

Entertainment Briefs

URBANWORLD FILM FEST SLATED FOR NEW YORK

NEW YORK (AP) - The work of black, Hispanic and Asian filmmakers will be on display during the fifth annual Urbanworld Film Festival, set for Aug 1-5 in New York City. Stacy Spikes, a former executive at Miramax and October Films, started the festival in August 1997 with 35 films. By 1998, it grew to more than 75 features, shorts and documentaries. Past festival features include "The Visit," "The Original Kings of Comedy," "The Best Man," "Soul Food," "Introducing Dorothy Dandridge," "How Stella Got Her Groove Back" and "Blue Streak." June 1 was the deadline to submit entries in the competitive categories of feature film, short film, documentary film and screenplay.

ARETHA FRANKLIN COLLABORATES ON JAMES CARTER'S CD

DETROIT (AP) — Aretha Franklin is usually the headliner, but the Queen of Soul has agreed to a guest appearance on a live recording by Detroit-born saxophonist James Carter. Franklin's participation is expected to give the recording a pop-culture glitter that could introduce Detroit jazz to a broader audience.



FRANKLIN

"It's an homage to what happens live when I'm in Detroit," he told the Detroit Free Press. "I want to let folks know this is where I come from and that there's still the jazz spirit here." Carter, 32, said Wednesday he had not yet ironed out details with Franklin, but the singer had left a message on his answering machine saying "she was looking at doing something up-tempo, maybe 'Cherokee.'" The Atlantic Records recording session, scheduled June 14-16 at Baker's Keyboard Lounge, is expected to bring together local jazz artists with internationally known saxophonists Johnny Griffin, David Murray and Franz Jackson. Franklin and Carter met last year at a benefit concert in Detroit. She invited him to play at her Christmas party and to participate in her "Divas Live" concert on VH1.

NATALIE COLE, RAY CHARLES, RACHELLE FERRELL TO HEADLINE MUSIC FESTIVAL

NEW YORK (AP) - Ray Charles, Natalie Cole, Rachelle Ferrell and others will headline a new music festival kicking off this summer in New York City. The Verizon Music Festival will offer a series of concerts from Aug. 7-11, some of which will be free.

The performances will range from Latin music to a tribute to jazz improvisation. "With a blend of jazz, blues, soul, world and Latin jazz, the Verizon Music Festival embodies the melting pot of styles that make up the current New York community," George Wein, whose company is producing the festival, said last week. Besides New York, the Verizon Music Festival will be staged in Los Angeles from Sept. 28-Oct. 2, and in Tampa from Oct. 24-27.



FERRELL

PUFFY PROTEGE 'SHYNE' SENTENCED TO 10 YEARS IN PRISON

NEW YORK (AP) - Jamaal "Shyne" Barrow was sentenced Friday to 10 years in prison for shooting and wounding two people during a dispute between rap impresario Sean "Puffy" Combs and another man in a Times Square nightclub. Barrow admitted at trial that he pulled out a gun and fired during the fracas at Club New York on Dec. 27, 1999. Before handing down the sentence, state Supreme Court Justice Charles Solomon called Barrow smart, talented and charitable but said he couldn't lose sight of the fact that Barrow had fired a gun in a nightclub "as crowded as a subway in rush hour." Barrow, 22, was charged with first-degree assault, gun possession and reckless endangerment. He told Solomon that he was not a threat to society and asked for leniency.

ENTERTAINMENT

Stereotypes muddle putrid comedy

DeVito, Lawrence disappoint in absent-minded flick

By Kam Williams

Special to Sentinel-Voice

When you see that Danny DeVito and Martin Lawrence are co-starring in a comedy, you have a right to great expectations. First of all, both funnymen have that knack for lighting up the big screen just by their presence alone.

So, after you add a solid supporting cast of comedians to the mix, including the ebullient Bernie Mac (The Original Kings of Comedy), perennial straight man Larry Miller (Nuttty Professor I & II), the outrageous John Leguizamo (Dr. Dolittle) and Saturday Night Live alum Nora Dunn (Bulworth), you ought to be thinking that this one can't miss.

Keep thinking, because I can save you nine bucks if you come to your senses.

I suppose it was my duty to sit there and suffer so that others might be spared the same experience. But how bad could it be, you might ask? How bad?

Drowning Mona bad. That disappointing dud also emptied out theaters despite Danny DeVito and a stellar supporting cast.

What's the Worst That Could Happen is based on the Donald Westlake novel of the same name from his entertaining Dortmund series. I wouldn't feel politically correct if I didn't point out that the film re-visits the



Martin Lawrence and Bernie Mac add off-kilter high-level comedic power to "What's the Worst That Could Happen," which also stars Danny DeVito.

ever-popular theme of the rich white man who turns the tables on the compulsively criminal black man. Even Mr. Lawrence has played this character before, in Nothing to Lose, where Tim Robbins decided to kidnap his carjacker. But where that, at least, was a laff-a-minute rollercoaster ride, What's the Worst only gets worse every minute.

Max Fairbanks (DeVito) is a homeless billionaire who's married to a pretty, but cold, unlikable, soulless bitch (Dunn). Max depends on a bevy of bimbos to help him through his bankruptcy proceedings. He has an inexplicably loyal team of attractive assistants, each of which he's

sleeping with.

Kevin (Lawrence) and Berger (Leguizamo), meanwhile, are career crooks who steal from the rich and give to themselves. They target the Fairbank's mansion, expecting it to be empty because of its widely-reported legal entanglements. But unbeknownst to the courts or his wife, Max is there entertaining Miss September (Sascha Knopf).

He gets the drop on the bunglers, and decides to rob Kevin of his diamond-studded ring. But the bauble which brought good luck to Kevin only mires Max deeper in misery. The balance of the would be "comedy of errors" involves Kevin's attempts to

retrieve the ring because it was a gift from Amber (Carmen Ejogo), his first "decent" girlfriend, meaning his first who wasn't also a convict.

For some reason, the make-up artist on this film decided to patty-cake it on everybody, giving the production a Kabuki dance effect. But the masking doesn't hide the offensive brand of humor which relies on so many stale sexist and racist stereotypes. The film was directed by Hollywood hack Sam Weissman, who was also responsible for the recent abysmal remake of The Out-of-Towners.

Should never have been released.

Farrakhan to speak at rap summit

NEW YORK — For two days, June 12-13, the New York Hilton will be the site of a National Hip Hop Summit. Russell Simmons of Def Jam Records has called together leading artists, record company producers and the NAACP to inspire the hip hop community to reach for new heights.

The industry movers and shakers will discuss hip hop's problems, how to fix them and how to clean up the music's violent image.

The Honorable Minister Louis Farrakhan, leader of the Nation of Islam, will deliver the keynote address. Min. Benjamin Muhammad, special assistant to Min. Farrakhan and national director of the Million Family Movement, will serve as the moderator.

Simmons said other co-sponsors include Sean Combs of Bad Boy Records, Master P, Dr. Dre, Snoop Dogg, Doug E Fresh, Eve, Queen Latifah, Jazzy Z, Talib Kweli, Scarface, Q-Tip and KRS-One.

"We are coming to the National Hip Hop Summit to document our genre in a posi-

tive light," KRS-One told The Final Call.

"Too many times we see hip hop on trial. This one shooting at that one, some scandal, some gossip, but those are strange, bizarre stories and we want to make that clear," he added.

"The whole hip hop world will be cheering us on June

12 and 13," KRS-One said.

"We won't hear about it right away, but there will be a chain reaction around the globe—an electric reaction to what we do in New York," he said.

There will be a special June 14 press conference to announce a plan of action, said summit organizers.

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