

THE 1992 AFRICAN DISPORA SUMMER FILM FESTIVAL

The second week of this years FILM FESTIVAL will feature the Brazilian films "Xica" and "Quilombo."

XICA is a story of the legendary black slave Xica da Silva who film director, Carlos Diegues calls "our Joan of Arc, sort of." An 18th-century diamond rush turns the interior of Brazil into a new El Dorado, a place of fabulous wealth and excess where Xica parlays a unique, untamed sexual talent into a rise to power

that makes her the unofficial Empress of Brazil. This festive exercise in Brazilian Baroque is dominated by Zeze Mota, a combination of Eartha Kitt and Carmen Miranda, performing an attention-getting striptease and a wild African mating dance.

This film is the second in a trilogy of films about the African experience in Brazil by filmmaker Carlos Diegues. During the 1991 AFRICAN DIASPORA SUMMER FILM FESTIVAL, "Quilombo" the first film in the trilogy, impressed Las Vegas audiences with its subject of an escaped slave/free man civilization that existed in the hills of Brazil during the early 1600's.

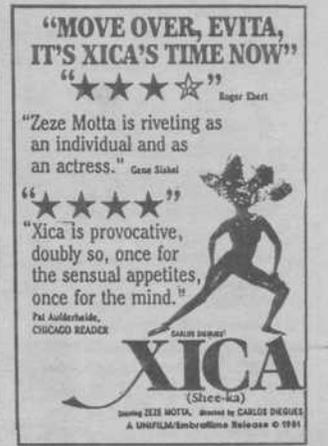
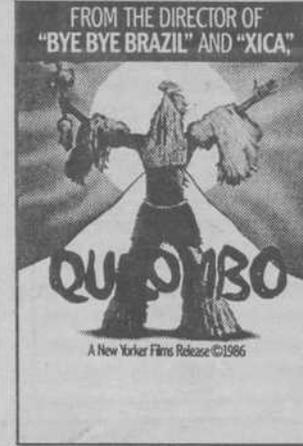
QUILOMBO, Carlos Diegues' historical saga, is a stirring fusion of folklore, political impact, and dynamic storytelling, realized in vibrant tropical colors and set to the pulsing beat of Gilberto Gil's musical score. The story derives from fact: in 17th-

century Brazil groups of runaway black slaves escaped to mountainous jungle strongholds, where they formed self-governing communities known as *quilombos*. This film is the chronicle of the most famous of these "black Eldorados"-Palmares- which flourished for several decades under the reign of the legendary chieftain Ganga Zumba. (In portugese with English subtitles.)

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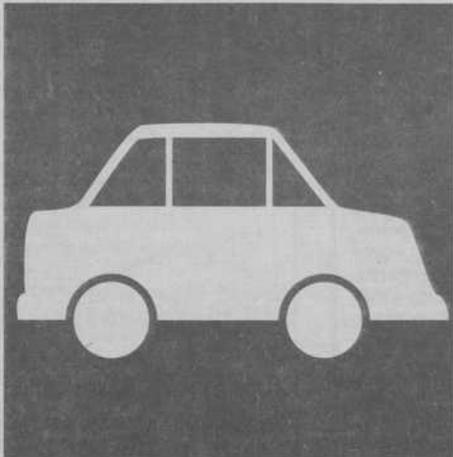
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AFRICAN-AMERICAN HISTORY

OSCAR MICHEAUX

Film Producer

By Gwen Walker

Oscar Micheaux was the first Black to successfully enter the, once all-white, film arena.

Micheaux was born in 1882 on a farm near Cairo, Illinois, and was the fourth son of five children of former slaves. At the age of 17, he left home and became a Pullman porter. In 1904, he purchased a farm in Gregory County, South Dakota where he was the only Black in the community. After an unhappy love affair, then more frustrations during marriage, he wrote his autobiography titled, "The Conquest," the story of a negro pioneer, he published it at his own expense, and launched his own promotional book tour.

He formed his own publishing company and barnstormed the county presenting his book in Black communities across the nation. He then took his promotional abilities to another art form; he adapted his novel *The Homesteader* into a film, thereby launching his cinema career.

He went from door to door to sell his script. His sales success was proved by the fact that he persuaded owners of the 700 Movie Houses tailored to Black audiences to book his film and pay him in advance.

He produced over 34 films by 1931, and discovered Paul Robeson, who appeared in his film *Body and Soul* in 1924.

Micheaux died in 1951 in Charlotte N.C. leaving his widow, actress Alice B. Russell.



GWEN WALKER



OSCAR MICHEAUX