

## **CFP: DEFA Summer Film Institute 2023, Amherst (10.02.2023)**

Discussion published by Evgeniia Trufanova on Friday, January 6, 2023

Dear Colleagues,

We are cordially inviting you to apply to our next Summer Film Institute!

### **Call for Applications**

#### **Hidden Figures: Blackness and Black Experiences in East Germany**

*11th Biennial Summer Film Institute - June 11-17, 2023*

*DEFA Film Library*

*University of Massachusetts, Amherst, MA*

We are excited to announce the **2023 Summer Film Institute**, to be held **June 11-17** in Amherst, Massachusetts (USA) and co-directed by **Dr. Priscilla Layne** (UNC-Chapel Hill) and **Dr. Evan Torner** (Univ. of Cincinnati). This year's weeklong institute mobilizes Black film theory to explore filmic representations of Blackness, as well as lived experiences of BIPOC in former East Germany. Inspired by questions raised at our Summer Film Institutes since 2007 and at Black German Heritage and Research Association conferences since 2011, the film screenings and collaborative workshops will directly address (East) German notions of civil rights, equity, inclusion and difference—both under and after the end of state socialism.

This interdisciplinary, residential seminar is intended for researchers, educators and doctoral students interested in: race and representation during the Cold War; media studies; Blackness; and transnational exchanges between Europe, Africa and the Americas. A keynote by **Katharina Warda**, independent scholar and creator of the *Dunkeldeutschland* (Dark Germany) project, will open the Institute on Sunday, June 11. The week will then alternate between workshops, discussions and film screenings, with participants navigating the material alongside the facilitators. Participants will end by forming interest groups to conduct further research and plan conference panels and publications on institute topics.

The Institute will raise new questions by exploring the inherent tension between media portrayals and the actual experiences of Black Germans, Black Americans and

African students and contract workers in East Germany (the GDR). Topics of interest include:

- How do the tools of critical race theory and critical whiteness studies help us better understand both the GDR and its cinema?
- What experiences did BIPOC filmmakers have at the DEFA Studios?
- How were Black figures represented in GDR fiction films, as opposed to in documentaries?
- How were key Black American figures—particularly Paul and Eslanda Robeson, Angela Davis, etc.—framed in East German films?
- How did media in general, and film in particular help afford Black (East) Germans opportunities for self-expression and societal critique?
- What tensions existed between the GDR as a *postcolonial* project and the lived experiences of Black people there?
- How did Black people’s experiences in the GDR intersect with those of international students and contract workers within the Socialist Bloc?
- What legacy of Black people in East Germany can we see in the media today?

## TO APPLY

The Summer Film Institute is perfect for academics at all levels and in a range of disciplines, as well as for other professionals, such as curators, librarians, high-school teachers, etc. Institute tuition is: \$850 for permanently-employed applicants; \$600 for non-TT faculty and non-renewably-employed applicants; and \$350 for adjuncts and doctoral students. Tuition includes a dorm room, linens, lunches and two dinner-time receptions. A limited amount of financial assistance may be available; if interested, please include the extent of your need in your application letter.

Please submit a 2-3 page letter of application and your CV or résumé (no more than 5 pages). Doctoral students should also submit the name, title, phone number and email address of one reference. Letters of application should address:

- Your interest in the topic;
- The qualifications / experiences that equip you to do the work of the institute and contribute to the learning community;
- A statement of what you’d like to accomplish by participating and, if applicable, a description of any research or curriculum project you hope to develop during the Institute.

Please submit your application by **February 10, 2023** to our Institute Coordinator, Evgeniia Trufanova, at [filmtour@german.umass.edu](mailto:filmtour@german.umass.edu). As additional information becomes available, we will post it on [our website](#). Evgeniia can also help answer any questions you might have.

Successful applicants will be notified of their selection by Friday, February 28; a commitment and \$150 deposit will be due by noon on Friday, March 10.

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