presents

CANE RIVER

A film by HORACE B. JENKINS
Starring TOMMYE MYRICK and RICHARD ROMAIN

Run Time: 104 minutes

ALL NEW 4K RESTORATION

@oscopelabs  #caneriverfilm

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ABOUT THE FILM

Written, produced, and directed by Emmy Award-winning documentarian, Horace B. Jenkins, and crafted by an entirely African American cast and crew, CANE RIVER is a racially-charged love story in Natchitoches Parish, a “free community of color” in Louisiana. A budding, forbidden romance lays bare the tensions between two black communities, both descended from slaves but of disparate opportunity—the light-skinned, property-owning Creoles and the darker-skinned, more disenfranchised families of the area.

This lyrical, visionary film disappeared for decades after Jenkins died suddenly following the film’s completion, robbing generations of a talented, vibrant new voice in African American cinema. Available now for the first time in nearly forty years in a brand-new, state-of-the-art 4k restoration.
ABOUT THE RESTORATION

To create the new 4K digital master, IndieCollect scanned a new 35mm print made by the Academy Film Archive, using a Kinetta Archival Scanner. The digital version was underwritten by IndieCollect and the HBJ Legacy Foundation with grants from the Roger & Chaz Ebert Foundation, Ford Foundation, and Amistad Research Center at Tulane University. The revival of this movie represents a unique collaboration between the Academy Film Archive and IndieCollect. In 2013, the Academy’s Documentary Curator Ed Carter selected the film’s original negative from the vault of DuArt Film & Video and provided a safe home at the Academy Film Archive.

When the 4K version premiered in New York at the Museum of Modern Art’s “To Save and Project” film festival earlier this year, Richard Brody in The New Yorker dubbed it a “major rediscovery.”
INTERVIEW WITH FILMMAKER HORACE B. JENKINS

Adapted from Sharon-Elizabeth Sexton’s December 10, 1981 interview with Jenkins for the television program Folks.

Sharon Sexton: Louisiana has been used for dozens of movie settings over the years. During the summer, the Cane River area in North Louisiana was a movie set for a film centered around a love story, Louisiana-style. On the set with me today is Horace Jenkins, director and producer of the movie entitled the CANE RIVER. Welcome to Folks.

What is CANE RIVER about?

Horace Jenkins: Well, it’s a love story about a young man who had been a football star in college and had been drafted into the pros. He decided that he doesn’t want to play football, he wanted to return to his hometown, which is Cane River, Louisiana. His objective was to be a poet and a farmer. When he reached Cane River, he was happy to be there and he met a young lady who was headed in the other direction. He was there because he appreciated nature. After being away from his hometown, he learned to appreciate the people and the culture of the area. She had been there all of her life and she was tired of it and she wanted to get away from her possessive mother and her sort of dominant brother. So it's basically a story about values and about people that are headed in two different directions.
Are the characters believable? Is this something that we can identify with here in Louisiana? You know, so many times people come here and they portray Louisiana people in a certain light, which folks here just don't agree with.

Well, I mean, of course I have to say yes, they're believable. A lot of the characters are based on real people that I met in Cane River and Natchitoches, Louisiana. In fact, we were filming on a gentleman's property who raises horses and when the actor was acting, the daughter heard the actor and thought that it was her father. So, I mean, that's fairly believable.

This movie is not only a love story, it does have some relevance, especially to the Cane River area. What is the historical background behind the story?

Well, I became very interested in Cane River because of the existence of a plantation, which is known as the Melrose plantation. The Melrose plantation was started in the early 1700s by an African woman who freed herself from slavery. Within fourteen years she turned sixty acres of leased land into 1700 acres of productive land.

She raised indigo and sold it to France. She raised tobacco. She created her own line of cosmetics. She fell in love with a Frenchman and they had ten children. These children, the offspring of Pierre Metoyer and Marie Thérèse Coincoin are considered to be the
origin of the Creole culture in Louisiana. I wanted to take this story and make it contemporary. So I developed two characters. One who is Peter Metoyer, who is an offspring of Marie Thérèse. The other is a young lady that works on the plantation that his great grandmother owned as a tour guide. Her name is Maria. The reason I developed these characters was to find a simple way of illustrating the cultural differences and some of the cultural problems that have been projected and perceived between "Creoles" and "Blacks."

So this story is not only a love story, but also a story which deals with some kind of historical significance to Louisiana. I guess, can we find out if it's a happy ending or not? Yeah, you can.

It is a happy ending?

You can go and see the movie and you'll know for sure.
CREDITS

Oscilloscope Laboratories presents

A H.B.J. Productions/The HBJ Legacy Foundation production

in association with Indie Collect

Starring Tommye Myrick and Richard Romain

Music by Leroy Glover and Phillip Manuel

Editor Debi Moore

Story consultant Carol Balthazar

Cinematographer Gideon Manasseh

Produced by Horace B. Jenkins

Associate producer Kathleen Rhodes Astorga

Executive Producers Doris Rhodes and Duplain Rhodes Jr.

Written and Directed by Horace B. Jenkins