

Director's Notes **The Power and the Story**

*Drifting on a memory
Ain't no place I'd rather be
-Isely Brothers*

Seven years, with all its magical and spiritual implications, have passed. It has been that long since I drifted in the Black Film Center/Archive as its director. During that time, the country and the culture have changed, mostly for the worse. This sends some of us in search of truer things that strengthen our resolve to resist arrogant injustice, and to anchor us against the hostile tide. Looking back, the last seven years have been filled with wonderful opportunities to highlight the power of film to expose and enlighten, while preserving stories that sustain our lives. Without story, as filmmaker Haile Gerima reminds us, we are easily trampled in the underbrush of history and absorbed in its master narrative. The Black Film Center/Archive, founded in 1981 by Phyllis Klotman under the aegis of the Department of African American Studies and the late Herman Hudson, has worked to disseminate and preserve those stories and the knowledge that film, in its best iterations, convey. Proudly, the BFC/A has played an integral role in establishing what we now call Black Film Studies. Part of my role has been to push it forward.

This issue recounts the activities of the BFC/A's last seven years, a highlight of which has been the growth of the archive, particularly the number of special named collections and our expanded focus on African diaspora cinema. We feature an interview with Manthia Diawara, a filmmaker and scholar who bridges African and African American cinema, and an insightful essay by Akin Adesokan on Nigerian Cinema. Professor Adesokan introduced the films in our recent film series, "Nollywood: Nigerian Cinema on the Rise." As I prepare to pass the torch to the very able Dr. Michael Martin, I am reminded of the countless people who have enhanced my experience at the BFC/A. Although there are too many to name here, without them this journey would not have been so full of pleasure and drifting memories.

-Audrey T. McCluskey, Director BFC/A

