



Øst for Paradis præsenterer:

I AM NOT YOUR NEGRO

En film af Raoul Peck



Baseret på et enestående værk af forfatter James Baldwin

PREMIERE

28. september 2017

PRESSEVISNING

Lang: 27. juni kl. 9:30 i Grand Teatret

Kort: 20. sep. kl. 9.30 i Grand Teatret

NB! + 20. sep. kl. 9.30 i Øst for Paradis, Aarhus

SYNOPSIS

Pecks Oscar-nominerede film om forfatteren, dramatikeren og aktivisten James Baldwin er en højaktuel (livs)historie om racismen i USA.

Den haitianske veteran Raoul Pecks fænomenale film om forfatteren, dramatikeren og aktivisten James Baldwin er en af det sidste års store dokumentarbegivenheder - og en af de mest roste. Baseret på arkivklip med den karismatiske og viljestærke Baldwin er **I AM NOT YOUR NEGRO** noget så sjældent som en højaktuel portrætfilm, der blotlægger racismen i Amerika gennem en intellektuel begavelse nærmest uden lige, og gennem Baldwins aldrig færdiggjorte bogprojekt 'Remember This House' fra 1979 om sit nære venskab med Medgar Evers, Malcolm X og Martin Luther King, jr. Filmen trækker linjer op fra fortidens borger-rettighedsbevægelse til nutidens 'Black Lives Matter', og er i kølvandet på det nylige, amerikanske præsidentvalg en lejlighed til at (gen)opdage en af amerikansk litteraturs største stemmer.



OM FILMEN

Pecks hensigt med **I AM NOT YOUR NEGRO** er at lede publikum ad den komplekse politiske sti, der portrætterer de mindeværdige liv; Malcolm, Medgar og Martin, ved brug af udelukkende Baldwins egne ord, med hovedvægt på det ufærdige manuskript *Remember This House*.

I AM NOT YOUR NEGRO opstår i et kryds af film som *Celluloid Closet* og *Concerning Violence*. Filmen trækker både fotografier og filmklip frem fra varierede kilder og væver dem sammen til et omsluttende audiovisuelt tapet. Med den unge, sorte kvinde Dorothy Count, der helt alene må konfrontere en stor, aggressiv gruppe hvide mennesker, der forfølger hende på vej til sin første skoledag, samt Pecks finurlige filmanalyse af *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner* og Sidney Poitiers rolle i Hollywood, indskriver **I AM NOT YOUR NEGRO** sig selv i fremstillingen af den sorte kultur, i både nyhedsmedier, reality TV, musikvideoer og blandt Hollywood-legender.

I AM NOT YOUR NEGRO er et essay om billeder, deres oprindelse, diskurs og ultimativt, deres indflydelse på vores kollektive bevidsthed.

HVORFOR JAMES BALDWIN?

James Baldwin (1924-1987) var en af de største nordamerikanske forfattere i den sidste halvdel af det 20. århundrede. Han voksede op i Harlem, New York, men i en alder af 24 år – frustreret over tilstanden mellem racer i USA og jævnlige episoder af overfald og chikane – forlod han landet og rejste til Frankrig, hvor han endte med at leve det meste af sit liv.

Han var en talentfuld forfatter og begavet socialkritiker, der forudså de destruktive tendenser, der i dag præger den vestlige verden, samtidig med at han altid bevarede et humanistisk håb og en håndfast værdighed.

Han udforskede centrale men udtalte kompleksiteter vedrørende skellet mellem race, køn og klasse i vestlige samfund, samt de uundgåelige spændinger omkring personlig identitet, antagelser, uvisheder og længsler. Han havde en uovertruffen forståelse for politik og historie, og i særdeleshed, menneskelighedens tilstand.

James Baldwin har arbejdet i mange genrer: essay, roman, selvbiografi, dramatik, Hans store værker inkluderer *Go Tell It on the Mountain*, *Notes of a Native Son*, *The Fire Next Time* og *If Beale Street Could Talk*. For Raoul Peck har Baldwins værker gjort stort indtryk: *“His prose is laser sharp. His onslaught is massive and leaves no room for response. Every sentence is an immediate cocked grenade. You pick it up, then realize that it is too late. It just blows up in your face. And yet he still managed to stay human, tender, accessible.”*

HVORFOR NU?

James Baldwins ord fanger os stadig uforberedte og med samme voldsomme sandhed i dag som dengang. Der vil næppe være noget så præcist, så retfærdigt, så beskedent og samtidig så rungende, som denne mands tekster. Hans analyser, vurderinger og konklusioner klinger nærmest stærkere i dag end da det oprindeligt blev skrevet.

Der er sket udvikling fra dengang til nu, men I forhold til de nuværende voldelige tilstande i USA, især mod sorte, forsøger **I AM NOT YOUR NEGRO** at analysere og forstå den dybere liggende forklaring på menneskets strukturelle tænkning. Peck forklarer: *“Despite progress, Martin seems quite lonely on the mountain top.”*

En cyklus af vold og fortvivelse, forudset af Baldwin, fortsætter - men i dag i en form, der er trivialisert og forvrænget af medier, TV, Hollywood og vrede fordomsfulde politikere.

Hvordan bryder vi med disse cyklusser når vi aldrig berører de reelle problematikker? Hvordan skal de fundamentale problemer i USA adresseres? Aldrig har Baldwins stemme været så nødvendig, så stærk, så radikal og så visionær.

INSTRUKTØRENS PROLOG

“I started reading James Baldwin when I was a 15-year-old boy searching for rational explanations to the contradictions I was confronting in my already nomadic life, which took me from Haiti to Congo to France to Germany and to the United States of America. Together with Aimée Césaire, Jacques Stéphane Alexis, Richard Wright, Gabriel García Márquez and Alejo Carpentier, James Baldwin was one of the few authors that I could call “my own.” Authors who were speaking of a world I knew, in which I was not just a footnote. They were telling stories describing history and defining structure and human relationships which matched what I was seeing around me. I could relate to them. You always need a Baldwin book by your side.





I came from a country which had a strong idea of itself, which had fought *and* won against the most powerful army of the world (Napoleon's) and which had, in a unique historical manner, stopped slavery in its tracks, creating the first successful slave revolution in the history of the world, in 1804.

I am talking about Haiti, the first free country of the Americas. Haitians always knew the real story. And they also knew that the dominant story was not the real story.

The successful Haitian Revolution was ignored by history (as Baldwin would put it: *because of the bad niggers we were*) because it was imposing a totally different narrative, which would have rendered the dominant slave narrative of the day untenable. The colonial conquests of the late nineteenth century would have been ideologically impossible if deprived of their civilizational justification. And this justification would have no longer been needed if the whole world knew that these "savage" Africans had already annihilated their powerful armies (especially French and British) less than a century ago.

So what the four superpowers of the time did in an unusually peaceful consensus, was to shut down Haiti, the very first black Republic, put it under strict economical embargo and strangle it to its knees into oblivion and poverty.

And then they rewrote the whole story.

Flash forward. I remember my years in New York as a child. A more civilized time, I thought. It was the sixties. In the kitchen of this huge middle-class apartment in the former Jewish neighborhoods of Brooklyn, where we lived with several other families, there was a kind of large oriental rug with effigies of John Kennedy and Martin Luther King hanging on the wall, the two martyrs, both legends of the time.

Except the tapestry was not telling the whole truth. It naively ignored the hierarchy between the two figures, the imbalance of power that existed between them. And thereby it nullified any ability to understand these two parallel stories that had crossed path for a short time, and left in their wake the foggy miasma of misunderstanding.

I grew up in a myth in which I was both enforcer and actor. The myth of a single and unique America. The script was well written, the soundtrack allowed no ambiguity, the actors of this utopia, black or white, were convincing. The production means of this Blockbuster-Hollywood picture were phenomenal. With



rare episodic setbacks, the myth was strong, better; the myth was life, was reality. I remember

the Kennedys, Bobby and John, Elvis, Ed Sullivan, Jackie Gleason, Dr. Richard Kimble, and Mary Tyler Moore very well. On the other hand, Otis Redding, Paul Robeson, and Willie Mays are only vague reminiscences. Faint stories "tolerated" in my memorial hard disk. Of course there was "Soul Train" on television, but it was much later, and on Saturday morning, where it wouldn't offend any advertisers.

Medgar Evers died on June 12, 1963.

Malcolm X died on February 21, 1965.

And Martin Luther King Jr. died on April 4, 1968.

In the course of five years, these three men were assassinated.

These three men were black, but it is not the color of their skin that connected them. They fought on quite different battlefields. And quite differently. But in the end, all three were deemed dangerous. They were unveiling the haze of racial confusion.

James Baldwin also saw through the system. And he loved these men. These assassinations broke him down.

He was determined to expose the complex links and similarities among these three individuals. He was going to write about them. He was going to write his ultimate book, *Remember This House*, about them.

I came upon these three men and their assassination much later. These three facts, these elements of history, from the starting point, the "evidence" you might say, form a deep and intimate personal reflection on my own political and cultural mythology, my own experiences of racism and intellectual violence.

This is exactly the point where I really needed James Baldwin. Baldwin knew how to deconstruct stories. He helped me in connecting the story of a liberated slave in its own nation, Haiti, and the story of modern United States of America and its own painful and bloody legacy of slavery. I could connect the dots.

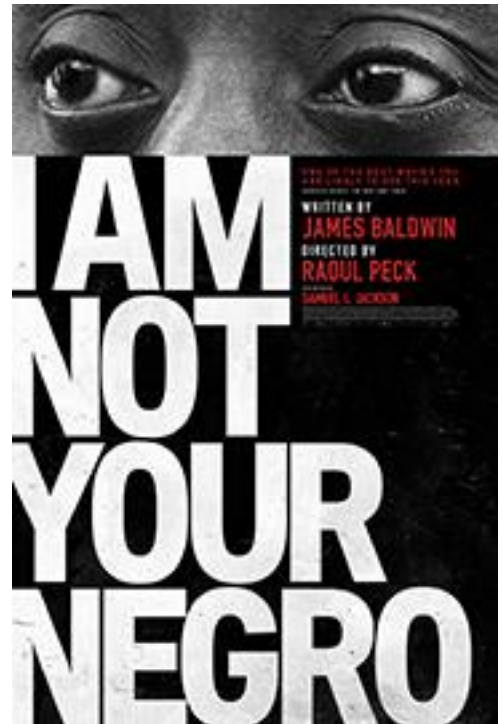
I looked to the films of Haile Gerima. Of Charles Burnett. These were my elders when I was a youth.

Baldwin gave me a voice, gave me the words, gave me the rhetoric. All I knew through instinct or through experience, Baldwin gave it a name and a shape. I had all the intellectual weapons I needed.

For sure, we will have strong winds against us. The present time of discord and confusion is an unavoidable element. I am not naive to think that the road ahead will be easy or that the attacks will not be at time vicious. My commitment to make sure that this film will not be buried or sideline is uncompromising.

We are in it for the long run. Whatever time and effort it takes. “

- Raoul Peck



Læs mere om filmen, og find fotos, epk mm på filmens distributionsside:

Klik [HER](#) eller find filmen her: distribution.paradisbio.dk

CREDITS

Medvirkende: Samuel L. Jackson (narration)

Instruktør: Raoul Peck

Manuskript: James Baldwin

Klip: Alexandra Strauss

Musik: Alexei Aigui

Fotograf: Henry Adebonojo, Bill Ross, Turner Ross

Producenter: Rémi Grellety, Raoul Peck, Hébert Peck

Original titel: I AM NOT YOUR NEGRO

År: 2016

Land: USA

Varighed: 93 MIN.

Filmen distribueres med støtte fra Det Danske Filminstitut

AWARDS

Winner Best Documentary – Los Angeles Film Critics Association

Winner Best Writing - IDA Creative Recognition Award

Four Festival Audience Awards – Toronto, Hamptons, Philadelphia, Chicago

Two IDA Documentary Awards Nominations – Including Best Feature

Five Cinema Eye Honors Award Nominations – Including Outstanding
Achievement in Nonfiction Feature Filmmaking and Direction

Best Documentary Nomination – Film Independent Spirit Awards

Best Documentary Nomination – Gotham Awards