

ENTERTAINMENT

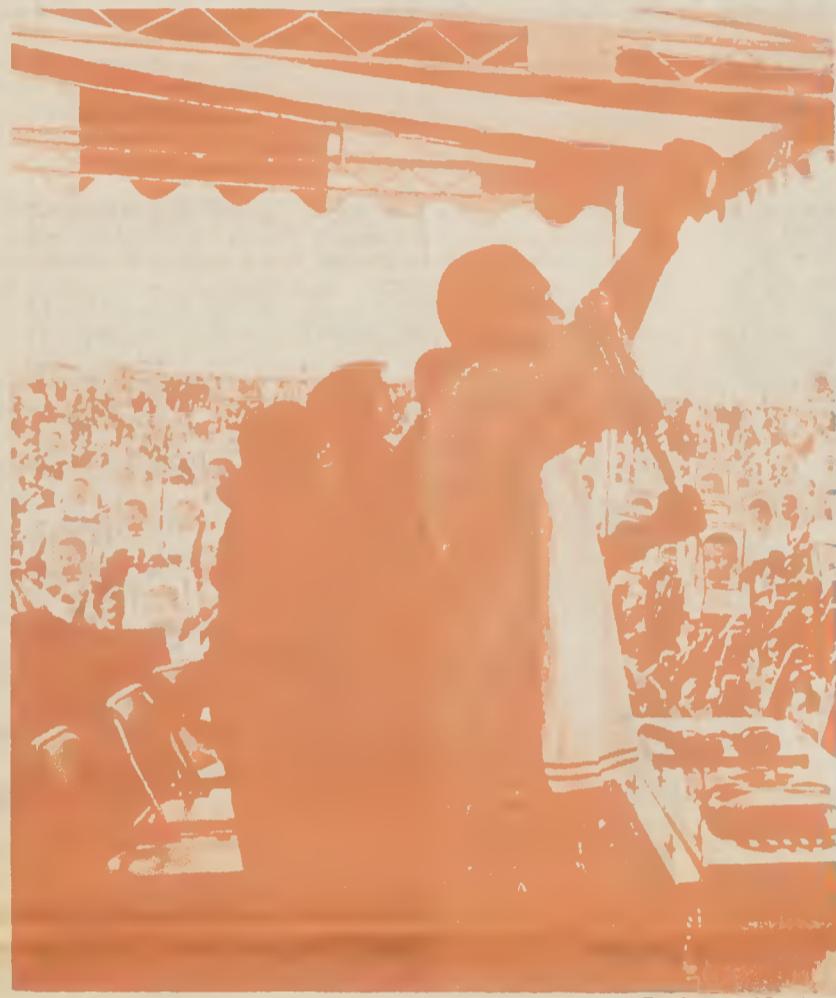
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THE CHARLOTTE POST - Thursday, February 18, 1988

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CRY FREEDOM CRY FREEDOM CRY FREEDOM

POWERFUL FILM PORTRAYS A BLACK MARTYR



The funeral of Stephen Biko in CRY FREEDOM



(Inset): Actor DENZEL WASHINGTON as Biko

Stephen Biko was an anomaly. A man of stupendous intellect, he was also a gracious man with a delightful sense of humor. At ease among any class of people, he despised pomp and pretentiousness. And he had an amazing charisma. He could light up a room; galvanizing both attention and emotions upon making his entry.

Biko might have become a film star-or the consummate politician. Like Martin Luther King, he had both the easy grace and common touch that cut across societal lines. Perhaps all great men possess those characteristics in common.

But like King, Stephen Biko carried within him the seeds of his own doom. He also had a profound

belief in human rights and dignity. And he was a tenacious fighter for the things that ennoble humankind. He was also very proud of his race and color. And that is always a dangerous thing to be if you're not the right color.

Beginning in his twenties, Biko became the most respected and effective black voice in South Africa. Heedless of personal danger, he focused world attention on the loathsome government policy of apartheid in that country.

The young social reformer's life was cut short at thirty years of age. He was tortured to death by the very government he had sought to reform. But his voice echoes again in the epic "Cry Freedom."

Denzel Washington & Kevin Kline reprise a great friendship in an epic motion picture.



By William James Brock
Post Entertainment Editor

Principal photography on *Cry Freedom* began in July 1986. Sir Richard Attenborough began the epic film on location in Zimbabwe, which was formerly Southern Rhodesia.

In ancient times, Zimbabwe was the biblical kingdom of Ophir, and was ruled by the Queen of Sheba. It was the country from which she and King Solomon drew their fabulous wealth in diamonds and gold out of the legendary mines.

The epic film is based on *Biko* and *Asking For Trouble*, two books written by journalist

DENZEL WASHINGTON & KEVIN KLINE

"Keyhole Dancer" in BOOGIE IN BLACK & WHITE

By Sally Keenen

Special To The Post

In 1947, a 25-minute film with an all-black cast called "Pitch a Boogie Woogie" premiered. It is now known that the featurette contains the only footage of an authentic Southern minstrel show and the only visual record of Irvin C. Miller's Brown Skin Models, one of the highly touted attractions at Harlem's Apollo Theater during the '30s. Today "Pitch a Boogie Woogie" is recognized as a cinematic gem in

which the Winstead Mighty Minstrels combine their talents with other performers to present the many facets of musical comedy.

This might not have been the case. The original "Pitch a Boogie Woogie" was lost after a number of showings. Twenty-eight years after its premiere, Bill Shepherd, a North Carolina musician, found the film in Greenville's abandoned Roxy Theater. He gave the reels to a

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Donald Woods. The author had, for a few years, been a close friend of martyred activist Stephen Biko in South Africa. *Biko*, written in 1978, was banned by the government of South Africa and remains so today.

After reading the two books, the British director wanted to make a film that would focus on the evils of apartheid. He employed screenwriter John Briley, who had scripted the monster hit *Gandhi* for him in 1985.

Before beginning the film, Attenborough felt obligated to visit South Africa for a first-hand

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WAYNE FULCHER INNOVATIVE IMPRESARIO



Spotlight

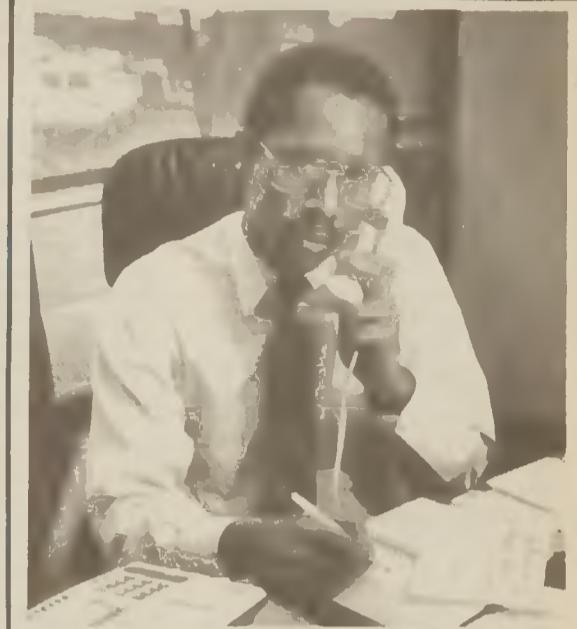


Photo By Calvin Ferguson

By William James Brock
Post Entertainment Editor

I am the most talked-about animal in America today; a black man.

The line is from "The Diary Of Black Men," a play written by Thomas Meloncon of Houston. It sums up exactly what promoter Wayne Fulcher would like to be. Being black, he's already half way there. And he's working hard to make the other half of the quote a reality.

As impresario and head of Wayne Fulcher Productions, he is bringing the play to Ovens Auditorium on Saturday, Feb. 27 for a one night stand. Show time is 8:00 p.m.

"We will, of course, go for a second night if advance ticket sales warrant it," Fulcher said. "Promoters love nothing better than a held-over show."

The impresario has had considerable success thus far in Charlotte. His organization brought both "Mama I Want To Sing" and the Harlem Boys Choir to the city in recent times.

Both productions were met with critical acclaim and excellent attendance. Perhaps this was due to his instincts and background in promoting crowd-pleasing events.

Not a typical "thee-a-tah" style promoter, Fulcher began his show business career promoting boxing matches. His first outing was working in promotion of the legendary Muhammad Ali-Ken Norton bout. Fulcher earned his spurs handling the closed-circuit TV end.

"That's how I cut my teeth in the business," he said. "I was still in college at the time. When I learned of the opportunity to help promote the fight I jumped on it. Boxing is excitement."

Born in Westchester County, NY, Fulcher attended JCSU, earning a degree in communications. But it was in New York that he learned his craft.

"My mother worked as a domestic for wealthy people," he said. "I guess that's how I got my foot in the door. In fact, one of them became my mentor."

Fulcher got his first big shot when Rene Anselmo, wealthy owner of Galavision in New York heard about him from a groundskeeper on the TV magazine's estate.

"Rene owns a national network of Spanish-speaking TV," Fulcher said. "He heard about my work on Ali-Norton and sent word for me to come and interview with him."

Figuring it would be a stock interview in an office, young Fulcher was surprised when he arrived at Anselmo's sprawling suburban estate.

"The place was a miniature of Versailles Palace," Fulcher said. "He invited me out into his tomato garden. It was right out of the movies, man. We cut the deal right there-drinking lemonade while birds sang in the trees. It was an experience."

What Anselmo had in mind for the budding impresario was equally surprising. He turned over promotion of the Joe Frazier-George Foreman fight to Fulcher in three large cities.

"Here I was a rising junior in college with the responsibility for promoting a bigtime boxing match in Buffalo, Rochester and Portland, Maine," Fulcher said. "I even had to approve the national TV commercials for the

bout. I'll always be grateful to Rene for believing in my talent."

The impresario has come a long way since those days. Along the way he dabbled in Hollywood-researching the life of "Moms" Mabley for the off-Broadway production "Moms." The play was written from a screenplay based on Fulcher's research.

"Clarice Taylor has the lead in the play," Fulcher said. "She plays Bill Cosby's mom on his hit TV show."

And he is diversifying Wayne Fulcher Productions. He is working to get Southeastern rights to a Mike Tyson-Michael Spinks fight-if the two sign a pact. Fulcher also dreams of promoting a "super card" of three championship bouts in Charlotte someday.

"I'd like to see Tommy Hearns, Kelvin Seabrooks and Evander Holyfield fight on the same card," Fulcher said. "I know Holyfield personally. I think this could be put together."

Fulcher has also branched out into the recording business. He is promoting "Candy," a record on the Special K label. The song was written and arranged by Kevin Henderson-who also owns the label. Singer Lisa Richards evokes a smoky sexuality with her powerful vocals.

"My secret dream is the movies," Fulcher said. "I'd like to go the way of Spike Lee." Hollywood had better look out.

The Diary Of Black Men opens Saturday, Feb. 27 at Ovens Auditorium. Showtime: 8:00 p.m. Tickets are \$17.00 (\$15.00 balcony). Wayne Fulcher Productions gives group discounts-\$3 off ticket price for blocks of 20.

The ROCK'N'ROLL HERITAGE



Scott Joplin was born around the turn of the century in Langtry, Texas. A precocious child, he could remember song lyrics after hearing them once by the time he was two. When he was three, his mother once sat the energetic boy at the piano to quiet him. He began pecking out simple melodies of songs he'd heard.

Joplin went on to earn a college degree in music and became a composer and arranger. He introduced syncopation to popular music. Written is ragged time signature, his music was quickly dubbed "Ragtime" and became the rage of St. Louis and Chicago. From those cities it spread across the country.

The composer went on to earn considerable money from his music. It was finally displaced by jazz in the 1920 and 1930s. One of the most popular of Joplin's songs was a rag called "The Entertainer." It became the theme song of Paul Newman's movie "The Sting."