

Cultivate Cinema Circle presents:
THE DEFIANT ONES [1958]

Directed by Stanley Kramer

MAY 7TH, 2022 - 1:00PM



Original Theatrical Poster

SHORT CUTS

“Viewed as a physical test of black and white, *The Defiant Ones* has a structure quite revolutionary for a Hollywood film...The artists involved in *The Defiant Ones* did not, however, dwell on the tensions in the film. The message, Poitier declared, was a gentle call for brotherhood: ‘It doesn’t pretend to give a cure-all for hate-thy-neighbor but it does say ‘I’m going through a hell of a lot with you, and still don’t dig everything about you, but in some ways you’re not so bad after all.’” Americans in 1958 found both this message and the film ‘not so bad after all,’ and *Defiant Ones* [was nominated for] the Oscar for best picture of the year; Stanley Kramer [was nominated for] the Oscar as best director, and the script was declared best script. In a landmark move, however, something even more dramatic happened in the Academy:

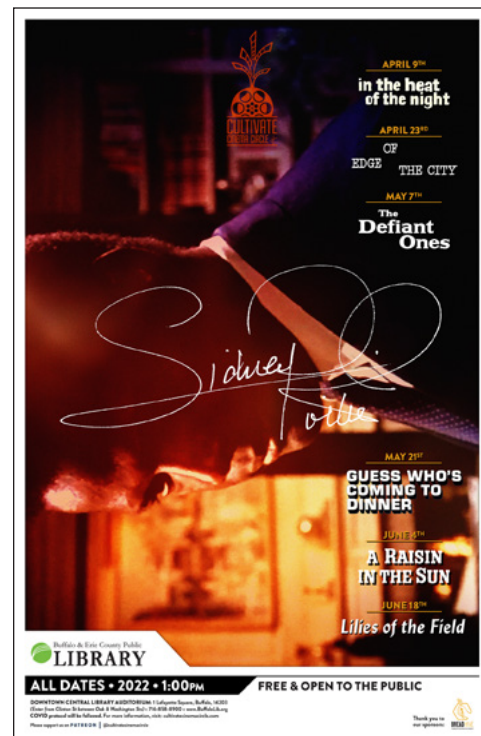
Sidney Poitier became the first black ever nominated for the best actor award. Though he didn’t win, *The Defiant Ones* brought him to the forefront of American actors.”

– Lester J Keyser & Andre H. Ruszkowski,
The Cinema of Sidney Poitier [1980]

“The theme of *The Defiant Ones* is that what keeps men apart is their lack of knowledge of one another. With that knowledge comes respect, and with respect comradeship and even love. This thesis is exercised in terms of a colored and a white man, both convicts chained together as they make their break for freedom from a Southern prison gang. The performances by Tony Curtis and Sidney Poitier are virtually flawless. Poitier captures all of the moody violence of the convict, serving time because he assaulted a white man who had insulted him. It is a cunning, totally intelligent portrayal that rings powerfully

true. As ‘Jocker’ Jackson, the arrogant white man chained to a fellow convict whom he hates, Curtis delivers a true surprise performance. He starts off as a sneering, brutal character, willing to fight it out to-the-death with his equally stubborn companion. When, in the end, he sacrifices a dash for freedom to save Poitier, he has managed the transition with such skill that sympathy is completely with him. Picture has other surprises, not

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the least of which is Kramer’s sensitive and skilled direction, this being only his third try at calling the scenes. The scenes of Poitier and Curtis groping their way painfully out of a deep clay pit, their perilous journey down the river, as well as their clumsy attempt to break into a store and the subsequent near-lynch scene, become integral parts of the larger chase, for the posse is never far behind.”
 –Fred Hift, *Variety* [1957]

“*The Defiant Ones*, Stanley Kramer’s third directorial try proves, at least to me, that Kramer is an excellent producer but an uninspired director...*Defiant Ones* repeats all his previous directorial weaknesses. The plot is excellent, casting is excellent, production is excellent. In the hands of a Zinnemann or a Kazan, the film would have become a minor masterpiece. As it is, the picture goes through its prescribed motions, but remains shallow and on the surface. Kramer lacks the necessary creative sensibility; no inspiration visits him. One can see that he worked hard, as in all his previous films. He made careful drawings for every shot, he planned every image of his movie. However, as is the case with all Hollywood Eisensteins, instead of aiding the film, this meticulous pre-planning only helps

to kill whatever inspiration, spontaneity, or improvisation remains.”
 –Jonas Mekas, *Village Voice* [1958]

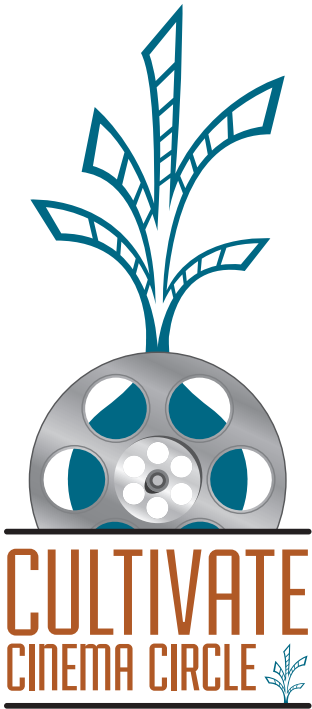
CAST & CREW

Director	Stanley Kramer
Screenplay	Nedrick Young and Harold Jacob Smith
Tony Curtis.....	John ‘Joker’ Jackson
Sidney Poitier	Noah Cullen
Theodore Bikel.....	Sheriff Max Muller
Charles McGraw.....	Capt. Frank Gibbons
Lon Chaney Jr.....	Big Sam
King Donovan	Solly
Claude Akins.....	Mack
Lawrence Dobkin.....	Editor
Whit Bissell	Lou Gans
Carl ‘Alfalfa’ Switzer.....	Angus
Kevin Coughlin	Billy
Cara Williams.....	Billy’s Mother

DIRECTOR FILMOGRAPHY

- The Runner Stumbles (1979)
- The Domino Principle (1977)
- Oklahoma Crude (1973)
- Bless the Beasts & Children (1971)

- R.P.M. (1970)
- The Secret of Santa Vittoria (1969)
- Guess Who’s Coming to Dinner (1967)
- Ship of Fools (1965)
- It’s a Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad World (1963)
- Judgment at Nuremberg (1961)
- Inherit the Wind (1960)
- On the Beach (1959)
- The Defiant Ones (1958)
- The Pride and the Passion (1957)
- Not As a Stranger (1955)



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UPCOMING SCHEDULE:

GUESS WHO’S COMING TO DINNER [1967]
 Sat, May 21st, 2022 | 1:00pm

A RAISIN IN THE SUN [1961]
 Sat, June 4th, 2022 | 1:00pm

LILIES OF THE FIELD [1963]
 Sat, June 18th, 2022 | 1:00pm

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