

# INDIECOLLECT

## THE STORY OF A THREE DAY PASS by Melvin Van Peebles

The 4K IndieCollect Restoration  
starts at Film Forum in New York  
and Laemmle Noho in Los Angeles on May 7!



We are very excited to announce that our HFPA-funded restoration of the Melvin Van Peebles film, THE STORY OF A THREE DAY PASS, starts May 7 at the Film Forum in New York and at Laemmle's Noho cinema in North Hollywood.

The movie is being released theatrically by Janus Films with a Criterion Collection boxed set of Melvin Van Peebles movies to follow. [More info about the release here.](#)

The film tells the story of a Black American soldier (Harry Baird), who wins a promotion and a 3-day leave while stationed in Paris. But his idyllic weekend with the lovely Miriam (played by Nicole Berger, star of *Shoot the Piano Player*) is marred by racism. In the wake of a continued assault on Black people in this country, [including those who serve our country](#), the film is perhaps more resonant today than it was in 1968.

**THE STORY OF A THREE DAY PASS**  
**Friday, May 7 — Thursday May 13**  
[Buy Film Forum In-Theatre Tickets](#)  
[Buy Film Forum Virtual Cinema Tickets](#)  
[Buy Laemmle NoHo 7 Tickets](#)

We hope that you will join us — either in the theatre or at home — to watch this treasure of Black cinema come back to life on the big screen!

### About the Restoration



The original film elements were found by the IndieCollect team during our inventory of Melvin Van Peebles' personal archive in 2018, and we undertook the restoration in collaboration with Melvin's sons, Max and Mario Van Peebles, with the assistance of Gloria Jarecki. To create the restoration, the IndieCollect team used a 5K Kinetta Archival Scanner to digitally capture the 35mm Interpositive of the American version and combined it with elements scanned from the French version. Color grading and restoration were completed in-house by Oskar Miarka, and the titles were recreated by Cameron Haffner. Sandra Schulberg translated the French dialogue and new English subtitles were created. The restoration was showcased at the 2020 Lumiere Film Festival in the Cannes Classics section.

We'd like to thank the [Hollywood Foreign Press Association](#), whose leadership and members supported the restoration with a special grant in 2019. The 2020 HFPA Restoration Summit hosted a "sneak preview" of the film at the beautiful Egyptian Theatre in Los Angeles, just before the pandemic hit.

[Read about STORY on GoldenGlobes.com](#)

### About Melvin Van Peebles

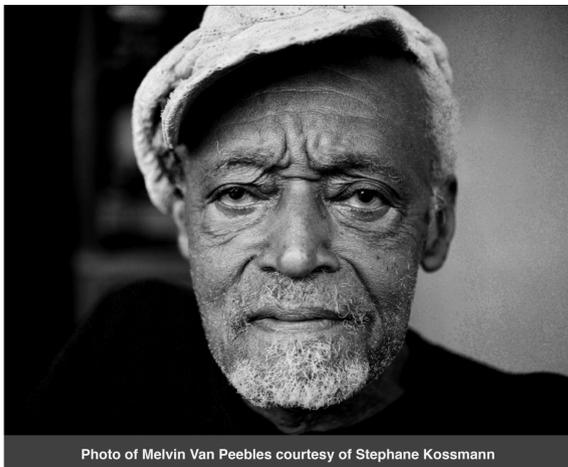


Photo of Melvin Van Peebles courtesy of Stephane Kossmann

THE STORY OF A THREE DAY PASS (known in French as *La Permission*) is the first movie by the now legendary American director Melvin Van Peebles. The flair and flamboyance of his later films are evident in this debut, but it is his supremely subtle handling of racial tension that makes this such a powerful movie. Born in Chicago in 1932, Melvin Van Peebles had left the U.S. because he could not find work as a director. He adapted this screenplay from his French novel, *La Permission*, and the film won a prize at the San Francisco International Film Festival. That attention finally opened doors for Van Peebles in Hollywood, but after making *Watermelon Man* in 1970, he vowed to finance and fully control his next project. That movie — *Sweet Sweetback's Baadasssss Song* — changed the course of film history forever.

[Support the Restoration of More Films by Black Filmmakers!](#)

### In the Press

Since the premiere was announced, THE STORY OF A THREE-DAY PASS has garnered lots of press coverage, including a terrific piece in The New York Times and this one by connoisseur Richard Brody in [The New Yorker](#):

MOVIES

#### The Story of a Three-Day Pass

Melvin Van Peebles directed this film, his first feature, in 1967, in France, where he had lived for years, and its boldly original inspirations reflect both French cinematic styles and American politics—it's at once a New Wave classic and one of the great American films of the era. It stars Harry Baird as Turner, a Black American corporal stationed at a U.S. Army base in France. A manic white officer (Harold Brav) offers him a promotion and the leisure time of the movie's title, which Turner uses for a jaunt to Paris. There, at a night club, he meets a white Frenchwoman named Miriam (Nicole Berger); news of their interracial relationship sparks turmoil at the base. Turner's divided consciousness—defiant and dutiful, hip and nerdy—is the core of the film, which Van Peebles unfolds with a dazzling array of cinematic devices, including mirror images coming to life, scenes fragmented into snippets and still frames, and frenzied fantasy sequences that evoke the tale's psychological and social complexities with wild humor.

— *Richard Brody*

Mario Van Peebles also did this [wonderful interview](#) with Ellen J. Wanjiru in BlackFilm.



Photo of Melvin and son Mario, courtesy of Mario Van Peebles

We look forward to sharing more reviews with you following its theatrical release. In the meantime, check out the other articles below!

[New York Times](#)

[Vulture | NY Mag](#)

[The Playlist](#)

### Note from Sandra Schulberg...

IFP comrade Warrington Hudlin suggested that Melvin Van Peebles and his family might need IndieCollect's help to assess film and sound materials Melvin was holding in his NY apartment and storage units. Having known and admired Melvin since we showed *Sweet Sweetback* at the 1979 IFP sidebar to the New York Film Festival, it was a privilege to be asked. Getting to know Mario and Max and Gloria in the process has been a pleasure. But the best part for me was getting to see Melvin again. Melvin, your indie spirit will never die. You inspire me still and always.



Right: Warrington Hudlin guest-hosting the "Midday" show on WNYC in 2018 to talk about restoration of Black movies including *Nationtime* and *The Story of a Three Day Pass*. (Photo by Sandra Schulberg.)

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