"Rich and revealing, a cry of historical dimensions..." (Variety, 1985)

New 4K digital restoration, DCP, color, 118 min.

The Killing Floor
Winner 1985 Sundance Special Jury Award

Saturday, February 22, 2020 at 7:00 PM
University of Wisconsin Cinematheque
821 University Avenue, Vilas Hall, Room 4070, Madison, Wisconsin
FREE ADMISSION

SYNOPSIS: Praised by The Village Voice as the most “clear-eyed account of union organizing on film,” THE KILLING FLOOR tells a true story of how a group of black and white slaughterhouse workers attempted to break race barriers to build an interracial union for the first time in the brutal stockyards. Damien Leake (SERPICO, APOCALYPSE NOW) stars as Frank Custer, a young black sharecropper from Mississippi — one of tens of thousands of southern blacks who journeyed to the industrial north during World War One, hoping for more racial equality. When Frank lands a job as a laborer on “the killing floor” in one of Chicago's giant meatpacking plants, he finds a place seething with racial antagonism and decides to support the union cause. His best friends from the South, distrustful of the white-led union, turn against him. As racial violence explodes in the notorious Chicago Race Riot of 1919, management is able to further divide the workforce to defeat the union, and Frank must forge a new path. Funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities, foundations, corporations and dozens of unions, THE KILLING FLOOR features a screenplay by Obie-Award-winner Leslie Lee, based on an original story by producer Elsa Rassbach and directed by Bill Duke (A RAGE IN HARLEM, DEEP COVER). Cast: Damien Leake, Alfre Woodard, Dennis Farina, Moses Gunn, Ernest Rayford and Clarence Felder.

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https://www.filmmovement.com/the-killing-floor

"A rare American labor union drama centered on Black experience, THE KILLING FLOOR is a minor miracle of narrative history, succeeding as drama, as pedagogy, and as a model of independent, inclusive, collaborative, local, unionized filmmaking." (Cine-List, 2019)

Awards, festivals, reviews & trailer: thekillingfloor-thefilm.com