

BFI discovers world's first interracial TV kiss uncovered and celebrated as part of BFI LOVE event: Race and Romance on television



Lloyd Reckord and Elizabeth MacLennan in *You in Your Small Corner* (tx.5/6/1962) BFI/Granada/ITV Studios

STRICTLY EMBARGOED UNTIL 00.01hrs Friday 20th NOVEMBER 2015. LONDON.

The BFI has uncovered what is believed to be the world's earliest known, surviving interracial kiss on TV from *You in Your Small Corner*, first broadcast on ITV in June 1962 and not seen on TV since. The discovery was made in the BFI National Archive while researching a panel discussion at BFI Southbank (Tues 24th November, 18.15) on Race and Romance on Television as part of the BFI's LOVE season. The kiss will be seen by audiences at the event.

You in Your Small Corner, tx.5/6/1962 was a Granada TV Play of the Week and an adaptation of a play by Jamaican-born Barry Reckord which had originally been staged at the Royal Court. It was only when researching the BFI's LOVE season in the BFI National Archive that BFI TV Programmer Marcus Prince realised this on-screen kiss between actor Lloyd Reckord (brother of the playwright) and actress Elizabeth MacLennan predates all other known examples, and is one of several intimate exchanges between the two leading players.

Heather Stewart, Creative Director, BFI said, "This ground-breaking TV play is such an important re-discovery. A document of British social history, it demonstrates the role of progressive television drama as a reflection of our society and underlines the vital work of the BFI National Archive as the guardian of our national memory. 50 years on, diverse on-screen representation is still an urgent issue and we must continue as an industry to effect much-needed change."

The famous kiss between Lieutenant Uhura and Captain James T. Kirk in an episode of *Star Trek* from 1968 is hailed as the first inter-racial kisses on US TV, whilst the kiss between Joan Hooley and John White from an episode of *Emergency Ward 10* in 1964 is generally acknowledged as the first inter-racial kiss in an ongoing series.

You in Your Small Corner was first broadcast live on ITV as the Granada Play of the Week on 5th June 1962. It follows the arrival of a young man from Jamaica to Brixton where he is staying with his mother before going up to Cambridge to study for an undergraduate degree. He meets a young woman on the rebound and they become lovers. The play is a sophisticated dissection of the subtleties and difficulties which affect the couple across race and class lines.

In Race and Romance on TV the panel will include contributions from actors Art Malik and Adrian Lester, director Gurinder Chadha, BBC's Head of Drama England, Hilary Salmon and BBC's Head of Diversity & Inclusion Tunde Ogungbesan. The event will be hosted by broadcaster Samira Ahmed.

The panel will discuss how TV has represented Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic relationships over the years, from the 'radical' plays of the 60s that aimed to break taboos, right up to the present day, illustrated with archive clips. They will pose questions such as where is the black-led 'romantic' primetime series? And is TV guilty of turning romance into a white middle-class affair? Our distinguished panel will address these important issues and discuss how TV might address them in future. An extract from *You in the Your Small Corner* will be screened to illustrate this key moment in British, and world, television history.

The full programme is available to view for free at BFI Mediatheques around the UK.

In October the BFI announced details of a £1m BFI Diversity Fund and the introduction of BFI Diversity Standards across all BFI Film Fund Lottery funding schemes, including film development, production, distribution and audience development, in a bid to help improve on and off screen diversity across the film industry. The BFI Diversity Standards have been enthusiastically welcomed by industry bodies and BFI funded partners. Underpinning the BFI Diversity Standards is a BFI definition of diversity, applicable across all BFI Lottery funded projects: to recognise and acknowledge the quality and value of difference.

Race and Romance on TV, Tuesday 24th November, 18.15, BFI Southbank. Tickets £6.
Box Office: 020 7928 3232 or online www.bfi.org.uk

STILLS:

**A selection of images for journalistic use can be found at www.image.net under
BFI UK Publicity > BFI > BFI National Archive > You in Your Small Corner**

**CLIP: A thirty second clip is available for download for media who are promoting the BFI LOVE season's Race and Romance on TV event. This clip must be credited to:
BFI/Granada/ITV Studios and captioned You in Your Small Corner (1962)**

Clip access via the following website:

<https://panther4.dmsukltd.com/>

Username: guest.pol@dmsukltd.com

Password: Letmein1

If you have any problems ordering the clip, please email panther4@dmsukltd.com or call 0845 055 9021 and a member of the team will be happy to help.

About the BFI

The BFI is the lead organisation for film in the UK with the ambition to create a flourishing film environment in which innovation, opportunity and creativity can thrive by:

- Connecting audiences to the widest choice of British and World cinema
- Preserving and restoring the most significant film collection in the world for today and future generations
- Championing emerging and world class film makers in the UK - investing in creative, distinctive and entertaining work
- Promoting British film and talent to the world
- Growing the next generation of film makers and audiences

The BFI is a Government arm's-length body and distributor of Lottery funds for film. The BFI serves a public role which covers the cultural, creative and economic aspects of film in the UK. It delivers this role:

- As the UK-wide organisation for film, a charity core funded by Government
- By providing Lottery and Government funds for film across the UK
- By working with partners to advance the position of film in the UK.

Founded in 1933, the BFI is a registered charity governed by Royal Charter.

The BFI Board of Governors is chaired by Greg Dyke.

About the BFI National Archive

The BFI National Archive was founded in 1935 and has grown to become the one of the largest and most important collections of film and television in the world with over 180,000 films and 750,000 television programmes. For over 80 years the BFI has been an international leader in film preservation and guardian of Britain's unparalleled film and TV heritage. The BFI is an innovator in presenting films to audiences in new and dynamic ways, from cinemas to film festivals, outdoor events to online video-on-demand. At the heart of all its activities is the BFI's central aim to ensure that everyone in the UK has access to the widest possible range of film and their own film heritage.

That heritage includes all time great British directors Alfred Hitchcock, David Lean and Powell and Pressburger; and the rich vein of documentary filmmaking, in which Britain led the world, including the lyrical work of Humphrey Jennings. The archive also boasts a significant collection of filmmakers' papers as well as extensive stills, posters and production and costume designs along with original scripts, press books and related ephemera.

Expert teams undertake the time-consuming and complex task of restoring films at the BFI John Paul Getty Jr Conservation Centre in Hertfordshire. The BFI's most precious film materials are kept in optimum conditions in the world-leading Master Film Store in Warwickshire.

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