

# BEHIND THE SCENES

with Lisa Collins



Cole Davis Rolle Jackson

**Natalie Cole Sets Date For Lavish Wedding:** The date is September 17, and a computerized list is being used to rack the 400 guests who will attend the nuptials, and hear Natalie Cole repeat her "I Do's" to record producer, Andre Fischer. "I'm truly excited," said Cole. "There's still so much left to do." It's been somewhat of a whirlwind seven-month relationship for the couple who actually met some 15 years ago. They met again last October, when he contacted her office to submit some material for her next album. Fischer began his career as the drummer for Rufus, and most recently produced Brenda Russell's last project, "Plano in the Dark," as well as two of the cuts off Natalie's latest LP. The two began dating after hitting it off at the NAACP Awards in mid-December. On the 10th of February, he proposed. This will be the second marriage for Cole, who has one son, Robbie.

**On The Home Front:** By the time you read this, newlyweds Nia Peeples and Howard Hewitt will have more than likely given birth to their firstborn. Nia was two days away from her scheduled delivery when I saw them at a star-studded recording session, hosted by Nancy Wilson. Wilson wanted "Heaven's Hands," one of the songs from her upcoming LP, to have a gospel choir sound, so she called on a few of her friends for support. Those turning out for the session included Deniece Williams, Little Anthony, Natalie Cole, Teena Marie, Sandra and Andre Crouch, Phillip Bailey, Shaunce Wilson, Sledah Garrett, and Freda Payne. Unfortunately, you'll have to wait until September when the album is released to hear how it all turned out.

**Big Women/Men Get The Call:** The word is out. Producers of a sure bet for a new one-hour series, "American Gladiators," are launching a nationwide search for men and women to play gladiators. However, to qualify men must be 6'1" - 6'5", 190 to 250 pounds, while women should be between 5'7" and 5'10". If you're interested, send a photo and resume to American Gladiators, 11755 Wilshire Boulevard, Suite 850, Los Angeles, CA 90028. The show, which will debut in syndication on September 9, has already cleared over 70% of the country.

**The Darker Side Of Sammy Davis, Jr.:** What many of us once thought of as horrible rumors were confirmed in a newly released book by Sammy Davis, Jr., titled "Why Me?" The book, released earlier this month, details Sammy's one-time obsession with pornography and porn queen Linda Lovelace, and even a short stint with Satanism. The book also tells of numerous marital affairs and his involvement with drugs. All this to show how one entertainer handled his obsession to stay on top? The book, however, draws on conclusions. Perhaps the real question should be -- why us?

**What's become of the Sisters Sledge?** The group that topped the 70's with such hits as "We Are Family" is indeed still intact, having just returned from touring Europe. The sisters who now, for the most part, make their homes in Los Angeles, are in process of recording a new LP. **Short Takes:** Michael Jackson's latest project just may be a movie based on the life of the great black Russian poet, Alexander Pushkin. Pushkin, who died in 1837, is one of Russia's literary greats. Of course, Jackson would have the title role, and word is he envisions the project to be a joint effort between the United States and Russia. . . **Ester Rolle is back before the cameras** in Atlanta, shooting a film called "Driving Miss Daisy" which also stars Morgan Freeman and Jessica Tandy. . . **Next week: Find out why superstardom has eluded Atlantic Starr.**

## The Sharp Style Of Kool Genius Of Rap

Rapping is a word that has been a part of Afro-American vocabulary for a long time. It is rooted in the praise songs, social satires and boasting of West African riots, the courtship conversations of slavery time romantics, Bo Diddley's "Say Man" and Melvin Van Peebles' "The Dozens," or comedy routines like Richard Pryor's "I Spy Cops," among other examples.

Since the late 1970s, the term rapping has come to be associated with rhythmic talking over a funky beat, with a support base growing out of the heritage of scratching, breakdancing and graffiti art.

Kool G. Rap, an artist signed to the Cold Chillin' label, is one of the best contemporary rappers on the scene today.

Born Nathaniel T. Williams on July 20, 1968, Kool G. Rap got his name from Kool Genius of Rap, but recently changed it because he thought it was "corny," not current. A native of Elmhurst, Queens, New York, he got involved in rap music in 1986

when his homeboy Eric B. released "Eric B. for President," and Kool asked him to get him a break in the music business.

Eric B. introduced Kool G. to D. J. Polo and rap producer Marley Marl. Out of this association came early records like "Polo Beats," and the classic "It's A Demo," an autobiographical number with a James Brown "Funky Drummer" backbeat.

Kool G. credits L. L. Cool J., Rakim, and Melle Mel with his present style. The former are smooth and mellow, and the latter, what Kool G. calls, "hard." His style cuts like "Road To Riches," is a combination of the hard and smooth rap traditions. With "It's A Demo" and "Road To Riches" under his belt, Kool G. Rap's upcoming LP, **I Declare War**, features more autobiographical hard core rhymes, and other tunes, described by Kool as, "sharp, attractive, catchy and brief..." Go for it!



Kool G. Rap & D.J. Polo

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