

# ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

## Rapper using radio to spread the Word

By Winfred B. Cross  
THE CHARLOTTE POST

Contemporary gospel fans scanning the airwaves will get an earful Saturday.

Bebe & Cece Winans' "Count It All Joy" will ring out of Radio station WNOW 1030 AM. It's the first song to be played on "R.A.P. It Up," a one-hour, all-music program devoted to the best in contemporary gospel broadcasting 10-11 a.m.

RAP stands for rhythm and praise. The show is the brain child of Marlon Tate, once known as the Overweight Prince. He used to rap for girls. Now he's The Hip-Hop Minister of Radio.

"The purpose is to be encouraging and uplifting," Tate said in the station's tiny location in Union County. "Also, we have the young people in mind. My audience is whoever will receive it. It's another outlet for young Christians not necessarily in tune with the traditional kind of gospel. It lets them know it's not boring to be a Christian."

The show features such artists as John P. Kee, Yolanda Adams, Dawkins & Dawkins, Donald Lawrence and the Tri-City Singers, Christopher L. Gray and the Winans.

The station is automated on the weekend but Tate will do the show live.

"We won't be limited to who we

will play, but it has to be word oriented," Tate said.

Tate's worked at other Christian stations. He did a stint at WGSP 1310. "They kept telling me that the Charlotte sound was a quartet, more traditional sound. There were many artists they didn't want to play," Tate said. But he kept pushing for more contemporary stuff and started developing an audience.

"A lot of stations in the area do not play these kinds of people. It's a shame," Tate said. "It's all gospel. People get caught up in the beat, saying it's not gospel. If you're caught up in the beat, you are not looking for the message. I'll be the first to admit the beat and the music is the first thing to get you. But if you are listening to a church station, you are doing that to get uplifted."

Ironically, Tate didn't even know contemporary gospel existed until 1990.

"I saw Commissioned at a local church," he said. "John Kee was there and came up and did a couple of songs. I was like, 'man, if this music sounds like this, that's what I'll do.'"

Tate, 24, moved to WNOW, basically a Christian talk radio station. He's on from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday, playing 15

minutes of music before each hour.

The station bills itself as interdenominational and interracial. Tate says about half the audience is black.

The station supports Tate's new show in spirit, but he's picking up the tab himself, just to get the program on the air.

Why? He says the reasons are obvious - the program is needed.

"I get tired of turning on the TV and seeing kids my age dying all the time," he said. "I look to it as being a tool in our community. Maybe this will speak to them and let them know there's a better way of life for them."

Tate is hoping the show becomes "listener supported" and becomes a part of the station's everyday lineup. "That's one of the goals I'm shooting for," he said.

And what of the The Overweight Prince?

"That's a time period I want to forget about," Tate said. "No one will ever know the stress I went through. I've done a lot of growing up mentally and spiritually."

Tate is now a Christian, married and at peace.

"My career is what I'm doing now," he said. "My concern is



Marlon Tate, the Hip-Hop Minister of Radio, in the WNOW studio in Union County. He hopes to get new show in regular lineup. PHOTO/James Brown.

what can I do to help someone else?" Tate is a 1989 graduate of

South Mecklenberg High School. He did get a job at

WGIV - 1600 (now WBAV) and got hooked on radio.

## Stickney to play Charlotte Monday

By Winfred B. Cross  
THE CHARLOTTE POST

Women who haven't gotten enough of exhaling will enjoy Monday night at the Comedy Zone.

Comedian Phyllis Yvonne Stickney will headline a women-only concert "From A

Black Woman's Point of View." Special guests will be Charlotte's own Sara Helms and Washington, D.C.'s Angelique Cope.

Part of the proceeds go to the Battered Women's Shelter.

Stickney is known for her "power of the booty" tag line, but her career is far more diverse. She's done movies

("New Jack City," "Malcolm X," and "What's Love Got To Do With It"), TV ("Cosby Show,") and stage. Her one-woman show, "Big Mama An Nem," won her a second Audelco Award.

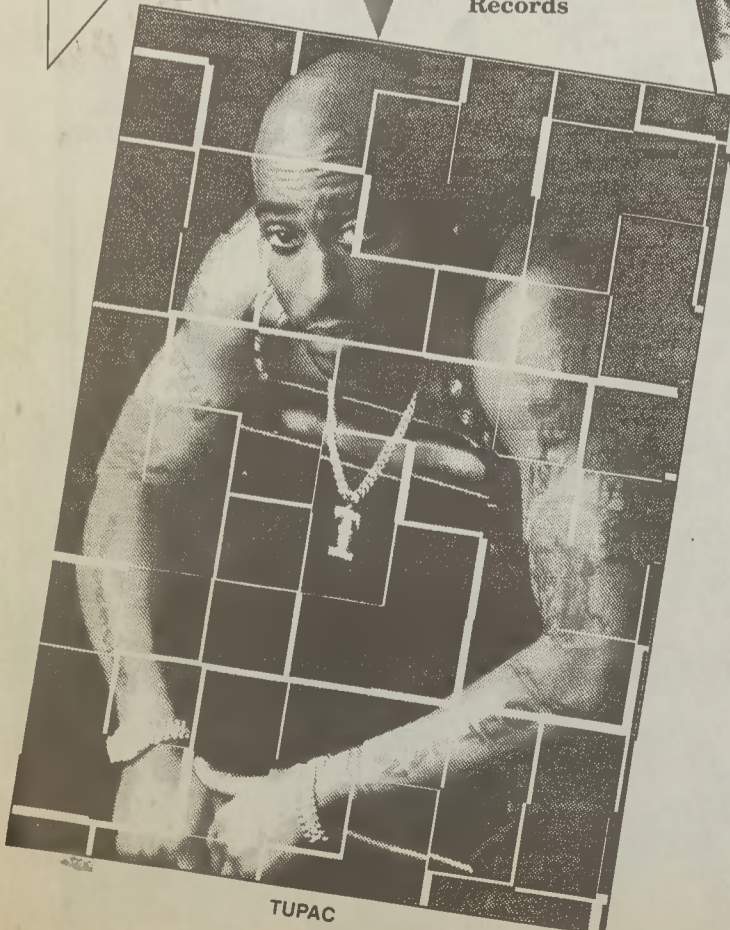
The show starts at 7:30 p.m. at the Comedy Zone, 5317 E.

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# SOUNDS

By Winfred B. Cross

2 Pac  
All Eyez On Me  
Dr. Dre., Dat Nigga Daz, David Blake, DeVante Swing, DJ Pooh, Mike Mosley, QDIII and Johnnhy "J" D. Rasheed, producers  
Death Row/Interscope Records



TUPAC

## All eyes are on Tupac's new disc

☆☆ 1/2

Tupac Shakur has been through a great deal in the last couple of years. He's been shot up, locked up and set free (at least tem-

porarily). Now he's about to blow up again with his fourth solo LP All Eyez On



FUGEES

the first double new release for a rap artist. It's an ambitious work - 27 compositions sprawled across two CDs. It could quite possibly become the best-selling rap CD of all time.

Before I get into praising this work, I have nit-pick. I have the same problem with this CD as I have with any other gangsta rap CDs: too much loose sex talk, too much frivolous violence and too, too much profanity. For a time, I didn't think he knew another word besides bitch.

But 2 Pac's intense vocal style and superb choice of producers makes this CD likable despite its flaws. The music is first-rate: beats pound with authority.

Shakur has assembled an all-star cast from rapdom - Dre, Snoop Doggy Dogg, Rappin' 4-Tay, Dat Nigga Daz, Outlaw Immortalz and E-40. He's even thrown in Roger Troutman (on the marvelous "California Love"), Jodeci and Michele to boot. Too bad he doesn't have

much to say lyrically. There's nothing new here. He does at times show creativity. "Wonda Why They Call You Bitch" tells the tale of a girl who's used her body to get through life. She ends up with lots of kids, no respect and HIV. It's a chilling tale, which is his explanation for why he uses bitch. I don't buy it, and neither will C. DeLores Tucker, who's mentioned in the song.

This could have easily been a one CD release, preferably Book 1, as he calls them. No matter. This is going to blow away the competition for weeks to come.

Fugees (Refugee Camp)  
The Score  
Prakazrel  
"Pras," Wyclef and Lauryn Hill, executive producers.  
Columbia

☆☆☆☆

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SOMETHING FOR THE PEOPLE