

ENTERTAINMENT

Louis Gossett, Jr.: The invisible love

By Sally Stone
Special to Sentinel-Voice

On June 15, Father's Day, SHOWTIME will air "In His Father's Shoes," a beautiful film that pays tribute to all fathers, everywhere, and to the unique love that marks the father-child relationship.

The movie stars Oscar-winner Louis Gossett, Jr. as Frank Crosby, a middle-aged man who is suffering from a terminal illness. His 13-year-old son, Clay, is played by Robert Ri'chard.

Gossett, who is executive producer of the film along with Hillard Elkins, said, "When I first read this story, I thought it was a lovely fantasy. But then I realized, if it's a fantasy, it's one I've shared for years as the son of a father I loved, but never got to know as well as I should.

"When I was growing up in Brooklyn," Gossett said, "my father worked long hours, so our time together was always too short. He was also a very reserved man; someone who didn't show his emotions easily. When I began to work on this film, I felt so close to the boy, Clay, that his story could almost have been my story. And when you talk to other people, especially men, they say the same thing: we never really got to

know our dads. This relationship which, in many ways, could be the most important in a man's life, is all too frequently ignored, even pushed aside by some people. And that's so unfortunate."

It sounds as if it's almost invisible; almost nonexistent, even.

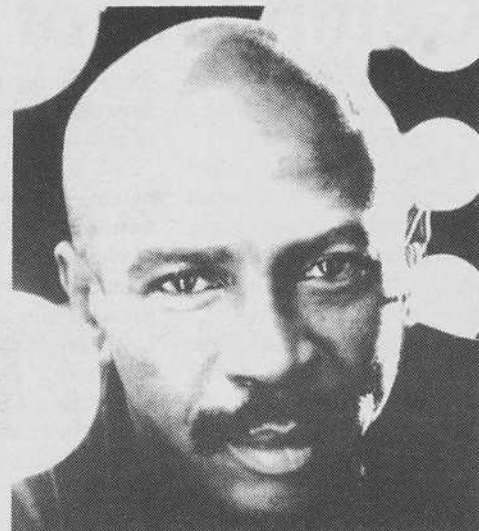
"Sadly, for many people, that would seem to be the truth," Lou said.

In the film, Frank is given a pair of wing-tip shoes by a gypsy who insists they're "magical." Later, on his death bed, his last words resonate in Clay's heart: "Tell my father I always loved him."

After Frank's death, Clay finds the "magical" shoes, puts them on, and is whisked back to his father's past. With each visit, he understands more about his dad, and more about the relationship between his dad and his grandfather.

"There's a common thread of wisdom in many cultures," Lou said, "that tells us that we should not judge a man unless we've walked in their moccasins, or along the paths they took or, indeed, in their wing tip shoes. The point here," he continued, "is that all too often we judge people without knowing those people as well as we should. And it's sad when, because we don't know the truth, we believe we were not loved by the people who should have loved us."

Or perhaps we believe we were unlovable?



GOSSETT

"Which is the real tragedy," Lou agreed. "We may blame ourselves as being unworthy of our parents' love and if they can't love us, who will?"

Would Lou Gossett, Jr. put on those magical shoes if he had them?

"Oh, yes, I certainly would. I've come to know much more about my father over the years. But if I had those shoes, I could learn so much more."

Gossett, who continues to use the designation, Jr., as a tribute to his father, cited some of the things he'd come to learn about his dad.

"I found out about his sadness: that he never got into the Army because he was 4F, physically unable to serve. And there were many other factors that overshadowed his life. But I also learned that he hid, indeed, not love me, but was proud of me. And since children want not just their parent's love, but also their approval, this was a wonderful revelation."

What's ahead for Louis Gossett, Jr.?

"I'm working on a long-held dream to make an African version of 'The King and I.' It's something I've wanted to do for a long time"

— Louis Gossett, Jr.

"I'm working on a long-held dream to make an African version of 'The King and I.' It's something I've wanted to do for a long time. As I said, it was a dream, and as you know, the best way to make a dream come true is to turn it into reality."

Finally, what would Gossett want us to take away from "In His Father's Shoes"? "I believe when you see this movie," Gossett said, "whether you're a son or a daughter of a father you loved, you'll find something of your own story in it. I would also hope that the movie will inspire more men to be honest with their sons and let them know how much they're loved, and that more sons would reach out to their dads as well."



South Central Cartel visits Vegas

By John T. Stephens III
Sentinel-Voice

The Bomb nightclub hosted a new album listening party for Def Jam recording artists South Central Cartel (SCC) last Friday, June 6.

The group SCC consists of Prodeje and Havikk and their executive producer Havoc accompanied them. The group was in town to promote their new album "All Day Everyday" hitting record stores this week.

"We try to tell it like it is," says Havikk who has been rapping since he was 9 years old. "We are the representatives of our neighborhood and we want everybody to know that it is not all negative."

"The situations that we do now ... we did

yesterday, and we're doing the same thing today which is living," states Prodeje.

South Central Cartel's promotion at The Bomb nightclub was arranged by Rory McAllister with the financial backing of Def Jam Records.

This is the third musical endeavor by the duo who have released two other albums entitled "South Central Maddness" and "In Gatz We Trust."

"We are trying to send out a message and it is not all about shooting up and gang banging. We want our listeners to stay true to themselves. You can still be a positive person and stay true to yourself," claims Havikk of South Central Cartel.

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