50 Years Since 68
An Initiative of the Department of Africana Studies/Rites and Reason Theatre

The year 2018 is the 50th anniversary of important and pivotal moments in history.

50 Years Since 68 is a year-long initiative that reflects on the meaning and significance of that remarkable year and examines the state of the world a half-century later. For Africana Studies at Brown University, it is also 50 years since the 1968 Walkout of black students and their allies that protested the small number of black faculty and the absence of a black studies curriculum. The University's response led first to the formation of Rites and Reason Theatre in 1969 and then the Afro-American Studies Program, which eventually became today's Department of Africana Studies/Rites and Reason Theatre.

Beginning in the spring of 2018, the department presented its first three 50 Years Since 68 events: a Launch Reception where we welcomed faculty, students and partners; the first screening of new film: The Stand: How One Gesture Shook the World, a revealing exploration into circumstances that led Olympic runners Tommie Smith and John Carlos to take a stand at the 1968 Mexico City Games; and Music of 1968: A Change is Gonna Come, a four part series highlighting the music and movements of 1968.

In September, 50 Years Since 68 continues with an open course, AFRI 1968: A Year in Review, that explores and analyzes the contentions, confrontations, and changes the events of 1968 brought forth with consequences that continue to resonate into the present; Upending the Ivory Tower: Brown University and the Black Freedom Movement, a book talk and signing by Stefan Bradley; and Walkout! a spoken word performance recollecting the memories of the Black Student Walkout of 1968 at Brown University.

On November 1st and 2nd, in partnership with the Brown University Watson Institute for International and Public Affairs, Africana Studies will convene a symposium 1968: The Global
and the Local to reflect on the significance of 1968 and explore its impact on world history through today.

During the 2019 Commencement Reunion Weekend, Africana Studies will screen the filming of the Fall 2018 spoken word performance: WalkOut!, as well as feature a Digital Gallery titled “Because They Did We Can” containing images of organizations and initiatives from the 1968 walkouts.

50 Years Since 68 will culminate in Fall 2019 with a major keynote speaker, sponsored by the Office of the President Christina Paxson, reflecting on the past, the uncertain present and proposing possible paths for the near future.

All of our 50 Years Since 68 events and programs are FREE and Open to Everyone with generous support from the Watson Institute for International and Public Affairs and the Office of the President, Christina Paxson.

For more information please feel free to contact us at (401) 863-3137 or africana_studies@brown.edu