

SP399 HOLLYWOOD DOES THE CAKEWALK:  
The Minstrel Show Tradition in Hollywood Film  
M, W; 6:00 - 8:20 PM  
212 Shattuck Hall  
Anne Richardson  
Dennis Nyback

In this class, we will use examination of blackface performance on film as a way to explore the long enduring legacy of the minstrel show.

Two papers: one mid-term, one final.

Required texts:

On The Real Side: A History of African American Comedy, Mel Watkins  
Raising Cain: Blackface Performance from Jim Crow to Hip Hop, W.T. Lhamon, Jr.

WEEK ONE: SPIKE LEE LOOKS BACK

Screen: Bamboozled (2000)

WEEK TWO: WHITE PERFORMERS BLACK UP

Screen: The Jazz Singer (1927)

WEEK THREE: BLACK PERFORMERS BLACK UP

Screen: Natural Born Gambler (1916)

WEEK FOUR: GOSDEN & CORRELL

Screen: Check and Double Check (1930)

WEEK FIVE: JUDY BLACKS UP

Screen: Babes in Arms (1939)

WEEK SIX: HOLLYWOOD APARTHEID

Screen: Stormy Weather (1943)

WEEK SEVEN: BING BLACKS UP

Screen: Holiday Inn (1944)

WEEK EIGHT: TIM MOORE: A CASE STUDY

Screen: Boy, What A Girl (1947) & The Rare Coin (1954)

WEEK NINE: PALACE-SUBALTERN DISCOURSE: OSSIE DAVIS RIFFS ON  
MINSTRELSY

Screen: Cotton Comes to Harlem (1971)

WEEK TEN: 1970's WHITEFACE

Screen: "Be Black, Baby" sequence in Hi Mom (1971), Bill Cosby on Prejudice (1970).

WEEK ELEVEN: WARREN BEATTY RAPS/BROOKE SHIELDS WEARS DREAMS

Screen: Bulworth (1999), Black and White (1999)

Excerpts from films in The Nyback Collection will also be shown.

Feature films:

Al Jolson, in The Jazz Singer (1927)  
Bing Crosby in Reaching for the Moon (1930)  
Stepin Fetchit in Stand Up and Cheer (1934)  
Shirley Temple in The Littlest Rebel (1935)  
Irene Dunne in Showboat (1936)  
Slim Gaillard in Hellzapoppin' (1941)  
Judy Garland in Ziegfeld Follies (1946)  
Jeanne Crain in Pinky (1949)  
Christmas On Earth (1963)

Short films:

Buster Keaton in The Playhouse (1921)  
Bessie Smith in St. Louis Blues (1929)  
Eubie Blake in Pie, Pie, Blackbird (1932)  
Sidney Easton in A Rhapsody in Black & Blue (1932),  
Ethel Waters in Underneath the Harlem Moon (1933)  
Noble Sissle, Flournoy Miller & Mantan Moreland in That's the Spirit (1933)  
Amanda Randolph in The Black Network (1936)

Soundies:

Eddie Peabody in The Banjo Boy (1929)  
Louis Armstrong in Shine (1932)  
Boswell Sisters in Sleepytime Down South (1932)  
Sally Gooding with The Mills Blue Rhythm Band (1934)  
Red & Shruggie with the Don Redman Orchestra (1934)  
Swor & Lubin in Vitaphone Varieties (1936)  
Maurice Rocco in Rumboogie (1940)  
The Charioteers in Darktown Strutters Ball (1942)  
Eddie Cantor in Alabama Bound (1944)

Cartoons:

Louis Armstrong in I'll Be Glad When You're Dead (1932)  
Ruby Dandridge in Coal Black and De Sebben Dwarfs (1943)

TV shows/docs: Billie Holiday With Count Basie (1950); Horace Heidt Minstrel Time (1952); Jazz Dance (1954); Edward Arnold Time (1955); The Heritage of Slavery (1964)