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"BLACK ON BLACK" #1  
ST. LOUIS MUSEUM

VISITING FILMMAKER:  
CHARLES BURNETT



Filmmaker Charles Burnett

So, it really starts at an early age. The consequences manifest themselves in many ways." (from *Black Films and Film Makers*, 1979 series)

And still the film is not depressing. Stan does survive and, though it appears ironic in spite of the image of so much killing, there is a strong reverence for life. Kids introduce the film; they are always underfoot. Their vitality seems impossible to "slaughter."

Charles Burnett received an M.F.A. degree from UCLA. He has also made a color short, *THE HORSE*, has worked as cinematographer for Sharon Larkin's *YOUR CHILDREN COME BACK TO YOU* (shown 4 April); and is presently working with Billy Woodberry whose film *THE POCKET-BOOK* will be shown 27 April.

## KILLER OF SHEEP

1977, black and white/narrative, 83 minutes. Produced, directed, written, edited, and photographed by Charles Burnett. Sound by Charles Bracy. With Henry Sanders, Kaycee Moore, Charles Bracy and Angela Burnett. Distributed by the filmmaker.

*KILLER OF SHEEP* is the story of Stan, a sensitive man whose work in a slaughterhouse conflicts with his own sensibilities about life. He internalizes these conflicts and, though never losing sight of the values of right and wrong, his growing alienation and personal isolation begin to surface. Burnett's profound creation of a sense of place draws a parallel between the story of Stan and the story of Watts in southern Los Angeles, where the film was made. Burnett admitted as much in an interview with Oliver Franklin. "Stan is, in many respects, a character that is common in our community... the idea for the film came from observation, seeing the limited choices that affect a person in Stan's position. In order to survive, you have to do conflicting things. The first scene in the film has the father telling the son he must defend his brother... it doesn't matter whether it's right or wrong.