

D Section

A & E



Floyd Rance and wife Stephanie Tavares-Rance of Lake Norman host the Run and Shoot Filmworks Martha's Vineyard African American Film Festival.

Cinema noir

Lake Norman residents host national festival of black filmmakers

By Cheris F. Hodges

North Carolina transplants Stephanie Tavares-Rance and Floyd Rance are champions of black filmmaking.

The couple is hosting the fourth annual Run and Shoot Filmworks Martha's Vineyard African American Film Festival and will premiere Out-Kast's "Idlewild."

The native New Yorkers, who now live in Lake Norman, started the festival in 2001 to honor the works of independent and established black filmmakers.

"We used to vacation in Martha's Vineyard a lot," said Tavares-Rance, "and saw it was a beautiful location."

When Tavares-Rance, who was working in publicity, hosted an event that showed a film, the couple saw how people flocked to see the movie. That's how they came up with an idea for the festival.

Rance, who has worked in film since he graduated from Howard University, is a successful commercial director and cinematographer.

He's shot spots for Reebok, Martell Cognac and Footlocker. His first job was on the set of Spike Lee's "Mo Better Blues."

The couple has grown the festival into one of the biggest black film festivals in the country. Tavares-Rance said many of the pieces that are shown at the festival have ended up on HBO, one of the event's sponsors.

Please see BLACK/2D

FCC reinstates NFL channel to Adelphia customers

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON - The Federal Communications Commission Wednesday ordered Time Warner Cable to reinstate the NFL Net-

work on systems the company acquired from defunct operator Adelphia Communications Inc.

The commission issued an emergency order to reinstate the network on a temporary basis

after NFL Enterprises LLC complained the network was booted without giving subscribers the required 30-day notice. The cable network is scheduled to show 54 NFL preseason games and eight

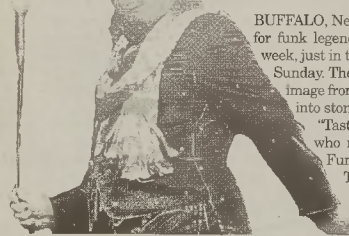
NFL regular-season primetime games this season. Preseason play begins Aug. 11.

Time Warner picked up about 3.5 million subscribers from Adelphia in western New York,

Ohio, Texas, southern California, Maine, North Carolina and South Carolina, according to the FCC records.

Funk legend Rick James' gravestone in place

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



BUFFALO, New York - The two-ton, jet-black gravestone for funk legend Rick James was hoisted into place last week, just in time for the second anniversary of his death Sunday. The Buffalo-born James lives on in his leather image from the 1981 hit album "Street Songs," etched into stone in tight pants, jacket, and guitar.

"Tasteful. Simple. Nice," said Molly Amigone, who runs the monuments division of Amigone Funeral Home.

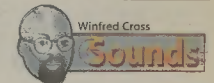
The album sold 3 million copies and made

James a superstar.

His family chose the portrait and the words on the gravestone, lyrics to a song the "Superfreak" singer never released: "I've had it all/I've done it all/I've seen it all/I'll be about love/God is love."

Older brother Carmen Sims said the monument shows the softer side of the man who once told an interviewer, "I wanted to be Rick James, wild man, party machine, lady slayer, and the cocaine told me I could."

The monument says, "I'm at peace," Sims said. James' ashes are interred at the site.



Lyfe keeps rising with sophomore 'Phoenix'

Lyfe Jennings

The Phoenix

Lyfe Jennings, producer

Sony/BMG Music



Lyfe Jennings' first CD was nearly spoiled by his need to talk between songs. Not that his life isn't interesting, but he can save the drama for a biography.

Jennings has done the same on his latest, "The Phoenix," an odd title considering his career has continued to rise since his first CD. Despite the title and chatter, Jennings offers a stunning set of meticulously crafted songs that speak volumes.

Jennings' life has been filled with tragedy and triumph, and his lyrics reflect that. He isn't afraid to share the pain or happiness through his music, which makes it worth listening. Jennings doesn't have to set up each song, but he chooses to do so. Call it therapy, self-indulgence or whatever, if keeps him writing meaningful songs, he needn't stop.

Jennings is blessed with a raspy, elastic voice that, when pushed, is very good. He's actually better at ballads, which is rare these days. "Goodbye" is a bittersweet song about a breakup. It borrows a little from Gladys Knight's "Neither One Of Us," which is a good thing. The arrangement is sparse, featuring Jennings and a piano. His vocal treatment is heartfelt and stylish. On "The River," Jennings borrows from Sam Cooke's "A Change Is Gonna Come," one of the greatest songs of the last century. Jennings uses the song as an autobiographical tool, bearing his soul to the public. It's far more effective than the 13 interludes included. It's achingly beautiful, but way too short.

The best song may be "More Than A Girl," about his current love. It gives Jennings a chance to be happy and not so introspective. That mood suits him.



Denzel and Spike make potent combination with 'Inside Man'



Inside Man Denzel Washington, Jodie Foster and Christopher Plummer Spike Lee, director Sony Home Video



Before "Inside Man," Spike Lee and Denzel Washington had not worked together since the brilliant "He Got Game." The break seems to have done both good. "Inside Man" - a well-written, superbly acted heist film - is certainly worth the wait.

This is Lee's best outing as a director in years. It's his unique stamp that makes this thriller go. His scene setup, and multiple camera angles have always been intriguing, but Lee seems to be on another level in this film.

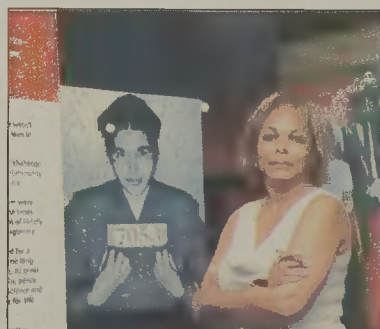
It also never hurts to have a massive cast, and Lee's

got that with this film. Oscar winner's Washington and Jodie Foster; Clive Owen, Willem Dafoe, Christopher Plummer and Chiwetel Ejiofor give fine performances - particularly, Washington, Foster Owen and Ejiofor. There's no bad performance in the bunch. Even the minor characters are strong. Particularly interesting is Amir Ali Said, a new kid that's got lots of potential.

The story is fairly conventional. What appears to be a bank heist is pulled off during which hostages are taken. Police standoffs, ridiculous demands and the chess game between hostage negotiator and kidnapper ensue. Yet it becomes clear that this heist has nothing to do with the bank full of money. There's something else that plays out at the end that lifts this very above the genre. Ground-breaking no, but very, very entertaining. That credit goes to first-time screenwriter Russell Gewirtz for throwing in nice twists to keep the film moving.

The DVD features a great conversation between Lee and Washington on their fourth outing. It's nearly worth the price of the disc to see Washington relaxed and open. Deleted scenes, a directors commentary and a "making of" feature round out the bonus stuff.

Montgomery Bus Boycott exhibit at Public Library



PHOTO/CURTIS WILSON

In celebration of Rosa Parks' legacy, the Public Library of Charlotte & Mecklenburg County is hosting the exhibit "381 Days: The Montgomery Bus Boycott Story." The exhibit was developed by the Smithsonian Institution, where Marquette Folley, above, is project director.

Ratings

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

