

**1973 Sammy Davis Jr Worlds Greatest Entertainer-** (HBO) : Talking to an old hooper Sammy Davis , Jr asks the names of old hoofers, smiles as he says Bill Williams. Sammy Davis Jr, says, “when I do *Bo Jangles* I don’t feel I’m talking about Bill Robinson but I feel I’m talking about all the black hoofers that didn’t make it for one reason or another.” He does not dance as he walks with a microphone in hand through, pausing to lean on a non representational set of pipes and different level flat platforms – dressed in casual open wide-collared shirt and dark green and yellow tartan suit as he sings to himself , a hand in pockets – a thinking man’s *Bo Jangles* -

His voice – and his presence have changed since I see him from the highest row of seats , the freshman row in the 2000 seat Oakland High School auditorium. The rich kids are stuck here till their school is finished in the Oakland hills. Montclair the new city is called. He tells a story. He’s in Oakland driving with his fat drummer, he remembers a letter in the hospital from an Oakland hi student who asks him to do a show at Oak and don’t worry ‘bout your one eye. We have a lot of people with one something or other. What does he see from his Caddy? Oakland High School. He walks in, talks to the flabbergasted Mr. Pinkney, the Principal and staff – get on the public address speakers in every classroom and orders an emergency surprise in the auditorium. Ok- one eye has one eye. This is his first show in a high school. He knows there are rules against smoking – but he’s nervous and he’s sure the powers that be will allow him one careful smoke. He steps to the lip of the stage, showily lights up. Takes a deep puff, exhales and waves the cloud of smoke over the seniors in closest section to the stage, saying, “Spread this among you.” The whole auditorium roars. I am 14 at the time. 1954 or maybe I’m 15, and it’s 1955?

He’s been criticized for playing in Blackfaced Vaudeville Minstrel shows- All the Sammy Davis Jr shows are minstrel shows with black entertainers who are paid to perform by Whites with money and the local printer, usually a newspaper. Like a good showman, he says how happy he is to be invited to this town and thanks the sponsor for the invitation – the sponsor is shy but he invites anyone who wants to donate xxx dollars they can have this mic and match a well-known Mr x who is a well well-to do business in town ) He arrives in town expected, a town or tv studio that shows him, he’s home...to do a SHOW.

With each show, the finale is Mr. Bojangles- with each show -each year the voice – the singing of the voice – the content of the song changes, he changes the song, without changing the words - he scats – in Pa’nsori off-beat - makes the song more honestly his, and arouses as his peoples hidden, dried up sensibilities one at time : the Black entertainers hear, listen and appreciate with emulate, what they like they develop as a form , a profession, professional competition, the people’s professional formal embrace as art by the artists.

Did a student for Oakland High really write a letter to Sammy Davis Jr? He did the show. Anybody remember?

1983-Perth TELETHON – I have tux will travel – no Derby for - straw hat will do. How about we Auction the straw hat I wear -for the Perth Telethon, to match the xxxxxx huge