

OFFICER X

A Six-Hour Limited Series Inspired By A True Story



NEWS
ON THE
MARCH

JAPAN FALLS!!

With the surrender of the Axis forces, American boys are finally coming home. But for the _____

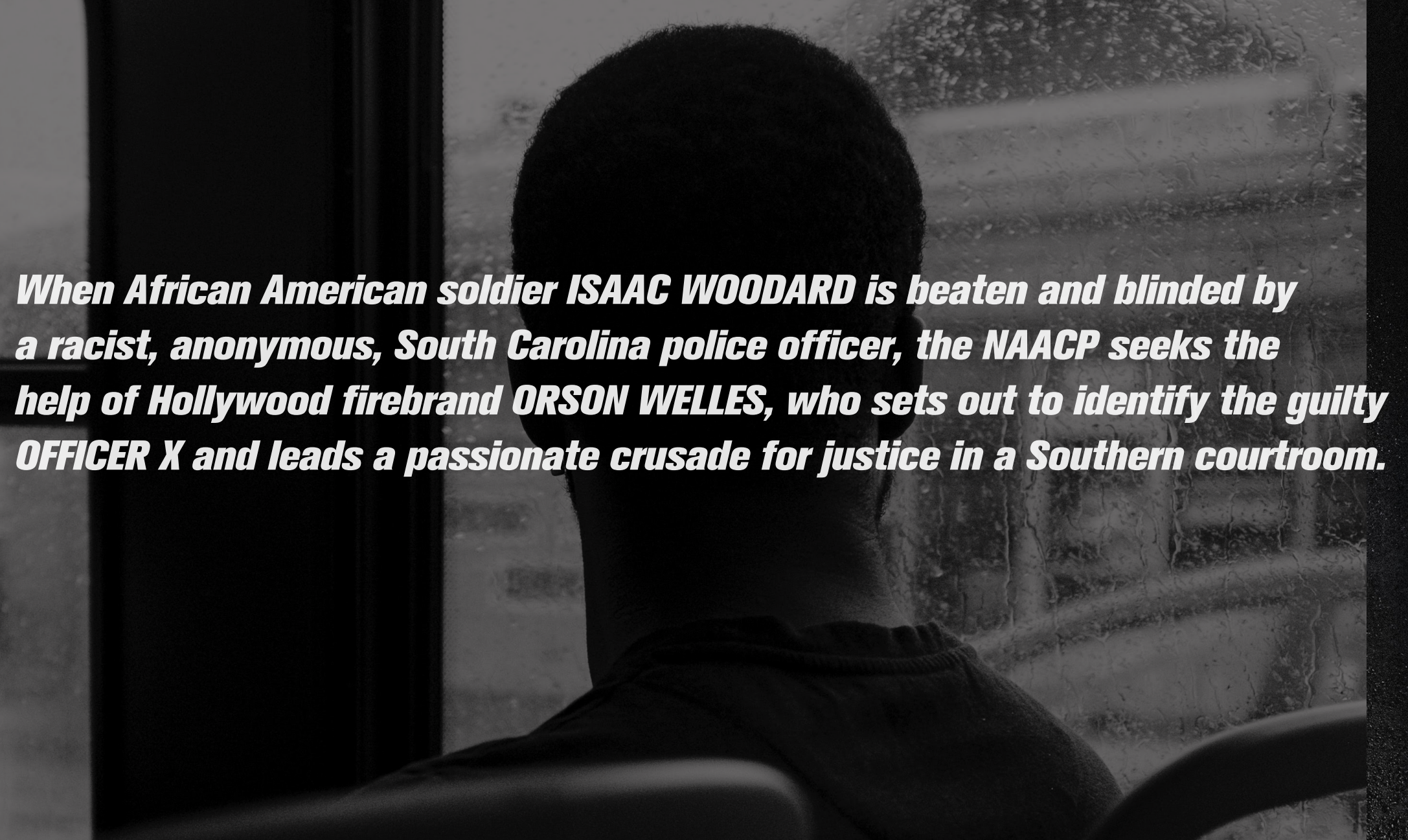
1.2 million African American soldiers, home is just another battlefield, as the war for equality rages.

No cheering crowds or victory parades

for these heroes. Black servicemen are returning to savage mobs, segregation, and unspeakable acts of violence.

The brutal blinding of ISAAC WOODARD is one of the most horrific tragedies from this time

SERIES LOGLINE



When African American soldier ISAAC WOODARD is beaten and blinded by a racist, anonymous, South Carolina police officer, the NAACP seeks the help of Hollywood firebrand ORSON WELLES, who sets out to identify the guilty OFFICER X and leads a passionate crusade for justice in a Southern courtroom.

THE ORIGINAL TRUE CRIME PODCASTER

broadcasting and solving the brutal
case of Isaac Woodard. Tune in every
Sunday for the latest twists and turns on

ORSON WELLES COMMENTARIES.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rtCqz1hy_x8&t=1747s



***“Welcome to the show.
Please allow me to speak directly
to somebody who calls himself an
officer of the law. Somebody who
is now a nobody. He’s vanished,
never been heard of, disappeared.
Until we know more about him,
we will call this nobody Officer X.
He might be listening to this.
I hope so.”***

– Orson Welles

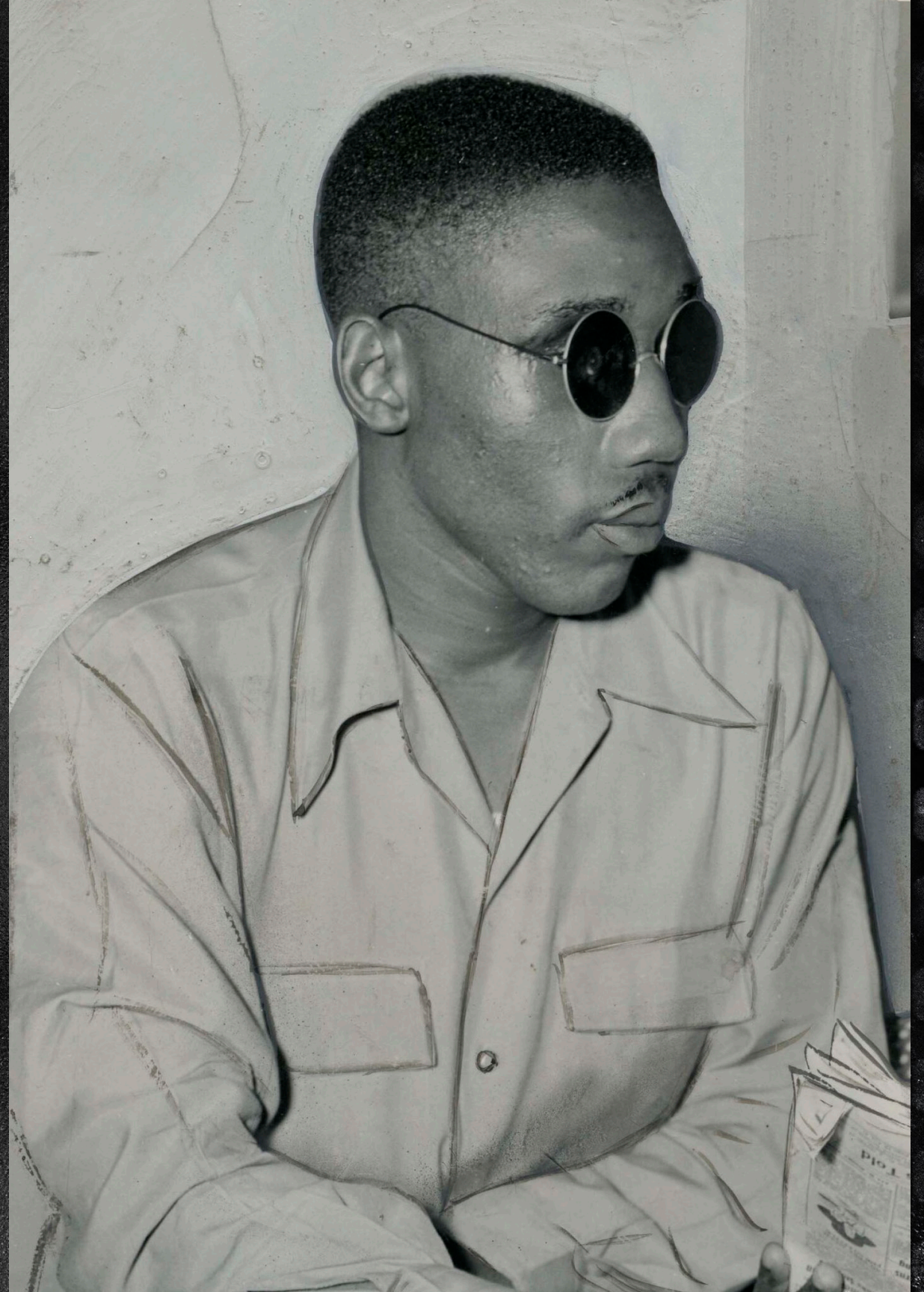


SGT. WOODARD'S COURAGE

forced President Truman to

**DESEGREGATE THE
U.S. ARMED FORCES**

galvanizing the Civil Rights Movement.




“I had the gall to ask a white man if I could use the bathroom.”

– Isaac Woodard

POLICE DOCKET
TOWN OF BATESBURG, SOUTH CAROLINA

NAME, No.	AGE	COLOR	SEX
6 Isaac Woodard		Col	M
5 Nemby C Branch		Col	M
Manerney		"	



NEWS OF THE WEEK

February 12, 1946. Isaac Woodard boards a Greyhound bus home to South Carolina. Five hours later, he will be blinded for life.

While the Greyhound stops to refuel in Batesburg, South Carolina, Isaac asks the WHITE BUS DRIVER if he can use the bathroom. Angered by the delay, the Driver calls the police who escort Isaac off the bus. Pleading his innocence, Isaac is brutally beaten and blinded by Police Chief LYNWOOD SHULL. After the attack, Shull anonymously dumps Isaac off at a hospital where doctors reach out to WALTER FRANCIS, a light-skinned African American who heads the fledgling NAACP.

Hoping to set the stage for a trial, Walter asks Isaac for a sworn testimony and urges him to listen to Hollywood icon ORSON WELLES defend black soldiers on his weekly radio show. Spurred by the broadcast, Isaac is determined to share his story on Orson's program.

While reading Isaac's gripping account, Orson dubs the unnamed attacker OFFICER X and immediately sets out to uncover his identity.

Moving to New York City to live with his parents, Isaac discovers that Walter can pass for white. Feeling angry and betrayed, Isaac accuses Orson of turning his life into a soap opera for ratings and quickly surrenders to the darkness that surrounds him.

At the risk of losing his radio show, Orson continues to shine a light on Isaac's case. The relentless pressure forces PRESIDENT HARRY TRUMAN to haul Chief Shull before a Federal courtroom in Batesburg. Leery of going back to South Carolina, Isaac proves that he has "a little more fight left in him," by standing up to a deadly lynch mob.

The next day, Isaac, Orson, and Walter finally confront Chief Shull in person. On the witness stand, Isaac whips off his glasses to show the world what real racism looks like ... and sets the stage for the shocking verdict that will impact the lives of all involved.

I'm not special because I was beaten by a white man. I'm special only because that white man let me live to tell the tale... and I'm telling it. Right to his face.

– Isaac Woodard



NEWSMAKERS



ISAAC WOODARD (24):

Decorated for courage under fire, Isaac proudly served his country, thinking that his service would mean something once he came home. It only took five hours for Isaac to learn that no amount of medals could cover up his black skin. When a racist cop beats Isaac for no reason, Isaac loses more than his sight. He loses his wife, his pride, his hope, and his will to fight. Angry and tormented, Isaac must find the courage to stand up to his attacker if he ever hopes to emerge from the darkness.



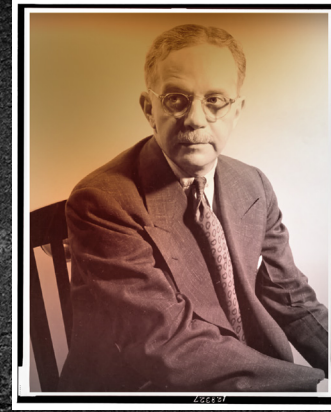
ORSON WELLES (31):

The original multi-hyphenated wunderkind. At 25, he had mastered radio, transformed Broadway, and, with *Citizen Kane*, revolutionized Hollywood. Now, better known as Mr. Rita Hayworth, Orson struggles to maintain his Hollywood career. And yet, he remains a force of nature, championing civil rights on his weekly radio show. When Isaac reaches out to Orson, the broadcaster turns the soldier's case into a personal crusade, vowing to identify the guilty Officer X at any cost.



LYNWOOD SHULL (40):

The Batesburg Police Chief is a man for whom justice and violence go hand in hand. A mama's boy with a mean streak, Shull is a product of his time and place. With the authority afforded him by a badge, gun, and white skin, Chief Shull doesn't just defend the law in Batesburg -- he is the law.



WALTER FRANCIS (52):

The driving force behind the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. With light skin, blue eyes, and blond hair, Walter infiltrated lynch mobs and conducted on-the-spot investigations leading to a host of arrests over the years. Now, with Isaac Woodard, Walter can finally help the survivor of a racist attack find justice.



RITA HAYWORTH (28):

The ultimate Hollywood "it girl." A flip of her fiery locks quickens the hearts of men everywhere, including her husband, Orson Welles. Rita not only champions many of the same causes as her husband (despite his infidelities) but puts her career on the line to defend Orson's politics, even against the FBI.

EPISODES ———

PILOT: “Justice by Nightstick”

Isaac Woodard, a decorated and innocent African American soldier, is brutally blinded by a racist cop. When doctors contact Walter Francis of the NAACP, he attempts to get Isaac’s testimony. Despondent after the attack, Isaac pushes back. In a last-ditch effort to get the testimony, Walter urges Isaac to listen to Orson Welles defend black soldiers on his weekly radio show. Realizing that Welles could be a strong ally, Isaac sends his story to Orson, who vows to bring Officer X to justice.

EPISODE 2: “On the Air”

Discovering that Walter can pass for white, Isaac feels betrayed by the NAACP. Southern politicians ask J. Edgar Hoover to shut down Orson’s investigation, and Rita Hayworth goes to war against the FBI.

EPISODE 3: “The Top Cop”

With his identity uncovered, Chief Shull goes on the defensive. Isaac accuses Orson of hijacking his story for ratings, leaving the NAACP’s star-studded Benefit Concert hanging in the balance.

EPISODE 4: “The Ballad of Isaac Woodard”

The Benefit Concert pressures President Harry Truman to haul Shull into federal court. The town of Batesburg rallies around its beloved Chief of Police.

EPISODE 5: “All’s Well That Ends Welles”

After years of championing civil rights, Orson jeopardizes his radio show by calling Southern audiences Nazis. Isaac prepares for his trial as a lynch mob gathers in the dark.

EPISODE 6: “What Evil Lurks in the Hearts of Men”

Flanked by Orson and Walter, Isaac faces Lynwood Shull on the witness stand and shows the world what racism looks like.

THEMES

Batesburg's Top Cop vs. The Barnum and Bailey of Broadcasting!

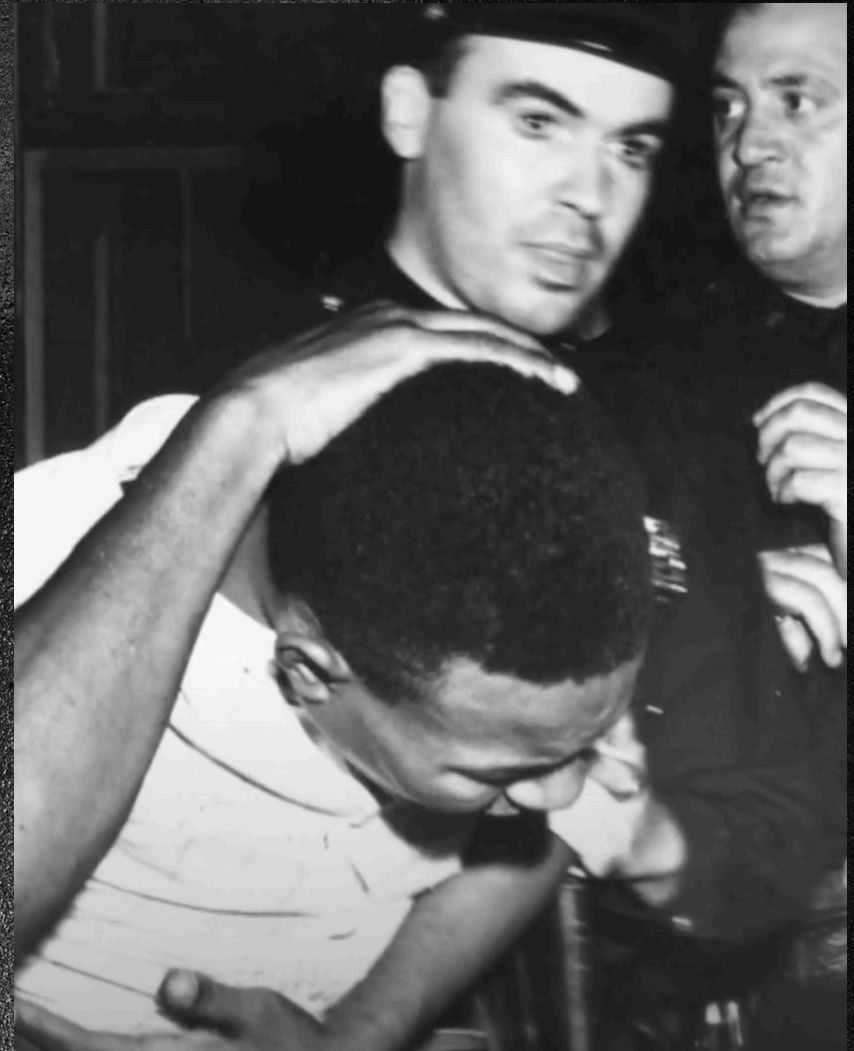
From a small-town bus station to a Hollywood radio station, Officer X does not shy away from the violence or horror of racism and vengeance, nor the perils of celebrity crusades.

Another connective tissue running through all six episodes is the theme of vision and perception.

Robbed of his sight, Isaac still sees what he will face inside a South Carolina courtroom. Orson has the vision to see injustice and the courage to open the eyes of the public. Walter Francis uses his appearance to infiltrate white lynch mobs, while Chief Lynwood Shull attempts to remain hidden in plain sight.

“Our Negroes here don’t cotton to uppity troublemakers with trinkets on a uniform. No sir, our negroes are happy with their lot in life.”

– Chief Lynwood Shull



A historical drama set in 1946. Grounded in the reality of the time, the look is rich and vibrant, akin to shows and films like Selma, Till, Mississippi Burning, and The Plot Against America.



***“This I swear to you, Officer x.
I will have your name.
And when I have your name,
Isaac Woodard will have his justice.”***

– Orson Welles



***“If skin color can become a crime, then we are
all one shade away from being guilty of something.”***

- Orson Welles

OFFICER X

Written by:

MICHAEL JOINER

A NICHOLL FELLOWSHIP SEMI-FINALIST - A PAGE AWARDS FINALIST

Michael@WhatTheHellCreative.com

917-370-1146