

“BOYCOTT” PORTRAYS A YOUNG DR. KING

-- By Daphne Young



Photo by: HBO Films

HBO's story of the early years of the Montgomery Bus Boycott, and the birth of the Civil Rights Movement, gives a fresh face to the historic minister and man who galvanized the movement.

Jeffrey Wright, who starred in *Shaft* and *Basquiat*, admitted to being intimidated by playing the role of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. But, Wright said he felt it important to show young people a more "inexperienced" King who struggled as a young minister, during the early days of the boycott.

In the film, Dr. King loses his temper, doubts himself and even makes mistakes. But he manages to keep

learning. When the movement triumphs, we realize Dr. King's greatness.

Director Clark Johnson's film starts at the beginning of the 381-day boycott and follows it to its triumphant end on November 13, 1956, when the Supreme Court sided with the Montgomery Improvement Association and struck down the Alabama bus segregation law.

"It's refreshing to see an accurate account of how this community came together to challenge and boycott the way they did," Patricia Sullivan, a lecturer on Afro-American Studies at Harvard University's Du Bois Institute, and consultant on the film, told *THESOURCE.COM*.

Executive Producers Norman Twain (*Lean on Me*) and Shelby Stone (*Mississippi Masala*), along with Producer Preston L. Holmes, used a variety of cinematic formats to give the film a unique look, including real and re-created documentary footage and simulated home movies. "[The filmmakers' technique] gives historical integrity to the film," added Sullivan.

Boycott also stars Carmen Ejogo (*Love's Labour's Lost*) as Coretta Scott King, Iris Little-Thomas as Rosa Parks and Terrence Howard (*The Best Man*, *Big Momma's House*) as Ralph Abernathy. Also featured are stars CCH Pounder (of *ER*), Reg E. Cathey, Brent Jennings, Shawn Michael Howard, Whitman

Mayo, Mike Hodge and Erik Todd
Dellums.

Boycott, which premiered on HBO on
Feb. 24, will air repeatedly throughout
March. Check your local listing for
dates and times.

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