

Music diva set to explode on film, in commercials

By Gordon Jackson
Special to Sentinel-Voice
DALLAS (NNPA)—The entertainment world is dangerously falling in love with Beyoncé' Knowles.

That's kind of appropriate at the moment with the immense success of her current solo album, "Dangerously in Love," among the top-10 sellers in several music charts.

It doesn't take a brain surgeon to recognize that Knowles is the hottest entertainment commodity in the world right now.

Not bad for a homegirl from Houston who started working on her dream of being a star at age 8.

With strong management and nurturing by her father and mother, she's seeing her dreams realized before her eyes as she turns 22 Sept. 4.

The first single off Beyoncé's album, "Crazy In Love," (featuring rapper Jay-Z, whom she's reportedly dating), just slipped to No. 2 on Billboard's Hot 100 and Top 40 charts, after enjoying the No. 1 spot for several weeks.

Her video of the same name is just as hot, verified by her receiving the Best R&B Video of the Year and Best Choreography in a Video awards at the recent MTV Video Awards.

But the singer, songwriter, dancer and actress is not done yet. The next explosive phase of her career is set to begin Sept. 19, with the release of the highly anticipated gospel film, "The Fighting Temptations," where she co-stars with Oscar-winning actor Cuba Gooding Jr., along with a host of marquee gospel and rhythm and blues artists. At the media conference for the film, Beyoncé' spoke with the Dallas Weekly about making the movie, along with other aspects of her career and life, such as trying to stay grounded.

DW: Your album is doing great. It's been an amazing summer for you, hasn't it?

Beyoncé': I don't know what to say. I just dropped the album's second single. It's very, very, surreal and more than what I expected. With this album, I didn't concentrate on just selling records; I didn't even think about [anything] but my love for music, what I wanted to sing about and the type of music I like. Some songs don't even have a chorus. It's very artistic, and I grew as a songwriter. I was able to do all the jazz, the minor choruses, all the harmonies and the other different things in my head. I'm very happy..

DW: How did you find

out that the single went No. 1 in the country?

Beyoncé': I was actually in Europe and it was No. 1 there. I was like, 'This is a joke, this is crazy.' Because I didn't expect it. I was scared to put out the single because it had this live component to it. I didn't know it would get that kind of response, but it did.

DW: Did the other members of Destiny's Child call and congratulate you?

Beyoncé': Absolutely. Whenever anything we do comes out, we have that support. Kelly [Rowland] has the No. 1 movie (starring in "Freddy vs. Jason"). I'm just so happy for her and that we're able to have success individually.

DW: Will Destiny's Child come back together? Do you have a feel as to when?

Beyoncé': Absolutely. We will, after probably my third single and Kelly finishes her movie (not sure of the film's name), and when Michelle [Williams] finishes her album. She's almost finished with it now and it sound great. So it probably will be in the middle of next year.

DW: Do you see people trying that gyrating move in your video and are they doing it wrong? What is your advice for them?

Beyoncé': I am shocked that so many people are doing it. I did "The View" (ABC-TV talk show) and a lot of mothers and people from the very conservative to young kids, were doing the dance. I said, "This is crazy," but it's nice though.

DW: Whatever attracted you to do the "Fighting Temptations?" Was it the power of the message, the music or both?

Beyoncé': I told my agent I wanted to do something that wasn't glamorous, that was real. She basically got the script with my character in it. I read it and decided that I like this message, it was a feel-good movie. They told me that Cuba [Gooding, Jr.] was playing in it. I said okay, that's great. Terry Lewis was doing the music and when I heard some of the tracks, I said, 'This is great.' I'm a big fan of [director] Jonathan Lynn. It just worked out.

DW: Is acting more satisfying than music, or is there a difference?

Beyoncé': Whenever I work at anything, I'm satisfied. I love movies. I feel like probably when I have something really challenging and have to really work for it, then that will probably be the most satisfying thing. This movie, I'm satisfied with the

music and the theme, but I don't feel it's my movie, it's everybody's.

DW: Were you worried or concerned about your audience accepting you as a regular person, a single mom, considering that you have that glamorous image? How hard was it for you to relate to a single mom?

Beyoncé': It was very easy. I grew up in my mom's hair salon, so I was around all kind of women, all strong women. I think that's where those songs came from because I was too young to know what an independent

woman was. It's important for people to know who I am, which is different from who I am on stage. It's more important for me to be taken seriously. I know I have a long way to go because I'm very young and just starting. But I didn't want to do the traditional, safe, Beyoncé-being-glammed-up role.

DW: Now as an international phenomenon, there must be much more responsibility from you to continue to be a role model. Do you have to think more about how you look, what your figure is like?

Beyoncé': I now that when

you're in the public eye, younger girls usually admire and look up to you. I respect and understand that. But I can't be responsible for anyone but myself. I try to give the message for people to accept the imperfections, love their bodies and basically not to concentrate so much on that, but on your character and the person you are. Then the beauty will shine through.

Basically, that's all I can do. That's why I wrote "Bootylicious," which is actually in the dictionary now. Wow! And that's why I felt it was important to do movies

like this, where I can be shown not looking so thin and so beautiful.

DW: From when you started out at a young age, has the payoff been worth it or has it been tough? Has it balanced out?

Beyoncé': It's getting tougher, but it's still worth it. I'm in a very happy place. Even though it's getting harder and I'm getting a little scared.

But I can deal with it. I have people around me who not there just for their jobs, but who care about me, they can tell me to calm down.

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