

Probably the most
noteworthy African
American event during
 the world's fair
exposition of 1893 was
the production of William
Edgar Easton's play
Dessalines.

The cakewalk, a popular black theatre dance, was felt by some to be an unfortunate reminder of slavery and should not be staged.



**One of the earliest
cakewalk exhibitions
was given in 1876 as

part of the Centennial of
American Independence
celebration that took
place in Philadelphia.**

**Aida Walker
was widely
recognized as
the Queen of
the Cakewalk.**



Bob Cole and Billy Johnson as a performing team promoted their musicals under black management which challenged existing white theatre managers.

**The team of Bert Williams
and George Walker,
contemporaries of Cole
and Johnson, overcame
exclusionary problems to
become widely
recognized and respected
performers.**

Horace Weston is well remembered as the king of the banjo players, with the banjo and the bones being the main instruments of the minstrel shows.

Paul Robeson is best remembered for his struggle for human rights and dignity of all peoples, known for his Negro spirituals and for singing “Old Man River” in *Show Boat*.

**Two black sopranos who
made their operatic
debut in Europe and
later became successful
in the United States –
Lillian Evanti and
Caterina Jarboro.**

**African American opera singers
of the 19th century have been
termed crossover artists
because they transgressed the
boundaries between high and
low culture by playing the
marginal American concert
stages as well as minstrel and
vaudeville shows.**