

BEHIND THE SCENES

With LISA COLLINS



Man of the moment? Samuel Jackson's just got to be the man of the hour. Since his standout role in "Jungle Fever," Hollywood just can't seem to get enough of him. And that's even after he bombed in "Amos & An-

draw." Of course, his current role in "Jurassic Park"-- anticipated to be the summer's top grosser--should make up for that. At present, Jackson is on location filming "Attica," in which he stars as an idealistic prison inmate who sees his world caving in around him. Next on Jackson's docket is "Conduct Unbecoming" for Showtime. He'll portray Johnson C. Whitaker, the first black West Point cadet to be court-martialed.



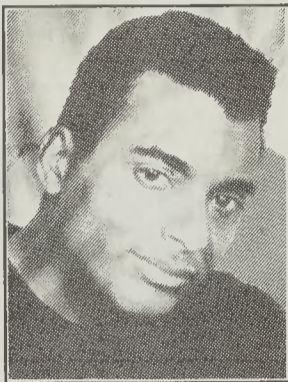
JACKSON

viewers with her cutey-pie antics as Olivia on "The Cosby Show." She's at it again with her debut recording, "That's What Little Girls Are Made Of." You'll be most surprised at how well she raps (of all things). However, the album runs the gamut of r&b, pop and dance...While on the subject of children, Diana Ross recently completed a children's book with an accompanying CD for release in January. In the meantime, Ross is also working on a boxed set to span her 30-year recording career at Motown. The four-CD set will include a book with rare photos of Ross and the Supremes...And congratulations to actor Al Freeman Jr. (who most recently portrayed Elijah Muhammad in "X") on his promotion to full professor at Howard University, where he serves as chairman of the Department of Theater Arts.

On your mark: The fifth annual Billboard Song Contest is now officially underway. Awards will be handed out to best original song writers sev-

er. Other judges include Andrae Crouch, Glen Campbell and Jose Feliciano. The cut-off date for entries is Aug. 31. For entry forms and/or additional information, contact the Billboard Song Contest, P.O. Box 35346, Tulsa, Okla. 74153-0346; or call (918) 627-0351. Taking Flight: Looks like NBC's Emmy award-winning and highly acclaimed series "I'll Fly Away" will wing it over to PBS. Executives are reportedly close to a deal that would call for a two-hour "I'll Fly Away" movie that would tie up all the loose ends. As part of the deal, PBS would also get the 39 episodes of the show that marked its ill-fated run on NBC. If all goes as planned, the movie would hit the airwaves early this fall...By the way: Carl Weath-

play a law enforcer who relocates to Sparta from Memphis. For the time being, Howard Rollins--currently serving a jail sentence is on leave from the show...Radioscope kicks off its "Peace In The Streets" summer promotion (to coincide with Black Music Month). Among the artists featured in the campaign promoting peace are Terrence Trent D'Arby and Kirk Whalum...And Playgirl recently unveiled its list of the ten sexiest men in rock n' roll. Making the list this year were Lenny Kravitz and Jon Secada...Next week: Find out what the former New Edition lead vocalist Ralph Tresvant is up to.



SECADA

ers joins the cast of "Heat Of The Night" next fall. He'll



SYMONE

Trading Places: It's confirmed now that Forest Whitaker will step back behind the camera to direct "Number Four." The film, described as "Die Hard on a bus," is being produced by George Jackson and Doug McHenry ("New Jack City"). Word is that the studio is hot on the project and hopes to put some steam behind getting it made and out into the marketplace...And it's full-steam ahead for top model-turned-actress Iman, who was recently feted for her work in Somalia at the TransAfrica dinner in Washington, D.C. She'll play the love interest of John Malkovich in TNT's upcoming "Heart of Darkness."

en categories: rock, country, Latin, r&b/rap, pop, jazz, and gospel. Each of the seven winners will receive \$1,000 cash, a Gibson guitar, and a contract with BMG Music Publishing. A grand prize of \$5000 cash plus additional prizes will be awarded the writer of the song judged to be the best of the song judged to be the best of the seven first-place winners. Quincy Jones will chair the panel of selected judges and will personally choose the grand prize win-

Switching Gears: 7-year-old Raven Symone won the hearts of Cosby

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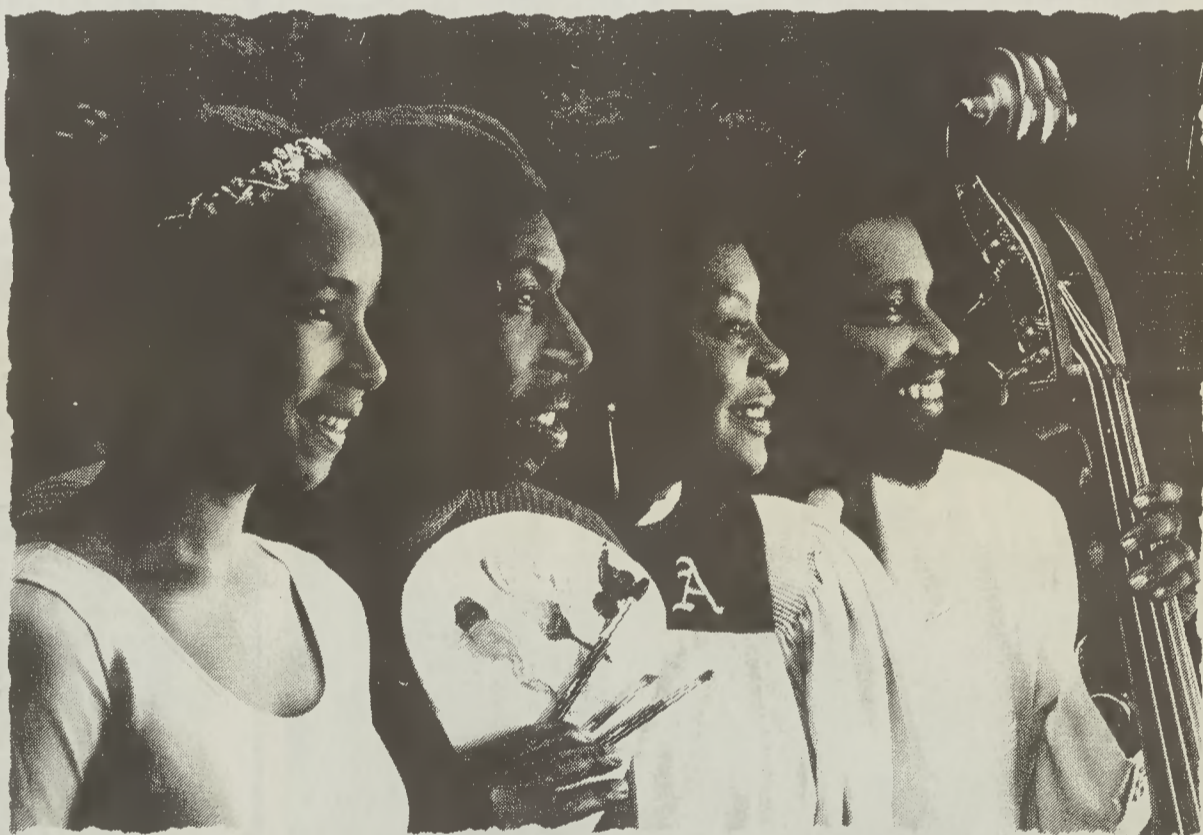
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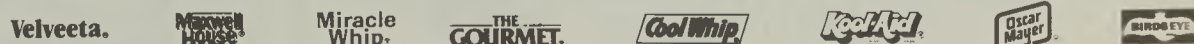
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