



Red Black And Blue

Director's Treatment by
Montgomery Fisher

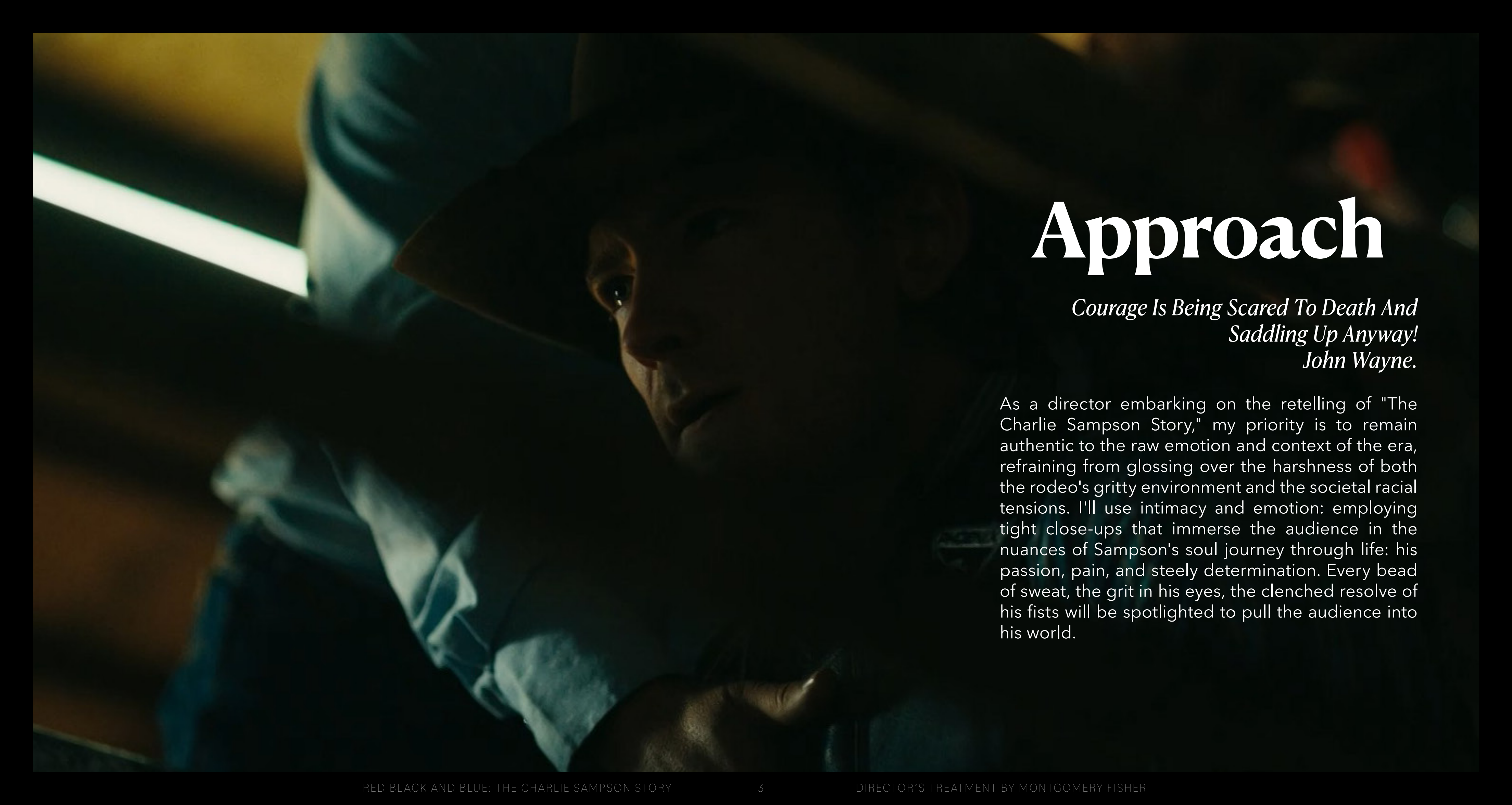
*Justin Johnson
Photo © 1984*



Howdy!

*Life's A Rodeo And All You Have To Do
Is Stay In The Saddle.*

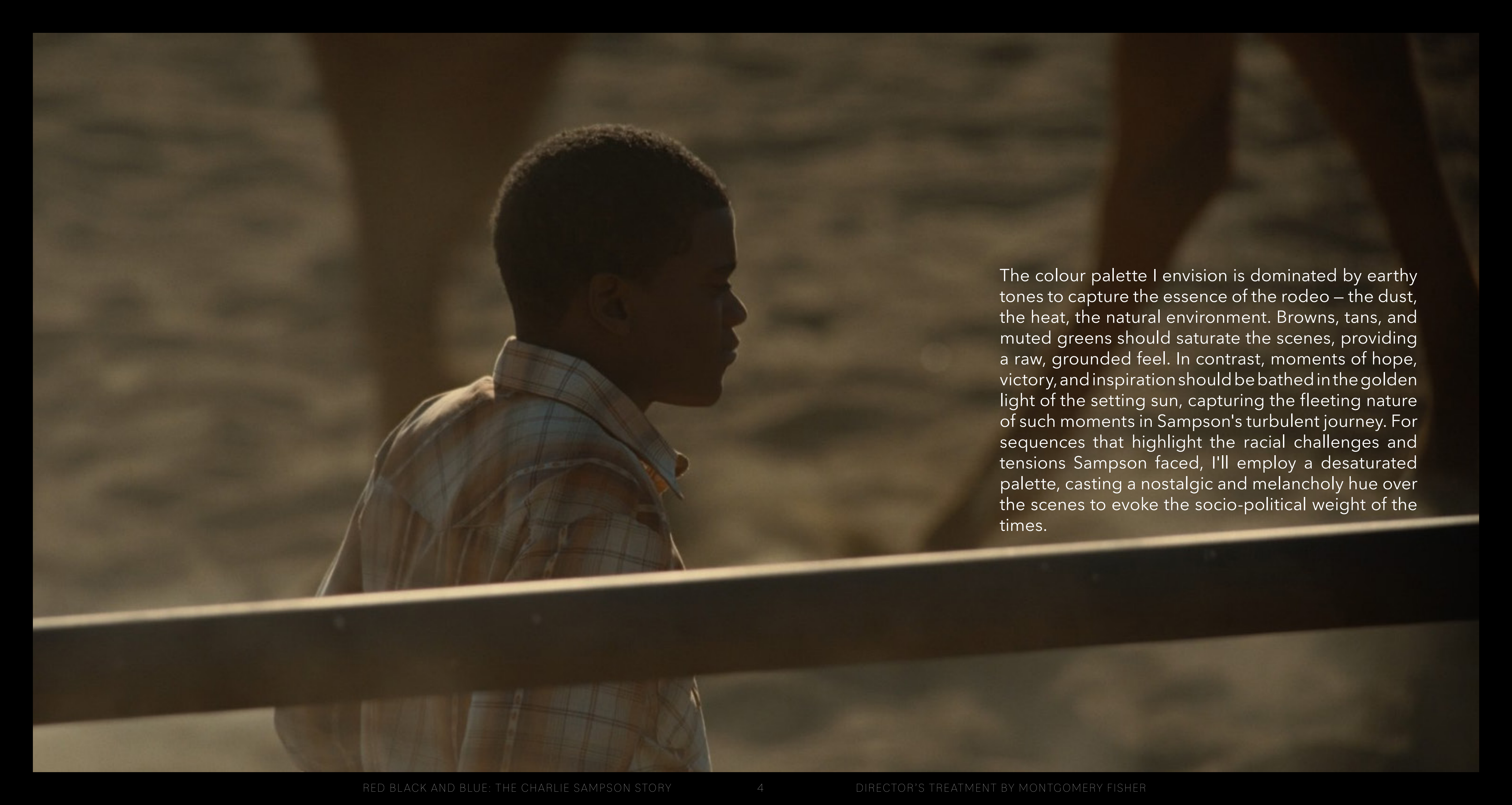
In the fiery rodeo rings of the '80s, straight from Watts' gritty streets, here's Charles Sampson. Bucking off racial bias and life's blows, this man doesn't just ride; he reigns as the first Black World Champion Bull Rider.. Guided by love, anchored in faith, he's not just riding bulls - he's trailblazing for heroes yet to come.



Approach

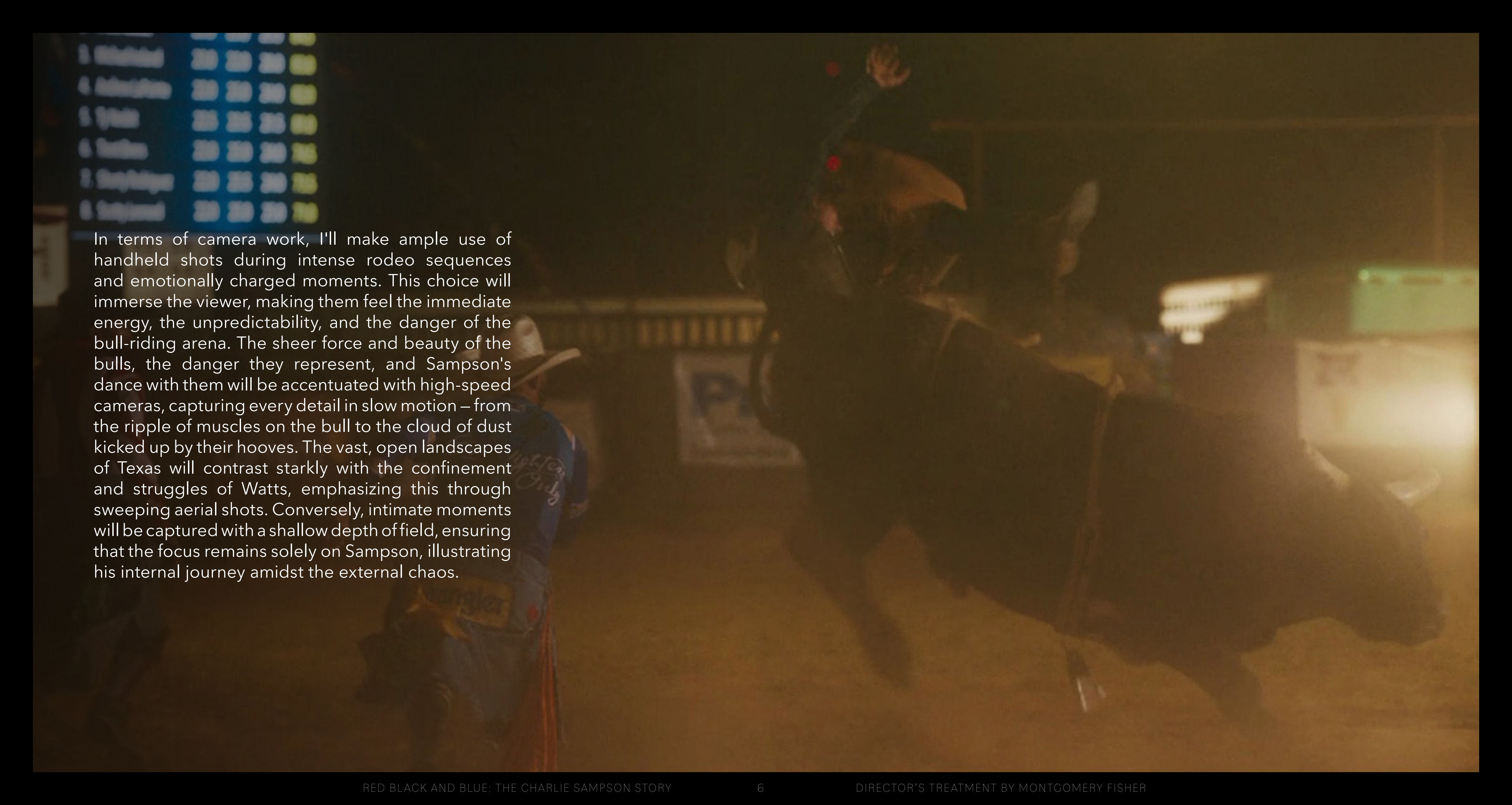
*Courage Is Being Scared To Death And
Saddling Up Anyway!
John Wayne.*

As a director embarking on the retelling of "The Charlie Sampson Story," my priority is to remain authentic to the raw emotion and context of the era, refraining from glossing over the harshness of both the rodeo's gritty environment and the societal racial tensions. I'll use intimacy and emotion: employing tight close-ups that immerse the audience in the nuances of Sampson's soul journey through life: his passion, pain, and steely determination. Every bead of sweat, the grit in his eyes, the clenched resolve of his fists will be spotlighted to pull the audience into his world.

A young man with short, dark hair is shown in profile, looking towards the right. He is wearing a light-colored, plaid button-down shirt. A horizontal, dark bar, possibly a railing, runs across the lower third of the frame. The background is a soft-focus, warm-toned landscape, likely a field or a body of water at sunset or sunrise. The overall lighting is warm and golden, creating a contemplative mood.

The colour palette I envision is dominated by earthy tones to capture the essence of the rodeo – the dust, the heat, the natural environment. Browns, tans, and muted greens should saturate the scenes, providing a raw, grounded feel. In contrast, moments of hope, victory, and inspiration should be bathed in the golden light of the setting sun, capturing the fleeting nature of such moments in Sampson's turbulent journey. For sequences that highlight the racial challenges and tensions Sampson faced, I'll employ a desaturated palette, casting a nostalgic and melancholy hue over the scenes to evoke the socio-political weight of the times.

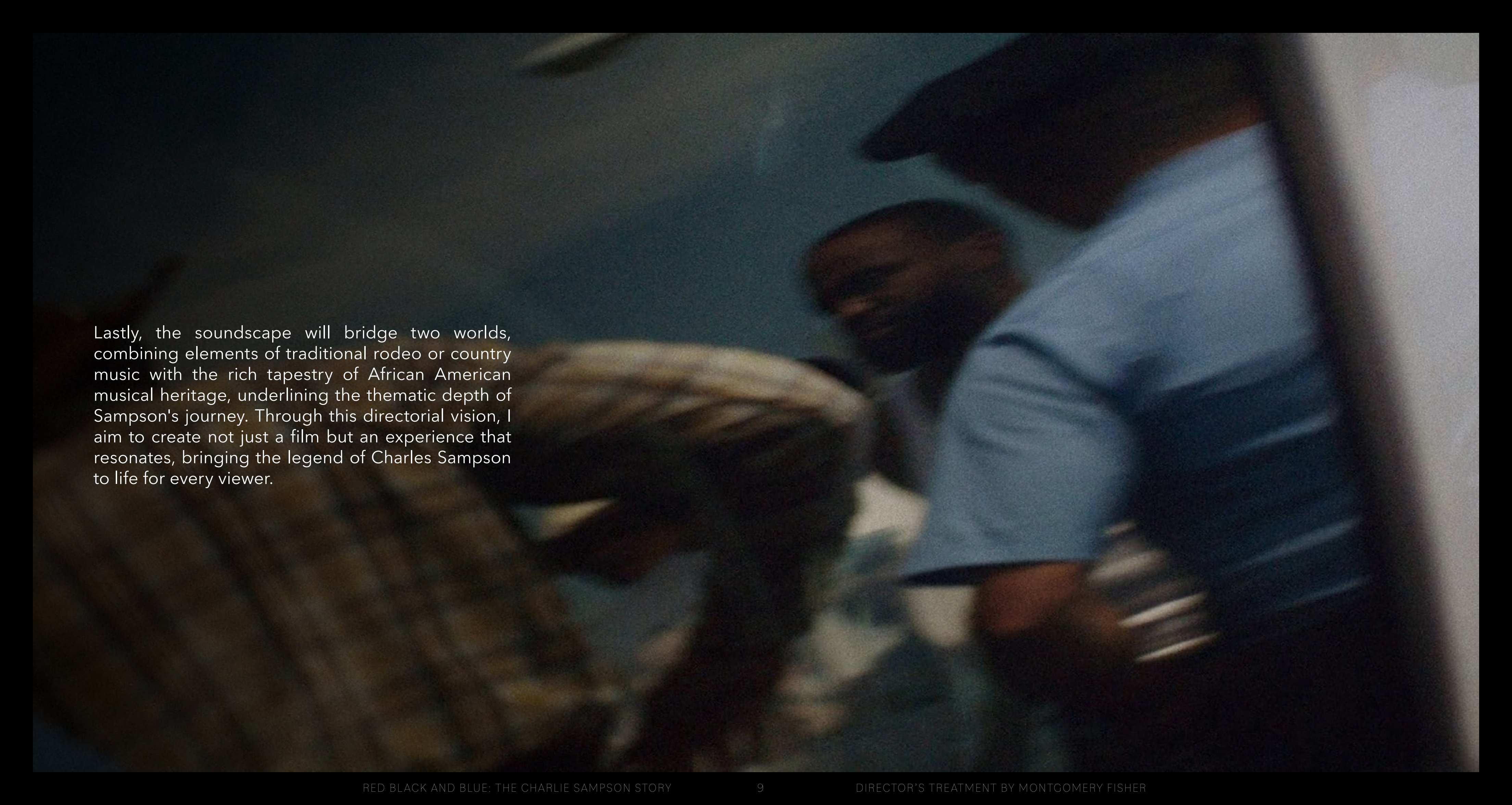




In terms of camera work, I'll make ample use of handheld shots during intense rodeo sequences and emotionally charged moments. This choice will immerse the viewer, making them feel the immediate energy, the unpredictability, and the danger of the bull-riding arena. The sheer force and beauty of the bulls, the danger they represent, and Sampson's dance with them will be accentuated with high-speed cameras, capturing every detail in slow motion – from the ripple of muscles on the bull to the cloud of dust kicked up by their hooves. The vast, open landscapes of Texas will contrast starkly with the confinement and struggles of Watts, emphasizing this through sweeping aerial shots. Conversely, intimate moments will be captured with a shallow depth of field, ensuring that the focus remains solely on Sampson, illustrating his internal journey amidst the external chaos.







Lastly, the soundscape will bridge two worlds, combining elements of traditional rodeo or country music with the rich tapestry of African American musical heritage, underlining the thematic depth of Sampson's journey. Through this directorial vision, I aim to create not just a film but an experience that resonates, bringing the legend of Charles Sampson to life for every viewer.



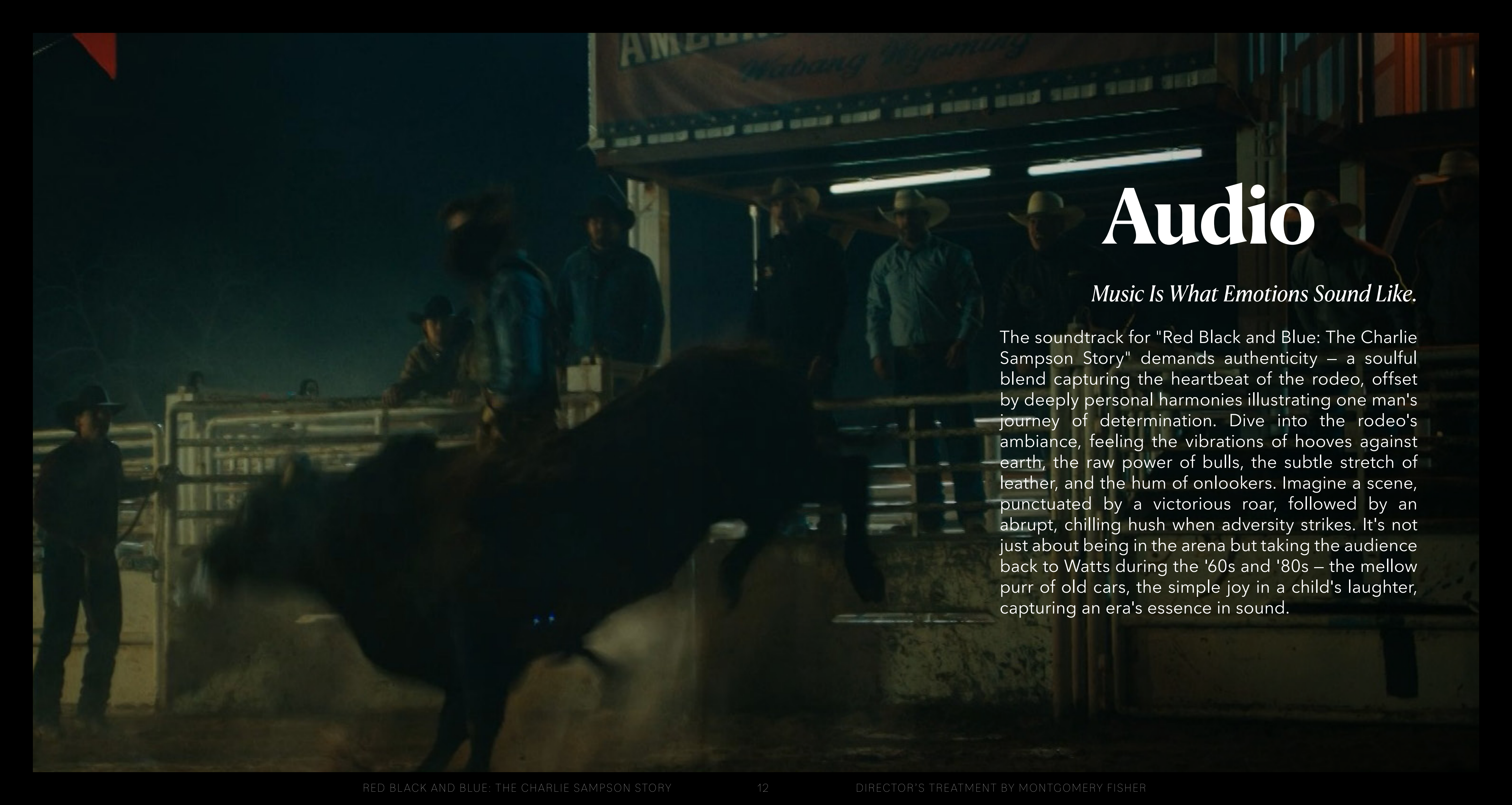
Characters

No Ifs, Ands, Or Bucks.

In the universe of "Red Black and Blue: The Charlie Sampson Story", Charlie Sampson emerges as a beacon of resilience and determination. Born amidst the chaos of Watts, California, this young African American holds a burning passion for the rodeo, which sets him on a transformative journey. From a boy consumed by the allure of the cowboy culture to a professional bull rider defying the racial undertones of a predominantly white sport, Charlie's trajectory is an arc of triumph and trials. Facing physical adversities in the ring and emotional challenges outside it, his iron resolve remains unwavering. His character radiates with intensity during his high-octane rodeo performances and softens into moments of introspection when away from the spotlight. Embedded deeply in Charlie's story is his profound faith, guiding him to believe in a higher calling and to shatter societal expectations.

Marilyn Sampson, on the other hand, stands as a figure of grace and unwavering support, the yin to Charlie's yang. Her beauty transcends the superficial, defined by her innate empathy and understanding. As she enters Charlie's tumultuous world, Marilyn evolves from a spectator, captivated by the dynamism of the rodeo, to Charlie's anchor. Through her unwavering love for him and their shared life, she becomes the sanctuary amidst his storm. Even in moments of darkness, Marilyn's soft, warm presence pushes Charlie to find his light, ensuring he remains anchored to his purpose and passion. Her profound influence on his life is palpable, a testament to their shared journey of love, sacrifice, and perseverance.

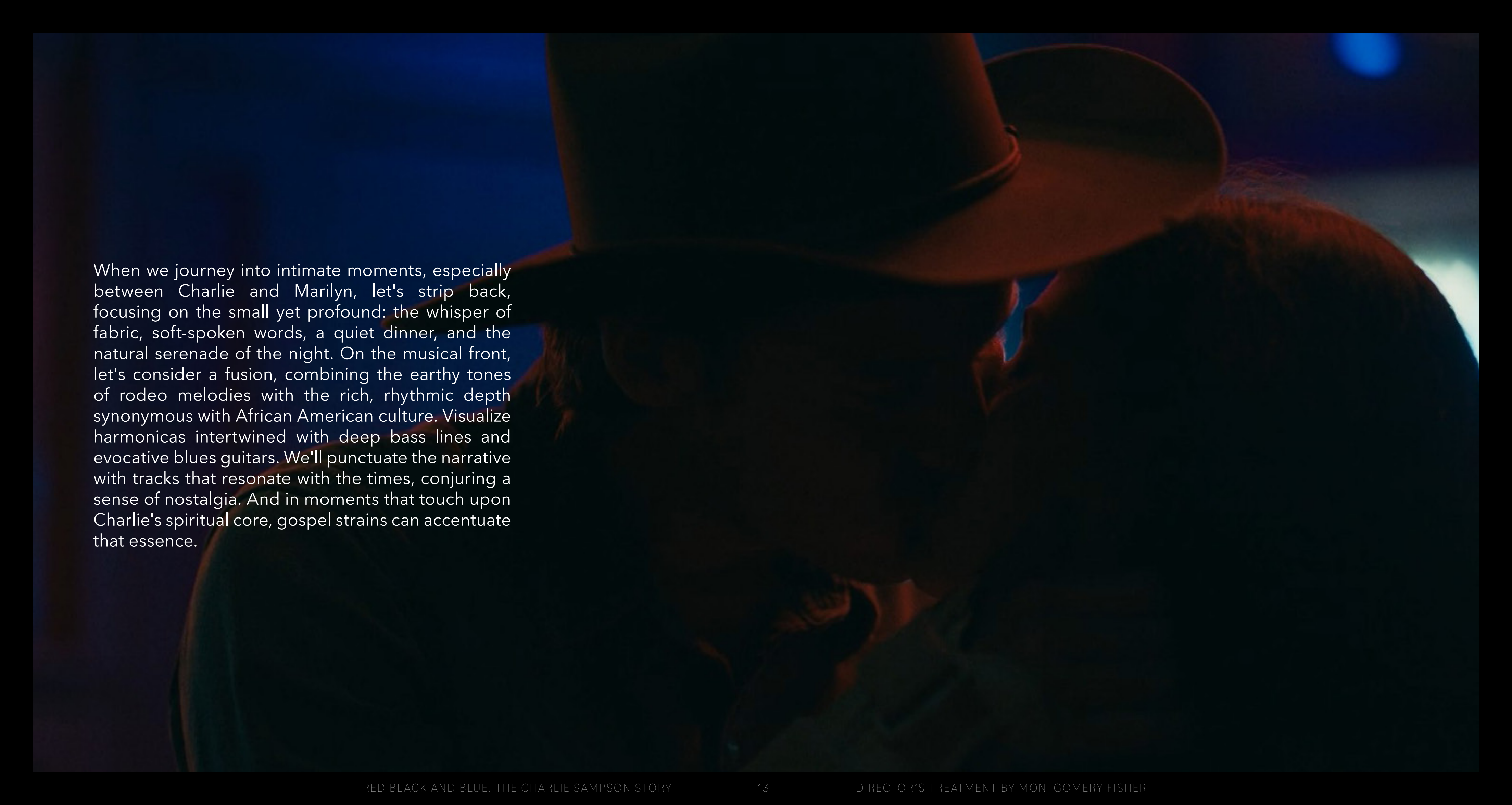




Audio

Music Is What Emotions Sound Like.

The soundtrack for "Red Black and Blue: The Charlie Sampson Story" demands authenticity – a soulful blend capturing the heartbeat of the rodeo, offset by deeply personal harmonies illustrating one man's journey of determination. Dive into the rodeo's ambiance, feeling the vibrations of hooves against earth, the raw power of bulls, the subtle stretch of leather, and the hum of onlookers. Imagine a scene, punctuated by a victorious roar, followed by an abrupt, chilling hush when adversity strikes. It's not just about being in the arena but taking the audience back to Watts during the '60s and '80s – the mellow purr of old cars, the simple joy in a child's laughter, capturing an era's essence in sound.



When we journey into intimate moments, especially between Charlie and Marilyn, let's strip back, focusing on the small yet profound: the whisper of fabric, soft-spoken words, a quiet dinner, and the natural serenade of the night. On the musical front, let's consider a fusion, combining the earthy tones of rodeo melodies with the rich, rhythmic depth synonymous with African American culture. Visualize harmonicas intertwined with deep bass lines and evocative blues guitars. We'll punctuate the narrative with tracks that resonate with the times, conjuring a sense of nostalgia. And in moments that touch upon Charlie's spiritual core, gospel strains can accentuate that essence.



All these elements, when intricately woven together, will create not just a soundtrack, but a soulful journey, echoing Charlie's highs, lows, victories, and struggles. It's about creating a sound landscape that's as real and resonant as the story it accompanies. Let's make it deeply visceral. Let's make it timeless.



Casting/ Performance

*Casting Is Everything.
If You Get The Right People They Make You
Look Good.*

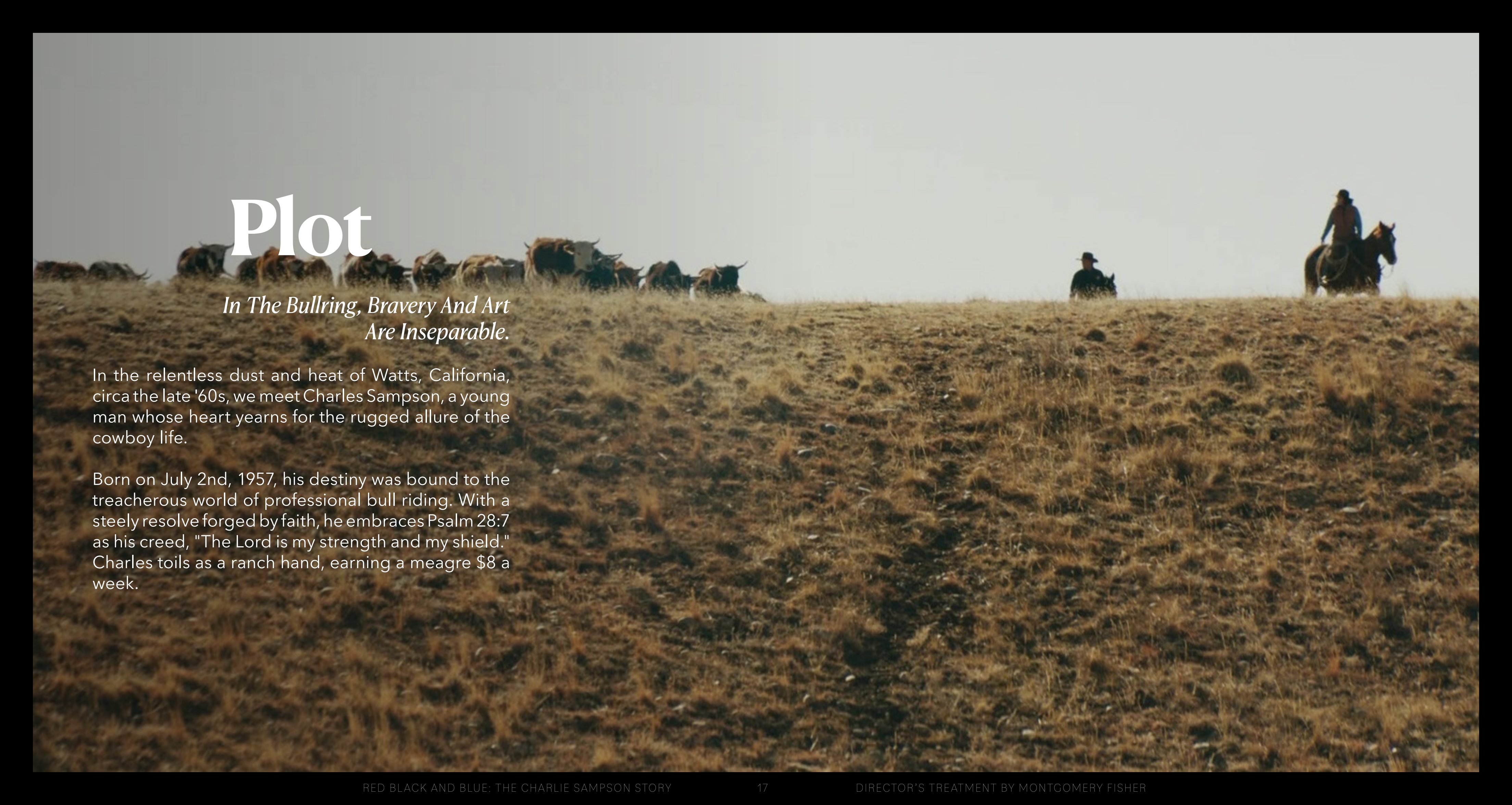
It is the very essence of bringing this evocative narrative to life. It's vital to select actors who can not only portray these roles but truly inhabit them, offering a sense of realism that mirrors the film's historical and emotional roots.

In the portrayal of Charlie, we are seeking an actor who embodies resilience, determination, and the raw passion that drives a person to defy societal norms and expectations. Beyond physical resemblance, the actor must convey the weight of the racial challenges Charlie faced, paired with the exhilaration of his triumphs in the rodeo arena. This character's journey requires an actor who can move fluidly between vulnerability and strength, showcasing a depth that resonates with audiences. Potential casting in this direction might include actors who have previously excelled in roles requiring emotional complexity and physical demands.



Performance-wise, I'd encourage the chosen actors to deeply immerse themselves in the world of 1960s-80s Watts and the rodeo scene. Method acting might prove beneficial, allowing the actors to organically connect with the lived experiences of their characters. Familiarizing themselves with the rodeo culture, understanding its nuances, and spending time in similar settings would further enhance the authenticity of their portrayals. Emphasizing realism and grounded performances will be key; we want the audience to feel the grit, sweat, passion, and heartache in every frame.

In essence, casting for "Red Black and Blue" isn't just about finding actors – it's about finding souls who can mirror the undying spirit, fervour, and resilience that the narrative encapsulates. Let's seek out performers who can delve deep, resonate with the ethos of the story, and truly bring Charlie and Marilyn Sampson's world to life on screen.



Plot

*In The Bullring, Bravery And Art
Are Inseparable.*

In the relentless dust and heat of Watts, California, circa the late '60s, we meet Charles Sampson, a young man whose heart yearns for the rugged allure of the cowboy life.

Born on July 2nd, 1957, his destiny was bound to the treacherous world of professional bull riding. With a steely resolve forged by faith, he embraces Psalm 28:7 as his creed, "The Lord is my strength and my shield." Charles toils as a ranch hand, earning a meagre \$8 a week.



Yet, a daring invitation beckons him to Houston, Texas, to experience the unforgiving reality of a true Texas Rodeo. In the heartland of bull riding, Charles is a rare gem – an African American man navigating a predominantly white arena. Despite initial challenges, he becomes a natural cowboy and bull rider, exceeding all expectations. His journey unfurls through the dust and sweat, leading him to become the World Champion bull rider by the unforgiving year of 1982. But the rodeo world is unforgiving, and Charles faces gruelling setbacks and injuries. In his darkest hour, it's his wife, Marilyn, who becomes his guiding light, urging him to rise from the depths of despair and conquer the beast once more. Charles Sampson, a legend in the making, eventually graces the Rodeo Hall of Fame.

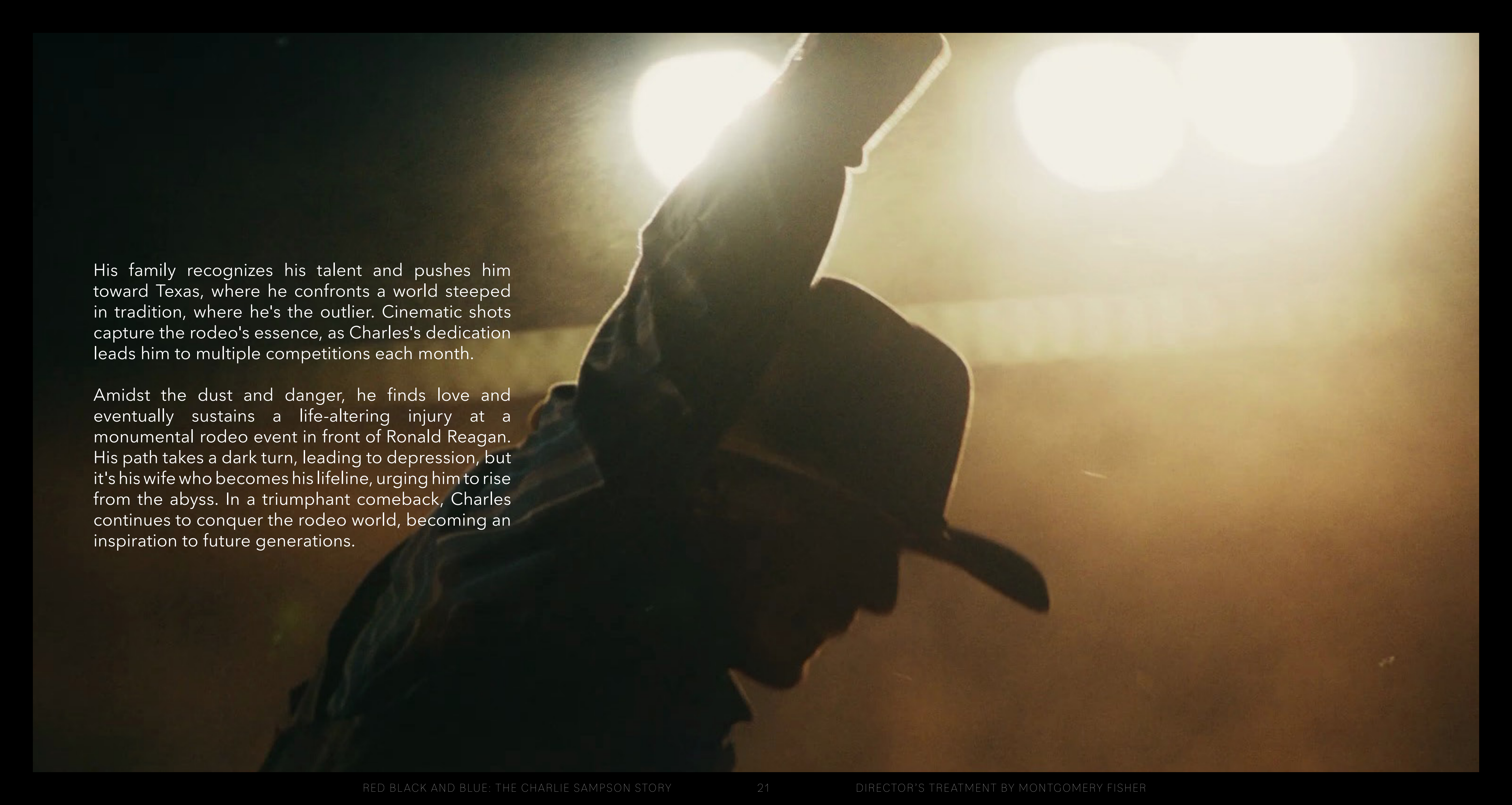
Today, he stands as a retired bull riding champion on his Colorado ranch, a testament to his unyielding spirit. Charles's story is a reflection of his journey from a turbulent childhood in Watts to becoming a beacon of hope. It was a way to escape the violence that plagued his youth, leading him to a stable near Gardena, California, where he found solace in horses and the allure of rodeo. Inspired by the legendary Myrtis Dightman, known as the "Jackie Robinson of Rodeo," Charles embarked on a path that defied both racism and adversity.

In the late '70s and early '80s, crime ran rampant in his neighborhood, but Charles's determination was unwavering. His journey led him to Central Arizona College, where his talent earned him a scholarship, despite numerous arena injuries. By 1982, Charles was crowned the World Champion Bull Rider, making history as the first black contender to claim such an honour.



*To The Bullfighter, Death Is Not A Threat,
But A Constant Whisper.*

He rode 30 to 35 bulls a month, never yielding to pain or fear. Injuries marked his journey, with Sampson enduring more than most could fathom. Yet, he stood tall, shattering stereotypes as he shattered his own bones. His career, spanning nearly two decades, culminated in 11 National Finals Rodeo trips. Now, envision a film that opens at a rodeo, circa 1982, with high-speed slow-motion shots of bull riding, encapsulating the sheer intensity of the sport. Watts, California, in the late '60s, becomes the backdrop for a young Charles, brimming with curiosity and defiance, mounting his first bull at just 15.

A silhouette of a cowboy in a rodeo arena, illuminated by bright overhead lights. The cowboy is in the foreground, facing right, with his arms raised in a celebratory gesture. The background is a bright, hazy arena floor with several large, circular light fixtures visible in the upper right.

His family recognizes his talent and pushes him toward Texas, where he confronts a world steeped in tradition, where he's the outlier. Cinematic shots capture the rodeo's essence, as Charles's dedication leads him to multiple competitions each month.

Amidst the dust and danger, he finds love and eventually sustains a life-altering injury at a monumental rodeo event in front of Ronald Reagan. His path takes a dark turn, leading to depression, but it's his wife who becomes his lifeline, urging him to rise from the abyss. In a triumphant comeback, Charles continues to conquer the rodeo world, becoming an inspiration to future generations.





A man wearing a light-colored cowboy hat and a brown jacket is riding a white horse. He is looking off to the side, away from the camera. The background shows a vast, arid landscape with rolling hills under a bright sky with some clouds. The lighting suggests it's either early morning or late afternoon.

Finally, we see him inducted into the Bull Riders Hall of Fame, an older man watching the new generation rise in his rear view mirror, proud to have paved the way for others. Shots of him on his Colorado ranch, accompanied by a voiceover recounting his achievements, serve as a reminder that one must never forsake their values, no matter the odds.

This is the story of "RED BLACK AND BLUE: The Charlie Sampson Story" by Montgomery Fisher, is a cinematic odyssey capturing the indomitable spirit of a man who transformed bull riding into an art form.

A man wearing a cowboy hat and a blue shirt is riding a horse through a vast, open landscape. The foreground is dark and out of focus, showing the heads of several other horses. The background features rolling hills and mountains under a clear, light blue sky.

Wrap

In the tapestry of narratives the world offers, there are rare gems that exude authenticity, tales that genuinely transcend epochs and locales. This is one such story, pulsing with unadulterated humanity and truth. The allure of Hollywood's glitter can often eclipse the journey of genuine filmmakers. Yet, for me, this cinematic voyage has spanned a relentless two decades. From inconspicuous roles behind the camera to the helm of direction, each step was a chapter of relentless learning. The frames I've crafted are living testimonials of my dedication. The legacy of cinematic artistry bestowed upon me by my grandfather, Gerry Fisher BSC, rooted me in this world. But every ounce of insight and every connection was carved from tenacity and perseverance.

*In The Bullring, Bravery And Art
Are Inseparable.*

Personal battles, particularly those with my father, also a world class DOP, shaped my ethos, embedding me deeply into the tapestry of diverse human experiences. Through these trials, I refined my vision, attuning to the harmonies between light and shadow, and the rhythm of human emotion. While the sirens of Hollywood can be seductive, my true north remains the heartbeats of the audience. My commitment is to sculpt a work of art that you will hold in pride, mirroring the passion I bring to it.

Guided by my grandfather's wisdom, I've come to realize that to orchestrate a symphony, one needn't master every instrument; discerning the desired melody is key.

Let's roll...

Monte