

Entertainment Briefs

MAN WHO PUNCHED DR. DRE GETS YEAR IN JAIL

LOS ANGELES (AP) - A man was sentenced Wednesday to a year in jail after he pleaded guilty to punching rap mogul Dr. Dre at the Vibe Awards last year. The judge also sentenced Jimmy James Johnson, 27, to three years probation and ordered him to stay away from Dre for three years, said Deputy District Attorney Hamid Towfigh. Johnson punched Dre after asking for his autograph during a taping of the show on Nov. 15, setting off a chair-throwing brawl that spread through the crowd. Johnson was allegedly stabbed by rapper Young Buck after punching Dre. Buck, whose given name is David Darnell Brown, has pleaded not guilty and is free on bail awaiting trial. Dre, a veteran producer and rap star whose given name is Andre Young, was about to receive a lifetime achievement award when he was assaulted.

MURDER CHARGE REINSTATED AGAINST CASSIDY

PHILADELPHIA (AP) - A judge reinstated a first-degree murder charge against rapper Cassidy in connection with an April ambush shooting that left one person dead and two wounded. The ruling Monday meant Cassidy, 23, whose real name is Barry Reese, was no longer eligible for bail. Cassidy's lawyer, Fortunato Perri Jr., who has said his client is innocent of the charges, sought a trial as soon as possible. "We are ready for trial right now," Perri told Common Pleas Judge Benjamin Lerner. Perri waived formal arraignment, and Lerner scheduled a hearing Sept. 20 to assign the case to a trial judge. Lerner overturned an Aug. 16 ruling by Municipal Judge Marsha Neifield that prosecutors had only enough evidence to try Cassidy on third-degree murder and attempted murder charges and weapons offenses. Prosecutors alleged that Cassidy was one of several men who fired at least 30 times, using four different guns including assault rifles, at a van on a side street behind the rapper's home on April 15. Desmond Hawkins, 22, was killed and his companions, Bobby Hoyle and Daniel Irvin, were wounded. Cassidy had been held without bail since he turned himself in to authorities on June 17.

DIZZIE GILLESPIE AUCTION DRAWS BIG CROWDS

MORRIS PLAINS, N.J. (AP) - Dizzie Gillespie can still draw a paying crowd. An auction of items from the late jazz legend's Englewood home drew musicians, former colleagues and website viewers from as far away as Switzerland. Among items that were auctioned Wednesday was a gold-plated piccolo trumpet that fetched \$1,200 and a dog license for the musician's pet poodle, Maestro, which sold for \$90. Nearly 1,000 lots were up for bid. The auction was held to settle the Gillespie estate among the jazz player's 48 heirs. Gillespie died in 1993; his wife, Lorraine, died in 2004. The event received live coverage on eBay. Other items sold included a signed photo with a love message to Gillespie's wife, which sold for \$12,000; letters from every U.S. president from John F. Kennedy to Bill Clinton; and a few campaign buttons from Gillespie's half-serious run for president in 1964, during which he drew attention to the Civil Rights Movement.

THE GAME TO AUCTION BENTLEY FOR CHARITY

NEW YORK (AP) - The Game will let a charity pimp his ride for the victims of Hurricane Katrina. The rapper has donated his 2005 customized Bentley Continental GT to Morgan Freeman's Charity Folks online auction to benefit the American Red Cross Disaster Relief Fund. The Game received the car, valued at over \$225,000, as a bonus from 310 Motoring, a high-end car customization company, for a sneaker deal. The shoe, scheduled to be in stores in December, is ironically named "Hurricane." A portion of the proceeds of the sale of each shoe will go toward hurricane relief, 310 Motoring announced Thursday. The Game's Bentley will be up for auction until Wednesday. A protégé of rapper 50 Cent, The Game, last month, won the World Music award for best-selling new male artist. Other celebrities who have contributed to Freeman's auction include Susan Sarandon, John Larroquette, George Clooney, Dakota Fanning, Greg Norman and B.B. King.

Emotions high at Katrina jazz event

NEW YORK (AP) - With the exception of the now-famous Kanye West outburst, celebrity-driven benefits for Hurricane Katrina victims have followed a familiar formula — musicians singing heart-tugging ballads while famous faces implore viewers to give, all in a sanitized, apolitical tone.

Those elements were present at Jazz at Lincoln Center's "Higher Ground" hurricane relief benefit concert Saturday night. But the five-hour concert was also stirring for the emotionally charged performances and speeches that assigned blame for the tragedy. "When the hurricane struck, it did not turn the region into a Third World country ... it revealed one," actor and activist Danny Glover said in a speech with Harry Belafonte in which both criticized the government, not only for the response to the hurricane but for the conditions prior to it.

"Katrina was not unforeseeable," Belafonte said. "It was the result of a political structure that subcontracts its responsibility to private contractors and abdicates its responsibility altogether."

Celebrities taking part included Bette Midler, James Taylor, Herbie Hancock, Toni Morrison, Robert De Niro, Cassandra Wilson, Meryl Streep, Shirley Caesar and the evening's host, Laurence Fishburne. A condensed version was broadcast on PBS.

Robin Williams poked fun at the administration during his standup routine, in which he imagined an ethnically named Hurricane and its attitude: "I'm going to go to Kennebunkport and see if

they respond any quicker!" (The Bush family compound is in Kennebunkport, Maine.)

Bill Cosby played it straight as he called on the American people to hold government accountable.

"This happened to the people. The constitution says of the people, by the people, for the people," he said. "But the people who got the office, got into office and forgot about the people."

Elvis Costello, who performed with jazz giant Allen Toussaint, said he heard conservatives were worried about Katrina's rebuilding cost: "I just hope we keep in our minds that an effort like this can never be too expensive."

Jazz singer Jon Hendricks best summed up the tone of the evening. After singing one tribute, he said, "That's the way I feel about New Orleans; This is the way I feel about the country right now."

Then he launched into the angry song "Tell Me The



Nobel Laureate Toni Morrison reads during Jazz at Lincoln Center's Higher Ground Hurricane Relief Benefit Concert, for Hurricane Katrina survivors, Saturday in New York City.

Truth," singing lines like "Nowadays, wrong is right, down is up, black is white, bad is good, truth is a lie..." before defiantly singing, "Somebody tell me what's right," to applause.

But some of the most poignant moments didn't need a political agenda.

Young jazz trumpet player Irvin Mayfield of New Orleans played the melancholy

tune "Just A Closer Walk with Thee," and dedicated it to the rebuilding of New Orleans and "to my father, who is still missing."

Other performances transplanted the audience to the city's vibrant musical scene: Diana Krall gave a sultry performance of "Basin Street Blues"; Paul Simon joined Buckwheat Zydeco for a zydeco jam fest; jazz singer and pianist Peter Cincotti played a tune called "Bring New Orleans Back."

The evening ended with Wynton Marsalis, event organizer (and Jazz at Lincoln Center's artistic director), leading members of the jazz orchestra through a Duke Ellington tune that played out like a traditional New Orleans jazz funeral.

It began somber and searing, as the horns wailed for the city. Then it transformed into a joyous celebration, complete with dancing, snaking through the auditorium and back on stage.

In the end, instead of a funeral, it represented a resurrection, which is what is hoped for New Orleans.



Wynton Marsalis plays trumpet during the benefit concert.

Jackson: All systems go for Katrina song

Special to Sentinel-Voice

In his first talk with a reporter since the end of his criminal trial, pop superstar Michael Jackson said Saturday he is "moving full speed ahead" on plans to record a song for the benefit of Hurricane Katrina victims and feels that his creative juices are flowing again.

In a telephone call to The Associated Press, Jackson said the trial was "the hardest thing I've ever done in my life" and that he and his children were still in Bahrain "resting and recovering" from the ordeal.

Jackson said he has been at work on the charity song, tentatively titled, "From the Bottom of My Heart."

"I'm constantly working on it," he said.

Michael Jackson's publicist says eight performers so far have agreed to join a song to benefit Hurricane Katrina victims.

Raymonte K. Bain said artists who will appear on Jackson's song include James Brown, Jay-Z, Mary J. Blige, Missy Elliott, Lenny Kravitz, R. Kelly, Snoop Dogg and Ciara.

But representatives for some of the artists said it was premature to say their clients were committed to the charity single, which hopes to duplicate the 1984 worldwide hit "We Are the World," which Jackson co-wrote to benefit African starvation

victims.

Representatives for Snoop Dogg said he would take part. But Jay-Z's publicist, Jana Fleishman, said the rapper had "been approached, but Jay told me directly he is not yet confirmed to be on that song." Several other publicists said their clients were in talks and had yet to confirm.

Bain, however, insisted during a telephone interview Wednesday that Jackson had personally contacted all the artists himself.

She said Jackson will record the tune on 2 Seas Records, the label owned by Sheik Abdulla bin Hamad Al Khalifa, son of the king of Bahrain. Jackson, who was

acquitted after a grueling child molestation trial four months ago, has been a guest of Sheik Abdulla for the past several weeks.

To confirm her account, Bain handed the phone to Sheik Abdulla, who said that he and Jackson had talked to each artist personally.

"He made every single call himself," the sheik said.

Following the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, Jackson tried unsuccessfully to put together a benefit song called "What More Can I Give."

For now, Bain said, the Katrina relief song is "a work in progress," with a time, date and place of recording yet to be scheduled.