



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
September 2, 2009

COLUMBUS NATIVE AND AWARD-WINNING AUTHOR AND JOURNALIST
WIL HAYGOOD
TO DEBUT SUGAR RAY ROBINSON BIOGRAPHY AT
EXCLUSIVE COLUMBUS PREVIEW

Lincoln Theatre to Host Haygood Book Signing Event October 9

Born and raised in Columbus, Pulitzer Prize finalist and *Washington Post* staff writer Wil Haygood brings home his newest work, a sweeping biography-cum-cultural history centered on one of the most iconic figures in the history of boxing. Slated for release from Random House on October 13, *Sweet Thunder: The Life and Times of Sugar Ray Robinson* will be unveiled at an exclusive Columbus preview on October 9, hosted by author Haygood.

The Lincoln Theatre Association presents Wil Haygood on Friday, October 9, 7pm, at the Lincoln Theatre (769 E. Long St.). Admission is free. Doors will open at 6:30pm with the program beginning at 7pm. Haygood will speak briefly and read excerpts from *Sweet Thunder* in the main theatre followed by a reception and book signing in the second-floor ballroom. *Sweet Thunder* will be available for purchase at the event, as well as Haygood's three previously published biographies. This event is made possible through the generous support of **Time Warner Cable**.

About Sweet Thunder: The Life and Times of Sugar Ray Robinson

Haygood grounds the story of Robinson's spectacular rise to greatness firmly within the historical context of the times. Born in Georgia as Walker Smith, Jr. in 1921, Robinson came of age when the country seethed with virulent racism. His mother moved the family to the relative safety of Harlem where she encouraged the 13-year-old into boxing to keep him off the streets. He soon became a rising star, cutting an electrifying, glamorous figure as he rode around town in his famous pink Cadillac. Beyond the celebrity though, Robinson would emerge as a powerful and often controversial black symbol in a rapidly changing America.

Among the great strengths of the book are the vivid descriptions of Robinson's unique blend of grace and ferocity in the ring, but with equal vividness, Haygood describes Robinson's life outside the ring. Weaved throughout are portraits of Langston Hughes, Lena Horne, and Miles Davis whose lives intersected with Robinson's and helped to illuminate his moment in cultural and political history.

From scrappy street kid to cultural icon to the relative obscurity of his last years, Haygood brings this champion's story hauntingly and powerfully to life against the vivid backdrop of the world he captivated.

About Wil Haygood

Wil Haygood is a prizewinning *Washington Post* staff writer and an acclaimed biographer. His *In Black and White: The Life of Sammy Davis Jr.* won the Zora Neale Hurston/Richard Wright Legacy Award, the ASCAP Deems-Taylor Outstanding Musical Biography Award, and was named Nonfiction Book of the Year by the Black Caucus of the American Library Association. *King of the Cats: The Life and Times of Adam Clayton Powell Jr.* was named a New York Times Notable Book. His family memoir, *The Haygoods of Columbus*, received the Great Lakes Book Award. He has been a Pulitzer Prize finalist for his newspaper work, and an Alicia Patterson Fellow. Haygood has also been a visiting writer at Colorado College, the University of Georgia, Penn State University, and his alma mater, Miami University, in Oxford, Ohio. Haygood resides in Washington, D.C.

CALENDAR LISTING

THE LINCOLN THEATRE ASSOCIATION presents WIL HAYGOOD BOOK SIGNING EVENT
Friday, October 9, 7 pm
Lincoln Theatre (769 E. Long St.)

Born and raised in Columbus, Pulitzer Prize finalist and *Washington Post* staff writer Wil Haygood brings home his newest work, *Sweet Thunder: The Life and Times of Sugar Ray Robinson*, for an exclusive preview. Haygood will speak briefly and read excerpts from *Sweet Thunder* in the main theatre followed by a reception and book signing in the second-floor ballroom. Admission is free.

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