

NATIONAL BLACK THEATRE FESTIVAL

Celebs descend onto 'Black Theatre Holy Ground'



Winston-Salem native Jackée Harry discusses "Black Stars of the Great White Way." This is Harry's first time attending the National Black Theatre Festival.

Winston-Salem native Jackée Harry attends 2015 NBTF opening press conference

BY TEVIN STINSON
THE CHRONICLE

Members of the media and local residents filled the main lobby of the Marriot Hotel, 425 N. Cherry St. on Monday, Aug. 3, for the opening press conference for the National Black Theatre Festival.

The event, which was open to the public, gave residents a chance to meet some of the many celebrities who are in Winston-Salem for the purple and black spectacular. This year's celebrity co-chairs, Debbi Morgan and Darnell Williams, talked about how excited they are to be on "Black Theatre Holy Ground."

"It's so wonderful to come to the festival and see people that we haven't seen in ages," said Morgan. "It's a real special honor to be named co-chair this year. I know its going to be an incredible festival."

Williams and Morgan were co-stars in the hit soap opera "All My Children," which aired on ABC for over 40 years. In the series, Williams played a former police chief who was married to Morgan's character, who was a doctor.

"There's so much going on this week, I can't wait to kick everything off. I think this will be the best festival yet," Williams said.

Following the welcome, various directors and actors talked about their productions that will be staged this

week at various locations throughout the city. Mabel Robinson, Artistic Director of the North Carolina Black Repertory Company, took to the stage to discuss her production "The Glory of Gospel" that will open on Thursday night.

"I have two other productions in the festival this year, but my specialty is 'The Glory of Gospel.' I just love, love, love it," Robinson laughed.

According to Brian McLaughlin, public relations director for the festival, tickets for this year's productions are selling out faster than ever.

"A number of the plays have already sold out," said McLaughlin. "Some plays have been sold out for a number of days, so we are very excited about the productions in this year's festival."

The legendary Bill Cobbs also was on hand during the press conference. Cobbs is this year's Sidney Poitier Lifelong Achievement Award winner.

Other fan favorites present during the press conference were Richard Brooks, Obba Babalundé, Grace Jones and Winston-Salem native Jackée Harry.

Harry, who is most known for her roles in TV hit shows "Sister, Sister", and "227," discussed being back home in North Carolina and attending her first festival.

"This is my first festival, but I am very familiar with the area. I was born right here in Forsyth County at Katie B. Hospital," Harry said.

Harry will be starring in "Black Stars of the Great White Way," which was produced by Chapman Roberts.

For additional information and a schedule of events, purchase The Chronicle's NBTF booklet inserted into the July 30 edition of the newspaper (call 336-722-8624 for more information), go to www.nbt.org or call the Festival office at 336-723-2266 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Estate sale starts today at Maya Angelou's home

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

Laster's Fine Art & Antiques will host an estate sale at the personal home of Dr. Maya Angelou, 2716 Bartram Road, Winston-Salem. The sale will start today (Thursday, Aug. 6) and will run through Saturday, Aug. 8, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Thursday, Friday and Saturday.

This sale is open to the general public.

The sale will include items from the late poet's home such as artwork, books, furniture and other household items.

Every item for sale will have a price tag.

"There are many treasures to be found during this sale. We hope those of you able to attend are able to find items that will be cherished for years to come," said a

spokeswoman for Angelou's estate.

For more information, go to: *<http://www.lastersfineart.com/please-join-us-for-the-dr-maya-angelou-estate-tag-sale/>

*www.ebay.com/cfn/lastersfineart/Dr-Maya-Angelou-Art-Collection/206132342018

*<http://www.estatesales.net/NC/Winston-Salem/27106/952257>



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