

SWERV

culture & community

FREE
FALL 2009

FILM & THEATER ISSUE

FASHION DRAMA!

FEATURING
ANDREW NOWELL
ALEK RISIMNIC
& ABMS

ACTING LEGEND

STANLEY BENNETT CLAY

DIRECTOR/PRODUCER

DEBRA WILSON

SPOKEN WORD ARTISTS

RED SUMMER & BUTTAFLYSOUL

TRIBUTE TO E. LYNN HARRIS

HIP-HOP'S

SONNY LEWIS

& THE SOULFUL

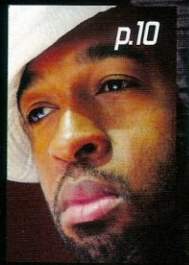
JIANDA

DRED GERESTANT • DAVID BARCLAY MOORE • ALAN SHARPE • JASIKA NICOLE

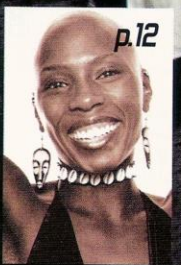


Trudi Ann Thompson
 starring in ivory chiffon ruffle
 blouse with waist sash and
 black crepe trousers with
 skirt train
 Directed by
 ABMS

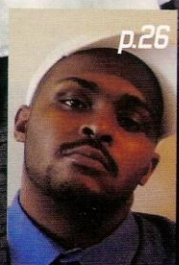
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 Fashion: Black
 on the Red
 Carpet



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 Director/Filmmaker
David Barclay Moore



p.12
 Gender Illusionist
Dred Gerestant



p.26
 Rapper
Sonny Lewis

Cover and above photo: malik m.j. williams

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THE RIGHT DIRECTION

Words/
Steven G. Fullwood



After studying creative writing at Iowa State University, film at Howard University and language studies at L'Université de Montpellier in France, David Barclay Moore relocated to New York City and has worked with the likes of Sony StudioOne, DreamWorks TV, Barbra Streisand's Barwood Films, and @radical.media, to name a few. Today he talks with SWERV magazine.

Steven G. Fullwood: Recently you screened your latest project, *Realness*, online. Whose idea was it to screen it online and how did it go?

David Barclay Moore: It was the National Black Programming Consortium's (NBPC) idea to start a series of virtual screenings for their Masculinity Project. Basically, the online screening took place in a chat room-type virtual environment complete with mood music playing in the "lobby" while the "audience" logged on and "mingled." At the designated time, the film played in a separate chat room window and after that, Christian Ugbo, their Program Development Assistant, interviewed me via a live video link and moderated questions from the virtual audience. It was fun, but I'm looking forward to the actual screenings.

Last year I was commissioned by the NBPC and Independent Television Service to produce two short documentary films (*Realness* and *Dr. Al's Rebels*) for their Masculinity Project, funded by the Ford Foundation for the NBPC's Masculinity Project site (<http://www.blackpublicmedia.org/project/masculinity/media/97>).

I decided to make *Realness* because, from the jump, I had wanted to examine masculinity from a biologically female perspective. I had also wanted to challenge the prevailing notion that masculinity is a factor of only sex or gender.

Both of my films are now available for viewing via the home page of my own web site, www.davidbarclaymoore.com.

And I'm also offering longer director's versions of these two films along with a brand-new short documentary called *Race & Sex*.

Until I read your web site, I did not know about Race Cooper as an adult entertainer or entrepreneur. My estimate is that maybe 2% of professional gay pornography companies are owned and operated by people of color. What did you learn about the porn

industry and Cooper while filming *Race & Sex*?

DBM: The porn industry has a history of exploitation, particularly when it comes to exploiting men of color. I have wanted to make a long-form documentary film about black men who work as adult film actors, but who also produce their own adult films.

Race Cooper is a black queer man based in San Francisco who not only stars in adult films for major porn studios, but who also owns and operates his own porn studio. He's been in the porn business for less than a year, but has already created lots of waves and achieved a degree of popularity. He also comes from a very mainstream background and is as smart as a whip.

One thing I saw while I was shooting my film out in San Francisco is the lucrative nature of the porn business. I understand how so many people (on the producer's side) get drawn in by the money. However, the aspect I was interested in exploring was whether black men who own and produce their own adult films achieve self-empowerment by that process, or if they are merely pimping themselves out, or something completely different.

Sex and Race is also the title of a book by J.A. Rogers. Is there any connection? Do you know about the book?

DBM: I am familiar with J.A. Rogers and his book *Sex and Race* but that title did not consciously affect the naming of my own project, *Race & Sex*. However, Rogers' book *Great Men of Color* had a huge influence on me as a child and on the development of my own pride in the achievements of black people. It is wonderful reading. I have always found Rogers and John Henrik Clarke to be intriguing black historical figures. Both self-educated, these men accomplished a lot with so little regardless of what some may say about their methods/scholarship. They helped create the ideas of Black History/African Diaspora and discovered a lot of information that might have vanished otherwise.

After spending time with Cooper, were you able to answer those questions about ownership and empowerment, or did you discover something else?

DBM: The time I spent with Cooper in San Francisco was productive, but also provoked more questions. I believe that I will be able to answer those questions upon completion

of the film, though it appears the response may be as complex as Race Cooper, who is an interesting, sweet and, I think, slightly crazy man. Cooper is a true free spirit and although he chose the name "Race" as his stage name, I don't think notions of race, or ethnicity, trouble him in the way that they do many other black men. Race told me that during the production of one of the adult films he made for another studio, he and his also-black co-star joked that they both "tasted like fried chicken" with their all-white film crew. That's a little different. I'm still working on the film and shaping its storyline/thesis, and it will be finished in time for 2009-2010 screenings. While I think it's fascinating and I guess provocative, I'm not trying to be garish in my approach.

Your Black/Queer Film and Lecture series consists of your short films and a talk. Tell us about it.

DBM: My work's current focus examines black male cultures and how they interrelate with other cultures. My Black/Queer Film & Lecture series launches this fall and was put together to explore certain themes within institutional settings.

The series features the screenings of three short documentary films all dealing with black queer masculine identities: *Realness*, *Dr. Al's Rebels* and *Race & Sex*. These shorts are followed by a lecture, "Being Real: Black Queer Cultures and the Struggle for Identity." A brief Q&A session will follow the lecture. Series screenings of *Realness* and *Dr. Al's Rebels* are longer director's cuts. *Race & Sex* may only be seen through this series. Right now, universities out west, down south and in the midwest have expressed interest in the series.

Your biographical statement online states that you are "constantly trying to see the world differently." Why is this important to you as a filmmaker/photographer/writer?

DBM: I consider myself a storyteller, working through words, photography and the moving image. Trying to see the world differently is important to me in several ways. The best artists see the world through "fresh eyes." Whenever anyone is able to show the world something it has never seen before, or present something in a manner the world has never seen, that is rare. When that happens, we see genius. I would love to be able to show the world something truly different.