

FAULKNER PRAISES RICHARD WRIGHT



William Faulkner

(1897-1962)



Richard Wright

(1908-1960)

“I have just read *Black Boy*. It needed to be said, and you said it well. Though I am afraid (I am speaking now from the point of view of one who believes that the man who wrote *Native Son* is potentially an artist) it will accomplish little of what it should accomplish, since only they will be moved and grieved by it who already know and grieve over this situation....

You said it well, as well as it could have been said in this form. Because I think you said it much better in *Native Son*. I hope you will keep on saying it, but I hope you will say it as an artist, as in *Native Son*. I think you will agree that the good lasting stuff comes out of one individual's imagination and sensitivity to and comprehension of the suffering of Everyman, Anyman, not out of the memory of his own grief....

I have (I hope) helped him [black poet Joe Brown] to learn what you learned yourself: that to feel and believe is not enough to write from. He has not read enough. He has taken my advice lately. The things he has sent me since I have been here (since June) are improving.”

William Faulkner
excerpt from letter to Richard Wright
(11 September 1945)