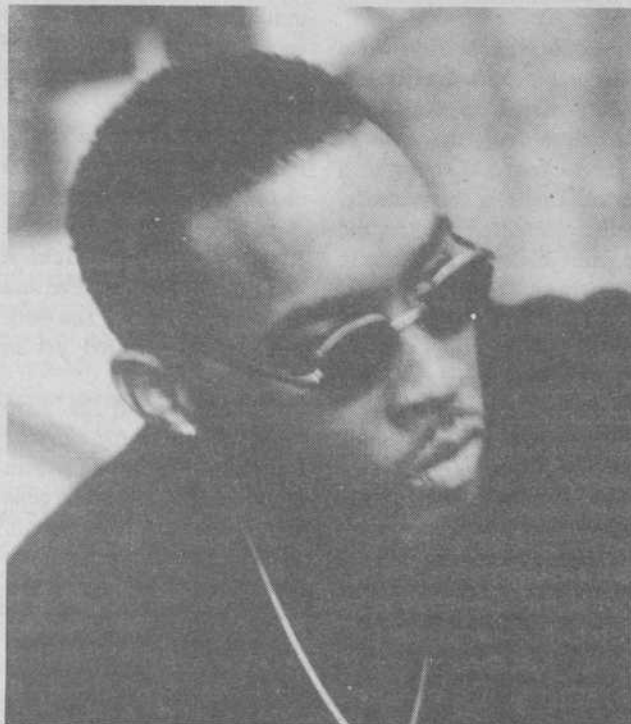


# Montell Jordan climbing to top of R & B pile



MONTELL JORDAN

By Janice Malone  
Special to Sentinel-Voice

The third time can be the charm, just ask Montell Jordan.

His third CD, "Let's Ride" reached the top of Billboard's charts only a few days after its release. Since his 1995 smash single, "This Is How We Do It," Jordan has released four other singles, a gold-certified second album ("More...") and contributed to the million-selling "Nutty Professor" soundtrack.

With his current offering, Jordan continues his seemingly effortless climb to join other musical greats.

"I wanted this record to address what's been missing in R&B nowadays ... I wanted to bring those qualities back," Jordan said.

Scoop: "Let's Ride" is

only your third album. You really took your time between CDs.

Jordan: I'm always in a constant struggle to make sure that each project is better than the previous one. I've done three albums in four years. I think that's a pretty good pace. I don't like making fans wait for long periods of time between projects.

Scoop: Your song "Can I?" is a quite suggestive tune.

Jordan (He laughs): It's a fun song. It's lyrically creative. I wrote that song on the back of a barf bag while riding on an airplane. As the plane was taking off, I wrote the entire song — lyrics and melody. I imagined myself at an imaginary party that's about to end. And I'm trying to ask this woman to come home with me

without saying the words "come home with me." So the question to the song comes down to, how can I creatively tell this woman that I want to make love to her without necessarily saying those words? So that's when I came up with the lyrics, "can I tuck you in?" "can I sing you a lullaby?" or "can I fluff your pillow?" I thought it was a nice, playful song. It's one of my favorites from the CD.

Scoop: Your pastor, Bishop Clarence McClendon (Church of The Harvest), has a spoken word portion on the song "I Say Yes."

Jordan: Bishop McClendon is not only my pastor, he's my buddy. Both he and his wife are close friends of my wife and me. He's just a great friend. He's only about

two or three years older than me but I look up to him and his family so much. He has a strong ministry toward Christians who work in the entertainment industry and people who are not.

There are several prominent-name celebrities who are members of our church. So it was an honor to have him as a part of this CD.

Scoop: Is it tough for you to write songs that appeal to secular audiences but still maintain your Christian principles?

Jordan: What I try to do is to live the lifestyle and conduct myself in a way that will hopefully let the audience see the presence of the Lord in my lifestyle. On my first album with a song like "This Is How" (See Jordan, Page 16)

# Martin: A media and presidential trailblazer

By Todd Burroughs  
Special to Sentinel-Voice

Power is where you find it. It's wherever you seize it. You become powerful the moment you decide to seize it. You become important and meaningful by using it properly.

Louis Martin, crusading Black newspaper publisher and aide to presidents John F. Kennedy, Lyndon Baines Johnson and Jimmy Carter, found power everywhere he looked. He used the power he found to uplift blacks not for the promotion of himself as an uplifter.

In this political biography, Poinsett, former contributing editor to *Ebony* magazine, tells a story of accomplishment, not fame. The book is published in conjunction with the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies, a Washington, D.C.-based Black think tank Martin helped found and once led.

Poinsett, true to his roots, gives us one of the few scholarly portrayals of a black

newspaper in action during Depression-era Jim Crow when he details Martin's career with *The Michigan Chronicle*, then and now a great Black newspaper founded by *The Chicago Defender*.

Martin, founding editor and co-publisher, was part of a cadre of young black activists in Detroit who, with help from the NAACP, were strong agitators against white racism, particularly in the union movement of the 1930s and 1940s.

"In its first five years [of *The Chronicle*, which began publishing in 1936]," wrote Poinsett, "Martin had molded [the paper] into a potent force for economic, social and political justice for Detroit's black community."

Through his editorials, articles and civic activities, Martin was a rational, ardent and courageous spokesman for black candidates, black suffrage, the newly emerging industrial unions, and the New Deal and the Democratic Party. At the same time, he challenged

discrimination and injustice in whatever guise they appeared."

This was true whether his opponents were the Ford Motor Co., sell-out black preachers on the company's payroll, or even the New Deal itself when Martin found its housing policy to be racist.

He editorialized: "It is idle in the face of these burning realities to speak of preserving our democracy. We cannot preserve what we do not have. We have a tyranny imposed by the majority, and as this tyranny is lessened, we approach democracy."

Martin understood the power of the pen, and used it to fight for black workers' rights. He soon discovered the power of politics, working with U.S. Rep. William Dawson (D-Ill.), then the nation's only black congressman, to help re-elect Franklin Delano Roosevelt in the mid-1940s. And thus began his transformation from Detroit protester to White House insider. His official post was deputy chairman of the Democratic National

Committee, but his unofficial post was negro adviser to the President.

What did Martin accomplish? Poinsett details several contributions. Martin was one of the Democratic leaders that convinced Kennedy, a 1960 presidential candidate, to make the now-famous phone call to Coretta Scott King when her husband was locked up in the South. (Martin, in this unofficial capacity, also made sure the black press and black political leaders knew of the phone call almost immediately through blue leaflets to churches and elsewhere.)

He applied pressure on Kennedy to make sure that any civil rights bill passed in 1964 would outlaw separate-but-(not)equal public accommodations. And, all along, he kept the Black press in the news and advertising loops.

But Poinsett emphasizes that Martin's most important accomplishment was his ability to name black people to important policy-making

positions.

This was because, in Poinsett's words, "lasting change had to occur within the system and become incorporated into it." Among the names he suggested to Kennedy, for example, was Robert Weaver, whom Kennedy named to what was to become the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, part of the president's Cabinet. Among names he gave Johnson for a Circuit Court seat was Thurgood Marshall.

This would have been a much better biography if more

information on Martin's life was presented. Didn't the hundreds of pages of Martin memoirs Poinsett examined have any information on his personal life and the lives of his kin? Family members are repeatedly mentioned before being abruptly discarded by the narrative. Who Martin and his family were - and are - would have given us more texture on the man and his mission.

This is an untold story that has finally been revealed. It is a story not only of federal government assistance, but of one black publishers' determination.

# Dancers waltz into theater for free performance

Special to Sentinel-Voice

The City of Las Vegas Cultural Affairs Division and the Las Vegas - Clark County Library District are sponsoring a performance by the Katherine Dunham Museum Children's Workshop Dance Company Saturday, June 13 at the West Las Vegas Library Theater, 951 W. Lake Mead Blvd.

The 2 p.m. matinee is free, but tickets are needed to guarantee seats.

Katharine Dunham, who in 1939 choreographed some of the dances that the company will perform, leads the group. The dancers, ranging in age from 7 to 17, come from the metropolitan areas of East St. Louis, Ill., and St. Louis, Mo., and have been trained extensively in a wide array of dance.

Master African storyteller Oba King will emcee the program, which includes authentic rhythms of Haitian, Senegalese and

other cultures. For more information and tickets, call the West Las Vegas Arts Center at 229-4800.

See Me for All  
Your Insurance  
Needs

AUTO HOME  
LIFE HEALTH

COUNTRY COMPANIES.  
INSURANCE GROUP



MELVIN WALKER  
6160 W. Tropicana  
Suite E-9  
702-873-6442  
Las Vegas, Nevada

WHERE DO  
SOUTHERN  
NEVADA  
EMPLOYERS  
FIND THE WORKERS  
THEY NEED?

**NBS**  
NEVADA BUSINESS SERVICES

A Human Resource and Career Training Service

Free employee screening, assessment and training services for Southern Nevada Businesses.

• 930 West Owens • 638-8750 or 638-1159 TDD •

Equal Opportunity Employer/Program; Auxiliary aids and services available upon request to individuals with disabilities.

