

Black & Gold

Directed by Khadija Diakité

Logline: Black & Gold reveals the untold stories of African-American athletes in the sport of women's gymnastics, as they battle near unbeatable odds, societal barriers, racism and stereotypes, at the highest levels of the sport, in the pursuit of Olympic gold.

Synopsis: Black & Gold is a feature length documentary that journeys from the gymnastic floor to the locker room to the living rooms of seven black Olympic gymnasts whose histories will be laid bare, facing obstacles that exceeded the ones they encountered on the competitive arena. The film centers on roots that have nurtured new gymnasts and therefore, it is envisioned as one feature documentary, not sliced into individual stories for serial consumption. This speaks to the African proverb: "If we stand tall, it is because we stand on the shoulders of many ancestors"—about our interconnectedness, how the previous generation paves the way for the new one. Black & Gold is a continuum--viewers will grasp how each athlete cleared the way for the next ones. Can you have Simone Biles without Gabby Douglas? Or, Gabby Douglas without Dominique Dawes? This film states the case for why you can't. By highlighting each Olympic Games from 1980-2016 and walking the path of each athlete, the film explores their unique contributions to USA gymnastics. Black & Gold transpires as a collective story linked through these individuals, an unbroken line reaching back and going forward.

In 1980, Luci Collins qualified for the games. The 15-year-old from Inglewood, CA shattered a gymnastics color barrier, maintained for 48 years. Only white women had represented the USA since appearing first in the 1932 Olympics. Since that initial performance, the U.S. women's gymnastics program bloomed into the biggest juggernaut at the Olympics. The film—traversing Los Angeles to New York to Maryland to Texas—chronicles the rollercoaster Olympic stories of the only seven African-American female gymnasts ever to qualify for the games. The audience experiences the soaring heights and profound lows of each of these women as they navigated the misogynistic and racist challenges of tackling their dream.



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