



<http://www.moviecitynews.com/reviews/DVD/2009/090519.html>

Made in 1984, and, thus, more than a few years out of date in certain discussion threads, **Black Hollywood** is best when it looks back at the history of African-American participation in the movie industry. The material is fascinating, and the images rarely seen. Less relevant, if only because so many things have changed in the last quarter-century, is the debate among black producers and entertainers as to how they could affect change in the studio system.

In 1984, black entertainers were reeling over the loss of opportunities left to them when the Blaxploitation trend collapsed. The producers and actors providing testimony rightly argued that nothing would change unless rich African-Americans seeded projects and theaters were built in the inner city – a theory **Magic Johnson** proved to be accurate – even the most influential artists would be reduced to accepting cliché roles and subordinate executive positions. Also necessarily missing was any discussion of the impact hip-hop money would have on the studio system and audience demographics.

Even so, these sorts of discussions are too rare a commodity, and **Black Hollywood** makes many still-valid observations. It would have been nice to find an updated panel discussion included in the DVD package.

- Gary Dretzka