

Director calls '4Chosen' a human interest drama

By **ELEANOR O'SULLIVAN**
MOVIE WRITER

Jon Doscher, producer and director of the documentary "4Chosen," says "it's not a Disney film."

Hardly.

"4Chosen" chronicles the story of four young minority basketball players from New York who, while traveling in 1998 to North Carolina for a college basketball showcase, were "profiled" by two New Jersey state troopers, who fired 11 shots.

Three of the players were wounded.

All survived, and the state of New Jersey awarded the victims \$12.9 million in damages. The late Johnnie Cochran was one of their lawyers.

April 23 marks the 10th anniversary of the shooting. The documentary is narrated by talk show host Montel Williams, whose company owns the film. It includes interviews with the Rev. Al Sharpton, lawyers Peter Neufeld and Barry Scheck and musician Wynton Marsalis.

New Jersey State Police Troopers John Hogan, 38, of Florence, and James Kenna, 37, of Hamilton Square, fired 11 shots into a van carrying the unarmed black and Latino men. They stopped the van near Exit 7A of the New Jersey Turnpike in Burlington County. The troopers publicly acknowledged later they stopped the van because its occupants were black and Latino, having been trained that these minorities were more likely to be drug traffickers.

Both troopers said the shooting was self-defense. They said they opened fire after the van backed up toward Hogan and knocked him to the ground. Keshon Moore, Daniel Reyes, Leroy Jarmaine Grant and Rayshawn Brown were the victims.

Doscher, who also is an actor, said he stepped in to direct the movie after it had languished for a while under another production company. Williams is promoting the film to raise money for the founda-



Montel Williams narrates the documentary "4Chosen," which will be shown today at the Paramount Theatre in Asbury Park. Williams will co-host tonight's red carpet arrivals. (FILE PHOTO)

tion he heads researching multiple sclerosis; Williams suffers from the disease.

Doscher is a principal in making the film — I know this from the disease. "The troopers explained they were trained to act as they did; minorities point fingers at the politicians and the state troopers, and then it's a complete train wreck," Doscher said.

"When I first approached making the film — I know this will sound strange — I didn't really see it as a racial profiling movie," Doscher said. "Of course, that is an element of the story, but I envisioned it as a human interest drama."

Doscher interviewed the four victims first and then the state troopers.

"I invited the troopers to my office and said, 'You were involved — what is your story?' It just so happened that their stories matched identically (to the victims' stories). That is fascinating. There was no discrepancy."

Doscher says the film shows how the shooting incident be-

came highly incendiary political and racial issues.

"The politicians pointed fingers at the state troopers; the troopers explained they were trained to act as they did; minorities point fingers at the politicians and the state troopers, and then it's a complete train wreck," Doscher said.

Doscher said he has received threatening comments on the film's Web site, www.4chosenthemovie.com.

"We've been accused of trying to exploit the troopers negatively. In essence, it's the complete opposite," Doscher said.

Feature film is next

With a possible start date of spring 2009, Doscher plans to make a feature film about the incident as well. He has approached David Anspaugh ("Hoosiers") to direct and Laurence Fishburne to perform in the narrative version. Doscher

said Starline Films will produce with Universal Pictures.

Doscher said cast members will include Fishburne, Cybill Shepherd, Billy Zane and Danny Aiello, a partner with Doscher in another film venture who is appearing at tonight's "4Chosen" event at the Paramount Theatre in Asbury Park.

"We were very happy that Diane (Raver, founder of the festival) reached out to us to be in the Garden State Film Festival. She realized what we could bring to the festival, as far as celebrity contacts and help in promoting the festival," Doscher said.

A portion of ticket sales will benefit the Montel Williams MS Foundation (www.montelms.org) and support the sixth annual Garden State Film Festival.

An "After After Party" will begin at 11 p.m. today at Mattison Park, Mattison Avenue and Bond Street. Admission is free; a limited number of reservations are available to the public. To reserve a space, call (732) 298-3559.

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REVIEW

Rinando and MSO do fine at the Basie

By **CARLTON WILKINSON**
CORRESPONDENT

Lucian Rinando, the Monmouth Symphony Orchestra's new assistant conductor, led the ensemble Sunday afternoon in warm, sumptuous performances of turn-of-the-century compositions by Delius, Bruch, Chausson and their Russian contemporary Kalinnikov.

The program at the Count Basie Theatre in Red Bank opened with British composer Frederick Delius' "Walk to Paradise Garden," a beautiful, atmospheric piece from his 1901 opera "A Village Romeo and Juliet." The ensemble got off to a rough start here but had warmed up by the end, turning in a resonant, gushing climax. Rinando's gestures seemed graceful and confident in his interpretation, yet appeared to be wrestling for control of the orchestra through most of this single movement work.

The second work was the Double Concerto for Clarinet and Viola of Max Bruch, played with extraordinary tone and agility by guest violist Dorothy Sorniecki. The MSO's director, Roy Gussman, was highly effective in the solo clarinet part and the joint interpretation of the two soloists was at times inspired. Premiered in 1911, the Bruch concerto is a gorgeous, lyrical piece of music, harking back to the height of the Romantic era. Rinando handled the balance of orchestra and soloists expertly and the orchestra's playing was superb.

After intermission, there was a performance of Ernest Chausson's symphonic poem "Viviane." While written 30 years before the Bruch, it is more

progressive in many respects, blending the tonality bending techniques of Wagner with a decidedly French accent, a mix that would later blossom into the Impressionist style of Debussy and Ravel. Again, the orchestra had some rough patches, particularly at the opening, but overall it was a moving performance of a fascinating work.

The high point of the evening was the surprisingly refreshing, clean and punchy Symphony No. 1 by Vasily Kalinnikov. I confess, I know next to nothing about this composer. Few people do, it seems. He had an apparently promising career as a conductor that was cut short due to illness and he retired to the seaside town of Yalta to rest. He died at age 34 in 1901 of tuberculosis, having composed two symphonies, some songs and solo piano works and little else.

This symphony was popular in the early part of the 20th century but fell out of favor. Perhaps the Cold War and a growing animosity toward Russia intruded. Or maybe tastes changed. Whatever the cause, the work languished in the dusty bins of orchestral libraries. An exciting piece of music, it is now being rediscovered by orchestras and has been recorded by several.

In this last performance of the evening, Rinando was completely at ease with the orchestra. His interpretation was right on target, and the ensemble played extremely well. The audience interrupted after each movement with applause and the gave the orchestra a standing ovation at the end.

4CHOSEN
8 p.m. today
• Paramount Theatre, Asbury Park • Montel Williams and Starline Films will host red carpet arrivals at 6:30 p.m., with Danny Aiello singing at 7:30 p.m. • Reception follows screening with performance by Brian Kirk and the Jirks • \$25; a portion of the proceeds benefits the Montel Williams MS Foundation • (877) 908-7050 or www.gfff.org

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