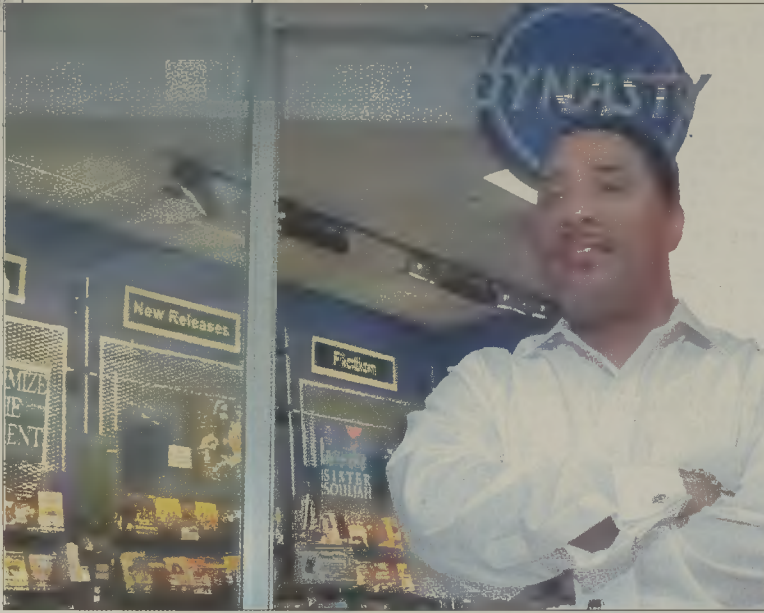


D Section

AA&EE



James Muhammad has inked a major deal with St. Martin's Press to produce 20 urban fiction novels, including one of his own.

Publishing Dynasty

Charlotte entrepreneur branches out with major book deal

By Cheri F. Hodges

Dynasty Bookstore owner James Muhammad is running a publishing empire in a corner of Eastland Mall...

The imprint will be distributed by St. Martin's Press with the first book, "Country Boy," to be released in November.

While 2 of A Kind publishes books that range from erotica to urban fiction, Dynasty Publishing will focus strictly on urban or street literature.

St. Martin's Press has signed on to distribute 20 titles from Dynasty. Muhammad said eight books are ready to go and he's looking for writ-

ers. "We're looking for creativity," he said. "We don't want the same girl and boy falls in love, boy sells drugs and gets locked up. That story's been told."

Muhammad knows how to sell books. His first title, "Little Ghetto Girl" sold over 120,000 copies and was an Essence best seller for three months. Larger publishers were so impressed, they came looking for Muhammad and author Danielle Santiago.

"After the success of 'Little Ghetto Girl' (Simon and Schuster) approached us with a deal to see if they could buy her out of her contract," he said. "That was our first time dealing with a major (company) That got me into the avenue of understanding taking my business into a different avenue. Maybe like setting

up a farm league for these authors that the majors were not interested in signing because they didn't know what kind of volume these authors could do."

Selling books independently can be difficult, Muhammad said.

"With independent publishing, there are only about four major channels to get your books out there," he said, citing Baker and Taylor, and Ingram Books as the largest distributors. "There are only about two or three black distributors out there."

Once bigger houses saw the number of books Muhammad's company sold, he said they wanted to talk.

But Muhammad didn't want to give up everything by signing with a large publisher. He wanted to make sure authors kept the rights to their work

Please see DYNASTY/2D



Huey Freeman stirs trouble and debate in "The Boondocks" which will be available on DVD this month.

July's hot for releases

For those of you mad at me for getting the "Boondocks" release date wrong, retract your fangs and redirect your anger towards Sony. It made the decision to move the release date.

That date is now firmly set for July 25. Yes, that's also the same day that "Pinky & The Brain," "Anamariacs" and Dave Chappelle's "Lost Episodes" hit stores. Start saving your pennies. All of these sets will be worth having.

Be warned. "The Boondocks" will be unedited and uncensored, which may be a scary thing. Remember Granddad doing nude aerobics or the huge guy in the shower from "A Visit From The Health Inspector?" Someone may get a thrill. I wouldn't advise showing this set to anyone under 13.

On August 22, "The Bill Cosby Show" debuts on DVD. No, not the show with Cosby as Cliff Huxtable. "The Bill Cosby Show" debuted on CBS in 1969 with Cosby as Chet Atkins, a good-natured gym teacher. He was always good for advice but usually found himself getting involved in situations he wanted to avoid. I remember it being very funny and it had no laugh track. My favorite episode was Cosby dealing with a kid who cussed like a sailor. When he called his mom in for a conference, the boy's mother cussed like two sailors. It's a five-disc set with 26 episodes that should please any Cosby fan.

On the same day, "Honey" releases its second season. Hugh Laurie is brilliant as the offbeat doctor who solves medical mysteries with unconventional flair. Omar Epps is very good as Dr. Foreman who has been getting more screen time.

But back to July. One of my favorite weird shows, "The Adventures Of Briscoe County, Jr." hits shelves. Fox ran this series from 1993-94 to less than stellar viewership. It was a Western with elements of fantasy which included time travel, ghosts, magic, and sci-fi. B-movie star Bruce Campbell starred as the Harvard-educated County Julius Carry (Sho' Nuff from "Berry Gordy's The Last Dragon") in his sidekick. It was innovative and well put together but it was the early days of Fox, before it got the NFL and right after it pumped Negroes by dropping all those black-themed shows.

"JAG," "Smallville," "Veronica Mars," and volume one of season one for "Perry Mason" round out major television show releases through September.



Cosby

Bearden, Oubre highlight Mint Museum art exhibit

By Sandy Seawright FOR THE CHARLOTTE POST

Mint Museum of Art 2730 Randolph Rd.

A very fresh exhibit is What's New - 2005 - an exhibit of artwork given to the Mint Museum of Art by generous donors in 2005.

Of great interest here are four black and white photographs of the Charlotte native and great collage artist Romare Bearden taken in 1980 when Bearden had a retrospective exhibit at The Mint by phot-

ographer Frank Stewart, who was born in 1947.

One of the photos is a very large vertical portrait of Bearden developed with an inkjet Process. This image clearly depicts Bearden's dignity.

In a second photograph, Bearden is showing art by another artist to three black girls and a black boy. In this shot we see Bearden's quiet reverence toward artwork. Also revealing and enlightening for all who visit the Bearden gallery in The Mint is the photo, "Romare

Bearden - Long Island Studio."

The surface of the artist's work table is well used and covered in Bearden's art supplies. Overlooking the work table is a large photograph of perhaps his grandparents. And full of joy is a shot of Bearden at the opening of his retrospective.

And etching of the Woolworth Building done in drypoint by American James Pennell (1860-1926) is of interest because Pennell was influenced by James McNeill Whistler (1834-1903). Pennell loved to create art about New

York City and said, "It's the most marvelous and endless subject on the face of the earth."

There is great variety in these art donations. Stunning is a 16th Century brass door knocker by an unknown Venetian artisan. And another showstopper is Donna Craven's stoneware "Lidden Jar" which is about three feet high and tastefully striped in two different brown values.

Making us think a bit of Pablo Picasso is the 1948 "Self Portrait" of intriguing black artist Hayward Louis

Oubre Jr. Oubre first studied at Clark Atlanta University and was the third African-American artist to earn a Master of Fine Arts degree at the University of Iowa, where he studied with Thomas Hart Benton.

Oubre's self-portrait is composed of free flowing lines forming wide eyes that border on surrealism.

Three pieces of soft paste porcelain from Derby, England are dainty fantasy creatures of pastel-colored flowers. A wall label indicates that the holes in the pieces

Please see MINT/2D

After a year off air, Delai resurfaces at WQNC radio

By Cheri F. Hodges

His father, Rick Roberts, is also a radio man.

Radio host Jaye Delai has a new show on WQNC-92.7, following the man he'd originally come to Charlotte to beat-Tom Joyner.

"When one door closed, it took me a while and it took my father really drilling it in my head, saying 'son, nobody can steal your blessings and you can't take nobody else's,"

he said. His father, Rick Roberts, is also a radio man.

Sitting in the Q 92 studio, Delai spends commercial breaks fielding calls from listeners welcoming him back to Charlotte-at least the air waves.

"You have no idea what it's like when people accept you

as part of their lives and when you're gone they miss that," he said.

After a year of hosting his own morning show on WBAV 101.9, Delai was released from his five year contract with the CBS station.

It's been about a year since he's been on the air. Delai said he needed that time to be with his family and see what he could do without radio. He started his own voice over company, but he's a radio

man. "I got a call, 'Let's get together for lunch,'" he said. "They actually told me that they wanted to call me back then, but they had some other stuff going on."

Delai said timing and grace brought him back to the airwaves in Charlotte. During his time away from the microphone, Delai said he'd received offers from other stations but he didn't want to leave Charlotte.

"I had given everything I could to my community, 1,000 percent of what I was doing and I honestly felt like I was angry. God, why? They say you get back out of the universe what you put in, why?" he said, saying that he needed to go through the anger to find his way back.

"I had to know that without radio, I could be very, very successful and do things for myself," he said.

Please see DELAI/2D

MOVIE REVIEW

New Man of Steel revives franchise in 'Superman Returns'

By Cheri F. Hodges

"Superman Returns" has single-handedly returned the franchise to its 1970s glory.

If you haven't seen the box office blockbuster, what are you waiting on?

The movie begins and forgets about Superman III and IV, which is a good thing. The Man of Steel returns after a five-year absence from Earth.

He'd thought that parts of Krypton had been found. As it turned out, the place was a graveyard.

Back on Earth, Lois Lane is angry and heartbroken that Superman left without saying goodbye. If you remember, Lois and Supes had a thing going on. She wrote a Pulitzer Prize-

winning article titled "Why the World Doesn't Need Superman." She's engaged to Richard White, son of the Daily Planet's editor and she has a son, who she doesn't mind dragging around on dangerous assignments.

Oh, and the kid is about five years old. Now, Superman isn't Superman if he doesn't have some

evil-doer to fight. Enter Lex Luthor, who's been released from prison because Superman kind of ignored his subpoena to show up and testify. How would anyone know his address anyway? But I digress. Lex, played brilliantly by Kevin Spacey, is just as evil as ever and won't hesitate to swindle an old lady out of her money; break into Superman's Fortress of Solitude or hold Lois hostage.

Lex uses secrets from Superman's world to create new land and take over the world.

It seems that he got a lot further with his scheme because Superman was too busy trying to get Lois back.

Even if the story is a little weak, "Superman Returns" is still worth seeing. Newcomer Brandon Routh plays Clark Kent brilliantly and there are

Please see SUPERMAN/2D

