

Entertainment Briefs

2006 ESSENCE MUSIC FESTIVAL TO BE HELD IN HOUSTON

HOUSTON (AP) - The 2006 Essence Music Festival is moving to Houston as New Orleans continues to rebuild after Hurricane Katrina. The annual event, sponsored by *Essence* magazine, has been held in the Superdome in New Orleans since 1995. Officials said the move is temporary. The festival will be held July 1-3 at Reliant Park, event organizers announced this week. Several concerts, a marketplace and empowerment seminars will be featured. A portion of the event will be aimed at helping victims of Katrina. Tickets go on sale Dec. 1. Participating artists will be announced in the weeks ahead. Nearly 500 artists have performed at the Essence Music Festival, which brought millions of dollars into Louisiana's economy, since its inception.

TERRY McMILLAN MOVING ON SINCE DIVORCE

MIAMI (AP) - Terry McMillan says she's trying to get her groove back. "I'm not going to end up on the rocking chair by myself," said McMillan, who filed for divorce from Jonathan Plummer in January. McMillan has said that she decided to end her 6 1/2 years of marriage to Plummer, 30, after learning that he is gay. The revelation led her to conclude that Plummer, whom she met at a Jamaican resort a decade ago, married her only to get U.S. citizenship, McMillan has said. Plummer inspired her to write "How Stella Got Her Groove Back," the 1996 novel that chronicled the romantic adventures of a 40-something woman who falls for a guy half her age. Angela Bassett and Taye Diggs starred in the 1998 film based on the book. McMillan, 54, said that during a recent trip to New York, she dressed up and "felt beautiful and sexy." "I just got back from Los Angeles where a group of women had a belated party for me," she said. "Guess what? Life does go on. My life is already continuing..."

WEST TO GET ARTIST ACHIEVEMENT AWARD AT BILLBOARDS

NEW YORK (AP) - Kanye West will receive the Artist Achievement Award at the 2005 Billboard Music Awards, which will be presented Dec. 6 in Las Vegas. Past recipients of the award, which recognizes both artistic excellence and Billboard chart success, include Rod Stewart, Eric Clapton, Madonna, Garth Brooks, Aerosmith, Janet Jackson, Cher and Destiny's Child. The awards will air live from the MGM Grand Garden Arena on Fox (8 p.m. EST). "Kanye West has not only had a huge impact on R&B/hip hop, he has transformed modern music as a whole," Tamara Conniff, co-executive editor of *Billboard*, said in a statement Thursday. The Billboard Music Awards recognize the year's leading artists and songs as determined by performance on the magazine's weekly charts.

2 LIVE CREW MEMBER SUES ICE-T, JAY-Z

NEW YORK (AP) - A former member of 2 Live Crew has filed a lawsuit against Ice-T and Jay-Z, claiming he is entitled to royalties for a song made famous by Jay-Z as part of his top-selling "The Black Album." In a filing Monday in U.S. District Court, Marquis Ross claims he wrote lyrics and a beat similar to those featured in the chorus of "99 Problems," which was eventually copyrighted by Jay-Z. Ross alleges that Jay-Z's 2003 and 2004 recordings are based on a song by the same name that was released a decade earlier on Ice-T's "Home Invasion" album. The lawsuit alleges Ross was asked by Ice-T to appear on that track and had performed parts of it before their collaboration. Ice-T put his own name on the copyright, but didn't include Ross and refused to pay royalties to the 2 Live Crew rapper until 2005, when he made a "partial payment" of \$10,000, the lawsuit claims. A spokeswoman for Jay-Z didn't immediately return a call from The Associated Press Tuesday for comment. A spokesman for Ice-T also was unavailable for comment. Ross is requesting back royalties and punitive damages.

Oprah OK's appearance on 'Late Show'

NEW YORK (AP) - Oprah, Dave. Dave, Oprah. The cold war between television titans Oprah Winfrey and David Letterman has thawed to the point where Winfrey has accepted Letterman's invitation to appear on the "Late Show" on Dec. 1.

Letterman made the announcement during a taping of his show on Monday. Winfrey's appearance will coincide with opening night of the Broadway musical "The Color Purple," which she is producing.

"What a big night that is going to be — not only for us, not only for Oprah, but for Broadway," Letterman said.

Women

(Continued from Page 7) "Salt" James, Da Brat, Yo Yo, cultural critic Joan Morgan and Spelman Professor Tarshia Stanley came together to battle opinions of the exploitation of women in the music industry.

MC Lyte stated that as a female, "You have to stay true to yourself and speak up, don't wait around until it's too late." Salt agreed with MC Lyte, stating that you have to always "rep yourself and be proud. Owning your own image is important." Morgan explained that, "the world views African-American women as lazy and sexualized."

Since rap artists often get the blame for the exploitation of women in music videos, students asked MC Lyte her opinion about who was to blame for this exploitation. "The exploitation is disgusting. Everyone has a responsibility for it, not just the artist. The females, the director, there are women producing these videos," MC Lyte responded. "But no one is saying anything. Stand up!"

She insisted that young Black women must "act with class, dress with class. We have to be aware of our surroundings and the image the media constantly gives off about us."

Stanley said that youth today cannot "underestimate the power of talking, especially to each other. Social movements begin when a change has to happen."

After attending the panel discussions, Spelman freshman Heather Winfield, an English major, said, "I am willing to make that change. I think that old hip-hop should be publicized for our generation. Youth have to un-

derstand that rap can be about positive things, not just guns, cars and females."

What advice did the panelists have for rising artists? "Surround yourself with people whom you can ask questions. Be original, con-

scious, and come from the heart," said MC Lyte. "Don't just be another rapper sayin' a whole bunch of nothing." They all agreed that, most importantly, the students must give their all, not just enough to get by or get over.

"Oprah, Uma, Uma, Oprah" introduction.

Winfrey told *Time* magazine in 2003 that she wouldn't go on Letterman's show because she's been "completely uncomfortable" as the target of his jokes.

"This just gives you an idea of what a big, big star this really is," Letterman said on Monday. "She's huge. Put bygones behind us, the water under the bridge, over the dam, wherever water goes — standing in your basement — she's going to be here on this show, and it's going to be fantastic."

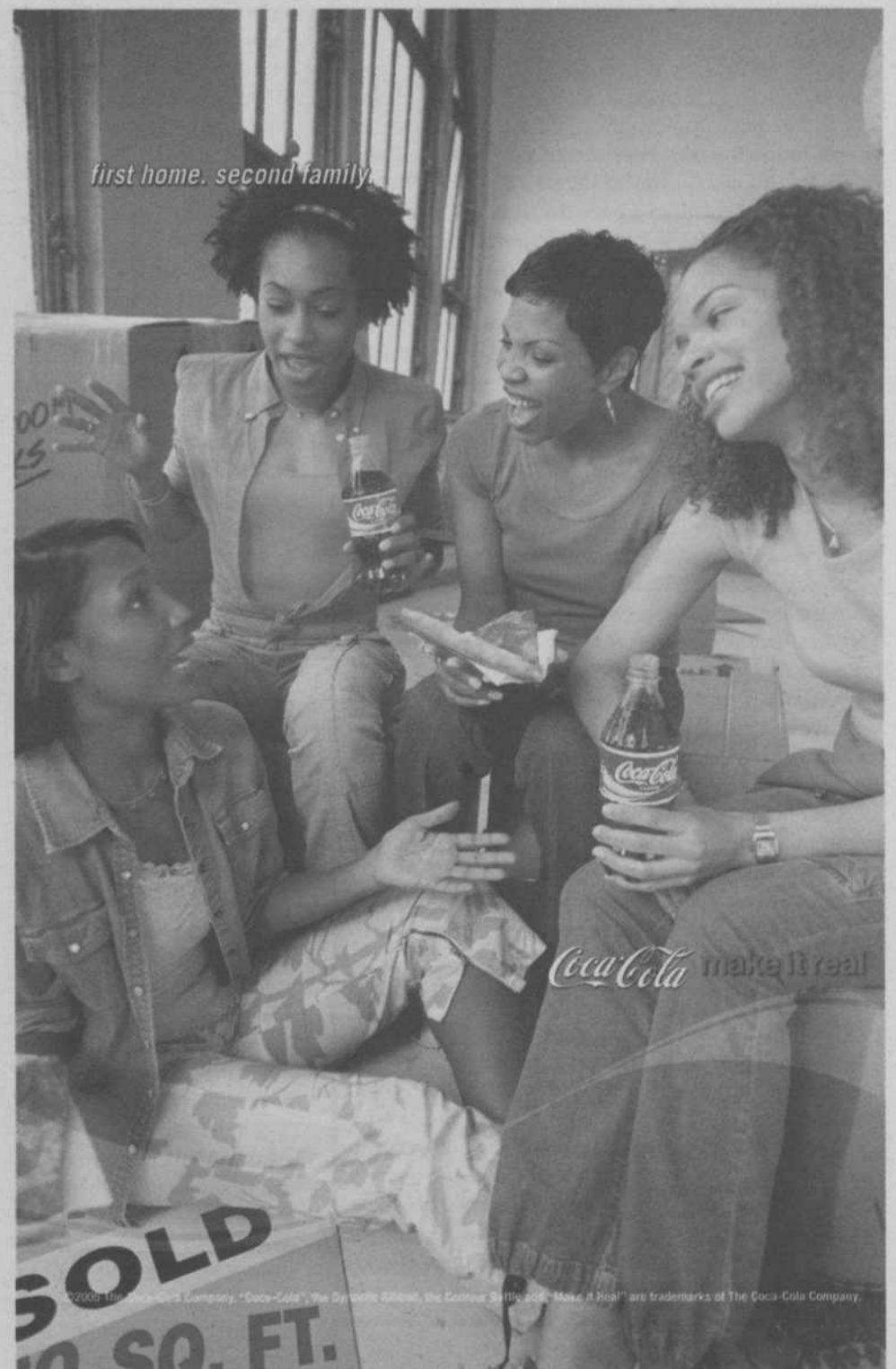
Back in 2003, Letterman joked about wanting Winfrey on his show to hold "the Su-

per Bowl of love." Winfrey — who had sent an olive branch gift of books for Letterman's newborn son — called his bluff and invited him on her show. He declined.

"Here's what would happen: I would go on the 'Oprah' show, and I would break down and sob like a little girl... I don't want to have that happen," he said at the time. "I'd feel ridiculous. I'd never be able to live that down, that Oprah would make me sob."

Former Winfrey protégé Dr. Phil has been a frequent Letterman guest, offering his own form of "tough love" in a needling relationship.

Oprah's appearance is a big boost for Letterman, who has been struggling in the ratings this season and falling further behind his nemesis, NBC's Jay Leno. The timing isn't quite ideal, however: Winfrey will visit the day after the November ratings sweeps period ends.



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