

1D ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Spike on Oscar, Halle and Osama

By Jesse Washington
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK — Oscars? Spike Lee don't need no stinkin' Oscars.

Sure, the director votes for the Academy Awards. And the outspoken filmmaker would surely give an acceptance speech for the ages. But that doesn't mean he's waiting around for a golden statue to fall into his lap.

No, Lee is sticking to what he does best: making provocative films; running his ad agency, Spike DDB; and rooting for the Knicks.

Spike DDB has just released a three-minute movie to promote Microsoft's new Wrist Net service, which beams information like headlines and sports scores directly into specially equipped watches. And Lee, 46, is finishing his new feature film, "She Hate Me," about a man who starts a business impregnating lesbians.

AP: So you're making this new movie, something with lesbians ...

Lee: No no no no no. It's called 'She Hate Me.' It's coming out this summer on Sony Classics, starring Anthony Mackie — he was the young brother battling Eminem at the end of "8 Mile" — Kerry Washington, Ellen Barkin, Monica Bellucci, Woody Harrelson, John Turturro, Brian Dennehy. Q-Tip's in it. It's about a young African American who gets involved in some shady things and gets set up at his company and he's fired. Because of his predicament he puts his morals and values aside and starts a business impregnating lesbians who want to have kids.

AP: Personally impregnating them?

Lee: It depends. Any way you want it. Artificial insemination or the real thing, \$10,000 each. In a month he impregnates 19 women.

AP: How far into the movie before you get to that point?

Lee: That's the first 10 minutes (big laughter). Nah, I'm joking. But really, it's a comedy. What's great about this film, this is an examination of what's happening in this country that's really demonstrated by the Super Bowl. I'm not just talking about Janet. You look at the commercials, the rest of the half-time show, it wasn't just Janet, it was the whole thing.

So this film really talks about the moral ethic of this country, and how money is God. It's an examination of the moral and ethical decline of America, from the boardroom to the bedroom. We deal with Ken Lay and Enron, WorldCom, (former Tyco CEO Dennis) Kozlowski, Adelphia, all these crooks.

AP: You mentioned John Turturro is in it. You've "broken" a lot of actors in your movies.

Lee: I didn't break John Turturro, but he's one of my dear friends. I've done like 18 or 19 films, and he's appeared in more of them than anyone. But I gave Rosie Perez her first role, Martin Lawrence's first
See SPIKE/2D

Bringing 'Raisin' to life in Charlotte

Production of classic play opens March 11



THEATRE CHARLOTTE PHOTO

Theatre Charlotte's production of "A Raisin in the Sun" includes cast members Paris Simpson and Olivia Bost (standing); Morayo Orija and Brian Simmons (on sofa) and Roderick Mobley (front).

By Paula Young
FOR THE CHARLOTTE POST

"A Raisin in the Sun" will premiere at Theatre Charlotte March 11-28. The play is based on the Youngers, a Chicago family who faces oppression, poverty and dreams deferred in the late 1950s.

Marilyn Carter, director of the play, is excited about the opportunity to direct this production.

"I was honored to work it," she said. Carter, who has been directing for over 30 years, is originally from Indiana. She has lived in New York, where she started teaching and directing. Since moving to Charlotte over 20 years ago, Carter has directed dozens of plays here. What attracted her to this play was "A Raisin in the Sun's" writer, Lorraine Hansberry.

"Lorraine Hansberry is an extraordinary playwright," said Carter. "She knows how to create believable, poignant family characters...she really knows how to design a play."

The other attraction for Carter was

working with Candace Sorensen again. Carter says she was asked to direct "A Raisin in the Sun" by Sorensen, who is executive director of Theatre Charlotte and producer of the play. The two have worked together on previous productions and each respect and admire their working relationship.

"She's a phenomenal director that works well with people," said Sorensen of Carter.

"I love her," said Carter of Sorensen. "She has a phenomenal amount of energy and an extraordinary theatre background. She really knows her stuff and I admire her."

Carter says the production took up to six weeks. Because it's community theatre, she says sometimes it's difficult to work around actors' schedules. Aside from hectic scheduling, Carter thinks the cast is talented.

Brian Simmons plays the main character, Walter Lee, who appears in every scene. This is Simmons' first performance with Theatre Charlotte but not his first time on stage. He has been a professional actor since

age 16, appearing in various plays, films and TV commercials.

"I know I was supposed to be Walter Lee," Simmons said. "It's a dream come true."

It's a dream that Simmons has held onto since seeing the play at age 9. He says that even at that age the life lessons of the play really touched him.

Walter Lee is a dreamer, a character Simmons said he relates to. In the play Walter Lee says, "There is not another man on the Southside that can understand my kind of thinking." Simmons says he feels that way at times because his thought process and patterns are different from most too.

Simmons says he has enjoyed working on this production and is thankful that Carter allowed him to explore and discover the character.

Sorensen says "Raisin" is a must see for everyone because it's a piece of history. She also says the play fits the theatre's mission, which is to educate and entertain.

Please see A RAISIN/3D

Blues saxophonist considered one of best

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

CHICAGO — Blues saxophonist A.C. Reed, who combined a simple, eloquent style of play with an offbeat sense of humor and performed with the likes of Bonnie Raitt and Stevie Ray Vaughan, is dead at age 77.

Reed, whose songs tended to mock the music industry and often had humorous titles, such as "I'm in the Wrong Business" and "I Am Fed Up With This Music," died last Wednesday of complications from cancer. He performed until two months before his death.

"He played blues of the first-class quality," said Grammy Award-winning blues vocalist Koko Taylor, a friend of Reed's for 40 years. "Everyone knew him for his good music. It was just so good to listen to."

Born Aaron Corthen in Wardell, Mo., Reed was raised in southern Illinois and moved to Chicago during World War II to work at

a steel mill. He bought a saxophone at a pawn shop with his first paycheck and studied at the Chicago Conservatory of Music, according to officials of Alligator Records, the company Reed worked with for 25 years.

Reed toured with the late Earl Hooker and Dennis "Long Man" Binder in the 1950s, collaborated with Buddy Guy and the late Junior Wells in the 1960s and joined the Rolling Stones tour in 1970. He

began fronting his own band in the 1980s.

In terms of the blues world if you were asked to name the best-known living sax players, he would be one of the three or four, worldwide," said Bruce Iglauer, founder of Alligator Records.

Reed is survived by his sister, Sarah Corthen. His funeral is planned for March 6 in Carbondale, said Marc Lipkin, an Alligator Records spokesman.

Affleck-Lopez bomb takes Razzie dishonors

By David Segal
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

LOS ANGELES — The honeymoon's over for Ben Affleck and Jennifer Lopez, but their mob-comedy flop "Gigli" real-

ly cleaned up Saturday at the Razzies, the first movie to take all six top trophies in the annual dishonorable-men-tion awards.

Golden Raspberry Awards voters picked "Gigli" as 2003's

worst picture, Affleck as worst actor, Lopez as worst actress and the two as worst screen couple. "Gigli" filmmaker Martin Brest also took the Razzies for worst director and screenplay.

"Gigli" hit theaters last summer amid the tabloid frenzy over Affleck and Lopez's on-again, off-again wedding plans. They finally announced in January the
Please see AACT/2D



Cee-lo aims high with 'Soul Machine'

Cee-lo Green
Cee-Lo Green...
Is The Soul Machine
Various producers
Arista Records



Cee-lo Green is the chameleon of music. This guy's talents lie in lots of areas: rap, hip-hop, southern soul and gospel. What ever he chooses, he does well - very well.

That's what makes "... Is The Soul Machine" work so well. Cee-lo pours himself into this wicked mix of everything. There's more soul here than anything but hip-hop and rap fans should not feel slighted. With guest artists Ludacris (what rap CD is he not on?) Jazza Pha, T.I. and Big Rube, this is as much a rap CD as anything. "I'll Be Around" with Timbaland sums up the rap selections - radio friendly without losing street credibility.

But for me, Cee-lo works best when he uses his Southern-fried voice to sing. He's a cross between Al Green and almost every other '70s singer. Give him something like "All Day Love Affair" and he ranks with the best of these neo-soul singers - no, he's better. The song is pure '70s magic, including a real horn arrangement. Cee-lo's

Please see CEE-LO/3D

Billboard top 10

Weekly charts for the nation's best-selling recorded music as they appear in next week's issue of Billboard magazine. Reprinted with permission. (Platinum signifies more than 1 million copies sold; gold signifies more than 500,000 copies sold.); Billboard Hot 100: Top 10

(Compiled from a national sample of sales reports collected, compiled and provided by SoundScan; radio playlists; and monitored radio by Broadcast Data Systems)

1. "Yeah!" Usher (feat. Ludacris & Lil Jon). Arista.
2. "Slow Jamz," Twista (feat. Kanye West & Jamie Foxx). Atlantic.
3. "The Way You Move," OutKast feat. Sleepy Brown. Arista. (Gold)
4. "One Call Away," Chingy (feat. J. Weav). Disturbing tha Peace.
5. "Me, Myself and I," Beyonce. Columbia.
6. "Hey Ya!" OutKast. Arista. (Gold)
7. "Hotel," Cassidy (feat. R. Kelly). Nick.
8. "Topsy," J-Kwon. So So Def.
9. "Splash Waterfalls," Ludacris. Disturbing tha Peace.
10. "Sorry 2004," Ruben Studdard. J.

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