

DAUGHTERS OF THE DUST

Directed by Julie Dash
Cinematography by Arthur Jafa

USA 1991, 112 mins, Cert PG
A BFI Release

With Barbara-O, Alva Rogers, Cora Lee Day

Winner, Cinematography Award (Arthur Jafa) and Nominee, Grand Jury Prize (Julie Dash) – Sundance Film Festival 1991

New 25th Anniversary 2K restoration



**Opening at BFI Southbank, Barbican Cinema and selected cinemas
UK-wide on 2 June 2017**

14 March 2017 – Julie Dash's **Daughters of the Dust** is a poignant portrait of three generations of Gullah women (descendants of West African slaves) at the turn of the 20th century. One of the main creative inspirations for the historical imagery in **Beyoncé's** recent celebrated visual album **Lemonade**, which has brought it renewed attention and critical acclaim, this beautiful, powerful drama was newly restored last year. Screened at the BFI London Film Festival in October, it will be released by the BFI on **2 June 2017** in selected cinemas UK-wide, and at BFI Southbank as part of the season *Sight & Sound Deep Focus: Ecstatic Experience – The Black Feminine on Screen*. On 19 June it will be released on DVD and Blu-ray by the BFI in a Dual Format Edition.

Evocative and dreamlike – with magnificent, award-winning cinematography by **Arthur Jafa** (*Eyes Wide Shut*) (who has an exhibition opening at London's Serpentine Gallery in June), *Daughters of the Dust* depicts the Peazant family's struggle with the decision to migrate from their island home off the coast of South Carolina to the mainland in 1902.

The story is narrated by a character called Unborn Child and the structure follows the form of a 'griot' – West African storytellers who excel as orators, lyricists and musicians, and recall and recount a family's history for formal occasions.

The atmospheric original musical score for *Daughters of the Dust* was created by **John Barnes**, a composer, producer and musician who has played with and collaborated with artists including Marvin Gaye, Quincy Jones, Herb Alpert, Whitney Houston and Michael Jackson. He assembled together a collection of musicians and musical styles to evoke the magic and mystery of the film's themes.

Shot on location in just 28 days on a very small budget, the film was Julie Dash's first feature and was the first feature directed by an African-American woman to be distributed theatrically in the USA (1992). It is preserved in the US National Film Registry by The Library of Congress, and Dash is the only African-American woman with a feature film inducted there. She went on to make other feature films and television drama and is now a Distinguished Professor of Cinema, Television and Emerging Media at Morehouse College. She has published two books related to the film: *Daughters of the Dust: The Making of an African-American Woman's Film* (1992) and *Daughters of the Dust: A Novel* (1997), which is set 20 years after the film's events.

This new digital restoration is from the original inter-negative and the restoration and colour grading has been approved by Julie Dash and Arthur Jafa.

The BFI's re-release this summer not only brings a modern American classic back to the big screen again, for all cineastes to savour once more, but will make fascinating viewing for the many admirers of Beyoncé's video work.

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For further information please contact:

Jill Reading, BFI Press Office

Tel: 020 7957 4759

E-mail: jill.reading@bfi.org.uk

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Notes to Editors

- Following on from BFI BLACK STAR – the UK's biggest ever celebration of black screen actors – this June BFI Southbank's regular *Deep Focus* season, programmed with **Sight & Sound** will present the black female experience through the lens of black female directors including Julie Dash's ***Daughters of the Dust*** (1991).

About the BFI

The BFI is the lead body 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