



## IF BEALE STREET COULD TALK

20th  
Year!

Spring  
Season  
2019

**Release:** 2018

**Cert (UK):** 15

**Country:** USA

**Language:** In English

**Runtime:** 1 hour 59 mins

**Director:** Barry Jenkins

**Writer:** Barry Jenkins, based on the book by James Baldwin

**Cinematographer:** James Laxton

**Cast:** Kiki Layne, Stephan James, Regina King



Many of you will have seen Barry Jenkins' magical Oscar-winning *'Moonlight'*, where he followed the life of a young black boy as he grows to be a man and realises he is gay. Here again, *'Jenkins seems to approach filmmaking with a sort of inspired synesthesia: There's a musicality to Beale that isn't just confined to the soundtrack of jazz and strings and Nina Simone, a rhythm to his camera angles and storytelling and the particular beats each scene hits'* - Leah Greenblatt, Entertainment.

The film is taken from James Baldwin's 1974 novel of the same name: *'Fingered by a racist cop, young Fonny is imprisoned for a rape he didn't commit; his pregnant fiancée, Tish, struggles to free him with help from her tight-knit family. Stephan James's battered Fonny effectively signals real love and deep hurt, but it's Kiki Layne who shines in a difficult ingenue role, rendering the shy and deferential Tish - another era's ideal of femininity - delicate yet strong'* - Kate Taylor, Globe and Mail.

So we are in the same world as our earlier film *'The Hate U Give'*, where black people suffer from racist police practices, and again we follow the effects on the woman next to the event, not the victim. It will be interesting to compare these films afterwards.

The title comes from Baldwin's book: *'Beale Street, for Baldwin, is a condition of black life in America, and the story it would tell "if it could talk" is the one presented here: a girl; a boy; an unjust accusation; and a huge extended family full of wildly disparate men and women scrambling to save the boy from the fate of so many young black American men'* - David Edlestein, Vulture.

