures at antique shops in hopes of unearthing one or two “jolly nigger banks.” The marketplace for black memorabilia was

and remains in high demand. By examining these objects and images through a constructive lens, it is possible to come away from the film, not with a feeling of anger, but with a feeling of understanding. Ideally even come away with a hope that it is in fact possible to change the profoundly detrimental impact black memorabilia has on *all* American people.

KEY CREATIVE PERSONNEL

Chico Colvard (Director/Producer/Editor) Chico Colvard teaches Race, Law and Media related courses at MassArt. He was the Founding Curator of the UMB Film Series. Chico is the founding member of C-LineFilms, which produces short and long form documentaries as well as online commercial content. His feature doc, FAMILY AFFAIR, premiered in competition at Sundance and was the first film acquired by Oprah Winfrey for her cable channel, OWN. The film streamed on Netflix, iTunes and other online outlets. The film screened at festivals and aired on TV stations around the world. He is a two-time Sundance Fellow, WGBH Filmmaker-in-Residence, Firelight Media Fellow, and Flaherty Fellow. Chico is a frequent guest speaker, moderator, festival panelist and juror. His recent film, BLACK MEMORABILIA examines the manufacturing, consumption and reclamation of these objects. The film premiered at MoMA and screens at festivals and museums nationally and internationally.

Madison O’Leary (Producer) Madison O’Leary is a Boston based producer. She received her BA in Communications from UMass Amherst. She worked as an Assistant Producer and Researcher on FAMILY AFFAIR (Sundance, 2010). She worked as a Producer on BLACK MEMORABILIA (MoMA 2018) and is currently the Producer for the film company C-LineFilms, LLC.

Hannah Buck (Editor) Hannah Buck is a New York-based editor with a background in visual arts. Hannah's artistic sensibility informs her approach to editing film. She studied film and media arts at the University of Technology in Sydney. Hannah was an editor and animator on Terence Nance's award-winning feature, An Oversimplification of Her

Beauty (Sundance, 2012). She later edited Nance's impressionistic documentary series Triptych (PBS, 2015) and Cecilia Aldarondo's Memories of a Penitent Heart (Tribeca, 2016). Hannah's recent projects include Black Memorabilia, directed by Chico Colvard which will premiere at MoMA's Doc Fortnight 2018, and Cameron Yates' Chef Flynn which will premiere at the 2018 Sundance Film Festival. In 2014 Hannah was awarded a MacDowell Colony Residency Fellowship to edit Memories of a Penitent Heart which later broadcast on POV. She has been a fellow at the Sundance Edit and Story Lab and a consultant for the Sundance Art of Non Fiction Program. Hannah's work has been supported by the Sundance Institute, The Jerome foundation, Women Make Movies and the Tribeca Film Fund.

Richard Liang (Field Producer, China) Richard Liang has been a documentary film producer, distributor and event organizer in China for over 10 years. Graduated in 1997 from probably the best English major educator in China, the English Department of Beijing Foreign Studies University, Richard Liang has worked on different positions in the media industry, including the government, IT companies and private production houses. He is an official scout and jury member of a top international film festival – including IDFA. Richard has produced several award winning documentary movies including The Next Life, official selection of IDFA 2011, winner of Grand Jury Prize of Guangzhou International Documentary Film Festival 2011, Best Feature Documentary of China Academy of Documentaries 2012, and The Road, feature length competitor of IDFA 2015, an achievement never got by a Chinese company before.

Siobhan Dunne (Additional Editing) Siobhan lives in NYC. She began her career as an assistant to Frederick Wiseman and has gone on to collaborate on such award winning projects as AMERICAN MAN, HELLFIGHTERS, SLINGSHOT HIP HOP, AN ENCOUNTER WITH SIMONE WEIL and most recently Deborah Kampmeier's SPLiT.

Khary Jones (Additional Editing) Khary Jones is a film lecturer and an award-winning filmmaker who received degrees in Film Directing (MFA) and English (MA) from Columbia University. He has collaborated on films such as HE NAMED ME MALALA

and THE WORLD ACCORDING TO DICK CHENEY, which have screened at numerous festivals including Sundance, SXSW, and the Mumbai. He has earned awards and fellowships from Columbia University's School of the Arts, AFI-Dallas, the Brooklyn Arts Council, the Andrew Mellon Foundation, and the Sundance Institute. Jones currently teaches Writing the Short Film, Filmmaking I, and special topics courses in Africana and Film Studies at Tufts University.

Sauli Pillay (Assistant DP/Editor) Born and raised in Finland, Sauli Pillay completed his bachelors in business at the Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences in Helsinki. He studied film at the Prague Film School, where he was named Best Editor by the faculty and received the Audience Award for Best Film for his graduation film. Prior to moving to the U.S., Sauli worked as a director, cinematographer and editor on narrative shorts, documentaries, television programs, music videos and commercials in northern and central Europe. Currently he is the cinematographer / editor on MY GOOD NAME IS STALIN, a feature-length documentary funded by the LEF Foundation and the Sundance Documentary Film Program. Sauli is also an Associate Filmmaker for The Laboratory at Harvard.

Advisors: **Heidi Ewing** (NORMAN LEAR, DETROPIA, JESUS CAMP, 12TH AND DELAWARE), **Keiko Deguchi** (FUR, IN A DREAM, THE CATS OF MIRIKITANI, CARLITO'S WAY), **Robb Moss** (THE SAME RIVER TWICE, SECRECY, CONTAINMENT), **Stanley Nelson** (THE BLACK PANTHERS: VANGUARD OF THE REVOLUTION, FREEDOM RIDERS, THE MURDER OF EMMETT TILL)

CREDITS

Director | Producer | Editor - Chico Colvard

Producer - Madison O'Leary

Editor - Hannah Buck

Executive Producers - Sally Jo Fifer | Lois Vossen

Supervising Producer for ITVS - Amy Shatsky

Additional Editing - Siobhan Dunne | Khary Jones | Sauli Pillay