

Negro Spiritual is Root of American Music, says Pastor

By MARK R. MOSS
Chronicle Staff Writer

If American music is looked at as a tree, with each branch representing a particular category of music, such as R&B or Jazz, the trunk of that tree would be the Negro spiritual, a prominent, big-city minister said recently.

"Much of the survival of the African American has been

anchored in singing the Lord's song in a strange land," said the Rev. Dr. Wyatt Tee Walker, pastor of Canaan Baptist Church in New York City's Harlem community.

Walker, in town last Wednesday to participate in a religion and ethics lecture series at Winston-Salem State University, spoke on "Singing the Lord's Song in a Strange Land." The song the African sang when he was brought

in chains to this continent became the Negro spiritual. It is the Negro spiritual that tells about the life of the antebellum slave, Walker said.

Speaking before about 100 people in the Albert H. Anderson Center Auditorium, Walker said that in order to truly understand the slave experience one has to go to the closest narrative available — the Negro spiritual. He said that without looking at the Negro spiritual, a historian's account of slavery will not be honest.

He said that one of the myths perpetuated by the historians has been that some slaves liked being slaves.

"We never did like being slaves," Walker said. In fact, a slave's first act upon reaching America was trying to escape, and he "usually ended up maimed or killed."

Slavery "had the sanctification of organized religion," Walker said. Ministers went down to the dock to bless the ships going to pick up their "hellish cargo."

Christians rationalized slavery by claiming that it was "wrong morally but some good came out of it" — the heathens were Christianized, Walker said. Although slaves were indoctrinated with the "slave catechism" — thy should not steal;

thy should obey thy master — somehow they found out what was in the Bible, Walker said.

He pointed out that there were more similarities between African tribal religions and Christianity than differences. African religions were neither "polytheistic or animistic" and had a "head start on monotheism."

Walker said that when the African prayed before a tree, it didn't mean that he believed in a tree god. He was praying to one God before the tree because God would give him the strength to make that tree into a canoe which would enable him to go out and catch fish

to feed his family.

He said that at the center of the African-American religious belief is faith and hope.

"We believe God can do anything but fail," he said.

He was asked during the question and answer period a question about violence in the African-American community.

Walker replied that segregation did not end because of the courts, but because black people got tired of it. If black people decided to adopt the same approach to violence, those problems would no longer plague the black community, he said.



Wyatt Tee Walker spoke at Winston-Salem State last week.

Long to Autograph New Book

Richard A. Long, Atticus Haygood Professor of Interdisciplinary Studies at Emory University in Atlanta, will autograph his new book, *The African-Americans* (Random House), at Special Occasions, 1120 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. on Saturday, Nov. 27 from noon to 3 p.m.

Long, the author of several major publications including *Black Americans and The Black Tradition in American Dance*, is a former panelist for the National Endowment for the Arts and member of the Schomburg Commission among other distinctions. The Fulbright Scholar has served as visiting professor of Linguistics at the University of North Carolina as well as lecturer in Afro-American studies



Richard A. Long

at Harvard University.

Everyone is invited to meet this distinguished author, educator, scholar, lecturer.

Reduce Waste During Holiday Season

While making purchases and preparations for the oncoming holidays think about reducing waste. Enviro-shopping which is shopping with a concern for the environment is one very important way to reduce the amount of waste generated.

Data distributed by the environmental protection association show that paper and paper board are the greatest percentage (41 percent)

- Buy lighter versions of products. Compare the amount of packaging to the product. Avoid containers made of mixed materials.

- Buy recycle materials. No material is truly recycled until it is brought back into productive use in manufacturing and production.

- Minimize toxic waste to do this substitute. Substitute less toxic commercial products or make your



HOME ECONOMICS

By JoAnn J. Falls

of waste by weight in the municipal waste stream. Food waste consist of 7.9 percent and plastic consist of 6.5 percent. Although plastic and glass have been used by consumers more since 1960, the percentage of plastic and glass in landfills has not increased due to the lightweight and the recycling possibilities of these product.

Think about these things before making holiday purchases:

- Is the item needed?
- Think about what will happen to the product or package after its no longer needed.
- Think about possibilities of how the wrapper or package can be recycle or reused.
- Buy fresh rather than prepackaged fruits and vegetables.

own less toxic cleaning. Materials using tested home remedies.

- Plan for recyclability, both in design and material choice.

As you receive gifts and make purchases this holiday season, think of ways to recycle the wrapper.

- Reuse wrapping paper for other packages or make a collage picture for the wall.

Use Christmas Card for wall hangings, waste baskets and tote bags. There are various craft ideas for making items out of discarded from the Cooperative Extension Service and craft shops.

Cardboard boxes can always be recycled, reused or covered with decorative paper or fabric scraps and used as organizers.

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Hospice of Winston-Salem/Forsyth County, Inc., in conjunction with Dillard's of Hanes Mall, invite you to "Light Up A Life" by sharing the joy of remembrance and honoring someone special.

The remembrance tree, decorated with ornaments commemorating the life of a loved one, will be located in Dillard's at Hanes Mall during the holiday season. With a memorial gift of \$10.00 or more, you can place an ornament in memory of or in honor of someone special.

For a donation of \$40.00 or more, you can place a commemorative handmade porcelain bell on the tree in memory of a loved one. Each bell, inscribed with your loved one's name, will be yours after the holidays to keep and hang on your own Christmas tree next year.

Your contribution will help us continue the many services that make Hospice truly special. All "Light Up A Life" tree donations are used for non-operational, patient-related services. For more information, call Beth Braxton at 768-3972, or complete this form and mail it to Hospice of Winston-Salem/Forsyth County, Inc. • 1100-C South Stratford Road • Winston-Salem, NC 27103

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Signature _____

