

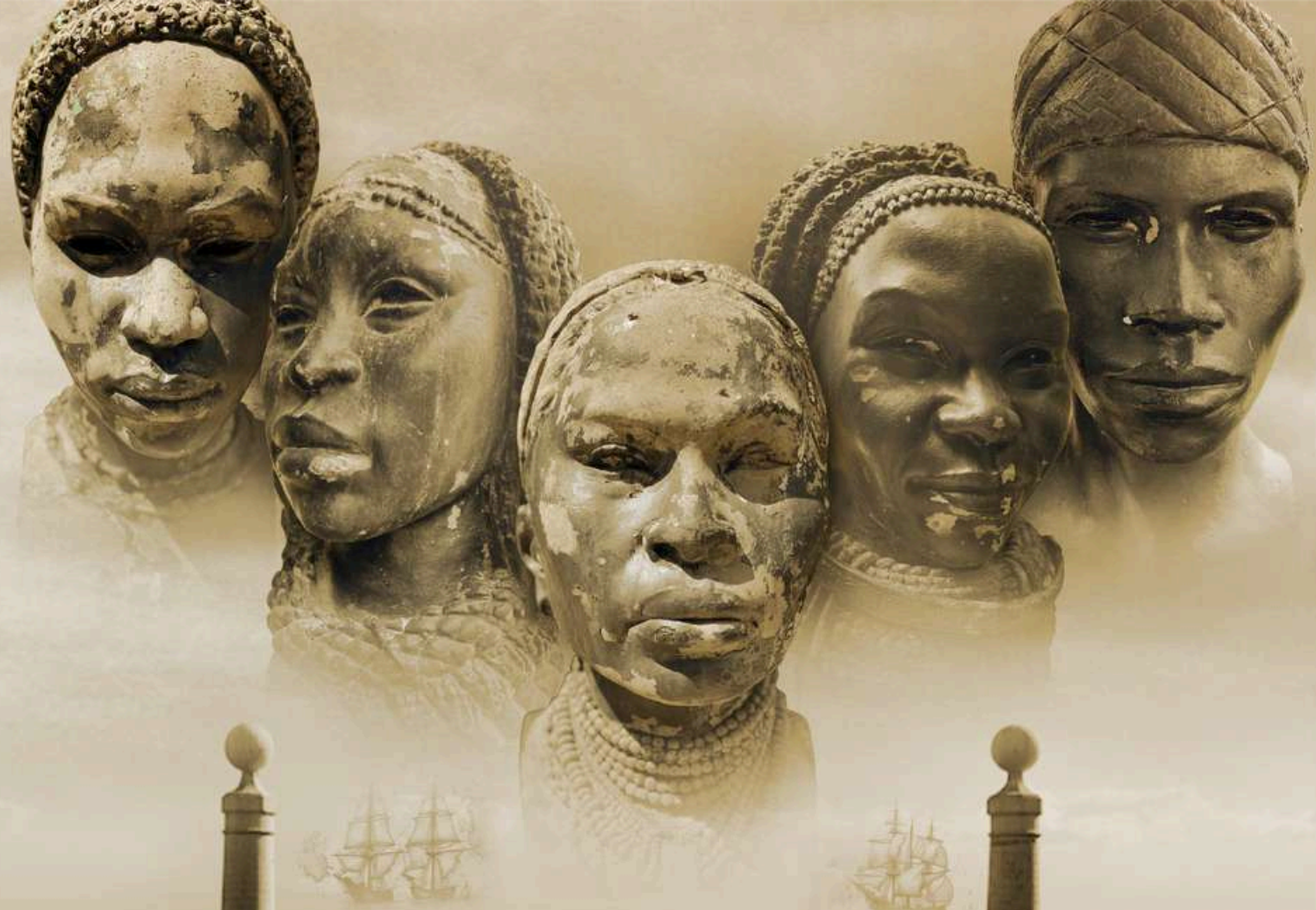
# We Were Here

*the untold history of Black Africans in the Renaissance Europe*

*"We Were Here" highlights the erasures of history that feed nationalist politics today by recovering the presence of Black Africans in Renaissance Europe -- **Ocula Magazine***

DO THE  
RIGHT  
FILMS

2025 TOUR



**WE WERE  
HERE**

THE UNTOLD HISTORY OF  
BLACK AFRICANS IN RENAISSANCE EUROPE

Reframing **Art** in the **Renaissance**

A Unique Intersection  
of Art and Black Heritage

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

has been exhibited at the **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. This unique film offers a profound exploration of cultural and historical narratives across the UK, Italy, Spain, Portugal, the Netherlands, and France. The documentary is particularly relevant for departments such as **Modern Languages, Art History, History, Renaissance Studies, Black Studies, Art, European Studies.**

By 2025, over 70 universities across North America, the UK, and the Netherlands have already built events centered around this film, seamlessly integrating it into their academic programs and cultural activities.

This documentary not only enriches academic curricula but also fosters a deeper appreciation for the interconnectedness of global cultures and histories, providing students and faculty with a valuable opportunity to engage in meaningful dialogue about the importance of inclusivity in both historical and contemporary contexts.

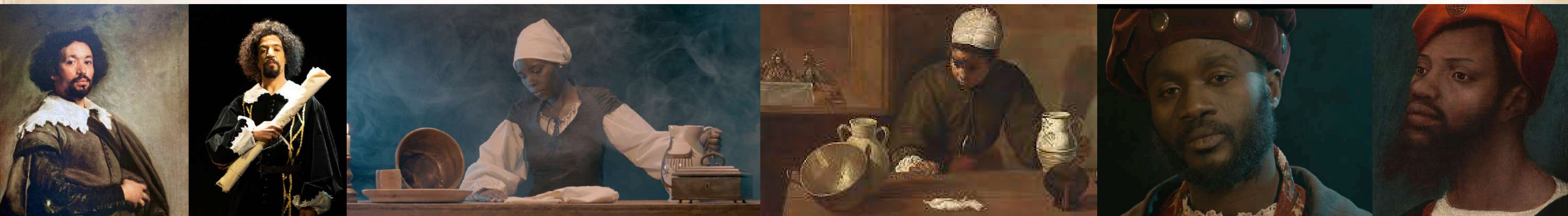


## SCREENING DETAILS

- Duration: The documentary runs for approximately 60 minutes.
- Languages: French, Portuguese, Spanish, Italian, Dutch subtitled in English
- Format: Digital File or DCP. Audio: Stereo
- Director's Presence: Fred Kudjo Kuwonu, the acclaimed director and expert in diversity representation and media, as well as Black Diaspora, will be available for a talk and Q&A session. This event presents an invaluable opportunity for engaging discussions not only on the themes of the film but also on the broader topics of Black Europeans and the importance of representation in media. With his extensive knowledge and experience, Kuwonu can provide deep insights and foster a wide-ranging dialogue on these critical issues.



# EXTRA OPTION UNIVERSITY MUSEUM



In addition to the single film screening event to be held in a cinema or campus auditorium, which will begin with the presence of the director, we are also finalizing a version of a three channel-monitor video installation. This installation could subsequently be programmed for continuous looping in the university museum starting the day after the screening and available for an extended period of 30 days at an additional cost, which allows for more visitors.

# ENGAGE, REFLECT, TRANSFORM: UNCOVERING HISTORY THROUGH ART

## Art and Art History Students

- Art and Art History students can gain a fresh perspective on viewing historical art through the lens of diversity. This experience can: Encourage them to approach past artworks with curiosity and without detachment
- Help students who may feel underrepresented to see themselves reflected in historical European art

## History Students

- History students can contextualize the Early Modern period in Europe as a more multiethnic era than often portrayed
- Examine how diverse populations contributed to European cultural development
- Critically assess historical narratives and their impact on contemporary understanding

## Modern Languages Students & Cultures

- For Modern Languages students, the film allows students to experience linguistic and cultural diversity of Europe
- Enhances language skills while exploring rich cultural context



# Discover, Challenge, Redefine Contemporary Europe

## Film and Media Studies Students

- For Film and Media Studies students, the screening demonstrates how to utilize hidden historical stories in contemporary filmmaking
- Techniques for working with archival materials and limited resources
- The power of documentary film in reshaping historical narratives and socially engaging the audience

## Sociology • Cultural Studies

- Critical analysis of historical narratives: students can examine how certain histories have been marginalized or overlooked, encouraging critical thinking about historical representation and power dynamics
- Examination of social structures: students can study how power dynamics, social hierarchies, and cultural norms of the Renaissance period impacted the process of racialization

## Africana and Black Studies Students

- Black Studies students gain a deeper understanding of pre-colonial African-European dynamics before the dominance of the slave trade
- Exploring the continuity of Black European history from the Renaissance to modern times
- Analyzing how historical Black experiences inform current racial dynamics in Europe





Fred Kudjo Kuwornu is a multi-hyphenate socially engaged artist, filmmaker and scholar whose work is deeply influenced by his background as a person of African descent. Born and raised in Italy, Kuwornu is based in New York. His unique background is reflected in his triple citizenship, holding Italian, Ghanaian, and U.S. passports.

His works have been exhibited at prestigious venues including the Central Pavilion at the Venice Art Biennale (2024), Museum of Moving Image in New York, Library of Congress, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, George Eastman Museum, numerous international film festivals and more than 300 universities.

In 2025, he received the Folger Library Artist Fellowship and the Dan David Prize, widely regarded as the “Nobel” for history—the world’s largest history prize, awarded annually to only nine outstanding scholars whose innovative work advances and enriches public understanding of the past.



By consistently bridging past and present, visible and invisible, the **seen and unseen, Kuwornu's** practice emerges as a vital contribution to contemporary visual culture, understanding the complex interplay between history, identity, race, and representation in our globalized world.

# ARTIST PRACTICE

**Kuwornu's** curatorial vision can be understood as a form of "**historical remixing**," in which he reconfigures archival materials and contemporary narratives to propose new modes of seeing and understanding. This process not only recovers suppressed histories but also challenges entrenched power structures and cultural assumptions, contributing to the ongoing project of decolonizing the gaze and reimagining historical narratives in a post-colonial context.



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*"When discussing Black people in the 15th and 16th centuries, the focus is often solely on their condition as enslaved individuals, overlooking the remarkable figures who lived in Europe during that period, which many associate exclusively with a white experience. However, Black individuals were also present, and this is why I felt compelled to make this film—to empower the Black diaspora community that they were there too."*

**-- Fred Kudjo Kuwornu's statement**

[Link La Biennale Venezia](#)

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More info: [www.wewereherethefilm.com](http://www.wewereherethefilm.com)