

D Section

Jazzed generation

Children's author builds bridges between jazz and hip hop

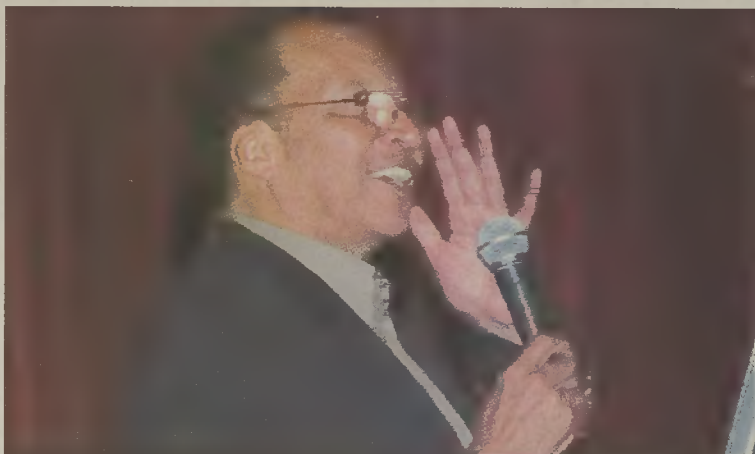


PHOTO:CALVIN FERGUSON

Children's author Walter Dean Myers uses poetry to show the history of jazz to the hip hop generation.

By Cheris F. Hodges
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Acclaimed author Walter Dean Myers wants to spread his love of jazz to the hip hop generation.

In his new book, "Jazz," illustrated by his son, Christopher Myers, Walter Dean Myers uses poetry to show the history of jazz, tracing its roots to Africa.

In a review, Booklist states: "There have been numerous picture books about jazz and jazz history over the last decade...Now, finally, the father-son Myers team has put together an absolutely airtight melding of words and pictures that is perfectly accessible..."

Myers said that was his plan.

"Sometimes books on jazz are so intellectual that they turn people off,"

the avid Louis Armstrong fan said. "In my book, I've tried to make the poetry something young people can understand."

His goal, a lofty one to say the least, is to get more young Americans to listen to something other than hip hop and pop music.

"(Jazz) is an art form that's drifting to the background," he said.

As a child growing up in 1940s Harlem, Myers said he was surrounded by jazz. He saw giants like Duke Ellington and Billie Holliday playing at the

Apollo Theatre and lived in the neighborhood with jazz musicians.

"Jazz was available when I was growing up," he said. "When I go to London, for vacation thank you very much, I know there will be more young people interested in jazz than in the U.S."

Myers also grew up with Thomas "Fats" Waller as a close friend of his family. Waller was the son of a preacher and learned to play the organ in church with his mother. He

received his big break in 1934 when he played piano at a George Gershwin party and a music executive asked him to record.

The book is a great tool for bonding jazz lovers with their children and anyone interested in this uniquely American art form. The book includes an introduction in which Myers traces jazz from its roots in Africa to America and a comprehensive glossary of jazz terms.

If the book spurs a love of jazz in young folk, Myers said start listening to Louis Armstrong, especially his early works.

"He was an innovative man. What he could do with a trumpet was so sensational," he said.

Myers said that exposing children to all aspects of black history gives them permission to be whatever they want to be.

A & E

Black women dogged by MTV

By Regan Toomer
THE PHILADELPHIA TRIBUNE

PHILADELPHIA - Some black professionals in the media industry are outraged over the MTV2 network's airing of a cartoon, which depicts Black women being led around on leashes.

They said they are also appalled that MTV, a network whose president is a black woman, would air the controversial cartoon.

The incident, which spurred instant criticism, was from the show "Where My Dogs At?"

In one episode, aired in the early afternoon, there was an appearance by a cartoon version of rapper Snoop Dogg accompanied by two bikini-clad black women in neck collars and chains.

The cartoon continued with Snoop Dogg strolling into a pet shop with the women, who hunch over on all fours and scratch themselves as he orders one of them to "hand me my latte."

At the end of the cartoon segment, the Snoop Dogg character dons a rubber glove to clean up excrement left on the floor by one of the women.

"I thought the cartoon was tasteless and immature," said National Association of Black Journalists President Bryan Monroe. "MTV should be embarrassed to have even considered showing such images, particularly in the middle of a Saturday afternoon. What were they thinking?"

Damon Roberts is the chairman of the Social Action Committee in the city. The group recently protested against Power 99 FM's airing of the former "Star and Buc Wild Morning Show."

Roberts called the MTV incident a crisis.

"This is a time of crisis in the black community," Roberts

Please see CRITICS/2D

'House' rules with drama

House, M.D.
Season 2

Hugh Laurie, Omar Epps, Jesse Spencer, Lisa Edelstein and Robert Sean Leonard
Universal Studios



Trying to improve on a spectacular first season usually leads to a disastrous sophomore slump, but such is not the case for Fox's phenomenal "House, M.D."

This show rivals Fox's "24" as the best drama on television. Writing and acting aren't separate entities. Each element is seamlessly integrated to give a viewing experience that's nearly unrivaled.

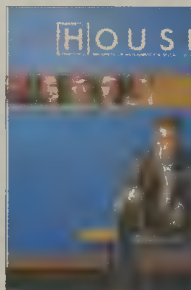
Emmy winner Hugh Laurie continues his role as Gregory House, a doctor specializing in rare infectious diseases. He's hooked on Vicodin (eats the stuff like M&Ms) and the Soap Opera Channel (reruns of "General Hospital"). He hates talking to patients unless it's to bully or harass and he terrorizes the hospital from end to end. Yet, there is a charming quality about House that makes you root for him to be right each and every time.

Laurie gets great support from Omar Epps, Jesse Spencer, and Lisa Edelstein. When each has been called upon to kick it up a notch, the results have been jaw-dropping.

"House" also works because of its busload of guest stars, which include Sela Ward, L.L. Cool J, Charles S. Dutton, Michelle Trachtenberg, and Cynthia Nixon. There must be a line of folks waiting to get on this show.

The DVD contains all 24 episodes, a blooper reel, commentary by executive producers on two episodes and "An Evening With House." The latter is a panel discussion at the Academy of Television Arts & Sciences with the cast and executive producers.

If you haven't seen "House," buy the DVD and watch "Acceptance," "No Reason," and "House Vs. God." You'll be hooked.



A RAW Affair for literary fans

By Cheris F. Hodges
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Charlotte is becoming quite the literary hub.

On the heels of the Charlotte Literary Festival, the RAWSISTAZ RAW Affair is coming to town.

In case you're wondering, RAWSISTAZ is an acronym for Reading and Writing Sisters, an online book club that was started by avid reader and literary agent Tee C. Royal in 2000. At the time, Royal was in the military and stationed in a small Alabama town. The closest book club was 30 minutes away in Birmingham. So she started an online club to connect with writers and readers.

"We started as an online group that branched out into its own entity," Royal said.

In six years, the club has become an international literary hangout with members all over the world.

The RAW Affair, the group's annual event, is in its fifth year. Each year the reunion and face to face meeting of club members and authors takes place in different cities. This is the first time the event has been to Charlotte. She chose the Queen City because "one of our biggest groups is in Greensboro," and Charlotte is close to her Atlanta home.

"This year's theme is hanging with our RAW Brothers," Royal said. "We wanted to take time to celebrate and appreciate our men."

The keynote speakers for the event are authors Vincent Alexandria, author of "Black Rain" and the coordinator of the Brother 2 Brother African American Male Literary Symposium, and Earl

Sewell, author of "The Flip Side of Money" and "When Push Comes to Shove."

New York Times best selling author Omar Tyree is also scheduled to make a guest appearance at the RAW Affair, having dinner with attendees on Friday night during the meet and greet.

Fifteen other authors, including Kathy J. Marsh of Charlotte, are scheduled to appear at the two-day event.

"The key with our event is there is no 'A-list,'" Royal said. "All anyone has to do is say 'I want to attend.'"

The event runs September 8-10 at the Embassy Suites Hotel, located at 4800 S. Tryon St.

To register, log on to www.rawsistaz-affair.com.

GALLERY REVIEW

Get to know contemporary art at Mint



PHOTO:HARRIS GALLERY

Phenomena Turn of the Tides is on display at Harris Gallery, Mint Museum of Art.

By Sandy Seawright
THE CHARLOTTE POST

Harris Gallery
Mint Museum of Art
2730 Randolph Road

A recent full-page article in the Sunday New York Times told that the Guggenheim Museum is now using eight art experts in their galleries to talk to museum-goers about the art on display.

This came about after a Guggenheim official's relative brought a group of friends to the museum and were baffled by an exhibit. The wall brochure explaining the exhibit was not sufficient. In the article, one of the art experts says people are angry at contemporary art.

Locally, the Mint Museum on Randolph Road is giving viewers the opportunity to better understand contemporary art with longer, more informative wall labels beside each artwork.

A very generous promise

gift from Mary and Jerald Melberg is the 20 foot wide "Phenomena Turn at the Tides" acrylic paint on canvas, from 1978 by the abstract painter Paul Jenkins. This uplifting painting features furled in pink, purple, green, yellow and red that would surely lift any spirit. I wonder if

Jenkins was influenced here by the late Washington, D. C., painter Morris Louis, who created beautiful striped and furled color-field canvases.

And looking fresh and very progressive for Charlotte is "Night Wing," an acrylic on wood sculpture by another Washington, D. C. artist, the late Anne Truitt, who died in 2004. This work probably gets many responses of "anybody could do that." However, the fact that it was created over six years from 1972 until 1978 as the artist wanted to

Please see MINT/2D

Ratings

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

