

ARTS & LIFESTYLE

Of Interest ...

Film "Crash" will be series

NEW YORK (AP) - The Oscar-winning "Crash" is coming to TV as a drama series this year.

The 13-episode, one-hour series will air on cable's Starz as its first original drama series, the network announced recently.

Key members of the feature's production team will be back for the series, including its director, co-writer and producer, Paul Haggis; co-writer and producer Bobby Moresco; producer Bob Yari; producer Don Cheadle; producer Mark R. Harris and executive producer Tom Nunan.

In addition to best picture, the 2004 film also won Oscars for best original screenplay and for editing. An examination of the complexities of racial tolerance set in Los Angeles, it starred Cheadle, Sandra Bullock, Matt Dillon, Jennifer Esposito, Brendan Fraser, Terrence Howard, Chris "Ludacris" Bridges, Thandie Newton and Ryan Phillippe.

No casting decisions have been announced for the series, which is scheduled to begin production this spring.

Primarily a movie channel, Starz last week premiered its first two original half-hour comedy series, "Head Case" and "Hollywood Residential."

With 30 million subscribers, Starz is one of 16 premium channels owned by Starz Entertainment, LLC.

Chris Botti to perform

Called the sexiest trumpet player this side of Chet Baker, Grammy Award winner Chris Botti will soon come blow his horn for audiences at the historic Carolina Theatre in downtown Greensboro.

The performance, part of The University of North Carolina at Greensboro's University Concert & Lecture Series, begins at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, Feb. 13.

Botti's lush melodies and thoughtful improvisations have captured audiences worldwide. He has recorded with distinguished musicians such as Sting, Paul Simon and Joni Mitchell.

Tickets are \$30.50, \$25.50 and \$20.50. Seniors, children under 12 and students will receive a \$2 discount. All tickets are subject to a \$1.50 Carolina Theatre restoration fee.

For ticket information, call (336) 334-4849. Tickets are also available through the University Box Office web site at www.uncg.edu/euc/boxoffice and through the Carolina Theatre box office by calling (336) 333-2605.

Jazz event coming to Reynolda House Feb. 8

Reynolda House Museum of American Art will present a jazz concert on Friday, Feb. 8 at 8 p.m., featuring bassist Matt Kendrick, pianist Keith Byrd, percussionist John Wilson and guitarist Charles Burns.

In a concert titled, "East to West," their performances are fueled by improvisations built around classics and original themes inspired by the works in the Museum's current exhibition, "Ancestry & Innovation: African American Art from the American Folk Art Museum."

Recently the Winston-Salem Arts Council funded a project envisioned by bassist Kendrick to bridge the divide through producing concerts and recordings by musicians who were raised on either side. According to Kendrick, "Jazz is a gift from God created by African Americans through the melding of African and European cultures. Jazz brings us together in an informed and intellectual setting."

Admission is \$12 for the general public and \$8 for members and students. For information and to purchase tickets, please call 336-758-5150 or visit reynoldahouse.org.

San Jose Taiko drummers coming to A&T Feb. 15

The San Jose Taiko drummers will perform at North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University 7 p.m. Friday, Feb. 15, in Harrison Auditorium. This event is free and open to the public. It is part of the university's Lyceum Program.

For three decades SJT has mesmerized audiences and critics with the powerful spell bounding and propulsive sounds of the taiko drums. The group was founded in 1973 by young Asian Americans searching for an artistic and musical outlet to convey their unique experiences as third generation Japanese Americans, or Sansei. They looked to Japan for inspiration and selected the symbolic taiko or drum as their instrument of expression.

SJT has taken the essence and voice of the traditional taiko and infused it with the vitality and freshness of their American spirit, creating a dynamic and compelling new Asian American art form. They use the power and beauty of taiko to transcend cultural barriers and foster a greater understanding of the Japanese American culture.

SJT has conducted tours throughout the United States and Japan. In addition to concerts and extensive residencies on college/university and performing arts centers, they have performed at Reno's Nugget Casino, on the Jerry Lewis Muscular Dystrophy Telethon and at Carnegie Hall.

City to welcome Guy Davis

CHRONICLE STAFF REPORT

Acclaimed bluesman Guy Davis will be performing in Winston-Salem next week. He will make several appearances Feb. 13-15 at events hosted by the Blessings Project Foundation.

The son of Ruby Dee and the late Ossie Davis, Guy Davis was raised in New York City but grew up hearing accounts of life in the rural south from his parents and grandparents. A self-taught guitarist, he learned his craft by listening to and watching other musicians.

"Early in my career, before agents and managers, I played for kids and will always do that," Davis, 55, told "My Black Hollywood" magazine in an interview last year. "I play for kids in hospitals, I go to the churches and the prisons." Davis can't think of anything he'd rather be doing. It's his passion.

"I guess I am going to play until I drop dead," he told the magazine. "I love doing this and the more I do, the more good visits me. I couldn't imagine not taking the blues into these places and beyond."

Throughout his career, he has dedicated himself to reviving the traditions of American blues through the influence of great blues masters such as Robert Johnson, Buddy Guy, Taj Mahal, John Adam Estes, Huddie Ledbetter, Nehemiah James and Lightnin' Hopkins.

His seventh album, *Legacy*, released in 2004, was chosen by National Public Radio as one of the best albums of the year. His latest album, "Skunkmello," was released in 2006.

In 1993, he performed Off-Broadway as legendary bluesman Robert Johnson in "Robert Johnson: Trick the Devil." He received rave reviews and won the Blues Foundation's W.C. Handy "Keeping the Blues Alive" Award.

Davis will perform at 8 p.m. at the Blessings Project Foundation headquarters, 823 Reynolda Rd., in collaboration with the Fiddle and Bow Society. Tickets are \$15.

He will also make appearances at local schools, introducing the deep traditions of American blues music and African-American folklore students. While performing at the schools, Davis will bring to life the music of great blues masters, African-American folklore stories and his own original songs and stories.

Blessings Project Foundation aims to foster individual enrichment and to empower a sense of respect and responsibility in the worldwide community.



Guy Davis



A&T Photo

Teams from across the region took part in the competition.

Carver High wins A&T competition

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

Carver High School's acclaimed JROTC program blew away the competition recently to take first place in the 29th Annual Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps (AFROTC) Blue and Gold Invitational Drill Competition that was recently held at North Carolina A&T State University.

Goldboro High School placed second, and T.C. Williams High School of Alexandria, Va. placed third.

The event was planned and organized by the cadets of AFROTC Detachment 605 and consisted of standard drill, exhibition drill, and color guard procedures. This annual event gave the cadets an opportunity to implement the processes and put into practice the planning and organizing theories they learned in their AFROTC classes.

The drill competition was very successful with more than 150 Junior ROTC students competing. A&T's Air Force and Army cadets judged the competition.

New Lawrence film to open tomorrow

Cast also includes James Earl Jones, Mo'Nique and Cedric the Entertainer

CHRONICLE STAFF REPORT

In "Welcome Home Roscoe Jenkins," funnyman Martin Lawrence leads an all-star cast in a film about a talk-show phenomenon (Lawrence) that has left behind his modest Southern upbringing and family name to transform himself into a self-help guru.

The film, which opens tomorrow, is written and directed by Malcolm D. Lee, whose directing credits also include "The Best Man" and "Roll Bounce."

In the film, Dr. RJ Stevens, who was born Roscoe Jenkins, returns home to Georgia for his parents' 50th wedding anniversary. Also in tow are his 10-year-old son and diva bride-to-be. It does not take long before his crazy, lovable family calls RJ on his big-city attitude and challenges him at every turn. RJ discovers that he may be a superstar in L.A., but he's just one of the guys in Dry Springs, Ga.

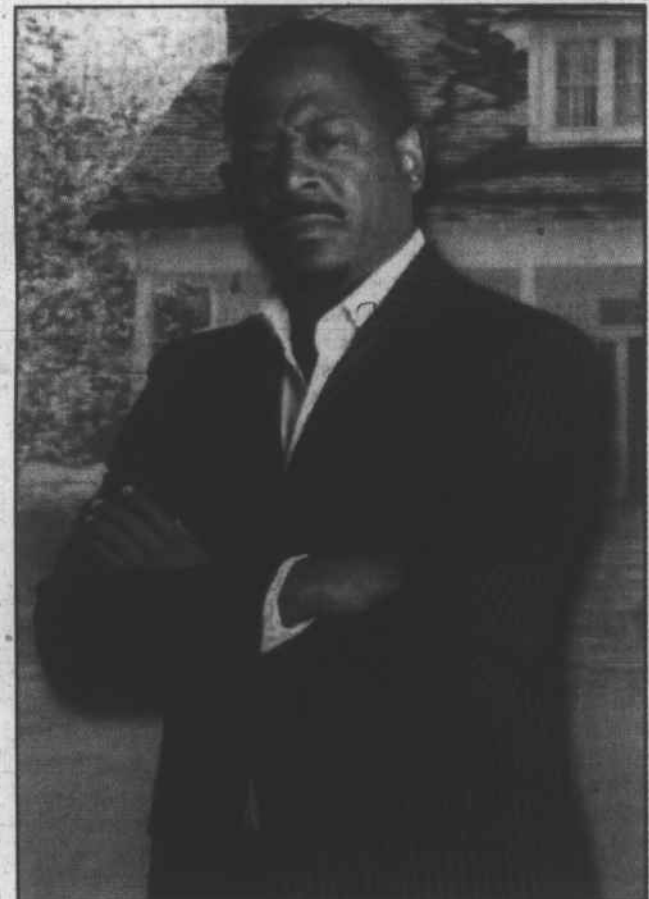
"[For RJ], it's about me. Do for yourself. You can't do for others unless you can do for yourself," Lawrence said of the character he plays.

The cast also includes a trio of hilarious comics - Mo'Nique, Cedric the Entertainer and Mike Epps. And a trio of three Oscar nominees - James Earl Jones, Michael Clarke Duncan and Margaret Avery. Beauties Joy Bryant and Nicole Ari Parker also star.

Writer/director Lee wanted to explore the idea that, as individuals, we cannot and should not function in the world by ourselves. But for many, he knew this might be a lesson learned the hard way.

Says Lee, "RJ thinks he found love in the outside world from the fans and from the press. In reality, the love came from his family, but in the form of tough love. He has to return home to make that realization."

Lawrence will next star in Walt Disney Pictures' College Road Trip, a comedy opening March 7 about an overprotective cop who takes his daughter on the search for her perfect school.



Universal Pictures Photo

Martin Lawrence stars as "Roscoe Jenkins."



Submitted Photo

Blues guitarist Ron Hunter took part in Wednesday's kick off.

Arts Council kicks off '08 campaign

CHRONICLE STAFF REPORT

"Where the Arts Come Alive" is the theme of the Arts Council of Winston-Salem and Forsyth County 2008 annual fundraising campaign.

The fund drive kicked off yesterday (Feb. 6) during a ceremony at the Sawtooth Building.

The Arts Council's goal for this year is \$ 2,750,000. The drive will strive to match the 2007 campaign, which exceeded its \$2.5 million goal. The Arts Council made \$1.6 in grants to artists and arts organizations - an increase of almost 33 percent - with funds raised in 2007.

The husband and wife team of Erna and Bill Womble, Jr., both attorneys at the Womble Carlyle Sandridge & Rice law firm, are the co-chairs of the 2008 fundraising campaign. The cabinet of the fund drive is comprised of Jerry and Marge Silber (community gifts); Bob Whaling (city and county government); Dr. William Applegate and Steve Snelgrove (health services); Chris Fox and Emily Boone (workplace); Hilary Kosloske and J. Smith (business); Ursula Henninger and Tonya Deem (professional); and Rudy Anderson and Murray Greason (education).

Several musicians, including bluesman Ron Hunter, performed at downtown restaurants and other venues while Wednesday's kick-off event was taking place. The public performances were designed to draw attention to the annual campaign.



Rudy Anderson