



AFRICAN ODYSSEYS

Free Renty: Lanier v. Harvard

In celebration of Black History Month USA, this compelling documentary tells the story of Tamara Lanier, an African American woman determined to force Harvard University to cede possession of daguerreotypes of her great-great-great grandfather, an enslaved man named Renty. Following this special screening, guests will discuss the implications of this trial.

David Grubin is a director, writer, producer, and cinematographer who has produced over 100 films, ranging across history, art, poetry, and science, winning every award in the field of documentary television, including two Alfred I. Dupont awards, three George Foster Peabody prizes, five Writer's Guild prizes, and ten Emmys.

His biographies for the PBS series American Experience – *Abraham and Mary Lincoln: A House Divided*; *LBJ*; *Truman*; *TR: The Story of Theodore Roosevelt*; and *FDR* – have set the standard for television biography. His five-part series for PBS – *Healing and the Mind with Bill Moyers* – has won many awards, and the companion book, for which he was executive editor, rose to number one on *The New York Times* Best Sellers list, remaining on the list for 32 weeks. His award-winning independent feature film *Downtown Express* has been screened at festivals in America and abroad. Grubin has received a Guggenheim Fellowship, has been a Montgomery Fellow at Dartmouth College, and is the recipient of an honorary doctorate from his alma mater, Hamilton College.

A former chairman of the board of directors of The Film Forum, he is currently a member of the Society of American Historians, and sits on the board at Poets House. Grubin has taught documentary film producing in Columbia University's Graduate Film Program, and has lectured on filmmaking across the country.

He has recently completed *Free Renty: Lanier v. Harvard*, telling the story of Tamara Lanier, an African American woman determined to force Harvard University to cede possession of daguerreotypes of her great-great-great grandfather, an enslaved man named Renty. The daguerreotypes were commissioned in 1850 by a Harvard biologist to provide evidence in support of his poisonous theory of the superiority of the white race. The images remain emblematic of America's failure to acknowledge the cruelty of slavery, the racist science that supported it and the white supremacy that continues to infect our society today. The film can be seen on Amazon, iTunes/Apple TV, Google Play, Microsoft Xbox, Vimeo, VUDU, YouTube, Amazon Home Video, and through your cable provider's VOD offerings.

Host: Althea Legal-Miller is a Senior Lecturer in American History and Culture at Canterbury Christ Church University. She received her BA in American Studies with Year Abroad (at the University of California, Berkeley), MA in Contemporary Cinema Cultures, and PhD in American Studies, all from King’s College London. Dr Legal-Miller’s scholarship has appeared in *Reclaiming the Great World House: The Global Vision of Martin Luther King Jr.* (University of Georgia Press, 2019) and *Developments in American Politics 9* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2022). She has also provided expert commentary on radio and television for the BBC and Channel 5, and teaches courses on American Studies and history.

FREE RENTY: LANIER V. HARVARD
Directed and Produced by: David Grubin
Presented by: David Grubin Productions
Director of Photography: Sam Russell
Film Editor: Deborah Peretz
Original Music: Xavier Muzik, Michael Bacon

With
Tamara Lanier
Benjamin Crump
Ta-Nehisi Coates
Ariella Aïsha Azoulay
Tina Campt
Josh Koskoff

USA 2022
95 mins

REGULAR PROGRAMME

Silent Cinema: Neil Brand Presents Laurel and Hardy Sun 12 Feb 16:00
Woman with a Movie Camera: Galentine’s Day: The Parent Trap 25th Anniversary
Mon 13 Feb 20:15
Projecting the Archive: I’ll Get You for This (aka Lucky Nick Cain) + intro by Rosie Taylor, Curatorial Archivist, BFI National Archive
Tue 21 Feb 18:20

Experimenta: Right of Way + Q&A with artists Dan Guthrie, Ufuoma Essi and Arjuna Neuman, hosted by Jonathan Ali Thu 23 Feb 18:10
Film Wallahs: Kekee Manzil: House of Art
Fri 24 Feb 20:40
Course: Filmmaking for Artists: Beginners Filmmaking Workshop Sun 26 Feb 10:30-16:30
Relaxed Screening: Throne of Blood (Kumonosu-jô) + intro and discussion
Mon 27 Feb 18:15

BECOME A BFI MEMBER

Enjoy a great package of film benefits including priority booking at BFI Southbank and BFI Festivals. Join today at [bfi.org.uk/join](https://www.bfi.org.uk/join)

BFI PLAYER

We are always open online on BFI Player where you can watch the best new, cult & classic cinema on demand. Showcasing hand-picked landmark British and independent titles, films are available to watch in three distinct ways: Subscription, Rentals & Free to view.

See something different today on player.bfi.org.uk

SIGHT AND SOUND

Never miss an issue with Sight and Sound, the BFI’s internationally renowned film magazine. Subscribe from just £25*
* Price based on a 6-month print subscription (UK only). More info: sightandsoundsubs.bfi.org.uk



BFI SOUTHBANK

Welcome to the home of great film and TV, with three cinemas and a studio, a world-class library, regular exhibitions and a pioneering Mediatheque with 1000s of free titles for you to explore. Browse special-edition merchandise in the BFI Shop.

We’re also pleased to offer you a unique new space, the BFI Riverfront – with unrivalled riverside views of Waterloo Bridge and beyond, a delicious seasonal menu, plus a stylish balcony bar for cocktails or special events. Come and enjoy a pre-cinema dinner or a drink on the balcony as the sun goes down.

Join the BFI mailing list for regular programme updates. Not yet registered? Create a new account at www.bfi.org.uk/signup