

Dolapo is Fine

Short film (15 minutes) available until 18th October.

<https://player.bfi.org.uk/free/film/watch-dolapo-is-fine-2019-online>

This rewarding and thoughtful depiction of an ever-relevant issue finds a young black girl about to leave boarding school and encouraged to conform to white beauty standards for a job in the City.

Director Ethoshia Hylton

Producer Millie Marsh

Writers Joan Iyiola, Chibundu Onuzo



Representation

1. Dolapo changes over the course of the film. How does the script use her actions and dialogue to show her in control of her destiny, to out of control, and back again?
2. The script weaves together different parts of Dolapo's life and identity. What are they, and how and why are they are represented differently on screen?
3. Do you know any other films representing young Black British girls in this way, exploring the move into your young adulthood? How do they compare?

Production

In recent years there has been increased interest and focus on the mechanics of camera, lighting and film processing to represent black skin and hair on film.

Where most camera, lighting directors and technicians have historically had a broad range of options for lighting white actors, the same options do not typically apply to black cast, resulting in less depth and breadth to their on-screen appearance than their white-skinned co-stars.

For DOLAPO IS FINE, Joan Iyiola, cinematographer Yinka Edward and director Ethosheia Hylton worked closely to achieve a full range of lighting set ups, ensuring that Doyin Ajiboye and the rest of the cast were filmed in a rich variety of tones expressing the wide range of moods across scenes and settings.

Production

In the film's Production Notes, Joan Iyiola notes that her inspiration has come from the lighting of dark-skinned black women in recent films from France, including *GIRLHOOD* (Dir Céline Sciamma / 2014) and Maïmouna Doucouré *MAMAN(S)* (2015).

She has also been inspired by black directors who working with black casts and exploring social issues around black hair and skin such as Spike Lee.



Céline Sciamma



Maïmouna Doucouré



Spike Lee

Stretch & Challenge

Find the trailers for the French films and Spike Lee films including the classic 'Good and Bad Hair' routine in SCHOOL DAZE (US 1988).

- Focus on the lighting – why do these films inspire filmmakers looking to represent the full range of black skin and hair on film?

Doyin Ajiboye as Dolapo is in every scene. Re-watch the film to see how the range of camera shots expresses her feelings and tells the story as she considers her identity:

- she's rarely in long shot, why is this?
- How is she filmed in relation to the other students at the school?
- When is she filmed in Close Up - why these moments?

Stretch & Challenge

Write a response to the film. This can be in the form of a review (written or filmed) or developed into an opinion piece article.

Submit it to Miss. Patel if you would like it to be published on BBC Young Reporter.