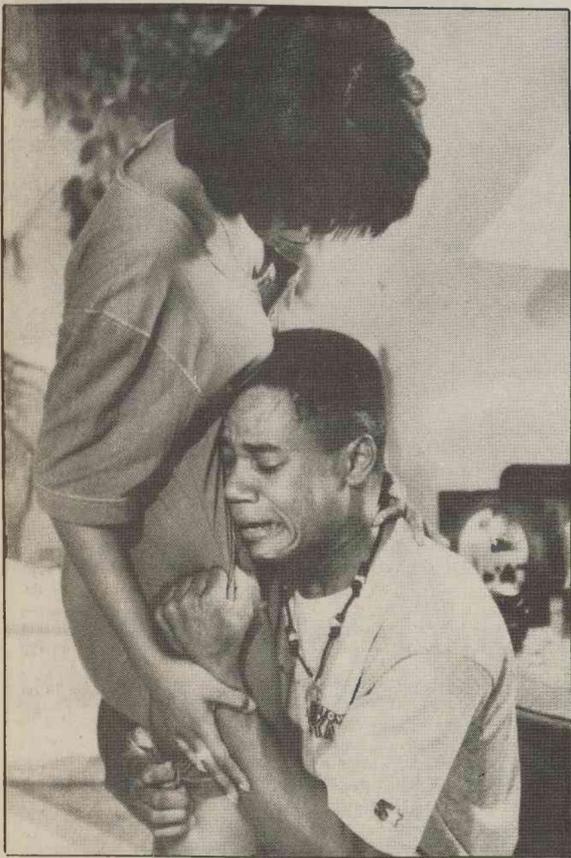


ENTERTAINMENT



Tre (Cuba Gooding Jr.) is devastated after the killing of his friend Ricky (Morris Chestnut). Tre reveals his pain in a scene with his girlfriend Brandi (Mia Long). Photo courtesy of Columbia Pictures

Players to present Dracula early Nov.

By Robert Wilkins

The University Players, Elizabeth City State University's drama troupe, will present the comedy-thriller *Dracula* on Nov. 6, 7, 8 and 10, 1991. The play will be performed each evening at 8:00 p.m. in the Little Theatre, located beside the G.R. Little Library on campus.

Dracula, based on Bram Stoker's nineteenth century novel, is a witty version of the story of a suave vampire whose passion is sinking teeth into the throats of attractive young women. Professor Van Helsing tries to save *Dracula's* latest victim, Mina. Can he do it? Or will the pretty Mina also turn into a vampire?

The Player's production, being directed by Shawn Smith, offers a fine cast of student and alumni actors. The title role will be played by newcomer Trone Gibbs, an ECSU freshman from Elizabeth City. Vincent M. Smith, a senior business major from Merritt, N.C., will portray Van Helsing. Swift last appeared with the Players as Bynum in *Joe Turner's Come and Gone*.

Senior art major Stephanie Crouail will appear as *Dracula's* prey, Mina. No stranger to the Little Theatre stage, Stephanie has performed major roles in *Hedda Gabler* and *The Lion in Winter*. Mina's boyfriend, Jonathan Harker, will be played by senior



Rose Riddick (left), Tom Williams (kneeling) and Vincent Swift will appear in the University Players' production of *Dracula* Nov. 6, 7, 8 and 10. Riddick will appear as Miss Hennessey; Williams as Renfield; and Swift as Henrich Van Helsing. Photo by Jackie Rouzre

Play Preview

marketing major Del Potter. Chester Dunton, remembered for his portrayal of Seth Holly in *Joe Turner's Come and Gone*, will play Dr. Arthur Seward, headmaster of the asylum for the insane. Returning to the Players after several years is Joycelyn Proctor as Dr. Seward's somewhat daffy sister, Sybil. Joycelyn has previously performed with the Players as Madge in *Picnic* and Abigail in *The Crucible*.

Rounding out the cast are Tom Williams as Renfield, a schizophrenic inmate, Roda D. Riddick as Miss Hennessey, the housekeeper; and Bruce Boyd as Wesley, an asylum attendant. Lisa L. Gregory is serving as assistant director and Jerald D. Robertson II is production manager. Sets, lighting and special effects are being designed by James Gibbs and Randy Berry. Susan Mahaffey is the costume.

Admission for *Dracula* is \$3.50 for the general public, \$1.50 for ECSU faculty and staff and \$1.00 for ECSU students. Tickets may be purchased at the door on the evening of performance.

For additional information regarding the production, phone the University Players' office at 335-3436 (campus extension #436).

Boyz N The Hood: a searing glimpse into shadow of the American Dream

By Ursula McMillion

On the big screen today some films are more than just entertainment; they resonate with crucial messages about the society that we live in. *Boyz N The Hood*, the feature film writing and directing debut of 23-year-old John Singleton, is such a film. Singleton signed with the well-known Creative Artists Agency while still a student at the University of Southern California.

The film opens with two staggering statistics: 'One out of 21 Black males will be murdered in their lifetime' and 'Most of them will be killed by other Black Males,' and a shot of a symbolic stop sign.

This powerful drama focuses on the life of three friends growing up in South Central Los Angeles. The audience meets these characters when they are young boys but the story primarily deals with their late teenage years. The film, according to South Central LA native, Singleton, is principally about "boys turning into men."

Tre Styles (Cuba Gooding, Jr.) is being raised by his father, Furious Styles (Larry Fishburne). Tre has befriended the neighboring Baker family boys, Doughboy (Ice Cube) and Ricky (Morris Chestnut) who do not have a father in the home.

These three characters' lives—Tre, Doughboy and Ricky—are shaped by either the presence or absence of fathers in their daily routines and the values of proper parenting. Ultimately, Tre ends up at Morehouse College and his friends end up murdered on the streets of South Central LA.

"The film has a lot of messages in it," says Singleton, "but my main message is that African-American men have to take more responsibility for raising their children, especially their boys."

Singleton employs some vividly shocking scenes in the film such as young boys discovering a decayed corpse—a victim of a shootout—while playing, babies walking in the streets while their drug-addicted mothers offer sexual favors for vials of crack and police holding guns to the head of young people for no reason.

The film develops the father figure, Furious, who espouses on manhood, cooperative economics, the U.S.

Movie Review

"The film has a lot of messages in it, but my main message is that African-American men have to take more responsibility for raising their children, especially their boys."

Director John Singleton
Boyz N The Hood

military and other hardships which plague the African-American communities. His conversations with Tre shout the importance of the father to young men.

Furious holds several intimate conversations with Tre during his adolescent years focusing on the role of the father as "King" and the son as "Prince." Topics such as sex, household duties and Furious's personal experiences of racism are revealed through these dialogues. "Any fool with a dick can make a baby, but only a man can raise his children," Furious tells Tre.

Furious also criticizes the U.S. Armed Forces for being unfair to African-American men, citing his personal experiences in the Vietnam War.

To illustrate the way African-American communities are oppressed in the United States, Furious takes Tre and Ricky during their teenage years to the Compton, CA community, which is virtually off limits to members of the South Central LA crew, to show them a billboard advertising real estate investments. As gang members and others in the community approach, Furious lectures about the system of oppression in the United States. He charges that powerholders have planted liquor stores and gun stores on each corner in African-American communities to ensure that people will get drunk and turn the guns on one another.

The movie, shot entirely on location in South Central LA, illuminates another side of this society—the lives of the people who live in the shadows of the American Dream. The film is an ironic mixture of commonplace and

the gruesome and grotesque.

During the production of the film the "LA Hood" gang members objected to actors wearing colors of other street gangs, police cars speed by in hot pursuit and police helicopters circled nearby houses.

The acting in the film was strong and believable. Key performances were given by Nia Long as Brandi (Tre's girlfriend), Tyra Ferrell as Mrs. Baker (mother of Doughboy and Ricky), Angela Bassett (Reva Styles, mother of Tre), Redge Green (Chris, paralyzed friend of Tre, Doughboy and Ricky), Desi Arnez Hine II (Tre at 10), Baha Jackson (younger Dough-

boy), Donovan McCrary (Ricky at 10) and Kenneth A. Brown (Chris at 11).

The screenplay and direction of this enlightening drama were excellent. Writer and director, John Singleton tells a poignant story about the community in which he was raised. He aims to give a realistic picture of South Central Los Angeles, which has a reputation for being poor, violent, drug-ridden.

Singleton's script points out how the media has distorted the image of the community, and shows that good people do come out of the it. He humanizes the community by portraying those who must endure this day-to-day confusion and violence and who don't get their stories on the p.m. news casts.

Three member of a South Central Los Angeles gang served as consultants to Singleton and the actors. They contributed an exceptional degree of assistance in wardrobe, realistic dialogue and inflections. Other credits include Steve Nicolaides, producer (*Stand By Me* and *Misery*), Charles Mills, cinematography (*Days of Thunder*) and Stanley Clarke, musical score (*Return to Forever*).

Boyz N The Hood is a Columbia Pictures presentation.



Furious (Larry Fishburne), Tre and Doughboy relax on the porch of a L.A. home in John Singleton's powerful film, *Boyz in the Hood*. Photo courtesy of Columbia Pictures

Boyz album reflects film's mood, themes

By Tarsha White

Album Review

A trend has developed of black films that are straightforward and streetwise—films like Spike Lee's *Do the Right Thing* and Mario Van Peebles' *New Jack City*. This trend has also resulted in an important new role for soundtrack recordings. They now must match the energy of the visuals with music taken directly from the world these new talents are portraying.

The latest and perhaps most exciting evidence of this trend, is the soundtrack to director John Singleton's critically acclaimed film, *Boyz N The Hood*. The soundtrack was released by Qwest Records, a subsidiary of A&R, under the supervision of Roaul Roach. Roach, the A&R Vice President in charge of Qwest Records, made his entry into movie music working with Quincy Jones on *The Color Purple*. He became involved with Singleton's project at an early stage.

"In late 1990 I had a chance to read the script," Roach explained, "and I started writing temporary notes and cues right on the pages as I went along. To me, the intent of John's film, its heart and soul, was evident from the very first scene. I knew the music would have to capture that same kind of authenticity. The film says, simply, 'Take a look around.' The soundtrack says, 'See what you hear.'"

The *Boyz N The Hood* album includes new material written especially for the screen by rapper Monie Love ("Work It Out"), Tony! Tone! Toni!

("Me and You"), newcomer Yo Yo ("Mama Don't Take No Mess") and the controversial 2 Live Crew ("Hangin' Out"). It also features music by Quincy Jones ("Septembro") and Tevin Campbell ("Just Ask Me To").

Several songs contain explicit lyrics. "Every Single Weekend" by KAM is a vivid song that addresses the movie's central themes and makes a powerful statement about Black stereotypes and problems. It also dramatizes one of the film's central concerns—Black on Black crimes.

"Hangin' Out" by the 2 Live Crew is typical of the group's style, although its lyrics are less harsh and shocking than those of other 2 Live Crew songs. Most Wanted, a Compton-based group, adds "Growin' Up In The Hood" a song similar to those of 2 Live Crew. It describes how rough life can be in South Central Los Angeles and the effects of poverty in a Black society. Roach says it is another example of keeping the "street feel" real. This track has been earmarked as one of the album's two initial single and video releases. Tevin Campbell's "Just Ask Me To" is the other.

In "It's Your Life" Too Short sounds like a cross between Bootsy Collins and George Clinton. It is a song about the effects of crack and other drugs on people.

Stanley Clark's "Black On Black Crime" begins by asking why is it that

there is a gun-shop on almost every corner. The song answers this question by saying it's because "they" want us to kill ourselves.

The song reflects the film's honest and unflinching approach to the problem of Black on Black violence. Rapper Ice Cube also addresses the violence found in Los Angeles' South Central section in "How To Survive In South Central." Ice Cube makes his acting debut in *Boyz N The Hood* as well.

"Just A Friendly Game of Baseball" by Main Source is a rap song that compares the "fast life" with a game of baseball in which the police are the umpires and the kids are players. This song brings a timely indictment of police brutality.

"Too Young," is an up-tempo song by the teenaged group Hi-Five, who scored a hit with "The Kissing Game." Hi-Five uses singing as well as rapping by group members in this song. It is different from other Hi-Five songs in that it deals with adult subject matter. The music is different also because it sounds more like hip hop than R&B. The song shows life as viewed by a younger person, who says that he is too young to even try to get his point across although he is mature and intelligent enough to make decisions.

Force One Network is an Oakland-based group Roaul Roach describes as "a hip hop version of Earth, Wind, & Fire." Their song, "Spirit (Does Anybody Care?)" combines hip hop energy mixed with classic soul," he says. The song's thought-provoking

lyrics cover the theme of brotherhood a theme echoed in Tevin Campbell's "Just Ask Me To." Campbell is the phenomenal 14-year-old whose debut album is being produced by Al I Sure for Qwest Records. "Just Ask Me To" will also be released on Campbell's album. The song explores one of the movie's themes—be there for your friends in times of need.

Yo Yo's "Mama Don't Take No Mess," which is based on an Commodores tune, reveals the singer's rapping talents. Her style mixes rap with hard soul music and R&B.

"Work It Out" by Monie Love is a fast-paced song with an interesting beat. The lyrics are in the high speed reggae-style which is Monie Love's trademark.

"Septembro" by Quincy Jones is one of the two slower-paced R&B songs on the album. This song was composed especially for the tragic scenes of the movie, and is most instrumental. The other R&B number is Tony! Tone! Toni!'s "Me and You." It takes the listener's mind off of the problems that are presented on the soundtrack for awhile and adds a romantic feeling.

Overall, the soundtrack to *Boyz N The Hood* is great. Although many of the songs contain explicit lyrics the deal with the serious problem of Black on Black crimes.

This album is excellent not only because its songs deal with real life problems, but also because the music is outstanding and well worth listening to.

Crouail's art show expresses sadness, beauty

By Sharon Chappell

Art Review

Stephanie Crouail, a senior art major from La Rochelle, France, displayed her senior art in the Johnson Hall art gallery Oct. 2 through 11.

The facial features on Crouail's drawings were exceptionally well done. Technically speaking, the shadows and highlights could not have been better. The hair of each person, however, in contrast, was drawn very simply as if not to compete with the face.

The drawing of the old face was

the inherent sadness in the other pieces, the effect of the "spills" was like viewing tears.

Stephanie's work had a beautiful but sad quality. In her art show brochure she explained that to her "everything in life is beautiful, especially sorrow, because it exposes someone's soul."

Crouail's largest painting was a visual demonstration of this philosophy of color. It consisted of five panels. Several sad faces looked out from the surface of the panel. In one corner a child with fearful, anxious eyes was

looking through a fence. He looked forlorn as if he was about to give up.

And yet the scene was obviously not real. The skin of each face was made up of individual brush strokes of different colors—red, green, blue, yellow and orange. The eyes were drawn more realistically except for the colors used. The eyes were either red or teal green.

Crouail used this technique for all of her paintings. Only a few faces had dark blue eyes.

Crouail achieved her aim of beauty and sensitivity.