

## Entertainment Briefs

### METHOD MAN WANTS MORE 'GHETTO' IN NEW SHOW

LOS ANGELES (AP) - Method Man says he's unhappy with Fox for squeezing the "ghetto" out of his new sitcom. "This is frustrating for me, and it's not turning out for me as expected," said the rapper-actor, who is co-star and executive producer of the network's comedy series "Method & Red." "I'm trying to keep this show ghetto, and there's a way for it to be both ghetto and intelligent," he said. "But it's not going that way." In the show, Method Man and fellow rapper Redman play two hugely successful hip-hop stars who move into an affluent, predominantly White gated community in the suburbs. The comedy drew more than 8 million viewers in its debut Wednesday, but that didn't minimize Method Man's dissatisfaction. He told the Los Angeles Times the series has veered from his original vision because some executives or writers tried too hard to appeal to "middle America" with "lame jokes." He didn't know the series would have a laugh track, he said, adding, "This show doesn't need it." Fox executives declined comment to the Times.

### SPIKE LEE RECEIVES KEY TO DALLAS

DALLAS (AP) - Filmmaker Spike Lee received a lifetime achievement award and a key to the city at the Fourth Annual Lyrical Underground, an event celebrating Black Music Month. "He is an inspiration and an innovative filmmaker who is not afraid to think out of the box," city councilman Leo V. Chaney said. The Privilege Lifetime Achievement Award recognizes "individuals who have provided hope, inspiration, joy and motivation to people around the world," said Noel Hankin, a spokesman for Schieffelin & Somerset, which sponsored the award presented Friday. Past recipients include Earvin "Magic" Johnson and the Rev. Al Sharpton. "Spike Lee is the most remarkable African-American filmmaker in the last 18 years," Hankin said. "Through his movies, he has challenged his audiences to think as well as question the status quo." Friday's reception featured clips from his upcoming movie "She Hate Me," about a biotech executive who turns whistleblower. It is scheduled for release July 30.

### MONTEL WILLIAMS BACKS MEDICAL MARIJUANA

NEW YORK (AP) - The Manhattan District Attorney joined television talk show host Montel Williams on Tuesday to support the legalization of marijuana for medical use. "It should be available to those whose suffering would be eased by the use of marijuana," said Robert Morgenthau. "There is absolutely no reason for not using marijuana for medical purposes. It's another weapon in the arsenal." Morgenthau said he supports a marijuana legalization bill in the state Legislature. He said he came to support medicinal marijuana after doing research and talking to his daughter, a physician who specializes in treating drug abusers. Williams, diagnosed with multiple sclerosis in 1999, choked back tears as he said he uses marijuana on his doctor's recommendation to relieve pain in his legs and feet caused by the neurological disease. "There are days I don't feel like getting out of bed," he said. Williams said he had tried other prescription painkillers but they did not control his tremors and spasms and caused side effects. The Emmy award-winning talk show host said marijuana does not incapacitate him and he is almost immune to its euphoric effects.

### HOUSTON TO SING IN CHINA FOR FIRST TIME

SHANGHAI, China (AP) - Whitney Houston will make her debut concert appearance in China with a July 22 show in Shanghai. "Whitney has said that China is her favorite country, so it will definitely be an emotional show," chief sponsors Shanghai Wenguang News and Media Group said in a news release. Houston, 40, is widely known in Asia for her rendition of "I Will Always Love You," from the movie "The Bodyguard." The Grammy winner entered a drug rehabilitation center in March and received a lifetime achievement award at the Women's World Awards earlier this month in Germany. Backed by China's highest family incomes, Shanghai has recently hosted shows by acts ranging from Mariah Carey to Deep Purple to Italian tenor Andrea Bocelli. The Backstreet Boys and Britney Spears are also planning upcoming China shows.

## ENTERTAINMENT

# Jackson blasts settlement terms leak

LOS ANGELES (AP) - Michael Jackson issued a statement late last week criticizing whoever was responsible for leaking documents that disclosed the settlement terms in a 1993 civil case accusing him of child molestation.

The records, obtained by Court TV on Tuesday, said Jackson had agreed to pay \$15.3 million to a boy who claimed the singer molested him.

Jackson, who faces trial in Santa Maria for allegedly molesting another boy in 2003, said he would never harm a child and said he had reluctantly agreed to the settlement because of the case's obvious potential to harm his

career.

"I respect the obligation of confidentiality imposed on all of the parties to the 1993 proceedings. Yet, someone has chosen to violate the confidentiality of those proceedings," Jackson said.

"Whoever is now leaking this material is showing as much disrespect for the Santa Maria court's gag order as they are a determination to attack me."

He urged the public to see the leaks "for what they are."

"These kinds of attacks and leaks seek to try the case in the press, rather than to a jury who will hear all of the evidence that will show that I did not, and would not, ever, harm a child," Jackson said.

"I have always maintained my innocence, and vehemently denied that these events ever took place."

The civil settlement in the 1993 case has been widely reported, but last Tuesday was the first time documents were available showing the specific figure.

The boy, his family and Jackson agreed to keep the settlement confidential, ac-

ording to the document.

In the current case, Jackson, 45, has pleaded not guilty to committing a lewd act upon a child, administering an intoxicating agent, alcohol, and conspiracy to commit child abduction, false imprisonment and extortion.

The next court date in the case is June 25. Jackson is not expected to attend the hearing.

## Judge blocks Lil' Kim from show in St. Kitts

NEW YORK (AP) - A federal judge Friday blocked rapper Lil' Kim from performing at a music festival on the Caribbean island of St. Kitts later this month.

The performer, whose real name is Kimberly Jones, is barred from leaving the United States as part of a bail agreement in a shooting case.

Judge Gerard Lynch scolded Jones - known for her revealing outfits and risqué lyrics - for having agreed in May to perform at the St. Kitts Music Festival. She had surrendered her passport in April after she was charged with lying to a grand jury about a 2001 shootout between rival rap groups at a New York hip-hop radio station.

Lawyer Mel Sachs argued Jones was not a flight risk: "Your Honor, this is a well-known performer," he said.

"Tell that to Roman Polanski," the judge replied, referring to the Oscar-winning director who fled the United States after he was charged in 1977 with having sex with a 13-year-old girl.

"Just because you're a celebrity doesn't mean you don't jump bail and leave the country."

The rapper wore a tan pantsuit to the hearing; her hair was streaked in red-orange hues. She sat with her hands folded in her lap and did not speak.

Lil' Kim, who won a Grammy Award for her part in the hit remake of "Lady Marmalade" in 2001, was to perform at the music festival

Saturday along with Ginuwine and Busta Rhymes. Sachs told reporters she would have been paid \$35,000, and now will have to pay an undetermined penalty calculated by concert organizations.

## Woman, almost 90, sues Robin Givens

MIAMI (AP) - An 89-year-old woman whom Robin Givens struck with her sport utility vehicle has filed a civil lawsuit against the actress.

The auto negligence lawsuit filed on behalf of Maria Antonia Alcover does not seek a specific money amount.

Alcover, a Cuban immigrant who came to the United States in 1963, is in a nursing home recovering from the accident that occurred five months ago in the crosswalk of a busy city street at rush hour.

Her lawyer, Steve Jugo, said it's unclear whether she'll walk again.

"She is doing better and she didn't lose her leg, but she says her life has been ruined," Alcover's nephew, Tony Garcia, told the Miami Herald.

Witnesses said Alcover had been inching across the road, and wasn't quite on the sidewalk when the traffic

(See Givens, Page 9)

# Summer Soul Festival

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