

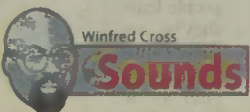
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'Change' solid for Goapele

Goapele
Change It All
Various producers
Sony/BMG



Goapele released a CD called "Closer" on a small label a few years back that got lukewarm exposure. It was what has become typical neo soul. Someone at Sony heard it, took the project and re-released it to a bigger response.

Sony has given Goapele more career guidance for her second CD, "Change It All." She steers away from rambling neo soul and concentrates on more traditional R&B (in today's world), techno-soul and folksy pop.

The mix of songs is pretty good. Goapele is no great singer - more of a song stylist. Her voice is pleasant enough, at times even entertaining. The R&B stuff is radio friendly, ranging from the sleeky title song to a torch-like ballad "Battle of The Heart."

When Goapele takes a risk, that works as well. "Find Away" is politically motivated but has a happier, more joyous musical background. "Darker Side Of The Moon" is certainly the most pop offering, and she handles it like a champ. "Chushed Out" would be typical hip-hop flair, but the churchy organ lifts it out of mediocrity.

I downloaded the CD from iTunes and that got me an extra track called "Chasing." It too takes Goapele into the pop world, just not as effectively as "Darker."

There is nothing that will knock you out, but more importantly, there's nothing that should offend. That's more than you can say about half of what's released these days.

February's must-see TV

Documentaries highlight Black History Month

By Cheri F. Hodges
cheri.hodges@thecharlottepost.com

It's Black History Month and that means the networks are gearing up to show every black documentary under the sun for the next 28 days.

Luckily, there's more than "Eyes On the Prize" being offered this year. (Not that there is anything wrong with this historic PBS series, but what black person over the age of 25 hasn't seen it at least once?)

- "Negroes with Guns: Rob Williams and Black Power" airs Tuesday. This documentary tells the stories of a Monroe man who dared to advocate armed resistance in the face of lynchings right outside of Charlotte.

In 1962, Williams had the guts and, to some, the gall to challenge the Klan-dominated establishment in Monroe, going against the "non-violent" leadership of the mainstream Civil Rights movement.

Telling the story are Williams' widow Mabel, Richard Crowder, member of Monroe's Black Guard, and Williams biographer Tim Tyson, as well as others who lived this oft-forgotten era in Civil Rights history.

Unofficially, Williams is the founding father of the Black Power Movement and fled to Cuba after he was charged with kidnapp-



PHOTO/TVS

Monroe native Rob Williams is the subject of "Negroes With Guns"

ping. Also on PBS:
• "July '64" (New) February 14, 10 p.m.

In the summer of 1964, a three-night riot erupted in two predominantly black neighborhoods in downtown Rochester, N.Y., the culmination of decades of poverty, joblessness and racial discrimination.

- "Parliament Funkadelic" (Encore Presentation by Popular Demand) February 21 (check local listings)

George Clinton, mastermind behind the band Parliament Funkadelic, expressed the cultural alienation of young African Americans, creating an alternate universe of "aliens" that brought the redemptive power of funk

to a world sorely in need of a new point of view.

- BET will air a commercial free documentary, "Infinite In Black," a conversation between five artists and moderated by former film critic Elvis Mitchell. The show plays on Feb. 9 and Feb. 13.

- TV Land celebrates the contributions blacks made to American and pop culture with a three part series called "That's What I'm Talking About," hosted by Wayne Brady.

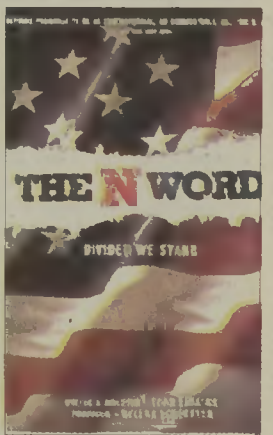
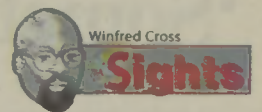
The series started Wednesday with "Greats, Dates and Debates." Brady moderates a discussion between Diahann Carroll, Harry Belafonte, comedian Paul Mooney and writer Toure.

The second installments

air Feb. 8 and 15.

If exploring black history on the small screen isn't your thing and you want to see some history that you can reach out and touch, check out the Levine.

Over at the Levine Museum of the New South, the month begins with the opening of "Oh Freedom Over Me," a new exhibit that chronicles Freedom Summer 1964. The opening event on Feb. 9 features a reception and panel discussion with civil rights attorney James Ferguson, attorney and civil rights activist Charles Jones, executive Greensboro's Truth and Reconciliation Commission Director Jill Williams, and Duke University professor Anne-Maria Makhulu.



A word that still stings

The N Word
Divided We Stand
Todd Larkins, director
Various speakers
Urbanworks Entertainment



If you are squeamish about the use of nigger, avoid "The N Word" at all costs.

If you are part of the growing number of Americans trying to understand the great racial divide, by all means pick up this brilliant documentary.

The film attempts to trace the origins of the word, its usage, its profuse use in rap and hip-hop lyrics and its multiethnic group acceptance.

The film's goals are lofty, but few of them are reached. Actually, that may be director Todd Larkins' greatest achievement. There may be no real right or wrong reasons to use the term, but he gives you enough to chew, to digest for you to make up your mind or even keep the opinion you have about nigger.

Various personalities express opinions on the word's use. The most interesting is former Dallas Cowboys star and ESPN pro football analyst Michael Irvin. His analysis is very frank and upfront. Who knew Irvin could piece together a coherent answer to something that didn't deal with sports.

Ice Cube, an original member of NWA (Niggaz Wit Attitudes), isn't bothered by its use; Quincy Jones, uber producer, can't stand it. Neither does NBA champion John Salley.

The film touches on the greatest users of the term - rappers and the late Richard Pryor. Both tended to remake the word into an endearing term, but Pryor did later denounce its use.

The discussion is frank, some of the images stark. There are some interesting twists and thoughts on nigger. There is a lot of profanity throughout this film, so it may not be appropriate for small children. But everyone else should view this. It makes you appreciate intelligent dialogue and great film making. You may not agree with what you see and hear, but you will not be able to dismiss the opinions or discussions of such a fascinating topic.

MOVIE REVIEW

'Something New' with hint of taboo

By Cheri F. Hodges
cheri.hodges@thecharlottepost.com

In "Something New," filmmakers take a smart, funny and charming look at interracial romance.

Sanaa Lathan stars as Kenya, a straight-laced professional black woman who has everything going right except she doesn't have that educated sexy black man to warm her nights.

Maybe it's because she's too picky and has a long list of demands in a man. And Kenya has a long list of things she doesn't do, such as blind dates. But reluctantly, she allows a co-worker to hook her up.

When her date turns out to be white, Kenya backs out of their meeting.

Fate brings them together again when she attends the engagement party of her co-worker and admires the landscaping at the event. Brian, the landscaper, just hap-

Please see SOMETHING/2D



PHOTO/FOCUS FEATURES

Simon Baker and Sanaa Lathan play lovers in "Something New," a movie that explores love and the color line in Los Angeles.

Interracial romance has reading audience, too

By Cheri F. Hodges
cheri.hodges@thecharlottepost.com

The movie "Something New" deals with a black woman finding love with a white man.

Though this topic is new on the screen, many romance novels have been written on the subject. From authors like Eric Jerome Dickey to Lizzette Grayson Carter,



Carter

interracial romance stories have been in between the pages of books for years.

Last year, Carter released her novel "The Color Line," which is the story of a black woman, much like the lead character

in "Something New," who happens to fall in love with a white man even though she was looking for her own "IBM" (ideal black man).

"I have heard women say that they would never consider dating a white man," Carter said. "But I wondered what would happen if they met a white guy by happenstance."

Carter, who is married to a black man, admits that her book is fiction and isn't based on any concrete research, just an idea.

She found that a lot of people are interested in interracial romance. "I live in Matthews County, Virginia," she said. "We have Matthews Market Days and I did a read-

Please see NOVELS/2D

MOVIE REVIEW

'Annapolis' soaks up 'Officer...Gentleman' vibe

By Aisha Lide
THE CHARLOTTE POST

Before you achieve, you must believe.

"Annapolis" is about respect, discipline, honor, and hard work. The movie's trailer puts it aptly "50,000 apply, 1,200 are accepted. Only the best survive."

"Annapolis" centers around a young man Jake Huard (James Franco) aspiring to become a naval officer. His entire life he wanted to be a part of the U.S. Naval Academy and his mother always told him he had what it takes to make it. Jake uses his deceased mother as inspira-

tion which is ironic because the movie never actually tells how the mother died, or why they had such a close relationship. He does all of this while striving for his shipbuilder father's love and approval through an awkward relationship. Their conversations are nonchalant. They act as if they were two strangers that just met.

At the last possible moment, Jake is admitted into the Naval Academy by the skin of his teeth because of mediocre test scores. James gets a true wake up call when he gets to Annapolis. He is already behind the other students

because he does not know basic military 101; however he has the physical training down pat.

His commanding officer, Lieutenant Cole (played by Tyrese Gibson) makes it clear his journey at the academy would not be a walk in the park. For the first time in film Gibson played a serious dramatic role, and is quite convincing. "Annapolis" sets Gibson apart from playboy roles seen in "Baby Boy," and "Four Brothers," especially "Baby Boy," where he came off as a weak wannabe gangster. In "Annapolis," Gibson's character doesn't take any slack

from students and would challenge them at any task.

Gibson, the stern lieutenant, and Franco the hard-headed student, clash, which puts you in the mind set of "An Officer and a Gentleman." Franco is a hot head who wants his chance to get back at Gibson, who he blames for his roommate's suicide attempt. What better opportunity than The Brigades, a big time boxing match where students can beat on their superiors without repercussions. Who ends up fighting for the title? Gibson and Franco. I must say, it's quite the showdown.

Ratings

Classic	★★★★★
Excellent	★★★★
Good	★★★
Fair	★★
Why?	★
No stars - A mess	

