

Entertainment Briefs

MISS AMERICA PAGEANT COMING TO LAS VEGAS IN 2006

LAS VEGAS — The "Miss America Pageant" has walked away from its perennial Atlantic City Boardwalk home of 84-years and is betting on success as it steps to the Las Vegas Strip for 2006. The Aladdin Hotel Casino will host the pageant, scheduled to air Jan. 21 on cable channel CMT organizers announced yesterday. This is the first time the traditional event has been held outside Atlantic City, N.J. "What we wanted to do is find a new host city that has all the glitz and glamour Miss America is known for," said Art McMaster, chief executive of the Miss America Organization. The nonprofit charitable group runs the annual event regarded as the nation's leading achievement program and the world's largest provider of scholarship assistance for young women. In what the organization feels is move toward developing a younger audience and a fresh start, it contracted with CMT, a Viacom company, to produce its upcoming shows for the next few years. Paul Villadolid, vice president of programming for Nashville, Tenn.-based CMT, said Las Vegas was chosen because it has a record of putting on first-class shows and for its energy. CMT plans a multi-million dollar campaign behind the "Miss America Pageant," and will promote across MTV Networks providing exposure for the pageant to VH1's youth audience.

50 CENT TO LAUNCH HIP-HOP BOOK LINE

NEW YORK (AP) - 50 Cent will again turn his reality into fiction with a new line of hip-hop novellas and graphic novels featuring his former G-Unit rap crew buddies, a publisher announced. Pocket/MTV Books promised the venture would showcase "gritty" stories and cover much of the same terrain as 50 Cent's raps. "These tales will tell the truth about The Life; the sex, guns and cash; the brutal highs and short lives of the players on the streets," the publisher said in a release over the weekend. The G-Unit Books line of street fiction will feature G-Unit members Lloyd Banks, Tony Yayo, Young Buck and Olivia as characters, the release said. Nikki Turner, author of "The Glamorous Life" and "A Hustler's Wife," will pen the line's first novella. It is set to be published in 2007. 50 Cent, whose real name is Curtis Jackson, was recently criticized by community groups in Philadelphia and Los Angeles for billboards promoting his semi-autobiographical movie, "Get Rich or Die Tryin'." The ads featured an image of him holding a gun in one hand and a microphone in the other.

ISAAC HAYES TO APPEAR ON 'THAT '70s SHOW'

NEW YORK (AP) - Isaac Hayes will go back to the '70s when he guest stars on "That '70s Show." Hayes will begin shooting next week on an episode that is scheduled for next spring, the Fox network announced Monday. "That '70s Show" airs Wednesdays (8 p.m. EST). Hayes will appear in an episode in which Fez, played by Wilmer Valderrama, tries to create a hipper persona for himself at the beauty salon where he works. While at the salon, Fez has a fantasy in which Hayes shows up and performs a hilarious musical number, the network said. Hayes, who had a memorable 1969-75 run at Stax Records, has a new two-CD collection, "Ultimate Isaac Hayes — Can You Dig It?" The album includes "Theme From Shaft" and "His Eye Is on the Sparrow." He is the voice of Chef on Comedy Central's "South Park."

MICHAEL JACKSON ENTERS LADIES ROOM IN DUBAI MALL

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates - Michael Jackson has stirred a small controversy in the United Arab Emirates by entering the ladies room in a shopping mall. The pop star's publicist said Jackson, who arrived in Dubai this week as the guest of a champion rally driver, did not understand the Arabic sign on the door and left the bathroom as soon as he realized his mistake. In the statement released late Tuesday, Jackson's publicist, Raymond K. Bain said: "Upon his exit (from the ladies bathroom), he was recognized and a crowd ensued. He had to wait in a nearby bookstore until police arrived to escort him through the crowd." But local newspapers reported that the 47-year-old performer did not quickly leave the bathroom and was spotted applying makeup before leaving.

Carey corrals four Vibe Awards

CULVER CITY, Calif. (AP) - Mariah Carey walked away with four honors at the Vibe Awards, a celebration of hip-hop and R&B that went smoothly after last year's ceremony was marred by a brawl and stabbing.

Carey won Artist of the Year, R&B Voice of the Year, Best R&B Song for "We Belong Together" and Album of the Year for her comeback hit, "The Emancipation of Mimi."

"Whatever you're going through in your life, don't ever give up," Carey said at the Saturday night event. The taped show was scheduled to air Tuesday on UPN.

The Diplomats were named Best Group.

With cognac and champagne flowing freely, rappers sporting diamonds and gold "grills" on their teeth mingled peacefully, although they had to pass through metal detectors to enter and police and security guards were plentiful.

Even hardcore rapper T.I., who won the Street Anthem award for "U Don't Know Me," acknowledged he didn't look very "hard" in a dapper velour suit and cravat. "But y'all just keep it pimping," he said onstage.

Last year, violence overshadowed the show when audience member Jimmy James Johnson approached rapper and producer Dr. Dre, seated at a table in front of the stage, and appeared to ask for an autograph before punching him. A chair-throwing melee



Mariah Carey accepts an award for best R&B song at the third annual Vibe Awards at Sony Studios in Culver City, Calif., Saturday. She took home four Vibe trophies in all.

ensued and Johnson was then allegedly stabbed by rapper Young Buck.

In September, Johnson was sentenced to a year in jail after he pleaded guilty to punching the rap mogul. Young Buck, whose given name is David Darnell Brown, has pleaded not guilty in the case and is free on bail awaiting trial.

Young Buck and Dr. Dre did not attend this year's ceremony.

Good vibes, however, did not prevent rapper The Game from creatively dissing 50 Cent, his former collaborator and current nemesis.

The night's first award, for Hottest Hook, went to

"Hate It or Love It," billed as being performed by The Game featuring 50 Cent, who did not attend the ceremonies.

The Game pointedly avoided mentioning the former G-Unit rap crew member onstage but showed off the word "G-Unot" shaved into the side of his head.

The subject of possible skirmishes prompted jokes throughout the show, which was hosted by Tracee Ellis Ross from the sitcom "Girlfriends" and Anthony Anderson from "Hustle & Flow."

"Three awards have been given out, and no one's been stabbed yet. Come on Black people!" said presenter Tony Rock, brother of comedian Chris Rock.

Music remained the focus.

Damian "Jr. Gong" Marley, Bob Marley's son, elicited cheers for a thunderous rendition of his reggae hit, "Welcome to Jamrock," which won the Boomshot Award honoring Caribbean music.

Flames and fireworks accompanied artists affected by the hurricanes, including New Orleans-based Lil' Wayne, Houston's Paul Wall and rapper David Banner from Jacksonville, Miss.

Banner performed his hit "Play" surrounded by scantily clad women lifting weights, wearing boxing gloves and bouncing on a trampoline.

Quincy Jones presented singer Mary J. Blige with the VLegend award, a special honor for her 15 years in music.

"Like a phoenix, I stayed strong and didn't kill myself," Blige said backstage, noting her struggle over the years with depression and substance abuse.

A small number of winners did not attend, including Kanye West, who won the Best Rapper award. R. Kelly was not on hand to pick up his Reelest Video award for "Trapped in the Closet."

Winners at the third annual Vibe awards:

Artist of the Year: Mariah Carey

Album of the Year: Mariah Carey

R&B Voice of the Year: Mariah Carey

Best R&B Song: "We Belong Together," Mariah Carey

Best Rapper: Kanye West
Next Award: Keyshia Cole

Coolest Collabo: "Oh," Ciara featuring Ludacris
Street Anthem: "U Don't Know Me," T.I.

Power Broker of the Year: Kevin Liles
Club Banger: "1 Thing," Amerie

Reelest Video: "Trapped in the Closet" (Chapters 1-5), R. Kelly

Hottest Hook: "Hate it or Love It," The Game featuring 50 Cent

Video Goddess: Esther Baxter in "Number One Spot" by Ludacris

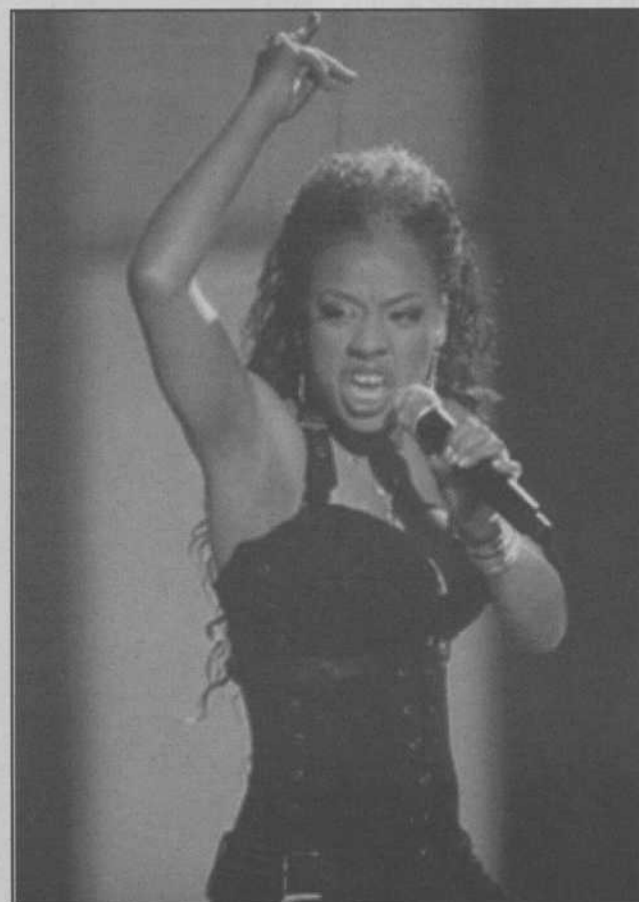
Boomshot Award: "Welcome to Jamrock," Damian "Jr. Gong" Marley

Best Group: The Diplomats

VStyle: Baby Phat

Vibe Vixen: Kimora Lee Simons

VLegend: Mary J. Blige



R&B singer Keyshia Cole performs at the third annual Vibe Awards on Saturday. The newcomer won the Next Award.