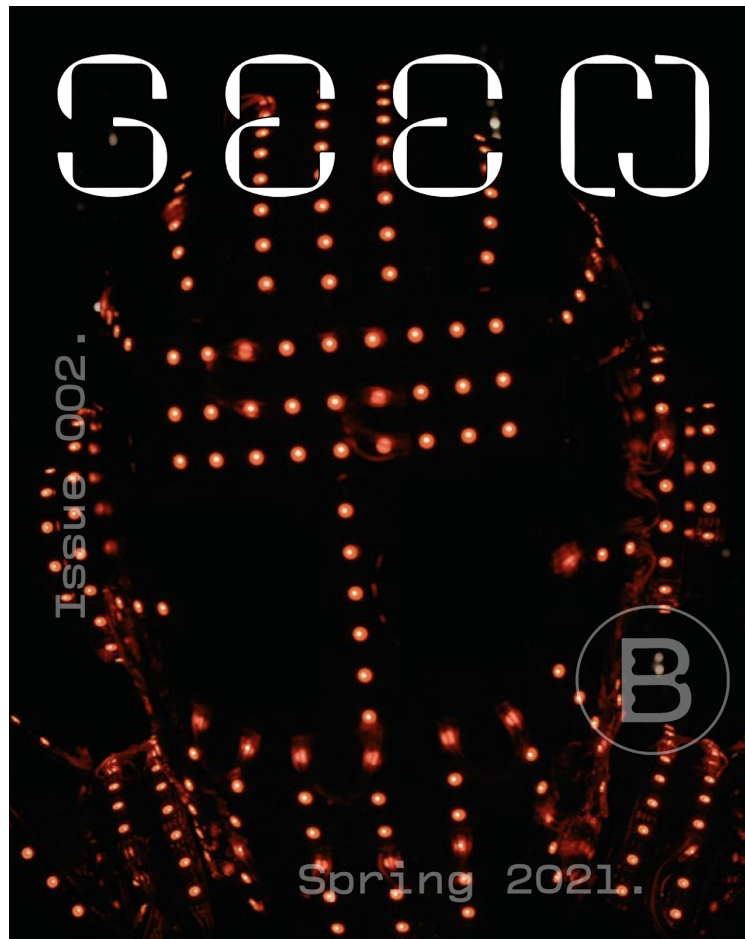


BlackStar Launches Second Issue of *Seen*

Guest Edited by Dessane Lopez Cassell, the twice-annual journal focuses on BIPOC Film and Visual Culture



(Philadelphia, PA - May 25, 2021) -- [BlackStar Projects](#), producer of the BlackStar Film Festival, is proud to announce the launch of the second issue of [Seen](#), its twice-annual journal of film and visual culture made for and about Black, Brown, Indigenous, and other artists of color.

Issue 002 of *Seen* will be available for pre-order [here](#) beginning May 25, and the print and digital editions will be officially released on June 18th.



Guest-edited by curator, writer, and editor **Dessane Lopez Cassell**, *Seen*'s second issue includes essays, reviews, interviews, original art and photography, and more. The issue features a wide range of voices, including strong representation of Caribbean creatives, across writers and subjects.

"As each piece in this issue exemplifies, this work of carving out space is both transformative and integral to Black, Brown, and Indigenous communities around the world," writes Lopez Cassell in her introduction to the issue. "It is often quiet, slow, spiritual, and perhaps most importantly, it is ongoing."

Highlights from the second issue of *Seen* include **Razan AlSalah** on queer, anticolonial filmmaking, **Karas Lamb** in conversation with **Questlove**, **Lakshmi Padmanabhan** on *Minari* & American-ness, **Astria Suprak**'s visual essay on science fiction, futurity, and Asian material culture, a review of *Liborio* by **Dixa Ramírez D'Oleo**, and a behind-the-scenes look at photographer and artist **Rikkí Wright**'s Los Angeles studio. The cover story features filmmaker **Keisha Rae Witherspoon**'s script for *T*, accompanied by an original introduction.

The release of Issue 002 is accompanied by a dynamic **IG live series** featuring *Seen* contributors. All conversations will take place between Blackstar's Instagram ([@blackstarfest](#)) and *Seen*'s ([@seen_journal](#)). The first live conversation aligns with partner organization Color of Change's **Racial Justice Week of Action**, and will take place on May 25th at 2:30pm ET with special guests **Keisha Rae Witherspoon** and **Gina Duncan**. On June 1st, **Astria Suparak** and BlackStar Festival Director **Nehad Khader** will go live at 4pm ET, and June 8th will feature **Dessane Lopez Casell** and **Jlin**, live at 4pm ET.

The release of the new issue of *Seen* kicks off BlackStar's summer season, which includes the 10th anniversary of its signature program, the **BlackStar Film Festival**, which will run from **August 4-8, 2021**. This year also marked the launch of several new and ongoing initiatives, including the **Blackstar 10th Anniversary [Print Sale](#)** and podcast *[Many Lumens](#)*. A new limited edition print by celebrated artists is released on the 15th of every month to fundraise in honor of Blackstar's first decade. Participating artists include: Garrett Bradley, Arthur Jafa, Kahlil Joseph, and Cauleen Smith. Meanwhile, BlackStar's new podcast

Many Lumens now has five episodes available – all illuminating conversations between BlackStar Artistic Director and CEO **Maori Karmael Holmes** and a range of guests, including dream hampton, Janicza Bravo, and Blitz Bazawule.

The full list of *Seen* contributors includes Razan AlSalah, Saleem Albeik, Heitor Augusto, Erin Christovale, Jemma Desai, D'Lo, Terri Francis, Maori Karmael Holmes, Beandrea July, Karas Lamb, Luce Lincoln, Dessane Lopez Cassell, Rachell Morillo, Janaína Oliveira, Meg Onli, Lakshmi Padmanabhan, Jlin, Keisha Rae Witherspoon, Farrah Rahaman, Dixa Ramírez D'Oleo, Imran Siddiquee, Tzutzumatzin Soto, Astria Suparak, Claire Tancons, Lendl Tellington, and Rikkí Wright.

The issue's cover features the work of filmmaker Keisha Rae Witherspoon. In addition to Lopez Cassell, the editorial staff includes: Caroline Washington, Art Director; Nehad Khader, Managing Editor; Leo Brooks, Design Associate; Imran Siddiquee, Communications Director; Jasmine Weber, Essays Editor; Kavita Rajanna, Interviews Editor; Yasmine Espert, Profiles & Reviews Editor; Sydney Alicia Rodriguez, Program Associate; Shauna Swartz, Copyeditor; and Maori Karmael Holmes, Founding Editor.

Seen's Editorial Advisory Board consists of Jeff Chang, Akiba Solomon, John L. Jackson, Jr., Louis Massiah, Adam Piron, Roya Rastegar, Sally Singer, Elizabeth Méndez Berry, Tarana Burke, Greg Tate, Gina Duncan, and Zaheer Ali.

Seen may be purchased via local, international, and online outlets, including: BYE BYE NEIGHBOR, Harriett's Bookshop, magCulture, McNally Jackson, Philadelphia Printworks, Reparations Club, The Sable Collective, Tomorrow Today, and Ulises. To purchase your copy, visit blackstarfest.org/Stockists for more information.

The first issue of *Seen*, edited by BlackStar Artistic Director and CEO Maori Karmael Holmes, included essays, reviews, interviews, original art and photography, and more. The first issue introduced the publication with features including **Heitor Augusto** on queer Brazilian cinema, **Niela Orr** in conversation with *The Forty-Year-Old Version* writer/director **Radha Blank**, a look inside renowned painter **Amy Sherald**'s Jersey City studio, an

unproduced short script by **Terence Nance**, and storyboards from **Blitz Bazawule's** **The Burial of Kojo**.

Issue **003**, to be released later this year, will be edited by writer and filmmaker **Darol Olu Kae**.

For more information on *Seen*, the BlackStar Film Festival, and other BlackStar programs, visit blackstarfest.org.

About BlackStar Projects

BlackStar Projects is the producer of the BlackStar Film Festival, an annual celebration of the visual and storytelling traditions of the African diaspora and global communities of color – showcasing films by Black, Brown, and Indigenous people from around the world. In addition to the acclaimed festival, BlackStar presents an array of programming across film and visual culture year-round, and produces the twice-annual journal *Seen*.

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