



Being Blacker

Directed by: Molly Dineen

©: RTO Pictures

Production Company: RTO Pictures

For: BBC

Executive Producer: Peter Dale

Executive Producer for the BBC: Emma Loach

Produced by: Molly Dineen

Filmed by: Molly Dineen

Film Editor: Tom Dixon-Spain

On-line Editor: Ian Mander

Additional Editing: Henri Plint

Editorial Consultant: Catherine Bailey

Additional Editorial Consultant: Harry Hook

Post-production Producer: Claudia White, Clear Cut Pictures

Colourist: Stuart Fyvie

Re-recording Mixer: Jamie Hartland

With:

Blacker Dread

UK 2018

89 mins

A Charmed Life + panel with directors and

special guests Sat 24 Jun 14:00

Part of Windrush 75 – Celebrating a turning point in building modern Britain and sparking a wider conversation about the past, present and future of our multi-ethnic society.

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)

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](https://www.sightandsoundsubs.bfi.org.uk)



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](https://www.player.bfi.org.uk)

SENIORS' FREE ARCHIVE MATINEE

Being Blacker

+ intro and Q&A with Molly Dineen and Blacker Dread. The event is hosted by Arike Oke, Executive Director of Knowledge and Collections at the BFI.

Acclaimed documentary filmmaker and BAFTA award winner Molly Dineen is reunited with charismatic reggae producer, businessman and community pillar Blacker Dread. He appeared in her 1981 graduation film *Sound Business*, which looked at sound system culture in the UK.

Responding to a request from him to film his mother's funeral, Dineen picks up her camera to record this fascinating documentary portrait, which unfolds at a time of great personal crisis for Blacker. As the story unfolds, he reflects on the issues that have dogged his last 40 years in the UK: inequality, poverty, crime and racism, and why he sent his youngest child back to school in Jamaica.

[bfi.org.uk](https://www.bfi.org.uk)

Me a Talk Fi You

Both *Being Blacker* and *Sound Business* give rare insights for outsiders into contemporary Black culture and community building. Filmmaker Molly Dineen's camera catches glimpses of the subtexts and the contexts, the resilience and the fragility of the world within a world of the Black communities in London, particularly of Blacker Dread's generation.

Sound Business shows community being performed. On one level as literal performances by sound system crews that intersperse and underlay the narrative, and on another level the performance by the interviewees. The film's subjects explain and translate their culture for Dineen. *Being Blacker* is different. The tragedy that affects Blacker Dread charges the story by showing how the community he is within draws up and around him in support and disbelief.

In *Sound Business*, DJ Country translates some of his patter for the camera, explaining some of the patois and the references a general audience wouldn't understand. In *Being Blacker* there's a scene in which Blacker asks his friend Naptali why he's talking 'like an Englishman'. Naptali says, 'I'm talking for her [Dineen], for the audience behind the camera.' In contrast Blacker says, 'Me a talk fi you.' Although he is joking around with Naptali this phrase marks a boundary between the mainstream white culture with which Blacker can work when he's negotiating on behalf of the community, and the Black community whom he tries to nurture and support. This instinct of translating, code-shifting, between identity community and mainstream community is endemic for people of colour, and in this case especially for people of African descent. The way that British history has been shaped by people from the African diaspora has a particular meaning for those first- and second-generation people of the Windrush era.

REGULAR PROGRAMME

Seniors' Free Archive Matinee: Being Blacker + intro and Q&A with Molly Dineen and Blacker Dread

Mon 19 Jun 14:00

Projecting the Archive: The Return of the Frog + introduction by film historian Jonathan Rigby

Tue 20 Jun 18:30

Experimenta Mixtape S02E03 curated by Mark Leckey + Mark Leckey in conversation with novelist Sheena Patel, author *I'm A Fan*

Thu 22 Jun 18:20

African Odysseys: A Charmed Life + panel with directors and special guests

Sat 24 Jun 14:00

Relaxed Screening: Under the Skin + intro and discussion

Mon 26 Jun 18:15

Black Self-Building On Screen + discussion

Tue 27 Jun 18:30

BIG SCREEN CLASSICS

The 400 Blows (Les quatre cents coups)

Thu 1 Jun 18:20; Tue 13 Jun 20:30

The Big Lebowski

Fri 2 Jun 20:30; Sat 17 Jun 18:10

La dolce vita

Sat 3 Jun 17:00; Tue 13 Jun 13:30; Sun 18 Jun 17:30

Boyz n the Hood

Sat 3 Jun 20:40; Fri 30 Jun 18:10

Vertigo

Sun 4 Jun 15:30; Tue 20 Jun 20:40

Bicycle Thieves (Ladri di biciclette)

Mon 5 Jun 20:45; Fri 16 Jun 20:40; Sat 24 Jun 12:00

The Third Man

Tue 6 Jun 20:40; Wed 21 Jun 18:10 (+ intro); Sun 25 Jun 12:30

The Long Goodbye

Wed 7 Jun 18:00 (+ intro by Geoff Andrew, Programmer-at-Large); Tue 27 Jun 20:35

Cleo from 5 to 7 (Cléo de 5 à 7)

Mon 12 Jun 21:00; Thu 29 Jun 18:30

Of Time and the City

Wed 14 Jun 18:30 (+ intro); Thu 22 Jun 20:50

Taxi Driver

Sun 18 Jun 18:30; Fri 23 Jun 20:45

Get Carter

Mon 19 Jun 18:20; Mon 26 Jun 20:45

La Haine

Wed 21 Jun 21:00; Sat 24 Jun 20:40; Wed 28 Jun 18:15 (+ intro)

Don't Look Now

Sat 24 Jun 16:00; Fri 30 Jun 20:45

DIY community building also meant that sound system culture was never only a music scene. In *Sound Business* DJ Country explains how he would use his sets to give community news headlines. In a performance shown in the film he speaks about the New Cross Fire. This fire at a house party of young Black people in 1981, the same year that Dineen made *Sound Business*, killed thirteen. Feeling that there was a cover up of how the fire broke out, Black people came together to march in the first Black People's Day of Action, a precursor to the cross-cultural Black Lives Matter marches in 2020 following the killing of George Floyd by police officers in America.

The Black Peoples Day of Action in March 1981 was part of a continuum of community activism that wanted to find more to living than having to constantly protect one another from racist onslaught and subtle discrimination. The uprisings of the 1980s in Bristol, Liverpool, Birmingham and in Brixton in London, characterised at the time as riots, were only part of the story. There were also groups working for a collective empowerment. One such group was led by the late Len Garrison to set up the Black Cultural Archives, an institution still present in Brixton which preserves and celebrates the histories of Black people in the UK. Another example would be Blacker Dread's record shop on Coldharbour Lane, which we see in *Being Blacker* function as a meeting point for community and a space in which and from which Blacker could provide cross-generational advice and support. It's never only about the music for Blacker. It's about community. He's working for them, talking to them. In his words again, 'Me a talk fi you.'

Arike Oke, extract from *The Molly Dineen Collection Volume 4: Being Blacker / Sound Business* DVD booklet essay (BFI, 2022)

NEW RELEASES

Reality

From Fri 2 Jun

Medusa Deluxe

From Mon 12 Jun (preview + Q&A on Mon 5 Jun 20:40)

Pretty Red Dress

From Fri 16 Jun (Q&A screening on Fri 16 Jun 18:00)

RE-RELEASES

Le Mépris (Contempt)

From Fri 2 Jun

The Wicker Man

From Fri 30 Jun

LONDON INDIAN FILM FESTIVAL

LIFF Opening Night UK Premiere: The Storyteller + Q&A with director Ananth Mahadevan (work permitting)

Thu 22 Jun 18:00

Too Desi Too Queer + Q&A

Fri 23 Jun 18:00

New Brit-Asian Shorts + Q&A

Sat 24 Jun 20:20

UK Premiere: Max, Min & Meowzaki

Sun 25 Jun 15:00

UK Premiere: Amar Colony

Mon 26 Jun 18:10

European Premiere: Call Me Dancer

Tue 27 Jun 20:30

Preview: The Effects of Lying + Q&A with director Isher Sahota and producer Jon Tarcy

Wed 28 Jun 18:00

UK Premiere: To Kill a Tiger

Thu 29 Jun 17:50