



## **Legacy of Gordon Parks: The Minnesota Experience**

"In my youth, violence became my ... photography, writing, music and film became the weapons a chose to fight against them." -Gordon Parks

Walking in the footsteps as a protégé of her great-uncle acclaimed photographer, filmmaker, author, composer and humanitarian Gordon Parks, Dr. Robin P. Hickman-Winfield, CEO and Executive Producer, founded SoulTouch Productions, a television, film and video production, youth development, community partnership and engagement consulting, and legacy preservation company. SoulTouch's mission is to make meaningful media and produce powerful social impact experiences. Established in 2001, the business of SoulTouch and Robin's personal commitment, is to plant seeds of hope, and through the arts, media and authentic community engagement, present "visions of possibilities. "We're in the business of touching souls." Robin's strong spiritual faith and family legacy, has guided her decades of servant leadership, and the wisdom of her Mother Patricia, "Be humble, but know your .", has given her the resilience to uniquely navigate her professional journey. Years before establishing SoulTouch, Robin approached her Uncle about developing a documentary about his life. He asked, "Are you ready?" She confidently replied, "Yes, Uncle Gordon, you've groomed me well. I promise I'll protect your story." Executive Produced by Denzel Washington, in 2000 HBO premiered Half Past Autumn: The Life and Work of Gordon Parks. The promise was keep.

Robin spent many decades under Parks mentorship, and engaging youth and communities in the transformative power of his work. She's created

numerous educational, media, arts and social impact initiatives, that have engaged intergenerational members of diverse communities. SoulTouch seeks to continue this work on a larger scale, in partnership with the Minnesota Humanities Center, in building collective of individuals and organizations to create a premiere Gordon Parks life and legacy experience, here in Minnesota where, Parks spent his years developing his, “choice of weapons” ... His artistic vision of possibilities.

Currently SoulTouch Gordon Parks Legacy Initiatives, partners initiatives and collaborative opportunities include:

- \* In the Footsteps of Gordon Parks Legacy Movement,
- \* Gordon Parks Plaza and Memorial Statue
- \* Gordon Parks Legacy Class, High School
- \* CHOICE Cinema Series: In the Footsteps of Gordon Parks, Bi-annual film festival featuring nationally acclaimed industry directors, producer, actors, film professionals. Guests have included Richard Roundtree (SHAFT), Robert Townsend (Five Heartbeats), Kyle Johnson (The Learning Tree) Art Evans (Leadbelly), Kokayi Ampah (50 year Hollywood location manager, St. Paul native), Craig Rice (Half Past Autumn)
- \* Don't Believe the HYPE, TPT / PBS
- \* SoulVision Film Collective- Developing and shepherding cinematic narrative projects.
- \* Gordon Parks photography exhibitions, American Gothic and GIANTS, Minneapolis Institute of Art
- \* “Experiencing Gordon Parks” at the Minneapolis / St. Paul International Airport
- \* The Music of Gordon: Classical, Jazz and Spoken Word, The Gordon Parks Foundation, Colour of Music Festival
- \* Film and television workforce development modeled after Gordon Parks' film project practice of ensuring that people of color be employed in crew positions behind the camera. We in conversations with Westbone Productions and, Twin Cities Film Festival, and FilmNorth.

- \* Resources to build SoulTouch's infrastructure and capacity is vital to ensure the continued excellence of service and impact.**