

GONNA FLY NOW

by John Judy

(Written for "Big News" January 19th 2004.)

(Lights up on KEN BURNS (Phillip) and CAST scattered across the stage.)

BURNS: Hello, I'm Ken Burns. This week America honored the memory of a great African-American hero, who changed our nation forever. As part of my never-ending series of documentaries I have captured a few American voices telling what this extraordinary man meant to them.

GREGG: He taught me that I didn't have to participate in an unjust system. That I could make my own way with dignity and pride. Thank-you Ron "Superfly" O'Neal.

(SCREEN GRAPHIC: Headshot of Ron O'Neal and DVD cover of "Superfly")

MELISSA: He had a fine ass. A tight, fine ass indeed. Goodnight, sweet Superfly, and may flights of angels sing thee to thy rest... with that fine, fine ass....

JOHN: It was Superfly who taught me that if I yelled at the movie screen loudly enough I could affect what happened. "Don't go in there, Superfly! Don't go in that motherfuckin' room!!!" Sometimes, he would go in the room anyway because I wasn't loud enough. But then I'd yell "Kick whitey's ass!" And he would.

(JOHN bows his head and gives a Black Power salute.)

KIP: The first time I got my freak on with a brother it was to that sweet Curtis Mayfield soundtrack. I closed my eyes and pretended I was being ravished by Youngblood Priest, "Superfly", instead of this totally random guy I'd met at Appleby's. Thank-you, Superfly.

FRANK: Yo! As soon as I saw "Superfly" I knew that shit was for me! I got me some crushed velvet shit for my frame, some gold shit for my teeth, and put me some ho's on the block! I was gonna be the coldest pimp in history!

EVERYONE BUT FRANK: That was "The Mack", you dumb fuck!

FRANK: Fuck! "The Mack!" Right! I'm sorry dude. I mean they all look alike, right?

(Music: From the "Superfly" soundtrack "Freddie's Dead" by Curtis Mayfield comes up)

BURNS: For PBS I'm Ken Burns. Goodnight.

(BLACKOUT)