

# 1B ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

## Motown Talent Search finals Saturday

By Winfred B. Cross  
THE CHARLOTTE POST

**A**nother Charlottean could be heading for the big-time Saturday.

They will at least be heading for Washington, D.C., after Saturday. That person will be the winner of the BET/Motown Talent Search semi-final being held 8 p.m. Saturday in The Locker Room at Independence Arena.

Ten finalist will compete for the right to represent Charlotte at the finals, which will be televised on BET later this year. The winner gets a free flight to the finals.

The 10 semi-finalist were chosen from an open mic contest held April 16 at The Fountain, 300 E. Stonewall St.

"Over 200 people came out for the contest," said Roxanne Parra, promotions assistant for Motown. "There was quite a bit of talent." Parra said semi-finals are being held in at least 22 cities. Each has 10 contestants - solo acts, vocal groups and bands - with the winners advancing to the finals.

Viewers will pick the overall winner, who will receive a Motown recording contract. Artist and Repertoire representatives will pick the semi-finalists.

Lewis Tillman, vice president of A&R for Motown, will help judge Saturday's contest. Tillman is a Myers Park High School graduate. He was responsible for bringing Charlotte native Horace Brown to former Uptown Entertainment president Andre Harrell's attention. Brown is currently signed to Motown. His first single for the label, "One For The Money," is rising on Billboard's Soul Chart.

The contest is Harrell's brainchild.



Harrell

## Jackson presses hollywood for more diversity

By Dinos Lambropoulos  
ASSOCIATED PRESS

LOS ANGELES - The Rev. Jesse Jackson has renewed his call for the entertainment industry to hire more minorities and women for the decision-making positions that shape film and television programs.

Touting what he called a new "Rainbow Covenant" for wider gender and ethnic diversity in

Hollywood, Jackson met with labor and other groups Monday.

"Our mission is not to close the industry down but to open it up," Jackson said. "It may involve litigation or demonstration or confrontation, but it really should involve negotiation."

Jackson met with some 40 representatives from groups including the Writers Guild of America, the Directors Guild of America, the Screen Actors

Guild, the American Federation of Television and Radio Artists and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. Later, he met with Leslie Moonves, CBS president of entertainment.

Jackson's criticism of the industry began during the weeks leading up to last month's Academy Awards ceremony. He urged nationwide protests against the Academy, saying Hollywood failed to

hire, promote and honor minorities.

As part of his argument, Jackson pointed out that few minorities were up for awards this year. One out of the 166 nominees was black.

Jackson said the low number of women and minorities in decision-making positions leads to the production of movies and TV programs that reinforce stereotypes.

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## Cover 2 Cover

"How Stella Got Her Groove Back"

Terry McMillan  
Viking Books  
\$23.95

By Jeri Young  
THE CHARLOTTE POST



On April 29 Terry McMillan will finally exhale.

"How Stella Got Her Groove Back" provides McMillan with a forum from which she can candidly discuss many of the issues that plague black women.

In her new novel, which coincidentally is also available on audiobook and has been sold to a major studio, McMillan outdoes herself. When 42-year-old Stella's son, Quincy, goes away on an extended fishing trip, she decides to take a much-needed vacation to Jamaica, where she meets 21-year-old chief-in-training Winston Shakespeare. Young Shakespeare makes Stella feel things she hasn't felt in years. And turns Stella's life upside down.

Her burgeoning happiness over the new relationship is marred by her own insecurities about the 20-year gap between her and Winston as well as negative sentiments expressed by her buppie sister Angela. Stella also returns to California to find herself the victim of a corporate downsizing that has phased out her position.

Stella lets none of this get her down for long. She goes on in typical Sister McMillan fashion and makes the best out of an awkward situation.

She decides to take some time away from work to develop her other talents and against her own judgement takes another extended trip to Jamaica, which puts her face-to-face once again with young Winston.

McMillan chooses to use few marks of punctuation, which makes "How Stella Got Her Groove Back" read quickly and feel like a conversation with your best girlfriend. McMillan also introduces characters that everyone can identify with, from Stella wrestling with issues of age and career, to motherhood and relationships to Winston, who at 21 is trying to find his

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# SOUNDS

By Winfred B. Cross

Jesse Powell  
Jesse Powell

Tone, Laney Stewart,  
Daryl Simmons, Michael  
Stokes, Buster and  
Shavoni, Keri "KL" Lewis,  
Stokley and Carl Roland  
MCA Records

☆☆ 1/2

Male r&b vocalists seem to be a dime a dozen these days, but good ones are scarce. Jesse Powell is a new one and a good one. His self-titled debut is full of good songs and even better singing.

Powell is a tenor with exceptional clarity and range. It seems he can keep climbing no matter where he starts on the scale.

His skills go deeper than theatrics, however. He's in full control of his special instru-

ment. Powell can use it subtly, as he does on "You," or he can be sledgehammer blunt, as on the power ballad "I Like It." Either way he's supremely effective.

Powell puts his range to the test on "The Enchantment Medley: Gloria/It's You That I Need." His tenor passes with flying colors as he nearly matches the original version's note for note. Michael Powell produces this version, as he did the original. Actually, Jesse Powell may be singing to a sample of the original. That sure sounds like Enchantment singing in the background.

There are plenty of other good original songs as well. The first single, "All I Need," features tight vocals strung over a hypnotic, pulsing beat. It's a tasty prelude to "Spend The Night," which features a sample of Isaac Hayes' "Do Your Thing."

Jesse Powell has the potential to have a long career. If he keeps getting material like this he could easily do that.

J'son  
J'son

Red Hot Lover Tone, Poke,  
Steve Diamond, Rudy  
Perez, Tony and Julio G,  
Ralph Hawkins, Vachik  
Agnaniantz, Kenneth Blue,  
R.T.S.K. Johnny 'J,' John  
Meyers, Vincent Berry and  
Jeff Carruther  
Hollywood Records

☆☆ 1/2

J'son will inevitably be compared to Michael Jackson, Tevin Campbell, Jason Weaver and every other male singer who started as a boy soprano.

J'son's voice has elements of all those folks, but he's closest vocally to Campbell. J'son's voice is nearly as strong as Campbell's but doesn't possess his range. At least he doesn't display it on this outing.

It's not really needed. The material calls for solid singing,

nothing flashy. J'son delivers and then some.

This is basically kiddie pop-soul - good clean lyrics with inviting beats. Adults won't be blown away, but the pre-teen set should eat this up.

There are times when J'son gets past the kiddie formula. His reading of Hall and Oates' "I Can't Go For That" is pretty lively. But most of his stuff is simple songs about lost love, falling in love and wanting to be in love. Not bad. Not bad at all.

The Substitute  
Various artists  
Various producers  
Priority Records

☆ 1/2

This soundtrack represents what's wrong with a lot of hip-hop and rap - too much violence, cussin' and sexual banter.

Yeah, I know, this is the soundtrack for a film that deals with all those topics. Still, creativity is a wonderful thing. This soundtrack has none, so it ain't wonderful. Mack 10's "Hoo Bangin'" and G-Spot-Geez's



J'son

"Money, Power & Women" are mildly interesting, but not much more.

I hope the film's better. If not, look for a very short run

at the box office.

Ratings:

☆☆☆☆ Classic; ☆☆☆ Excellent; ☆☆☆ Good; ☆☆☆ Fair; ☆ Why?; No Stars Given - Please, Spare Us.



Jesse Powell



The Substitute

