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News

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[Television](#)
[Cable](#)
[Home Video](#)
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[Theatre](#)
[New Media](#)
[Legal Briefs](#)
[Executive Suite](#)
[People](#)
[Business](#)
[Awards](#)
[Obituaries](#)

Features

[Interviews](#)

Industry Resources

[Events Calendar](#)
[Production Charts](#)
[Opportunities](#)
[Industry Links](#)

Black Box Office

Upcoming Movies

Home Video Releases

Weekly TV Ratings

Commentary

News > Cable

HBO Acquires Brian Copeland's "Not A Genuine Black Man" for Series Development

By Tanya Kersey posted on Oct 27, 2005



Brian Copeland

Multi-talented comedian, writer, television host, talk radio host and commentator Brian Copeland has sold the rights to his one-man, two-act monologue staged play, "Not A Genuine Black Man," to HBO. Rob Reiner will be the "Genuine" HBO series executive producer. Copeland and director Rusty Cundieff will write the series and Copeland is also slated to star and produce.

Copeland is also writing a book based on the show, which will be published by Hyperion Books. Both the book and series are scheduled to debut in 2006.

"Genuine" is a multi-themed play that deals with Copeland's family struggles as one of the first Black families in the 'liberal' Bay Area suburb of San Leandro, California in 1972, right after the town is declared one of the nation's most segregated. The play also encompasses an exploration of what it means to be black as the adult Copeland is accused of being 'not a genuine black man' because he did not present himself in the stereotypical manner some people expect of blacks.

"Not A Genuine Black Man" has set the record as the longest running solo show in San Francisco history, and the show has been extended through November where it is playing at the Marsh. Theatre. Originally scheduled for a six week run the show is now entering its 20th month. The show recently celebrated an unprecedented 200th performance with Mayor Gavin Newsom proclaiming "Brian Copeland 200 Day in San Francisco".

Copeland's incisive, cutting edge standup comedy material won him San Francisco's prestigious Cabaret Gold Award as well as top prize in the Monterey Laugh Off. His unique ability to hilariously cut to the heart of some of our most serious social and political problems has earned him spots as the opening act for such diverse artists as Ray Charles, Natalie Cole, Dionne Warwick, Donna Summer, Peabo Bryson, Al Jarreau, Ringo Starr, Manhattan Transfer, Steve Allen, Dana Carvey, Kevin Pollack, James Brown, Rick Springfield, Lionel Richie, Lou Rawls, George Benson, Etta James, Gregory Hines, The Righteous Brothers, Smokey Robinson, The Temptations and the Queen of Soul, Aretha Franklin.

He has also appeared at such venues as Caesar's Palace in Las Vegas, The Taj Mahal and Trump Palace in Atlantic City, the Nugget in Reno as well as clubs, colleges and concert halls across America.

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 Tel 310.203.1336 | Fax 310-943-2326
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