

FILM REVIEW: 'Marshall' Recounts High-Profile Case Argued by Thurgood Marshall Proxy

By **Kam Williams**
For *The Skanner News*

Prior to becoming America's first African American Supreme Court Justice, Thurgood Marshall (Chadwick Boseman) enjoyed a legendary legal career as a civil rights lawyer. While serving as chief counsel for the NAACP, he argued before the U.S. Supreme Court 32 times, most notably, the landmark *Brown v. Board of Education* case ending segregation in public schools.

This makes one ques-

tion director Reggie Hudlin's ("House Party") thinking in having his

“The case was splashed across the tabloids, and the accused had already been convicted in the court of public opinion

biopic about the beloved icon revolve around a criminal trial from 1941, when he was still establishing himself. What's even more curious is that Marshall wasn't allowed to interrogate witnesses or even speak in the

courtroom by the racist judge (James Cromwell) presiding over the pro-

ceedings, because he wasn't a member of the

bar in the State of Connecticut.

So, instead of seeing Marshall work his magic, we have to settle for watching him quietly orchestrate his strategy with help of a Caucasian colleague (Josh Gad), who's rather reluctant to get involved. That would be Sam Friedman, a local yokel afraid of jeopardizing his flourishing insur-



Film still of 'Marshall'

ance practice by defending a Black man accused of raping a white woman. After all, the case was splashed across the tabloids, and the accused

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Author Resmaa Menakem

Boy, they really came in handy
She'd say, 'Matty don' you whip that boy
What you want to spank him for?
He didn't drop no apple core'
But I don't have Grandma anymore
If I get to heaven I'll look for
Grandma's hands"

--*Grandma's Hands* by Bill Withers

Like Bill Withers, Resmaa Menakem had a wise grandmother who played a pivotal role in shaping him during the formative years of his life. For that reason, he acknowledges the debt of gratitude owed to Addie Coleman, whose tenderhearted spirit permeates his new book, "My Grandmother's Hands."

But the groundbreaking opus isn't merely a fond memoir about a late loved one, but rather a sobering how-to tome endeavoring to identify and alleviate deep-seated traumas afflicting Blacks and Whites alike. For the author, a veteran therapist who has appeared as a guest on such TV shows as Oprah and Dr. Phil, fervently believes that racism can't be eradicated by conversation across the color line alone, as so often sug-

gested by well-meaning political pundits.

He asserts that race-based trauma is so embedded in our bones that it can "alter the DNA" and thus be passed from one generation to the next. Consequently, his innovative recipe for recovery incorporates a hands-on approach to healing the body as well as metaphysical measures for soothing the soul.

The book is basically a mix of diagnostic discussion, anecdotal evidence and invaluable exercises designed to enable the reader to recognize his or her need for treatment and then get themselves started on the road to recovery. Though the highly-charged subject-matter might ordinarily be controversial in nature, this text is written in a non-confrontational style apt to disarm, engage and enlighten readers, regardless of color or political persuasion.

Kudos to Resmaa Menakem for such a sorely-needed work which couldn't be more practical or more timely, given this bitterly-divided country's current state of race relations.

To order a copy of "My Grandmother's Hands," visit: www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/1942094477/ref%3Dnosim/theska-20.

We've got a lot to talk about.

Check out our plans for 2018–19 and share your feedback at trimet.org/plan.

Join us at an open house:

Oregon City

November 1, 6–8 p.m.
Pioneer Community Center
615 5th St.

North Portland

November 2, Noon–2 p.m.
PCC Cascade Student Union
705 N Killingsworth St.

Gresham

November 6, 5–7 p.m.
Gresham City Hall
1333 NW Eastman Pkwy.

Tigard

November 8, 6–8 p.m.
Tigard Ballroom
8900 SW Commercial St.

Milwaukie

November 9, 6–8 p.m.
Milwaukie High School
2301 SE Willard St.

Hillsboro

November 14, 6–8 p.m.
Centro de Prosperidad
400 E Main St., Suite 110

Downtown Portland

November 15, 6–8 p.m.
University of Oregon
White Stag Building
70 NW Couch St.

