

# JOHN SINGLETON: A CELEBRATION

Friday, September 9, 2022: *Boyz n the Hood*

Wednesday, September 21, 2022: *Poetic Justice*

Wednesday, October 12, 2022: *Higher Learning*

Wednesday, November 9, 2022: *Rosewood*

Friday, November 30, 2022: *Shaft*

Wednesday, January 25, 2023: *Baby Boy*

Wednesday, February 22, 2023: *2 Fast 2 Furious*

Sunday, March 5, 2023: *Hustle & Flow*

Sunday, March 5, 2023: *Black Snake Moan*

Wednesday, March 22, 2023: *Four Brothers*

Thursday, April 20, 2023: *Snowfall*

University of Southern California

## KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

- John Singleton (1968–2019) was a director, screenwriter, and producer best known for the films *Boyz n the Hood* (1991), *Poetic Justice* (1993), and *Higher Learning* (1995).
- He studied screenwriting at USC.
- Singleton was the youngest person ever, and the first African American, to be nominated for an Academy Award for Best Director, in 1991.
- Each screening is a part of a series celebrating the life and career of John Singleton. For a full list of events and guests, visit [cinema.usc.edu/JohnSingletonCelebration](https://cinema.usc.edu/JohnSingletonCelebration).

## JOHN SINGLETON

John Singleton was born in 1968 in Los Angeles. He attended Pasadena City College and studied screenwriting at the USC School of Cinematic Arts. His student work as a screenwriter garnered awards, and he signed a contract with Creative Artists Agency ahead of his USC graduation in 1990.

Singleton's directorial debut, *Boyz n the Hood*, came out the following year. It was based on a coming-of-age screenplay he wrote as a student. Singleton was nominated for Best Original Screenplay and Best Director Oscars for the film, becoming the first African American and the youngest person ever to be nominated for the directing award. The film was a huge hit.

Singleton would go on to direct nine films, including *Poetic Justice* (1993), *Higher Learning* (1995), *2 Fast 2 Furious* (2003), and *Four Brothers* (2005).

In addition to his films, Singleton directed a music video for Michael Jackson ("Remember the Time") and episodes of TV shows including *Empire*, *The People v. O.J. Simpson*, and *Billions*. He created the 2017 show *Snowfall*.

Singleton died in 2019 after suffering a stroke. He was 51.





## FILMOGRAPHY

*Boyz n the Hood* (1991)—director, writer

“Remember the Time” (Michael Jackson music video) (1993)—director

*Poetic Justice* (1993)—director, writer

*Higher Learning* (1995)—director, writer

*Rosewood* (1997)—director

*Shaft* (2000)—director, writer

*Baby Boy* (2001)—director, writer

*2 Fast 2 Furious* (2003)—director

*Four Brothers* (2005)—director

*30 for 30* (TV series documentary, 1 episode) (2010)—director

*Abduction* (2011)—director

*Empire* (TV series, 1 episode) (2015)—director

*American Crime Story* (TV series, 1 episode) (2016)—director

*Rebel* (TV series, 1 episode) (2017)—director

*Billions* (TV series, 1 episode) (2017)—director

*Snowfall* (TV series) (2017-)-—creator, director, writer

## INFLUENCES

Some of the artists John Singleton named as influences include:

Paddy Chayefsky  
Akira Kurosawa  
Steven Spielberg  
August Wilson

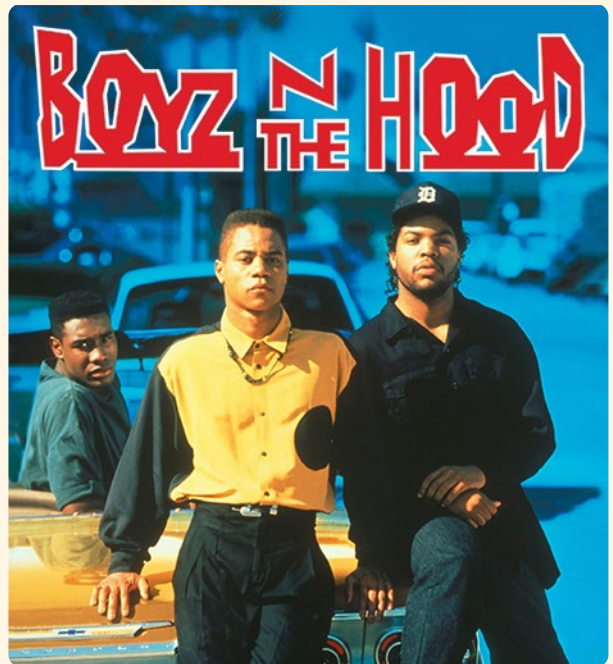
Zora Neale Hurston  
Spike Lee  
Gus Van Sant

## EMERGENCE OF MULTICULTURAL CINEMA

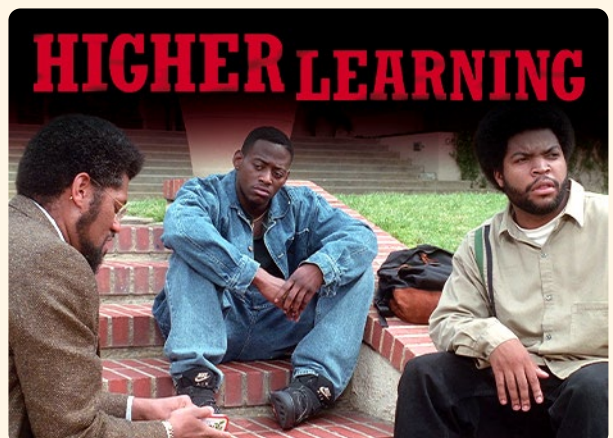
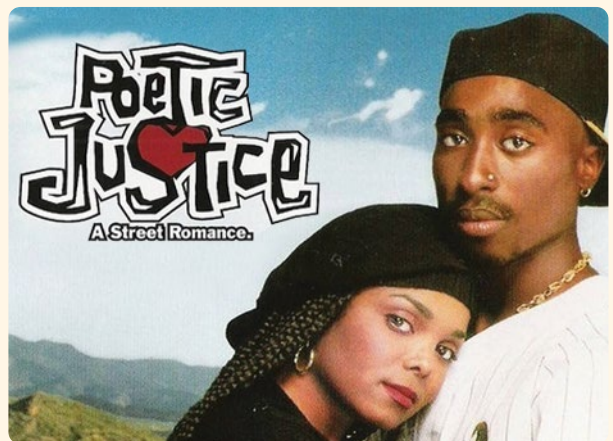
In 2016, John Singleton taught a class at USC called “Emergence of Multicultural Cinema.” In Austin Film Festival’s “On Story,” Singleton described the course as tracing the shift from “a manifest destiny attitude of white male cinema to a multiethnic point of view of cinema now that is now the commercial idiom.”

## FOR FURTHER REFLECTION

- Writer Doreen St. Félix has said Singleton “ardently expanded the Los Angeles film canon.” What films do you think make up the L.A. film canon? How did Singleton’s works expand it?
- John Singleton said in a film festival event: “Your perspective may not be for everybody, but it’s your perspective and it’s valid...There are people out there who want to see what you have to say.” What is special about your perspective? What might you say through art?
- What perspectives do Singleton’s films represent? What perspectives do you want to see more of in film?



*Boyz n the Hood* “was the first masterwork of a hip-hop film aesthetic.”  
—Doreen St. Félix, *The New Yorker*



@USCVandV

VISIONSANDVOICES.USC.EDU

## IF YOU LIKED THIS EVENT, YOU MIGHT WANT TO CHECK OUT:

- Other events and classes at the USC School of Cinematic Arts | [cinema.usc.edu](http://cinema.usc.edu)
- Upcoming Visions and Voices events, including
  - 3/26/23** [Gearfest 2023: Afrodesia](#)
  - 4/20/23** [John Singleton: A Celebration—Snowfall](#)
  - 4/29/23** [The Met in HD: Terence Blanchard's \*Champion\*](#)
- LA Black Film Festival | [lafilmfestivals.com](http://lafilmfestivals.com)
- Pan African Film and Arts Festival | [paff.org](http://paff.org)

## DISCOVER MORE AT THE USC LIBRARIES

**Melissa Miller** of the USC Libraries selected the following resources to help you learn more about this event. Electronic resources are accessible through the search bar on the USC Libraries homepage at [libraries.usc.edu](http://libraries.usc.edu) but may require the user to log in using their USC credentials.

### ARTICLES

Andrés Bartolomé Leal, "[Boyz Out the Hood? Geographical, Linguistic and Social Mobility in John Singleton's \*Boyz n the Hood\*](#)," *Journal of English Studies* 11, no. 1 (2013): 27–39.

James Nadell, "[Boyz N The Hood: A Colonial Analysis](#)," *Journal of Black Studies* 25, no. 4 (1995): 447–64.

Vicci Lovette Saunders, "[Dorothy and the Boyz: Race and the Education of the American Movie Ticket Buyer](#)," *Journal of Black Studies* 38, no. 4 (2008): 622–40.

### BOOKS

Craigh Barboza, [John Singleton: Interviews](#) (Jackson: Univ. Press of Mississippi, 2009).

Joi Carr and John Singleton, [Boyz n the Hood: Shifting Hollywood Terrain](#) (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 2018).

Celeste Fisher, [Black on Black: Urban Youth Films and the Multicultural Audience](#) (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishing Group, 2006).

### JOURNALS

[Journal of Black Studies](#)      [Film & History](#)

### VIDEOS

[Poetic Justice](#) (Columbia TriStar Home Video, 1998).

[Boyz n the Hood](#) (Columbia TriStar Home Entertainment, 2003).

