

"DEAD PRESIDENTS" INSPIRED BY ACTUAL EVENTS

Anthony Curtis (Larenz Tate) is a bright 18-year-old, from the Bronx, who in 1968, is stepping into manhood. Choosing not to immediately enroll in college, Anthony decides to leave his mentor Kirby (Keith David), girlfriend Juanita Benson (Rose Jackson) and her sister Delilah (N'Busche Wright), to enlist in the Marine Corps. His buddy Skip (Chris Tucker) and friend Jose' (Freddy Rodriguez), soon join him.

It is 1972 when Anthony returns to his neighborhood, only to discover that he is not treated as a hero. Though for a while he manages a part-time job in a butcher's shop, Anthony, with his girlfriend Juanita, who bore his daughter shortly after he enlisted, is living in an infested South Bronx apartment, barely making ends meet.

His world has completely changed. Afforded little respect, and eventually unemployed and desperate, Anthony feels he has no alternative but to take part in a scheme to obtain some "dead presidents" — a slang term for cash: bills of currency that bear the images of past U.S. Presidents.

He believes that one well-executed score will secure a chance at a better life for himself, for his daughter and for the

people of his community. Anthony contributes his combat knowledge to help plan the heist of an armored car that carries out-of-circulation currency to be burned in Washington. His fellow vets, including Skip, Jose' and Cleon (Bokeem Woodbine), along with Kirby and Delilah, all band together for the criminal acts as a final means of survival.

Inspired by actual events, "Dead Presidents" chronicles a young man's struggle to define his place amidst the chaos of the late 1960s and early 1970s.

"Dead Presidents" is produced and directed by Albert and Allen Hughes, the fraternal twin brothers who made their future film directing debut at age 20 with the highly praised "Menace II Society." That film won the Best Picture award at the 1994 MTV Movie Awards, and was based on a story that the Hughes Brothers developed at age 14. Made for \$3 million, the film went on to gross \$30 million and led to a deal with Caravan Pictures.

"Dead Presidents" is the Hughes Brothers' first project under the Caravan Pictures deal. Although it is officially their second major feature, the brothers have been making movies since age 12.



Finding their world completely changed after returning from war in Vietnam, a group of friends have no alternative but to take part in a desperate scheme to obtain some "dead presidents" — a slang for cash. They decide to commit an armored car robbery. But fatal flaws in the heist lead to their future downfall, in Hollywood Pictures' compelling drama "Dead Presidents."

Motown Records Names Andre Harrell President

LOS ANGELES - Motown Records named black music entrepreneur Andre Harrell as its new president and chief executive in an effort to restore its glamorous image.

Harrell, 35, a former rapper who struck a \$50 million multimedia deal for his own label with Seagram Co Ltd's MCA Records three years ago, succeeds Jheryl Busby, who had run PolyGram NV-owned Motown since 1988.

Los Angeles-based Motown, founded 36 years ago in Detroit by Berry Gordy Jr, boasts a rich catalog that includes Stevie Wonder, Smokey Robinson, the Temptations and Marvin Gaye. Gordy sold the label in 1988 to Boston Ventures, which in 1993 sold it to Amsterdam-based PolyGram which also owns A&M Records, Mercury Records and Island Records.

While Motown has enjoyed runaway success in recent times with soulful crooners Boyz II Men, the label has been left in the dust by the explosive popularity of rap and hip-hop. Meanwhile at his Uptown Records label, Harrell propelled Mary J. Blige and Jodeci to international success. However, Harrell said in an interview that MCA was

reluctant to let Uptown grow from a boutique operation into a full-service label with active film and television wings. In a process that lasted two and a half months, Harrell asked to be freed from his contract, MCA allowed him to talk with Motown and a series of high-level meetings in London and New York resulted in his new appointment.

"I think that Motown didn't get the facelift that it might need for a younger generation of active record buyers. One of the things I intend to do is really make it a hip and exciting place to be," Harrell said.

"If they get the right act like Boyz II Men, they can sell tens of millions of records, and they're committed to making black acts into pop superstars." On a wider level Harrell is looking at making "serious" music publishing acquisitions, and deep inroads into movie and television production. He also plans to raise the profile of "cultural treasures" at the label like Wonder and Diana Ross.

Over the next two years, though, his major focus will be as a talent scout for both new musical talent and black executives to run the company.

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