

ENTERTAINMENT

Versatile Townsend seeks betterment in all aspects

By Gil Robertson
Special to Sentinel-Voice
 Everybody likes Robert Townsend. With his affable manner and light-hearted wit, he has become an endearing figure in American television and cinema. Whether it's playing a dad, like he has on the long-running "Parenthood" sitcom or being a superhero, like he did in the film "Meteor Man," Townsend can always be counted on to tickle your funny bone or touch your heart.



ROBERT TOWNSEND

As the host of the popular syndicated variety show "Motown Live," Townsend each week introduces an exciting mix of new and established musical talent. He also entertains the audience with his own eclectic humor. "The work that I'm doing on this show is a natural fit because of the great love that

I have for music. Maintaining a musical element in my work as an actor and director has always been real important

to me. It's great doing this show, because our format exposes some of the best names in the business to get

out there and do their thing." Although his "Parenthood" sitcom will complete its long run later this year, Townsend has been very busy, acting and directing in a number of upcoming projects.

"I just completed work on two films, a feature called "Allen's Experiment," and a new film for Showtime entitled "Love Songs" starring Lynn Whitfield, Andre Braugher and Lou Gossett. I will also appear in a documentary for Showtime that will be airing soon. Also I'm about to begin work on the film "Jackie's Back," with Jennifer Lopez, Whoopi Goldberg, Tim Curry and Jason Alexander. I like working my chops on all levels.

Away from work, Townsend enjoys spending time with his wife and three

young girls. Calling them his "inspiration," he says that they keep him motivated and focused about what's real and important in his life.

"My family is a real special part of my life," he says. We have a good time together, spending time in Las Vegas and Santa Barbara or just hanging around the house watching a movie.

"I'm in a great space in my life right now, growing in my work and working my creative chops on all levels. As a creative person I never want to repeat myself and I always want to keep getting better."

Urban Film Festival
 The UrbanWorld International Film Festival and HBO, will launch the 1st Annual Urban World Film Festival College Tour beginning February 1, 1999. The festival will feature some

of the best films from Urban World's popular 1998 hit festival, and will travel to historically Black Colleges and Universities. For more information, check out their website at urbanworld.com.

"Family Matters" mom sings

Popular TV actress Jo Marie Payton, who for nine years played the mom on the popular TV show "Family Matters" will release a new jazz CD, "Southern Shadows," on March 9, 1999 from Chartmaker Records. The album, which features a collection of popular standards like "This Masquerade," "Teach Me Tonight," and "What A Difference A Day Made," features contemporary jazz greats Gerald Albright and Billy Mitchell.

Visit our web-site at www.robertsontreatment.com

'In Dreams' a psychological thriller not for the faint of heart

By Tammy D. McMahan
Special to Sentinel-Voice
 In dreams, the rules are bent. Logic can be fuzzy. Fairytales can seem like reality. Symbolic imagery can pervade the mental landscape. When monsters invade dreams, pleasant thoughts are transformed into nightmares. Director Neil Jordan's "In Dreams" bends the cinematic rules to create a nightmare world where dreams are not escapes, but pain-filled visions of madness. Jordan's stylistic thriller stars Annette Bening as Claire Cooper, a psychic and an author/illustrator of children's books.

Claire's world is upset like the proverbial applecart when she starts to dream and experience visions of someone stalking little girls. Her dreams and visions materialize into a real-life nightmare when her own daughter is taken. Claire cannot escape the pain of losing her daughter and she tries to kill herself. However, she survives, but the killer continues to invade her mind with horrific images. Although Claire knows that she will no doubt descend into madness and terror, she allows the killer to mentally guide her to him in an attempt to end his bloody rampage and end her pain.

This film which plays like a dream can be confusing, but it's nonetheless fascinating and haunting. For example, the opening scene

shows powerful waters overtaking a town which was flooded in order that a dam could be built. The significance of this scene is initially puzzling. Eventually, the film reveals a horrific abuse that was suffered by the child-killer when these floodwaters were unleashed. The revelation provides further insight as to this character's actions. Despite the initial confusion, the viewer will no doubt be captivated by the cinematography for the opening scene and other scenes involving the submerged town all of which are surreal and downright creepy.

"In Dreams" has fairytale references and symbolic imagery aplenty. When Claire relates her strange visions to her husband, the

police and her psychiatrist, she is not unlike the little boy who cried wolf, but no one believed. Furthermore, the color red and apples figure prominently in this work. Red with its references to blood and apples with their symbolic representation of sin make for a disturbing psychological atmosphere. In fact, this film may cause you to never look at apples in the same way.

The child-killer in this film is not unlike the wicked witches and other villains and monsters found in fairytales such as Snow White which is briefly featured as a school play in the film.

Like most villains and monsters of fairytales, the killer preys upon the innocent. Furthermore, like the evil stepmother of Snow White, the killer does not

recognize his actions as evil but, instead, characterizes them as justifiable and necessary to ensure his emotional survival.

Annette Bening gives an uneven, but decent performance. Sometimes, Bening acts as if she is waiting for the director to cue her to speak and she won't open her mouth until she gets the signal. Although Bening's character has a lot on her mind and in dreams, this behavior came off as staged, ineffective bizarreness. However,

Bening can, at times, ably show Claire's descent into madness and blend it with Claire's determination to stop this killer even if she loses her mind in the attempt.

"In Dreams" "gotcha" ending may leave you considerably unsettled and that's good if you're tired of the usual Hollywood killer-thriller fare. If you are interested in a film that plays like a dream-nightmare with a creepy visual landscape, you'll enjoy this not-so-ordinary thriller.

Wu-Tang rapper posts bail after shooting incident

Special to Sentinel-Voice
 NEW YORK (AP) — Rapper ODB posted \$150,000 cash bail Friday after spending a week in jail for allegedly firing a gun during an encounter with undercover police.

The 29-year-old Wu-Tang Clan rapper, whose real name is Russell Jones, is charged with attempted murder in the first degree, attempted murder in the second degree and criminal weapons possession. The principal charge carries a maximum penalty of 25 years to life.

Police say Jones fired at undercover officers after they stopped his sport utility vehicle for a routine traffic violation Jan. 15. The officers fired four or five shots back, but no one was hurt.

Police have yet to comment on whether they found the gun allegedly used to fire at the officers. Jones' attorney, Peter Frankel, did not return a telephone call regarding the results of a paraffin test — used to detect gunpowder residue on a suspect's hands. Jones took the test last weekend.

Jones is a founding member of Wu-Tang Clan.

Since 1987 he has had several run-ins with the law, including four arrests in the past year for such offenses as

menacing security officers, alleged shoplifting and threatening a former girlfriend.

Seminar

(Continued from Page 3)

minority business owners and entrepreneurs; tell them, "You can do it!"

Saturday's program begins at 7 p.m. with a Reception and opportunities to stop by the 27 booths that area businesses will set up. Dinner, the presentations by featured speakers and entertainment starts at 8 pm.

Tickets are \$75 apiece. A portion of the proceeds will benefit KLVX Channel 10 and the E.O.B. Micro Business Program.

Those interested in attending can contact Fuller at 631-5443.

Black Women:
STOP PULLING YOUR HAIR OUT!!!
ADD-ON HAIR
"The Safe & Easy Way"

BEFORE	AFTER	• NO GLUING (no breakage)
		• NO SEWING (no pulling)
		• NO BRAIDING (no all day)

Let me demonstrate "The New Method" to Add Length, Volume or Cover Thinning!
 Call me today
(702) 312-3657, Yolanda
 1-888-572-6733 pager/voice mail