We will look at works by African-American directors through the prism of auteur theory and the historical perspective of the American film industry. Auteurs include Charles Burnett, Ryan Coogler, Julie Dash, Ava DuVernay, Cheryl Dunye, Barry Jenkins, Spike Lee, Kasi Lemmons, Oscar Micheaux, Gordon Parks, Tyler Perry, John Singleton, Melvin van Peebles and Jordan Peele. What is the construction of masculinity on screen, and is there a politics of style— in and out of Hollywood. Besides entertaining us, these filmmakers examine filmmaking itself. Readings include interviews with contemporary auteurs, plus essays by cinema historians. Screenings— subject to change— will mix full-length features, excerpts and shorts.

April 10 Within Our Gates (Oscar Micheaux, 1920)

April 17 Killer of Sheep (Charles Burnett, 1977)

April 24 Bamboozled (Spike Lee, 2000)

May 1 Moonlight (Barry Jenkins, 2016)

[No class on May 8.]

May 15 Get Out (Jordan Peele, 2017)

May 22 Black Panther (Ryan Coogler, 2018)

May 29 Harriet (Kasi Lemmons, 2019)

[No class on June 5.]

June 12 The Cry of Jazz (Edward O. Bland, 1959), Tongues Untied (Marlon Riggs, 1989), Hair Love (Matthew A. Cherry & Karen Rupert Toliver, 2019)