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“The Heart Has Its Reasons”

Genesis: I wrote “The Heart Has Its Reasons” screenplay after purchasing the 1970 American shortened edition of the 1934 edition of “Negro”, the first anthology of 20th Century African-based artistic and cultural achievements.

Historic Interracial Romance: Its author, Nancy Cunard, (1906 – 1965) an heiress to the Cunard shipping company, dedicated ‘Negro’ “to Henry Crowder (1890 – 1955) my first Negro friend’. Crowder, a poor Georgia born piano player, whose “great good looks” and his music appealed to Cunard. He became her lover and her collaborator in the time-consuming and arduous task of publishing “Negro” at great financial risk and amidst racial prejudice in England.

Historic Publication: The original edition of “Negro” (855 pages; 385 illustrations; 450,000 words) was published in England in 1934 with a total of 1000 copies. (Most of them destroyed in the London bombing raids) “Negro” was the first publication of a “comprehensive history of the cultural, social, political and artistic achievements of black people of the world”. Cunard’s main purpose in publishing “Negro” was to combat racial prejudice and to prove there is no superior race only cultural differences.

Historic Music: “Le hot Jazz”, the raw, raucous, improvisational and totally American music, was introduced to European audiences for the first time by African American musician during the 1920’s. Their improvisations and swing melodies enthralled audiences throughout Europe. These musicians experienced their first full acceptance by a society for their talent without regard to their color. Nancy Cunard gave Henry Crowder the opportunity to write and to publish his music based on poems written by the 1920s Paris literati.

Historic Art: Tribal African masks and sculpture greatly influenced the Cubist movement in France since 1906 when Pablo Picasso and Georges Braque first discovered the African artifacts in Paris.

Joe Madalena, Producer/Writer