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# FRED KUDJO KUWORNU

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Fred Kudjo Kuwornu is a multi-hyphenate artist and scholar whose work is deeply influenced by his background as a person of African and Jewish descent, born and raised in Italy and moved to the United States, with a triple citizenship, including Italian,

Ghanaian and U.S. passports. His artistic and scholarly practice revolves around exploring historical and intersectional themes, including issues related to identity, the global African diaspora, and mobility. His roles as a filmmaker, activist, educator, allow him to engage with diverse communities and initiate conversations about pressing societal issues. Over the past decade, more than 400 academic institutions worldwide have invited him to deliver lectures and screenings of his films, engaging audiences in thought-provoking discussions about history, diversity, and contemporary society

## EDUCATION

1998 Master of Arts in Political Science at the University of Bologna, Italy, with a focus on sociology and mass communication studies

## FILMOGRAPHY

PRODUCER & DIRECTOR

2024

### **"WE WERE HERE - THE UNTOLD HISTORY OF BLACK AFRICANS IN RENAISSANCE EUROPE"**

The film was showcased in 2024 at the prestigious **60th International Art Exhibition - La Biennale di Venezia** in the Central Pavilion curated by Adriano Pedrosa. The multilingual documentary explores the roles of Africans and their descendants in Renaissance Europe as revealed in compelling paintings, drawings, sculptures, and printed books of the period, interviewing scholars of Art History, History, Black Studies, Black activists, Art Curators.

2016

### **"BLAXPLOITALIAN 100 YEARS OF BLACKNESS IN ITALIAN CINEMA"**

This diasporic, hybrid, critical, and cosmopolitan documentary uncovers the careers of entertainers seldom heard from before, namely black actors in Italian cinema starting from 1915 when the first black actor appeared in an Italian film. "Blaxploitalian" cleverly discloses the personal struggles Afro-Italian, African-American, Afro-Caribbean, and African diasporic actors faced and compares these struggles with the experiences of contemporary actors who work diligently to secure significant parts which afford them the appropriate respect

MAIN EXHIBITION SCREENINGS

MIA Magazzino Italian Art, New York, United States  
George Eastman Museum Rochester, United States  
Museu de Arte do Rio, Brazil  
National Film and Television Institute of Ghana  
Museum of the Moving Image Astoria, United States  
Wexner Center for the Arts, Columbus, United States

2012

**"18 IUS SOLI - THE RIGHT TO BE ITALIAN"**

This documentary examines multiculturalism in contemporary Italy and specifically looks at citizenship issues for the one million children born and raised in Italy who have yet to attain Italian citizenship because their parents are immigrants

MAIN EXHIBITION SCREENINGS

National Museum of Cinema, Turin, Italy  
Human Rights Nights Film Festival, Bologna, Italy  
New Voices in Black Cinema, BAM Brooklyn, United States

2010

**"INSIDE BUFFALO - THEY SERVED AMERICA WHEN AMERICA  
WAS NOT READY TO SERVE THEM"**

Reconstructing for the first time an important piece of African American history and placing it within the context of Civil Rights history, "Inside Buffalo" is an award-winning feature film telling the story of the 92nd Buffalo Division, the exclusively African American segregated combat unit which fought against nazism with outstanding heroism in Italy during the Second World War

MAIN EXHIBITION SCREENINGS

Library of Congress in Washington D.C., United States  
The Museum of Fine Arts of Houston, United States  
The National Constitution Center of Philadelphia, United States  
Museum of the African Diaspora of San Francisco, United States  
The Colorado Springs Pioneers Museum, United States  
California African American Museum, United States  
The Presidio of San Francisco, United States  
The Museum of the Moving Image in New York, United States  
The Charles H. Wright Museum of African American History, United States  
Reginald F Lewis Museum Baltimore, United States  
African American Museum in Philadelphia, United States  
Oklahoma Historic Center, United States  
Du Sable Museum of Chicago, United States

## **TEACHING EXPERIENCE**

2024/2023/2022/2021

Founder, Director and Teacher for: "Teaching Black Italy" a professional development course for professors of Universities of Italian Studies and Black Diaspora Studies

2024

Teaching course: "Black Italian Cinema and Digital Performance"  
at Colorado College, United States

2020

Teaching course: "Black Italian Cinema and Digital Performance"  
at Colorado College, United States

2019

Teaching course: "Community/Media/Activism: Building Resilience through"  
at the University of Minnesota, United States

2018

Teaching course: "Diversity in Italia Cinema"  
at Italian Studies Department of University of Toronto (Canada)

## **SPECIAL HONORS, GRANTS, AWARDS**

2024

Grant worth \$ 27,000 University of Minnesota for supporting the production of the documentary " We Were Here - The untold history of Black Africans in Renaissance Europe"

2023

Grant worth \$ 10,000 Africa No Filter for supporting the production of the documentary " We Were Here - The untold history of Black Africans in Renaissance Europe"

2021

Grant worth \$ 5,000 City Artist Corps Grants New York Foundation for the Arts (NYFA)

2011

Grant worth \$15,000 from Cineteca of Bologna for production of the "18 IUS SOLI" documentary

2011

Certificate of Congressional Recognition from the Eighteenth District of Texas signed by Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee

## **ACADEMIC GUEST SPEAKER CONFERENCES**

2022

Keynote Speaker: "Black Italy- How to Make Visible the Invisible"  
at Georgetown University, United States

2022

American Association for Italia Studies Annual Conference:  
"Africans in Renaissance Italy (Re)Evaluate Diversity in Italian Renaissance"

2018

Afro/Black Paris - Future/Past- Dartmouth College (United States):  
symposium to launch the African and African American Studies Program

2017

Encontro de Cinema Negro- Rio De Janeiro, Brazil

2017

Association of Professional Italianist in South Africa (API) Annual Conference in  
Johannesburg, South Africa

2016

African Literature Association (ALA) Annual Conference in Atlanta, United States

2015

Black Portraiture[s] II: Imaging the Black Body and Re-staging Histories as part of the  
NewYork University Conference in Florence, Italy

## **PUBLICATIONS**

2021

Article "Co-Teaching Black Italian Cinema"  
with Dr. Amanda Minervini for the The Italianist Film Issue

2020

Article Who is Black Italian? And Above all who is an Italian? for BlackInk (Issue. 1)

## **OTHERS**

Advisory Board for the Journal of American Association of Italian Studies

Member of Critical Race Studies Caucus of the AAIS  
American Association for Italian Studies

Member of AATI American Association of Teachers of the Italian