



# THE BLCK PROJECT

The background features a stylized illustration of a tree with a thick, light-colored trunk. The branches are adorned with various colorful leaves and flowers in shades of yellow, green, and purple. In the center of the tree, several small, diverse figures of people are depicted in a circular arrangement, appearing to be in a celebratory or communal activity. The overall color palette is warm and earthy, dominated by golden-yellow and brown tones.

**The BLCK Project** is an international artistic exchange program that aims to connect Black creators from the African Diaspora including the United States, the Caribbean, Europe , Latin America and Africa. The project is fostered through a series of intensive courses designed to promote cultural exchange and artistic collaboration. Our mission is to reconnect the African diaspora through art and storytelling.

The primary goal of The BLCK Project is to decolonize Black identities through the arts by building creative partnerships across the African Diaspora. It is a reclamation of our narratives that allows us to celebrate our distinctive cultures. It is a return to self. It is a homecoming.




In the words of Kwame Nkrumah, “We must unite now or perish.”

History proves that Black unification precedes Black liberation. Consider the movement of African liberation that swept across the continent off the heels of World War II, where Black Americans and African colonial soldiers served alongside one another in combat. Consider the 1945 Pan African Congress of which many of its attendees returned to their African homelands and led movements that liberated their countries from European colonization. The decolonization of Africa would in turn inspire the Civil Rights Movement in the United States, later serving as a blueprint for nonviolent resistance against South African apartheid decades later.





# the Project

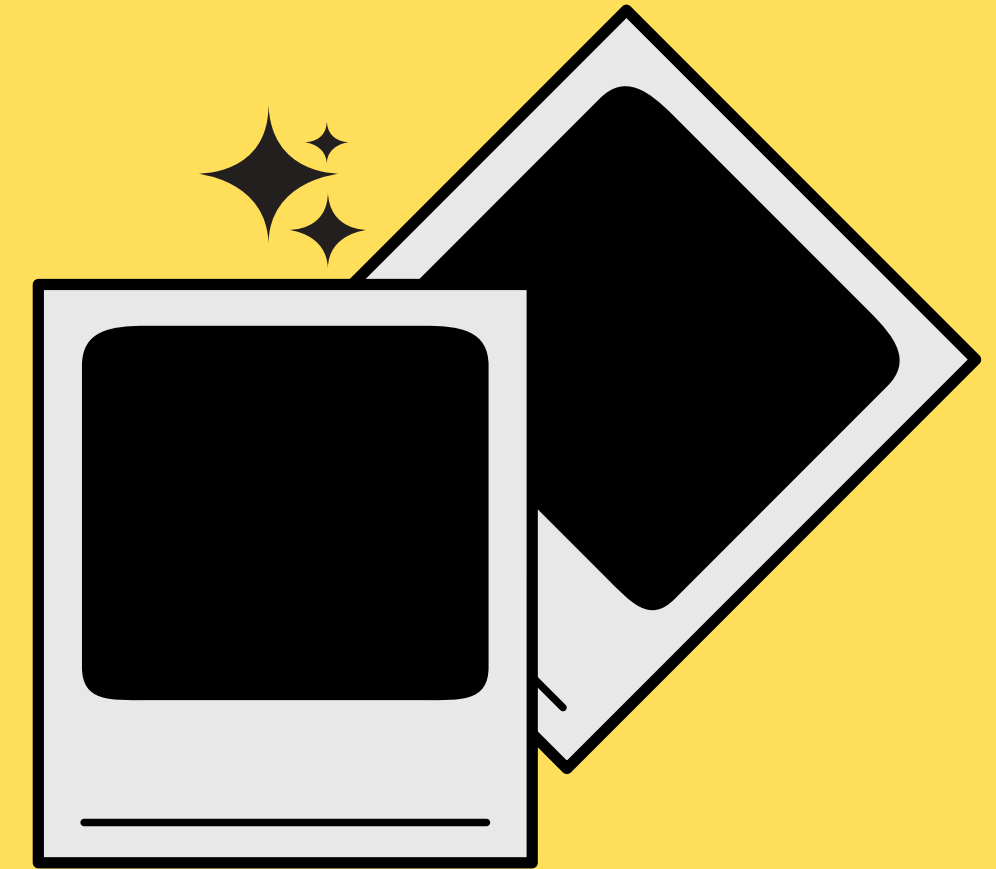
A person with glasses and a bun, looking down, in a room with wooden chairs.

We cultivate partnerships by connecting creators throughout the Americas, African countries, the Caribbean and Europe to teach film and photo intensives to local youth with the objective of completing 2-3 projects that are centered in visual storytelling within 3 weeks. In the future, we hope to incorporate other mediums and industries such as art, dance, music and fashion, in addition to film and photography.

why is it important to teach filmmaking?



Storytelling is as old as humanity itself. To tell one's own story is a birthright. In the digital age, visual storytelling is also a means of economic empowerment as digital content and streaming platforms are fertile ground for emerging creators with authentic stories.



We are empowering Black young creators by providing them with the tools and skill sets necessary to bring their ideas to life and creating opportunities to tell their own stories, produce their own projects and self distribute should they choose to do so.



How?



Curriculum will be based on a 3 to 5-week schedule. The first week is utilized for scouting, prep and artist meetings, and the following 2-4 weeks is used for the various phases of visual storytelling:

- Development
- Preproduction
- Production
- Post Production
- Distribution

In addition to supporting our young creators in producing their own content, we will also document our experience and capture. The plan is to create a documentary that explores the experience of connecting the diaspora.

Our First Trip!

We're connecting with Melaku at the Fendika Cultural Center to house all of our workshops and artistic exchanges.

At Fendika Cultural Center, we celebrate and renew Ethiopia's rich cultural heritage. We welcome and nurture all creative souls through exchange of music, dance, art, and poetry, we meditate on peace and humanity's one-ness.

Our vision for Fendika is to continue to nurture the creative community in Addis Ababa, and to grow into one of Africa's most vibrant centers for artistic innovation and cultural exchange grounded in rich Ethiopian heritage.

<https://fendika.org/about>





### Artist Exchange :

In 2023, our pilot program will send four black artists from the US to Ethiopia to teach a 3-week intensive film & photo course to members of our partnering organization, Ethiopian Girl Skaters (EGS). We aim to not only leave our students with practical skills, but also provide them with the equipment they need to tell their stories on their own terms.

EGS is a grassroots organization in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia that uses skateboarding as a tool to enhance the lives of girls in Ethiopia and inspire confidence, leadership and community. They provide free skateboarding lessons to girls of all ages and plan to build a skatepark in Addis Ababa to create a safe space for girls to skate freely. One of their biggest hurdles in securing funding is a lack of access to the cameras they need to tell their stories and share their mission on digital platforms.

We intend to gift the girls with go-pros and/or cameras to start filming their journey even after the BLCK program.

***MEET THE TEAM***



## Briana Monet

Founder

Entrepreneur | Filmmaker

*Writer, cinematographer, producer, artist, mentor, and business owner. Briana Monet, Washingtonian native, received her Bachelor of Fine Arts from the Art Institute of Miami International University. Currently, she is a Los Angeles-based cinematographer who focuses on hyper color, high contrast, and experimental images. Briana's dogma style and color choices are a true reflection of her roots in experimental films, music videos, and documentary filmmaking.*

*In 2016, she co-founded and became a co-owner of Freelance Camera Ops, a production and staffing company. Briana Monet increased the company's overall revenue by 300% and trained the company's staff. In 2017, she became the co-owner of the non-profit organization, The Starving Artist Conference, where she curated master classes, panels, and conferences that rewarded hard-working artists and allowed artists to learn and directly network with business professionals such as financial advisors, business managers, credit repair mentors, and attorneys. In 2018, Briana Monet created her production company, BLCK Productions, to curate queer and people of color spaces in the film industry.*

*Currently, as a mentor to emerging youth filmmakers, she nurtures and builds deep relationships with mentees who participate in youth mentoring programs such as Hands on the Future. She continues to work with inner city youth for organizations such as Black Lives Matter, Harriett Dreams, Starving Artist Conference, and Made in Her Image.*

*Clients: Revolt, Complex, HBO, Viacom, E Network, Hart beat, Toyota, Hoorae, SpotifyUK, Issa Rae Productions, Westbrook, and Essence.*

*Affiliations: ARRAY Crew, Black Film Space, The JTC List, SPORAS and Growth & Co.,*

### *Awards & Festivals:*

- Premiered at Sundance "What's Costing Hollywood"*
- Black Star official Selection Maestrina da Favela*
- ii Mostra de Cinema Negro De Mato Brosso : for Best Documentary*
- GLAAD: "Stop Killing Us: Black Transgender Women's Lived Experiences" for Outstanding Online Journalism*
- Mostra Tinerante De Cinema Negro Mahomed B Amba : For Best Film*

***2022 Traveling Artist***



Dee Dwyer

'22 Cohort

Photographer | Filmmaker

Dee Dwyer is a diversified Photographer from South-east, Washington, D.C who produces awe-inspiring images. She has been anointed by her community as "The Visual Voice for the People". Her goal is to show all aspects of human life with the primary focus being humanity. Dwyer's raw and compelling candid photos unveil the souls of people. The images expose many subject's truth, adversities, beauty, and culture.

As a teenager, she developed her fascination for photography. Dee never left the house without her disposable camera to capture daily life of family and friends. Receiving her BFA in Filmmaking and Digital Production helped to develop her keen eye and technical skills. While taking a required Black & White photography class, she had to shoot and develop her own film. This is how the love for photography blossomed. She'd spend half her days snapping candid photos and the other half in the dark room. Having a love for travel and community she continues to use her camera to, "Show the World What it's Made of." Her work has been shown in exhibitions such as PhotoSCHWEIZ, Photoville, Catchlight amongst many others and featured in publications such as Vogue, The Wall Street Journal, The New York Times, BET, The Guardian, Bloomberg Businessweek and more. Dee Dwyer currently resides in Washington, DC with her two children.



Daniel Leka

'22 Cohort

Photographer | Storyteller

Born in Glendora, California (U.S.A.) in 1998, Daniel Leka is a storyteller who specializes in photography and practices videography, writing, and other mediums. Since earning his undergraduate degree in Political Science from the University of California-Los Angeles, Leka has spent the last few years conducting photo work in Los Angeles.

*"The primary goal of my career is to honor the history that precedes me while actively contributing to it in real time. By studying phenomena that engaged me throughout my lifetime, I have been able to centralize emotion and utilize it as a tool in my work. From cinema to publications, advertisements, music, and work from my predecessors and contemporaries alike, my intent is to simultaneously educate and inspire. More than anything, "culture" has been a guiding principle in my craft and implementing my perspective has allowed me to attain a catalog that is grounded and original altogether. Furthermore, I hope that my output can positively affect the next generation in similar ways that my influences did for me."*



Michelle Clementine

'22 Cohort

Cinematographer | Storyteller

Michelle Clementine pulls from her caribbean roots to tell universal tales. Her career in film began with an internship at TriBeCa Film Festival in 2005. After graduating with a B.A. in film production at Brooklyn College, the Bronx native joined IATSE Local 600 Camera Guild in 2010. In 2018, Clementine was part of the first ever Cinematography Intensive for Women at American Film Institute and began shooting a slate of short form narrative films. With experience in Oscar winning feature films, documentaries, commercials and music videos, Michelle has a practical approach to filmmaking that enhances the creative flow. Michelle is based in LA.



**THE BLCK PROJECT**

**THANKS YOU**