

# Director wants Las Vegas to 'tri' his new comedy

By Deborah Kohen  
Sentinel-Voice

When an aspiring actress tries out a trio of psycho roles on three "modern-day stooges," the result is a play that will "make you laugh and teach you nothing," says writer/director Rick Davenport about his new play, "Tri Something Else."

The play will be performed at the West Las Vegas Library Theatre, 951 W. Lake Mead Blvd., on Thursday through Sunday Sept. 3-6 and Sept. 10-12. Showtime is 7 p.m. each evening, with 4 p.m. Sunday matinees on the 6th and the 13th. Besides having written the script and directed the production, Davenport also plays one of the roles. He and the rest of the cast are all professionals with long resumes in theater.

Davenport began his entertainment career as a stand-

up comic in the early to mid 80's in Michigan, where he played some of the same venues as Eddie Murphy and Sinbad.

Coming to Las Vegas in 1987, he met an actress, attended a few of her rehearsals, and "got bit by the theater bug," he says. Since he'd been writing his own comedy sketches for years, writing a play seemed like a feasible task.

"Quiet Lightning," Davenport's first play, enjoyed a successful run here at the Moulin Rouge, encouraging the entertainer to form his own theatrical company, now known as ERA Productions.

Since then, Davenport's talent and persistence have led to many live and taped appearances, including a television role with Kato Kaolin and Vivica Fox in an episode of "The Watchers."

Davenport feels satisfied with the number and quality of roles he's been given since moving to Las Vegas; however, he acknowledges that the local theatre scene is difficult. "Here, you have to pay your money to give your performance," he said, whereas in other cities, if you can put on a production, you can find a theatre that will bring in an audience.

"The Strip hotels still frown on plays," he commented, and they comprise the biggest entertainment showcase in town. Davenport says we need a permanent downtown location for live theatre.

Local companies can use the stages of the library theaters, but must work around the scheduling of a plethora of community events. "You lose your audience if you have to keep moving from one venue to another," he said. "If you had a steady venue with



Rick Davenport

consistently high-quality productions, people would come to see them."

New West Theater, for example, always packs the house, according to Davenport, who met one of his partners, Earl Harrison, when both were cast in New West's production of "A Few Good Men."

However, says Davenport,

black community for "Tri Something Else."

Is it difficult to draw a large black audience for live theatre? Yes, says Davenport, but by no means impossible. "We don't want to pay to see amateur performances," he said, "but if we can expect a good show, we'll pay to see it."

The cast of "Tri Something Else" are all professionals, said Davenport, "and the play is pure entertainment." He says Joyce Thomas, director of programming at the West Las Vegas Library Theater, told him that people want a comedy, they want to laugh. He wrote a play with that end in mind.

Tickets are \$10 and may be purchased at the library or by calling 440-0532.

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## Snipes delivers sharp action in knife-edged movie

By Tammy McMahan  
Special to Sentinel-Voice

He has supernatural strength. He can leap from tall buildings in a single bound. He's faster than a speeding train. Is he Superman? No, he's Blade. With an introduction like that, you know this is one power-packed action flick. The film "Blade" may not provoke deep thought, but if action is your game, this is your film.

Wesley Snipes ("U. S. Marshals") is Blade, a half-human, half-vampire hero who fights a legion of vampires who seek to eradicate the human race as we know it. The story begins with Blade's birth.

His mother is hurriedly wheeled into the delivery room. She screams from the agony of a bite to her neck and from childbirth.

Blade is born, but his mother fades.

From here, the movie mostly has scene after scene showing Blade pouring out cans of "kick butt" on vampires. An early semi-comic scene features a young man who can only be said to have had the bad date of the century. In this scene Blade shows us what he can do to the average bloodsucker. Believe me, it ain't pretty, folks. Blade's power comes from the vampire blood coursing through his veins. His high-tech weapons come from his grizzled partner and surrogate father Abraham Whistler portrayed by Kris Kristofferson ("Lone-Star"). Although Blade is mostly on the front lines, both he and Whistler wage war on the night stalkers. A third warrior on the side of humanity is found in



Wesley Snipes

Dr. Karen Jensen portrayed by N'Bushe Wright.

The young, ambitious and

ruthless villain of this film, Deacon Frost (Stephen Dorff), is determined to win the war for vampires. As Frost's plan unfolds and comes together, Blade realizes that the very future of humanity is at stake. Thus, the action becomes more fast and furious. Much blood is spilled, but that's to be expected in a vampire movie.

The action of "Blade" is a well-choreographed dance of violence that may appeal to some and shock others. The cinematography has the feel of the new wave, grittier, artistically detailed comic books and graphic novels. In

fact, the film is based upon the best selling comic book *Blade*. The special effects are state-of-the-art especially the inventive, visually spectacular ways that the vampires die.

The film is very weak in the areas of plot, dialogue and acting. The holes in the plot logic are large enough to drive a Mack truck through. For example, the vault that holds not only holds the records of vampire holdings around the city but the ancient vampire bible is unguarded. The pro-human characters basically state and restate that the

(See *Blade*, Page 9)



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