

# SPECIAL BLACK BOY ISSUE

## Richard Wright Newsletter

Volume 3, Number 3

December 1994

### Wright Film Biography Released

*Richard Wright—Black Boy*, the new film biography of Richard Wright, premiered on December 2, 1994 at the Smith Robertson Museum in Jackson, Mississippi, Wright's former school house.

Attending were Julia Wright and her son, Malcolm, and Joanna Newsome, Wright's half-sister, now over 90 years old and living in Port Gibson, MS.

The gala event brought together a host of friends of Mississippi Educational Television, the film's sponsor and the production staff, notably the executive producers, Jef Judin and Guy Land and the film's director Madison Davis Lacy, Jr. of Firethorn Productions.

*Richard Wright—Black Boy* made its television debut December 7 on Mississippi Educational Television and will air nationally on PBS in 1995.

Funding was provided by the National Endowment for the Humanities, The Corporation for Public Broadcasting, The Ford Foundation, The National Endowment for the Arts, The National Black Programming Consortium, Southern Educational Communications Association, Independent Television Service, and The Foundation for Public Broadcasting in Mississippi. It is distributed by California Newsreel of San Francisco.

*Richard Wright—Black Boy* will be shown at the Modern Language Association Convention in San Diego, the College Language Association Conference in Baton Rouge, Northeastern University in Boston, and at other educational venues to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the publication of Wright's autobiography.

To celebrate this landmark event for Wright studies, the Richard Wright Circle, which has been actively working for the past three years to bring together an international community committed to furthering scholarship on the life and work of Richard Wright, has produced this Special Issue dedicated to both the book and the film. ■

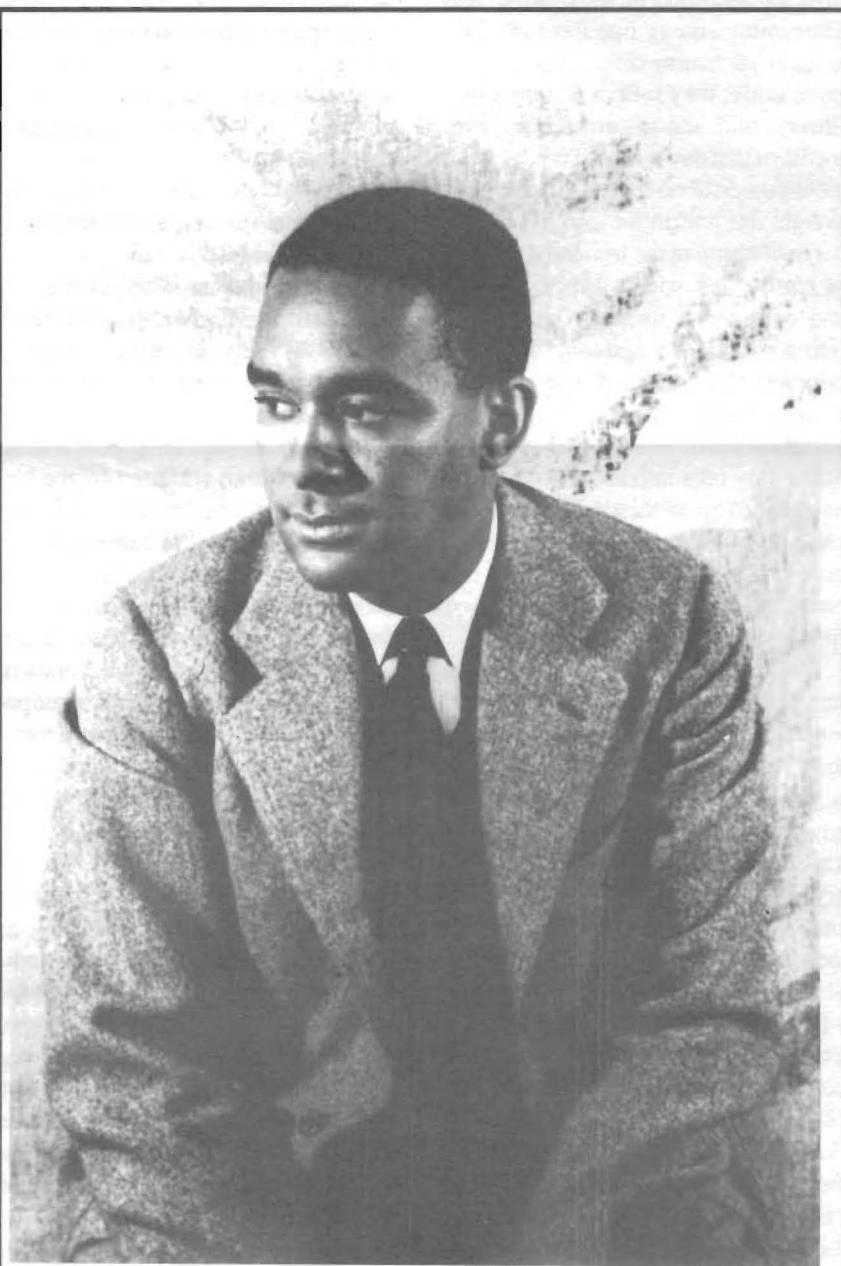


Photo of Richard Wright by Carl Van Vechten c/o California Newsreel

# Richard Wright: A Cinematic Life

*Julia Wright reviews film biography*

"He stood in a box in the reserved section of a movie house. . . . These people were laughing at their lives, he thought with amazement. They were shouting and yelling at the animated shadows of themselves. . . . No; it could not be done; he could not awaken them. He sighed."

—Richard Wright, "The Man Who Lived Underground"

These words were written by Richard Wright almost a decade before he invested so much of his creative and performing energy into the 1951 film version of *Native Son*. Yet, almost presciently, they reflect Wright's disillusion with the sea change the film media of that day wrought in one of the most powerful novels of this century. Wright did not, in the end, recognize his own stamp in the truncated version of *Native Son* which directorial cuts and cold war censorship had turned into a mediocre whodunit. Also the criticism of his portrayal, in the film, of his own central character, Bigger Thomas, was blunt and hurtful—and did not always take into account the challenge faced by our first African American best-selling author in the acting of his own literary hero—which was unprecedented in Hollywood-dominated film history.

One cannot help being aware of the screen potential of many of Wright's works, but I am personally convinced that Richard Wright's own life-story is supremely cinematic. The historical adventure in time and space which took a barefooted predelinquent hungry black boy from the southern kitchens where his mother worked early in the century—to the literary paternity of Bigger—a mythic urban character who still haunts America—begged film treatment. His story took him from the post-feudal rural South to the sophisticated intellectual turmoil of post-war France, from Roosevelt's New Deal to the historical Bandung Conference at the epicenter of the first rumblings of third world national independence risings, from the harassment of McCarthyism to the disillusion with the power politics of communism. . . .

The mind boggles to think that his short life, spanning so much history, was a series of secular and humanistic rites of passage beyond the power hungry crusades which threaten not to end with the century: racism, nazism, communism, colonialism, and religious fundamentalism.

All this, I felt, was great stuff, exciting material for an educational documentary. And so, needless to say, I was delighted when, five years ago, a Mississippi/ETV production team headed by Guy Land and Madison Lacy approached the Richard Wright Estate with a documentary project. I also welcomed the news that a solid budget had been allocated by the National Endowment for the Humanities and other sources. As it turned out, this funding enabled a wide range of interviews to be conducted on both sides of the Atlantic, in time to capture on celluloid the stories and recollections of those who had, as peers or contemporaries, crossed Wright's path in varying degrees of closeness. Historically, I felt the project was beautifully timed for I was aware of the fact that successive generations of witnesses often take their stories with them. Then, shortly after I formally accepted serving as Special Consultant to the film, Madison Lacy received an Emmy for his *Eyes on the Prize*: the project was born with a silver spoon in its mouth.

At no time have I had cause to regret my initial enthusiasm, but it is true, I had not realized that, as a member of the family, I was both too close to the subject of the film—and too distant from the technical and creative choices which must necessarily be made to fit a complex life-story into the time-structure and production

framework of a T.V. documentary. And so, along with the excitement of the challenge and the willingness to help, came the awareness that wearing three hats (as the writer's daughter, as one of the interviewees, and as Special Consultant) was going to be a difficult acrobatic feat to say the least. I was eventually to relinquish the Special Consultancy: perhaps I knew too much about my father's painful day-by-day ordeal to wish to be associated with surgical editing decisions taken at a more detached distance. And it would have been difficult to follow the logic of these decisions without access to at least a wide selection of the rushes. It is to the film team's credit, that we were able to work out a more flexible and informal approach to my advisory position—which leaves me today more freedom and objectivity to review both the excellent points and the flaws of the completed film.

First and foremost, the documentary—*Black Boy*—is a fitting tribute to the fiftieth anniversary of the publication of the book. And the film is, in more ways than one, true to the ambitious standards it set for itself. It is refreshing to find that in these days of hysterical zapping mania when the taking of one's own televisual time is an act of creative courage—the film, *Black Boy*, takes the full hour and a half required to tell a complex but intensely dramatic story. Another real quality which makes the film highly recommendable is the sheer quantity of interviews Madison Lacy and his sensitive cameraman, N. Killingsworth, collected both in the US and Europe. I consider some of those interviews to be anthology pieces. Another outstanding quality of the *Black Boy* documentary is the attention paid to the main turning-points in Richard Wright's life: the national events which the publication of *Native Son* and *Black Boy* turned out to be, the decision to join the Communist Party and the reasons for leaving it, and—above all—

the complex many-layered motivations for choosing exile. Last but not least, an unparalleled search for television and newsreel archival footage featuring Richard Wright turned up some real nuggets in the form of a few rare and precious celluloid minutes showing a very private, guarded man who, having been once bitten by the medium, may have been twice shy for that reason.

Overall care and attention paid to the accuracy of biographical detail is attributable, I think, to a bright galaxy of scholar-consultants. But paradoxically, if the film does fail in part, it is exactly here, where its ambition of excellency is at its highest. The film's panel of academic advisors was exemplary of the best expertise available in terms of modern and postmodern scholarship on Wright, but did not count in its midst a single scholar or intellectual who was a witness to the texture of his voice and the sound of his laughter... From books and articles, we can seek out many brilliant interpretations of Wright's genius, but it seems to me that what we ask of a film on Wright is something different—a few more of those fleeting moments of truth which a carefully poised camera captures well but somewhat hurriedly: for instance, that marvelous old lady who went to school with him and who reminisces with a chuckle about the adolescent charisma of his story-telling. We want more of that old lady with the twinkle of memory in her eyes and less of what the scholars think of it all. We want more spotlights on those who were there and a little less time given to those who comment—albeit brilliantly—about those who were there. One analysis or two could have been weeded out to make room for instance for Joanna, Richard Wright's half-sister who believed in him and is still around to say it. Similarly, the film interviews of the survivors of the group of French intellectuals who welcomed the writer to exile in Paris in 1946-7—and subsequently made him feel at home—have not seen the light of day. So many are now gone who could have spoken about the man on the other side of the mirror, in exile: we can no

longer hear what Kwame Nkrumah, Eric Williams, C.L.R. James, Franz Fanon, Gertrude Stein, Jean-Paul Sartre, Jean Cocteau, Albert Camus, Simone de Beauvoir, and Chester Himes would have had to say. And so, for that very reason, the few surviving French witnesses to those lesser known later years should have been given some space: Maurice Pons, Suzanne Lipinska, Rémi Dreyfus, Jean Pouillon, etc.

However, apart from four brief dramatizations of cinematic moments in his best known fiction and poetry, I admit I do miss more of Wright's own words—especially from his non-fiction. Since live footage of him and tapes of his voice were so difficult to come by, why not simply have filled the gap with more of some of the most powerful words African American literature has produced? I feel Wright's words would have been needed to "kick off" academic discussion wherever it is undertaken. After all, if the soul of a writer is in the words he leaves behind, then a more liberal use of Wright's actual words (published or unpublished) could have carried the story forward at a livelier pace than the rather neutral third person narrative is able to achieve.

And what about the school and young adult audiences this educational documentary was made for? Will the sophisticated distillation of Wright's words-as-weapons by their elders (most of the interviewees are aged between 50 and 80 years) hold their attention sufficiently to awaken their interest for the least academic of writers? No school child, no high school or university student—although many were filmed—has made it to the final version I was shown in October. Also I do miss a statement or two from our young upcoming generation of African American writers and film makers—at least those who could have spoken about the enduring temptation to become Bigger—and of the enduring need of brotherhood with Bigger: Nathan McCall, Brent Staples or Edgar Wideman and John Singleton to name only a few.

And although, the completed docu-

mentary is a little like a new house not quite "lived in" as far as its main character is concerned, I heartily recommend it because it gives us, at least, a few celluloid stepping-stones towards a living knowledge of Richard Wright. I particularly recommend it to the patience of all young viewers who may wish to find out what happened to the child who started out burning curtains and killing a kitten—and who ended up advising prime ministers and simply changing American culture. ■

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The editors welcome all news relevant to the life and work of Richard Wright. The *Richard Wright Circle* is supported by the departments of African American Studies and English at Northeastern University.

# Filming Wright: An Interview with Madison Davis Lacy

On November 4, 1994, Kelley Norman traveled to New York on special assignment for the Richard Wright Newsletter and met with Emmy winner Madison Davis Lacy, Jr., writer, director, and producer of Richard Wright—Black Boy at his Firethorn Productions office.

**Kelley Norman:** Can you describe how your involvement with this project originated?

**Madison Davis Lacy:** Mississippi Educational Television had gone to a national funder, NEH, to try and raise money for this project. They didn't succeed the first time out because there were some elements missing out of their effort. One of the elements that was missing was a producer that they felt could do this job. After I finished working on *Eyes on the Prize II*, I was asked by one of my executive producers to consider working with METV on this film.

**KN:** What kind of research did you do to produce the script?

**MDL:** Basically, I read everything I could. I had read *Black Boy* and *Native Son* between high school and college. For this film, I read biographies by Constance Webb, Margaret Walker and Michel Fabre. I was looking for a story—when something happens to somebody you like, as Stephen King says. I was looking for moments within that story where there are certain things that happen that I could build up to and show that the script has energy. So when you are doing research you are of two minds: you are trying to learn the material so you can figure out what the story is and then try to see through the material so you can discern what within this story makes it filmic.

**KN:** How do you use film footage of

Richard Wright in this film?

**MDL:** Essentially there was very little footage of Wright. He died before the 1960 Black Consciousness movement gave more focus to Black writers. By contrast there is a wealth of material on James Baldwin. There is a little bit of stuff on Chester Himes. And there is a lot of footage on 60s writers like Baraka, etc. I relied on what is called collateralization, smoke and mirrors, which doesn't denigrate the material. It is a way of shaping a story and fashioning an idea or expression so that what's missing in the middle

biographies, I made a note that Richard Wright was sent to Sweden in c. 1954 by his publishers. So I figured because it was a professional publicity tour for one of his books, somebody might have filmed him. We called the Swedish television archives and sure enough, bingo, we gave them a date, a year, a time and there was Richard Wright. The same thing with the National Archives. After a generic search, we hadn't come up with anything. I knew that he had spoken in 1940-41 at the American Writers conference. I figured—because you don't know—that shark, that footage, was in this library.

**KN:** What process did you have to engage to create the docudrama?

**MDL:** I call it a documovie, and the reason I do is not because I am trying to fashion a fancy name, but because we tried to breathe life into 4 or 5 pieces of Richard's work. Some people would call them recreations or representations, but they are imaginative renderings of his work on film. For example, there is a scene from "Big Boy Leaves Home"; the camera dissolves through some of the words on paper to a pond, and we excerpt a dramatic portion of his work. Big Boy leaves home, he runs through the woods, he jumps into the ditch, looks over, and he sees Bobo burning at the stake. This dramatic moment gives rise to Wright's words.

really isn't missing. It's there, but it's really missing. For example, you are talking about somebody or something. The character is there, and it's felt as a presence, but the trick is to make you feel it without it actually being there. The third act of the film shows how I structured a way for that footage to be used; it pops up and all of a sudden you see Richard or Richard appearing in *Native Son*, the original version in 1951 film. I designed a way to use what's integral to the story, of course, but so that he pops out and he is real all of a sudden.

**KN:** Getting back to the footage issue, how did you know to go to the National Archives? Did you stumble upon this footage?

No. When going through all of these

Doing this film presented another problem: the film literally should have been done 25 years ago when the actual witnesses could tell you stories about Richard Wright. But many of these people are gone. So Margaret Walker assumes a prominent role in the first act of this film because she was there. She saw where he lived and was close to him. Frankly, Margaret was ailing when I interviewed her, but we knew we had to get this interview. There are

RICHARD WRIGHT

# Making BLACK BOY

beautiful moments in this interview. There were a couple of moments where she gets emotional because she has a particular viewpoint on Richard.

**KN:** What standards or criteria did you set for yourself as a film biographer?

**MDL:** My purpose was to do as credible a rendering of his life and literary story as I possibly could, given the resources we had at hand, the time we had to complete the project, and the absence of footage and live first-person characters. Everything we do on film must rock and roll appropriately on film, so one of the tests at the rough cut stage was to show it to young black men and women between 15 and 18 years of age, some of whom had heard of Richard Wright, but most of whom had not. If they could stick with it or my telling of it, I knew I had something that everyone could access. As it turned out they had the most valid criticism of all at the rough cut stage. One of the things was that they needed to hear about the southern experience before the second act, for example. So I changed it. We had an advisory meeting with folks like [Arnold] Rampersad and [Keneth] Kinnaman, and they basically said to change some other things so that it makes more sense. I never thought that the film belonged to me; it belongs to the audience. I am the instrument by which this thing gets made and hopefully will be available to anybody for all time.

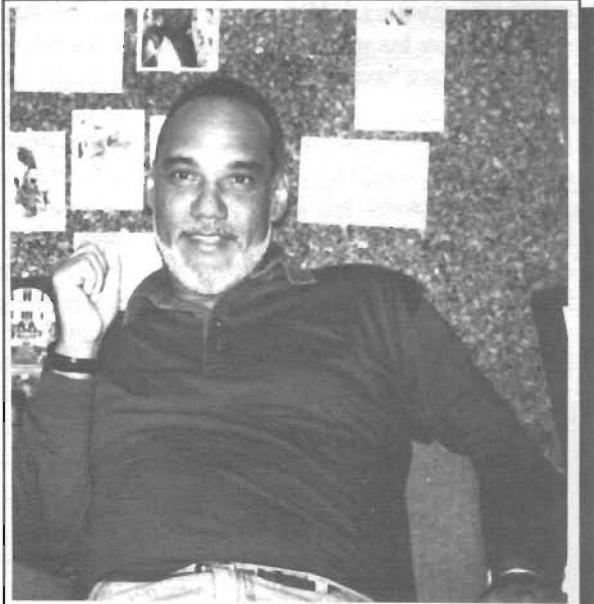
**KN:** When you were talking about leaving certain material in during the editorial process, the material that you did leave in, how did you decide what to emphasize?

**MDL:** It's a feeling process; it's a whole person process, in terms of your head, heart, and gut. Once you immerse yourself in all of this material and once you've done all the research, you become consumed. You want

your film to be a felt thing. The best films are felt things. Once you get people working on an emotional level rather than an intellectual level, you got 'em! Earlier, I was talking about Margaret Walker in an emotional moment. Richard is having a conversation with her about leaving Chicago. We know he leaves Chicago. I know that she is a direct witness to the fact that he left Chicago. At the end of the conversation she talks about the job at the post office which Wright had been struggling for years to get. And she said, "He looked at me, and he said, 'When I leave I will have forty dollars in my pocket.' He said, 'I don't know if I am making the right decision.'" Margaret said, "How can you not be making the right decision-You are going to your fame and fortune. And he said, 'I knew you would say that Margaret.'" You know, you grab them and you pull them in! You make decisions about the story and about emotional moments. If you feel it and you can heighten it so other people can feel it too, then your film is working.

**KN:** How did you get J.A. Preston to narrate?

**MDL:** He's a friend of mine. I knew as a narrator he was going to work at it. There is a moment in the film where he actually has to act with his voice: the scene where Bigger Thomas is putting Mary in the furnace. I wanted an excerpt from *Native Son*, and I could have had a straight narration, but J.A. uses his dramatic voice to quote those famous words, "What I KILLED for I am. I didn't know I WAS ALLIIVEE in this world until I felt things STRONG ENOUGH to kill for."



Writer, Director, Producer "Dave" Lacy

**KN:** Why do you use the 1986 version toward the beginning of the documentary rather than the 1951 version with Wright acting in it?

**MDL:** I needed both and was lucky enough to have both. I felt that the newer version was contemporary footage and it would draw people into the film biography a lot stronger. Besides, it had scenes in there that I needed to make my points early on in the film: Fear was the driving force behind race relations in this country. The film footage also establishes continuity between Wright's text and Maryemma Graham's comments about the South. She says, "And it was a fear of what might happen to you if you stepped out of line. And even though it was Chicago, it was still the South where stepping out of line could cost you your life"—and bang we show footage of the rural South. She mentions the South, she talks about the South, and we take you South. I wanted to save the 1951 movie version for later. I needed the 1951 footage to place us in time and also to illustrate another point:

Continued on Page 6

## Interview with Dave Lacy

Continued from Page 5

Wright had not lost a lot of his creative power; he was constantly changing, constantly growing. Also, we get a chance to hear his voice, which many people may not have heard before.

**KN:** Did you ask Julia Wright any questions that would allow her to talk about her personal relationship with her father? She talked about her father as the writer, and I didn't get a sense of their personal relationship.

**MDL:** She never said, 'my father' or 'my dad.' I think that's what happened with that family: Richard is a memory who is a part of the family and, at the same time, apart from the family. This was the mode through which she chose to communicate.

**KN:** I saw a documentary of Frederick Douglass recently on PBS, and I noticed, unlike your film biography, the director used 'billboards' to separate one scene from another. Did you consider using this technique?

**MDL:** [Billboarding] is a legitimate technique to pace a film, but I'm trying to create documentaries to work like a movie works. I wanted this film to reflect my personality and the way I like to pace my statements and expressions. Like movies, you get to a certain point and you send your material in another direction. You are constantly finding ways to maintain the viewers' interest. It would have been easy to get to the first act when Margaret says, "And he always said, 'I want my life to count for something,'" to go into some soft piano music and drift away, but then it is even more interesting to get to that point and send the material in another direction. Because all of a sudden he is in New York. The bright lights are there, the big city is there, and the music is jammin'. The point is: He's moved on! He's left Chicago and Margaret says so, but she says so with a statement that tells you everything: "I want my life to count for something." Boom! You don't have to dwell on

it...well, in retrospect, maybe I could have dwelled on it a little bit more [laugh]. But that is the way I express myself, and that's the way I express myself in films. It's a learning process for me, and I'm developing a style that isn't all that unique necessarily because I am still working within the envelope, but I got ideas and notions about how to stretch and expand the envelope in the works I will do in the years to come. Some things I tested out and tried in the Wright piece worked, and they give me reason to consider doing riskier kinds of stuff. For example, the last scene of *The Long Dream* is there for a reason: We have taken you down, down, down. The boy is being spied on, he has been forced to go back to nonfiction, he's gotten sick, he's depressed. His family lives in England and he lives alone in Paris. You know where this film is going, right? But I basically wanted to say, "He ain't lost it!" So when you come to *The Long Dream*, and all of a sudden, wham, it flowers up, and you basically say, "Maybe it disproves the notion that he lost touch with his black roots," and we see he ain't lost touch with it. And he returned. Yet, if he had lived in this country during the fifties he may have expressed *The Long Dream* differently than he did. But there is still power in *The Long Dream*. I wanted a scene that woke you up, totally unexpected. But it has all been building rationally and becoming more intricate. By the time you get to *The Long Dream*, it's like you are in the movie and it's totally unexpected. The viewer comes to a film hoping and expecting the unexpected. If you give them the unexpected during the course of your film you are going to be very successful.

**KN:** I was uncomfortable during the lengthy close-up of the African woman's breasts. Was that a deliberate move on your part?

**MDL:** Some say we're holding on too long. We held on that shot for two reasons: the practical reason was that the picture covered some audio edits. The aesthetic reason was that we knew

that shot would serve to reinforce what was being said by Cedric Robinson: "In a sense, Richard was extraordinarily uncomfortable with what he saw [in Africa]." It was a visual way of saying what Richard also says in many different ways in his book: that he was uncomfortable, a realization that comes out of his book, *Black Power*. Because it held so long it makes the audience uncomfortable too and that creates the kind of tension you then relieve when you go to the next shot, or the next scene or the next piece of information. Finding ways to create tension and finding ways to relieve tension over an arc of a story makes the film go, which

"At one point [Wright] becomes the most famous black man in America on the strength of will, on the strength of intelligence, on the strength of his anger and the desire to be something."

makes the story work.

**KN:** I understand you are doing other film biographies. Why are you doing this series, and why do you think it is the right moment to do this series?

**MDL:** I feel it is an appropriate niche for me in the pantheon of filmmakers out here. I think I have learned a lot from doing the Wright documentary. I don't think there are enough biographies of black writers, and I have been disappointed in the biographies I have seen. There has never been a good one on Langston Hughes, and I have a way of telling that story that will be extraordinarily interesting; however, I like the James Baldwin biography, "The Price of the Ticket." Chester Himes: I always liked his work because he always represented another side of Wright's approach to protest literature. There is

a brand new biography of Chester Himes' life that I think is revealing. I think there are some stories that need to be told like Zora Neale Hurston's. I am not a literary wiz; I'm no maven. I am a film maker; I'm a story teller, and that's all I try to be. Being normal in that fashion and not overly academic about it, I think I can bring to it a kind of intensity of interest and curiosity that I can render on film that people will get.

**KN:** What do you hope viewers will

come away with after seeing this film biography?

**MDL:** I hope this film places Richard back at last in the public consciousness in a stronger position. Here is a guy who came out of the deep South and was a sharecropper's son. He is a magnificent dude! At one point he becomes the most famous black man in America on the strength of will, on the strength of intelligence, on the strength of his anger and the desire to

be something. As Jerry Ward says at one point, if there is a lesson for anybody in this, you don't have to have a Ph.D. or master's degree to be a writer: Writing comes out of the gut. You have to feel it and you have to want to do it. I think Richard felt a lot of connection between his life and the circumstances of every other black person's life, and he struggled mightily and he expressed that in such a way that people would understand what black America was going through.■

## Black Boy : A 50th Anniversary Retrospective

### Critical Reception of *Black Boy*: An Historical Perspective

"One rises from the reading of such a book with mixed thoughts. Richard Wright uses vigorous and straightforward English. . . . But if the book is meant to be a picture and a warning, even then, it misses its possible effectiveness because it is as a work of art so patently and terribly overdrawn."

-W.E.B. DuBois  
*Weekly Book Review*, 3/4/45

"Richard Wright's *Black Boy* is a remarkably fine book. . . . But if *Black Boy* were no more than a document of misery and oppression, it would not have the distinction which in fact it does have."

-Lionel Tilling  
*The Nation*, 4/7/45

"A tradition is at work here. Emerging from slavery or wretchedness, a young man stumbles and struggles toward self-awareness. Spokesman for an exploited people, he makes his life into an emblem of its exploitation—memory becomes myth."

-Irving Howe  
*New York Times Book Review*  
6/26/77

"A strength of *American Hunger* is the fact that many of Wright's insights of two generations ago about the urban north have held true and steady until this time."

-Thomas A. Johnson  
*New York Times*, 7/2/77

"The publication of this new edition is not just an editorial innovation, it is a major event in American literary history."

-Andrew Delbanco  
*The New Republic*, 1993

### Chronology

- 1940 *Native Son* published by Harper and Brothers March 1 and is offered by the Book-of-the-Month Club as one of its two main selections. In three weeks it sells 215,000 copies.
- 1943 Accompanied by Horace Cayton, Wright goes to Fisk University, Nashville, in April to deliver talk on his experiences with racism. Strong reaction from the audience leads Wright to begin autobiography, which he named *American Hunger*.
- 1944 Book-of-the-Month Club tells Harper that it will accept only the first section of *American Hunger*, describing Wright's experiences in the South; Wright agrees to this arrangement. Changes title to *Black Boy*. Publication of "I Tried to Be a Communist" in *Atlantic Monthly* (August-September).
- 1945 *Black Boy: A Record of Childhood and Youth* published by Harper and Brothers in March to enthusiastic reviews. The book is number one on the bestseller list from April 29 to June 6 and stirs controversy when it is denounced as obscene in the U.S. Senate by Democrat Theodore Bilbo of Mississippi. Published excerpt of *American Hunger* in *Madeleine* (September) and "Early Days in Chicago" in *Cross Section*.
- 1946 By January 19, *Black Boy* has sold 195,000 copies in the Harper trade edition and 351,000 through the Book-of-the-Month Club, making it the fourth best selling nonfiction title of 1945.
- 1948 Gallimard translation of *Black Boy* wins French Critic's Award. Wright travels to Rome and to Switzerland, for the publication of *Black Boy*.
- 1960 Dies at Eugene Gibeau Clinic in Paris of a heart attack shortly before 11:00pm, November 28. Cremated, along with a copy of *Black Boy*, at the Père Lachaise cemetery December 3, where his ashes are interred.
- 1977 *American Hunger* published by Harper & Row.
- 1991 Library of America publishes the complete autobiography, *Black Boy (American Hunger)*, including for the first time, the second section, "The Horror and the Glory."

Compiled from *Black Boy*, published by HarperPerennial, 1993.

## Announcements

### New Wright Releases from University Press of Mississippi

*The Color Curtain*, which rose out of Wright's participation at the 1955 Bandung conference, appears for the first time in paperback with a foreword by Gunnar Myrdal and an afterword by Amritjit Singh.

*Savage Holiday*, Wright's dazzling mid-fifties novel of murder and misadventure, is reprinted for the first time since its initial publication in 1954 with an introduction by Gerald Early.

Both books will be published by the *Banner Books* division of the University Press of Mississippi in January, 1995.

### 1995 Mississippi Writers Calendar Now Available

The 1995 Mississippi Writers calendar has just been published by the Mississippi Department of Archives and History. The new calendar features such revered authors as Richard Wright, William Faulkner, Eudora Welty, and Tennessee Williams, plus younger acclaimed writers including Richard Ford, Barry Hannah, Beth Henley, and others. \$12.95 each. To order contact:

Old Capitol Shop  
P.O. Box 571  
Jackson, MS 39205-0571  
(610) 359-6921

All proceeds go towards the Mississippi Department of Archives and History

### Richard Wright Circle Membership

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