

ENTERTAINMENT

EBONY ETCHINGS, ETC.

Berry, Rochon slated to join Fox on new movie

By Warren Lanier Sr.
Special to Sentinel-Voice

Inside sources seem to think it's a done deal as far as the signing of the latest two selected female actresses to play starring roles in the biopic of late singer songwriter Frankie Lymon which will star Larenz Tate as Lymon.

When the idea of the film was first presented, the names of Toni Braxton and Queen Latifah immediately surfaced for two of the female leads. The signings did not take place to land them for the flick, for whatever the reason. Now it's Halle Berry and Lela Rochon who reportedly will be signing on the dotted line to join Vivica A. Fox who's already signed for the production.

It's also been confirmed that Miguel A. Nunez, the star of "Sparks" has been signed to play the role of Little Richard. His signing by producer Gregory Nava came after he did a perfect imitation of the flamboyant Richard with dead-on voice qualities.

His ad-libbing about the role as though he were Little Richard himself really got him the job.

In the rating wars, Disney's new version of "Cinderella" that aired the other Sunday with Brandy Norwood, Whitney Houston and Whoopi Goldberg in the starring roles produced a rating smash that led to ABC getting its first weekly win of the

television season. It was also estimated that 60 million people saw some parts of the Rodgers & Hammerstein musical during its Sunday night airing, which gave ABC its best ratings in the time slot in 13-years. Among the viewers of "Cinderella," a survey listed an estimated 70 percent of the viewers were girls age 2 to 11.

For those of you who don't understand how ratings of a television show goes!! A rating point represents 980,000 households, or 1 percent of the nation's estimated 98 million TV homes. A share is the percentage of those televisions in use that are tuned to a given show during a specified time period.

Legendary record producers Jimmy "Jam" Harris and partner Terry Lewis not only got the nod to produce the



VIVICA FOX



HALLE BERRY

soundtrack album for the motion picture "How Stella Got Her Groove Back," the project will also give them a chance to stretch out and use a lot of musical styles in reggae, world music, jazz, hip-hop and R&B, because "Stella" takes place in Jamaica. Harris and Lewis are also going after some really big stars for their "How Stella Got Her Groove Back" soundtrack album, which will also be the first major release on their Flyte Time Records label.

The big news from the business sector of Tinseltown is the news that Microsoft Corporation is close to an agreement to



BRANDY NORWOOD AND WHITNEY HOUSTON

invest up to \$1-billion in the cable television operations of US West, an investment that would buy Microsoft as much as 6.3 percent of US West's cable business at the current stock price.

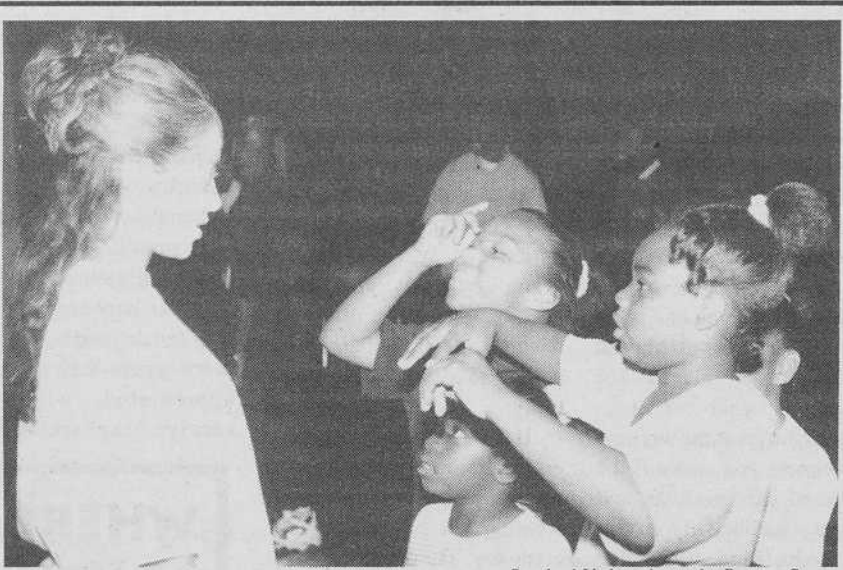
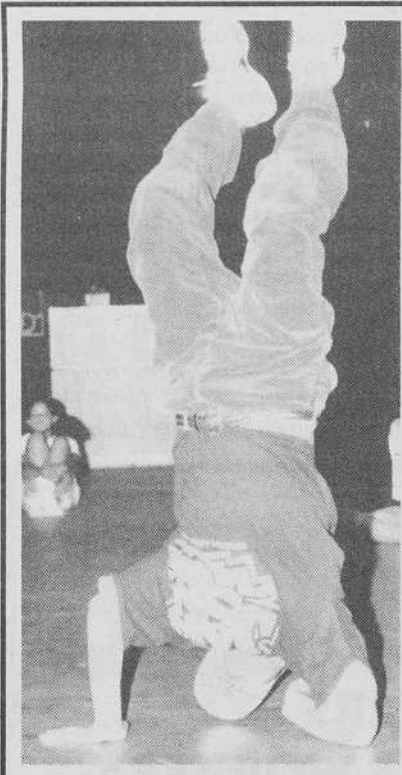
The move will also further the software giant's strategy of turning the nation's cable systems into the primary providers of high-speed access to the Internet — with Microsoft hoping to control the television set-top box software people would use to get on-line.

Hit gospel play launches benefit performances to help churches

The 'hit' gospel play "Precious Lord—The Untold Story Of Gospel Music" that's been critically acclaimed by theater critics and reviewers will launch a series of benefit performances for various churches around the Southern California area before they go on national tour in the spring of 1998.

The idea to give churches an opportunity to raise funds for their financial needs by utilizing the play as a fund raising source was conceived by Jo Ann Barner, producer and director of the production along with yours truly who views the gospel song laden gospel stage play depicting the life of Thomas A. Dorsey, as a theatrical ministry. This offer gives churches the opportunity to have a national touring gospel play perform for their church audience, instead of taking on group discount ticket sales programs for various plays in town and in turn receive a small percentage of the money generated through their efforts and methods of selling tickets.

The first benefit performance of "Precious Lord" for a Southern California Church will take place on Saturday evening, December 6th, to benefit Greater Community Missionary Baptist (See Hollywood, Page 12)



Sentinel-Voice photos by Ramon Savoy

Just maddening

Hip hop performers Honey Rockwell (Ereina Valencia) and Wicket, (break dancing), of the New York New York Hotel & Casino's variety production MADhattan recently took time out to visit and display their dancing techniques to members of the Austin Dancers at the West Las Vegas Library Theatre.

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