



Ron O'Neal ushered in a new era in black cinema in the 1972 movie "Superfly." He died Wednesday at age 66.

'Superfly' star Ron O'Neal dead at 66

By Emmanuel Jackson
BET.COM

Ron O'Neal, whose portrayal of a take-no-prisoners hustler in the film "Superfly," gave rise to a new genre of roles for black male actors and created on the street a new symbol of black machismo, died Wednesday.

O'Neal died at the Cedars Sinai Medical Center in Los Angeles, after a long bout with pancreatic cancer.

O'Neal was born in Utica, N.Y., but grew up in Cleveland where he joined a theatrical company called the Karma House. His strong interest in theatre led him to New York where he taught school in Harlem. His convincing performance in "No Place To Be Somebody," earned him a prestigious Obie Award.

The recognition jumpstart O'Neal's career and pro-

ducers of "Superfly" recognized his ability to portray a cocaine dealing street-hustler. The movie became a surprise hit and ignited a series of black movies called "blaxploitation" films in the 1970s. "Superfly" was followed by "Superfly TNT," a sequel in which O'Neal directed and help produce.

"Superfly" was released on DVD last week.

O'Neal had later roles in

"Mercenary Fighters" (1987) and "Up Against the Wall" (1991), which he also directed. He joined up with blaxploitation stars Pam Grier, Fred Williamson and Richard Roundtree in "Original Gangsters" (1996). But mostly he stayed away from acting because producers only sought him for roles playing a pimp or hustler.

He is survived by his wife Audrey Pool O'Neal.

Audio formats stumble in quest to replace CDs

By Mike Musgrove
THE WASHINGTON POST

The appeal to consumers was supposed to be better and more lifelike sound quality. The appeal to music companies was supposed to be a new digital format that consumers couldn't Napster-ize or cheaply copy so it could be sent across the Internet.

But instead, two newish audio media formats, DVD-Audio and SACD (short for "super audio compact disc"), seem to be stuck at the starting gate. Rather than replacing the enormously successful CD, these two formats are starting to look like two Next Big Things that may never find a place in tomorrow's all-digital, relentlessly networked living room.

The lack of enthusiasm adds yet another chapter to the hit-or-miss nature of digital innovation, and, experts

said, a cautionary lesson in what happens when companies try to impose new restrictions on a product where once there were few or none at all.

Both of these shiny, palm-sized discs look just like standard audio compact discs but contain about six times as much digital information, delivering a sonic picture so detailed their backers brag you could practically hear Mick Jagger strut his stuff across the stage.

Both have been available since 2000 and cost about the same as a CD — while the machines needed to play each disc cost only about \$200, slightly more than traditional CD gear. Yet for both, sales have been negligible.

During the six-month period ending in June 2003, only

100,000 DVD-Audio discs were sold, compared with 245 million CDs, the Recording Industry Association of America reports. Even traditional vinyl records outsold DVD-Audio — by six to one.

Rather than growing, sales of DVD-Audio discs are actually down from the same period a year ago. The RIAA does not track SACD sales.

Three years might not seem like a long time for a new format, but by this point in the CD's life cycle, sales had begun to triple and quadruple as consumers lined up to buy into the format.

The CD had a smoother road to introduction. The recording industry and the consumer electronics industry presented a united front when they sold the world on the benefits of the CD 20 years ago, but with the

newer formats, there is no unanimity. Each is backed by different industry players (for instance, Warner Music Group likes DVD-Audio, while Sony Music Entertainment Inc. supports SACD). Even many audiophiles with golden ears can't tell the difference between the two.

It's "shades of Beta versus VHS," said Tom Edwards, analyst at NPD Group Inc., a market research firm. "It's a format war all over again, but the differences aren't as obvious this time around... and right now it's more a question of whether either of them will win."

"It's fair to say neither format has set the world alight to date," said analyst Jim Bottoms, president of Understanding & Solutions, an English firm that specializes in entertainment media research.

Former model accuses Roc-A-Fella chief of rape

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and asked me — and literally these were his words — "Will you have sex with me?" I'm not a virgin, but I'd never heard such a vulgar line in my life," Thompson told the New York Post.

Thompson admitted that

she had eight glasses of wine and a half of tablet of Ecstasy and eventually passed out in a bedroom at the party. Later, one of her friends allegedly brought Dash to the inebriated Thompson, claiming that she had not engaged in sex for a long

time.

"The next second, he's on top of me. For 10-15 seconds at 8:30 in the morning, he was on top of me. I screamed out to my best friend, and nothing happened, and I certainly passed out," Thompson stated.

son stated.

At press time, Thompson hadn't filed a criminal suit and the police hadn't charged Dash with a crime.

"These allegations are baseless and untrue," Dash's representative said.

Mystikal pleads guilty; 6 year bid

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must serve five years probation for that charge once he gets out of jail. Should he violate his probation, he would have to serve an additional 10 years in jail.

On July 18, 2002, the entertainer was taken into custody with two accomplices. According to police, the woman cashed checks written to her from the rapper's account without his permission. After discovering she cashed the checks, Mystikal allegedly said he wouldn't turn her into police in exchange for sex.

Mystikal then allegedly called the two other men and told them to come over to his house. Police reports claim that when Leland Ellis and Vercy Carter arrived, Mystikal instructed Ellis to videotape the rapper having intercourse with the woman. But according to police, he raped and sodomized her when the camera was turned off. Afterwards, Carter and Ellis allegedly raped the woman on tape with Mystikal manning the camera.

Reports said Mystikal's counsel sent an affidavit to authorities, signed by the woman, stating that she consented to the sex with the three men. Police contend the woman signed the paper in a state of confusion and under the coercion of Mystikal's attorney.

Mystikal was lead out of the courtroom in handcuffs and was taken directly to jail to start his sentence.

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