

## Entertainment Briefs

### OFFICIAL WANTS TO OFFER B.I.G. REWARD

LOS ANGELES (AP) - A city councilman wants to offer a \$50,000 public reward for leads in the unsolved murder of rapper Notorious B.I.G. Councilman Dennis Zine proposed Friday to offer the reward for 60 days. "I am hopeful someone will come forward with information which will lead to the eventual apprehension of the murderers involved in this case," Zine said in a statement. Zine's motion was under review by a council committee. A 1997 measure offering a \$25,000 reward expired after several months. The 24-year-old rapper, born Christopher Wallace, was shot and killed March 9, 1997, after a party at the Petersen Automotive Museum in Los Angeles. A new team of police detectives was recently assigned to the case.

### RUSSELL SIMMONS, ESTRANGED WIFE PLAN FUNDRAISER

MIAMI BEACH, Fla. (AP) - Russell Simmons and his wife, Kimora Lee, have announced their separation — but the couple plan to host a fundraiser Saturday at Donald Trump's estate in Palm Beach. The dinner and auction at Mar-a-Lago will benefit Art for Life, which Simmons and his brothers founded. The hip-hop mogul has called on celebrity friends to attend the \$1,000-a-person event. "This will be the best party Mar-a-Lago has ever seen," Simmons said Wednesday while sitting poolside at the Delano hotel. "I have to tell Kimora to bring one of my suits." Jamie Foxx, Antonio "L.A." Reid and Denise Rich will be honored for their philanthropic efforts to promote art among the youth. Others expected to attend include Trump and his wife, Melania; Venus and Serena Williams; and Kelly Rowland. Up for bid will be items such as a trip to the Bahamas for 20 on a chartered jet, couture gowns and top-of-the-line beauty products. "Last year my wife got a Rolls-Royce," Simmons said. The pair will meet with about 200 students from the Boys & Girls Club on Sunday. They will take part in a question-and-answer session and discuss how art can influence lives. "Art is a way to express yourself and through that you can escape a bad situation," Simmons said. The pair announced last week that they were splitting after seven years of marriage. They have two young daughters. In a statement issued by the couple, they said they had been separated for "some time," even though they were still living together.

### SNOOP DOGG, THA DOGG POUND TO RELEASE ALBUM

NEW YORK (AP) - Snoop Dogg is back in Tha Dogg Pound. The 34-year-old rapper has reunited with Daz Dillinger and Kurupt, aka Young Gotti, to record a new album, "Cali Iz Active," set for release June 27 on his label, Doggy Style Records, in conjunction with Koch Records, it was announced Tuesday. "I'm letting everybody know that the West Coast is definitely making a strong comeback," Snoop Dogg was quoted as saying on the website www.allhiphop.com. "It's a beautiful thing for me to be able to work with them, and when we drop this album it's gonna shake the whole game up." Also featured on the album: B-Real, David Banner, Soopafly and RBX. Tha Dogg Pound's relationship became rocky when Kurupt left the group in 2002 to join Marion "Suge" Knight at Death Row Records, later renamed Tha Row.

### SPOKESWOMAN: BOW WOW, CIARA SPLIT

NEW YORK (AP) - Bow Wow and Ciara have split, a spokeswoman for Ciara has confirmed. The young celebrity couple had dated for nearly a year. "I cannot comment on the reason, but can confirm that Ciara and Bow Wow have split," said Tracy Nguyen in a statement Monday. The spokeswoman also took the unusual step of stating that the breakup wasn't amicable. A message left with Bow Wow's publicist wasn't immediately returned. Bow Wow, whose real name is Shad Moss, was christened Lil' Bow Wow by Snoop Dogg. He dropped the "Lil" in 2003, the second single off his fourth album, "Wanted." Ciara, 20, was dubbed "the First Lady of Crunk & B" by Lil' Jon, who produced her debut single, "Goodies," from her 2004 album of the same name.

# Franklin spunky showman

By Tasha Pope  
Sentinel-Voice

Proving gospel music has few limitations, three-time Grammy winning, Fo Yo Soul Entertainment/Zomba label's recording artist Kirk Franklin rocked the Aladdin Theater with his "Hero Tour," March 30.

People dancing in the aisles, bass rattling the walls and fans on the stage shaking their tail feathers was the scene during the concert.

The show appeared to be sold out with people of every race, age and culture filling the seats.

The opening act was Cross Movement's rap artist Da T.R.U.T.H., who Kirk Franklin has called "a modern day prophet for the corner."

His expressive flows,



KIRK FRANKLIN

which were laid over Kanye West-style beats, incorporated Bible scriptures and

expressed his love for Christ.

After performing "Let Him Turn you Around," from his latest album, "The Faith," the baggy jeans clad rapper finished his set with a three minute free-style that proved his rap skills were authentic.

With excitement in the air, gospel fans slipped toward the edge of their seats in anticipation of featured performers Mary Mary and Kirk Franklin.

As steps on the stage rose, Franklin and Grammy-award winning duo Mary Mary made their grand entrance belting praise which brought the audience to their feet.

After one song collaboration with Franklin, Mary Mary claimed the stage.

Erica and Tina Campbell, the two members of Mary Mary, explained the meaning

behind their group name.

They said the name derived from biblical figures Mary Magdalene and Mary, the mother of Christ.

"They came from two different worlds but they ended up doing the same thing," said Mary Mary.

So they decided to tag themselves Mary Mary because they feel these women are a reflection of who they are and what they've become.

The Columbia recording artists, who have had platinum success since their 2000 debut, performed a few slow ballads that relaxed the crowd.

They then teased the fans about timid participation and challenged the audience to "break the shackles" off our (See Kirk, Page 9)

## Knight sets new 'table' for label

LOS ANGELES (AP) - Death Row Records chief Marion "Suge" Knight describes the bankruptcy protection filings he and his company made this week as "setting a new table."

The rap-music mogul commented on the move in a statement made after the federal bankruptcy court filings last week halted a state court action in which former couple Lydia and Michael Harris, who claim they helped found Death Row, are trying to collect a \$107 million judgment from Knight.

"For the last few years there's been a stigma attached to Death Row," Knight said in a statement issued through spokesman Jonathan Wolfson. "People like the Harrises have been coming out of the woodwork and it's been like a dark cloud hanging over me. I've decided that I'm serving Death Row its last meal. I'm setting a new table."

Knight did not elaborate. Despite the reference to a "last meal," Wolfson said Knight has no intent to close the company.

The statement reiterated Knight's contention that the Harrises' claims of helping found Death Row are false.

It also said his attorneys plan to bring a motion claiming violation of bankruptcy law by the Harrises and their attorneys, who on Tuesday unsuccessfully tried to persuade Superior Court Judge Ronald Sohigian to cite Knight for criminal contempt for not appearing at debtor

hearings.

Rex Beaber, the attorney for Michael Harris, said he received a letter from Knight's attorneys demanding that he and Lydia Harris' attorney pay \$4,500 in law-

yer fees by the start of this week or the motion would be filed.

Beaber said that generally the mere filing of a federal bankruptcy petition automatically stays all state court

proceedings against a debtor and a violator can be sanctioned. But he said there is an exception for criminal prosecutions, and the judge found that the contempt claim was (See Knight, Page 9)



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