

Attorney in cop brutality case unrepentant in book

By Marcello Sawyer
Special to Sentinel-Voice

Joe Hopkins, the initial attorney in the Donovan Jackson police brutality case that a judge decalared a hung jury in Los Angeles County, is headed to Las Vegas for a book signing.

This Saturday, at the 4th Annual Celebrity Benefit presented by the Mokae Resource Scholarship Foundation at the Treasure Island Hotel, Hopkins will make his Las Vegas debut.

"I Will Not Apologize" piggybacks on notoriety garnered with numerous television and radio appearances that Hopkins has had since the Jackson case arose.

The book, subtitled "Uncompromising Solutions to Black America's Dilemma in the 21st Century," is a compilation of essays and columns written by Hopkins in a weekly column published in the Pasadena Journal, dating back as far as 1992.

Since the book's publication in February, the well-known Pasadena attorney and businessman has visited Oakland and Hayward, Calif., Jackson, Tenn. and Baltimore.

The self-described "quasi-book tour" came about as an invitation after Hopkins attended the Trumpet Awards in Atlanta and a follow-up tribute in Jackson, Tenn., to Xernona Jackson - one of the first blacks to have a own television show.

"Some of the issues in the book need to be spread nationwide to turn the tide of the impact negative images are having on today's kids," Hopkins said.

He sees the book as a medium that can reach the masses and have a lasting impact.

In Hopkins' opinion, the editorials chosen for the book are interesting, relevant

and have a lesson attached. There are three in particular he feels readers should take a deep look at.

"The Trojan Horses in Our Community" was published July 7, 1994. It addresses youth fascination with gangster rap music, clothing and language. Hopkins preaches rap is a Trojan Horse "filled with the elements of defeat."

The analogy is much like the original wooden horse that carried soldiers poised to overtake a Greek city.

He advises children to seek role models amongst those that value the "traditional elements of progress...hard work, education, sacrifice, pride, respect for self and others."

In 1997, after seeing the Vibe magazine cover with an almost nude Toni Braxton, Hopkins wrote "Fattening Hogs for Snakes."

He was shocked that Braxton, being a role model for thousands of young girls, would say that she wanted to show her body before she loses the opportunity. This article addresses the need for parents to step up and become better teachers for our children.

He believes that "what children see is what they'll be." Parents cannot "fatten" their kids with good values during childhood just to let snakes of the world take advantage of their hard work.

The final essay he recommends — and the one that I sensed the most intensity for — was "Our Word for Today is ASSETS - Can you say 'Assets'?" It was published in 2001.

This selection portrays the Black community's struggle with economic (See Hopkins, Page 14)

Young model next superstar

By Kam Williams
Special to Sentinel-Voice

Thirteen-year-old Gerren Taylor is one of the entertainment world's new rising stars. The budding young beauty has already been dubbed "The next Naomi Campbell," because of her promising modeling career which is already under way. She is also very interested in acting, exhibiting a charisma which has prompted others to call her an African-American Julia Roberts.

Things haven't always been so rosy for Gerren. At almost 6" tall, she used to be teased at school constantly. Kids called her names like Giraffe and Bean Pole. Her mother Michele and grandmother Billie, however, taught her to stand tall and to be proud of her height. Gerren dreamed that one day she would be a model, like Tyra Banks, after hearing Tyra say on Oprah that she, too, had been teased.

Gerren's modeling career started when she and her mother were approached by a talent scout. Since, she has done TV commercials and print work for JC Pennys, Macy's and Rich's Department Stores and magazines such as YM, Seventeen and Teen. She was recently featured in "America the Beautiful," a documentary by director Darryl Roberts.

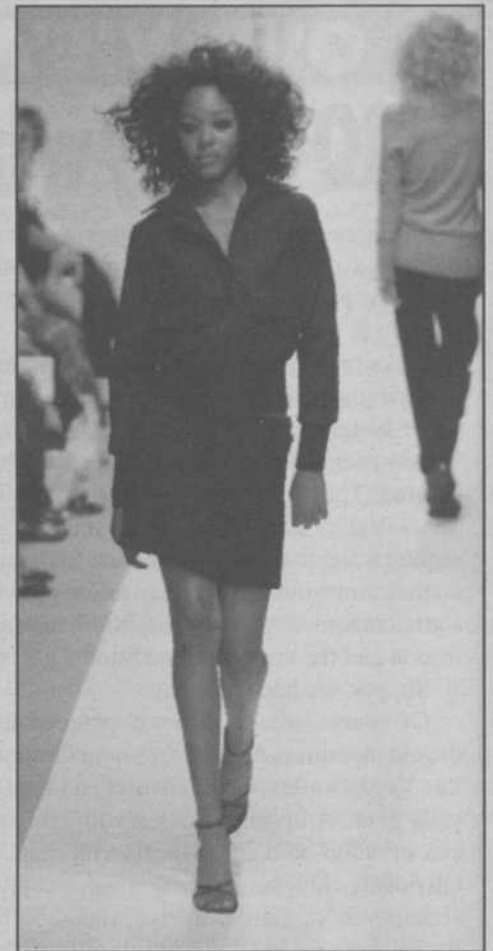
The film, which is set to premiere in January at the Sundance Film Festival, focuses on America's fascination with beauty and follows Gerren down her road to success.

The sky's the limit for this rising young star who was lucky to learn that her height is a blessing, not a curse. I shared the following exchange with this emerging star of tomorrow and found her even more charming than one would have expected from her decidedly upbeat advance billing.

KW: Where do you live now?

GT: "I live in West Los Angeles."

KW: Do you go to still go to school or do



All of 13, model Gerren Taylor is being ballyhooed as the world's next "it" girl.

you have a private tutor?

GT: "I still go to school and have a private tutor for my math and science."

KW: Are you still able to have play dates and go to friends birthday parties?

GT: "Yes I still have play dates and hang out with my friends. I'm a regular kid."

KW: What do you do for fun?

GT: "I hang out with my mom at museums, parks, the malls, the beach, we go everywhere together. I also have fun with my

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Hines

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March, he appeared in the spring television series "Lost at Home."

Gregory Oliver Hines was born on Feb. 14, 1946, in New York City. He has said his mother urged him and his older brother toward tap dancing because she wanted them to have a way out of the ghetto.

When he was a toddler, his brother was already taking tap lessons and would come home and teach him steps. They began performing together when Gregory Hines was 5, and they performed at the Apollo Theater in Harlem for two weeks when he was 6. In 1954, they were cast in the Broadway musical "The Girl in Pink Tights," starring French ballerina Jeanmaire.

"I don't remember not dancing," Hines said in a 2001 interview with The Associated Press. "When I realized I was alive and these were my parents, and I could walk and talk, I could dance."

Sammy Davis Jr. was one

of young Gregory Hines' inspirations, as were the Nicholas Brothers and Bill "Bojangles" Robinson. Hines drew on Robinson's style for some of his work in "Jelly's Last Jam."

Paired with brother Maurice, he was a professional child star. In his teens, joined by their father, Maurice Sr., on drums, they were known as Hines, Hines and Dad.

But there was a time, Hines said in the 2001 interview, that he didn't want to dance. He was in his mid-20s, "a hippie" in a brief moment of rebellion.

"I felt that I didn't want to be in show business anymore. I felt that I wanted to be a farmer," he said with a laugh. Invited to work on a farm in upstate New York, he quickly learned a lesson.

Beginning before dawn, "I was milking cows and shoveling terrible stuff and working all day. By the end of the day, all I wanted was my tap shoes — I thought, 'What am I doing? I better

"His dancing came from something very real."

— Bernadette Peters

get back where I belong on the stage where we work at night and can sleep late!"

Hines had a falling out with his older brother in the late 1960s because the younger was becoming influenced by counterculture and wanted to perform to rock music and write his songs. In 1973, the family act disbanded and Hines moved to Venice Beach.

"I was going through a lot of changes," Hines told the Washington Post in 1981. "Marriage. We'd just had a child. Divorce. I was finding myself."

He returned to New York in 1978, partly to be near his daughter, Daria, who was living with Hines' first wife, dance therapist Patricia Panella.

His brother, with whom he had reconciled, told him about an audition for the

Broadway-bound "The Last Minstrel Show." He got the part, but the show opened and closed in Philadelphia.

The brothers reunited onstage for "Eubie!" a homage to composer Eubie Blake, choreographed by LeTang. Gregory Hines was lauded for his singing of "Low Down Blues" and his rat-tat-tat tapping during "Hot Feet." He won several awards, and was nominated for a Tony.

Hines also earned Tony nominations for "Comin' Uptown" and "Sophisticated Ladies," and he won a Tony for best actor in a musical playing jazz legend "Jelly Roll" Morton in "Jelly's Last Jam." Tony-winning choreographer and dancer Savion Glover, a protege of Hines, danced the roll of the young Morton in the Broadway show.

Hines landed his first film

role in the 1981 Mel Brooks comedy "History of the World Part I," in which he played a Roman slave as a last-minute replacement for Richard Pryor. He has since been nominated for a number of awards, most recently an Emmy in 2001 for his lead role in the miniseries "Bojangles."

His PBS special, "Gregory Hines: Tap Dance in America," was nominated in 1989, and in 1982 he was nominated for his performance in "I Love Liberty," a variety special saluting

America. He was nominated in 1985 for a performance on "Motown Returns to the Apollo."

He also won a Daytime Emmy Award in 1999 for his work as the voice of "Big Bill" in the Bill Cosby animated TV series, "Little Bill," and NAACP Image Awards for "Bojangles" and "Running Scared."

Hines was engaged to Negrita Jayde and, in addition to his father and brother, is survived by his daughter Daria, son Zach and stepdaughter Jessica.

Museum

(Continued from Page 7)

Porter (Isaac Hayes' songwriting partner), Isaac and Mavis Staples hosted a golf classic earlier this year to raise money for the museum. It doesn't surprise me about the artists. See, Stax for us was a real utopia. Axton and Stewart created an environment for us that respected our talents and created a mentoring environment. Stax really put Memphis, Tennessee, on the map."

The Stax Museum of American Soul Music is located 926 E. McLemore Avenue and College Street. The hours of operation are 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. Monday through Saturday and 1-4 p.m. Sundays. For information, call (901) 942-7685, or visit them on the web at www.soulsvilleusa.com.

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