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Actor writes for kids' esteem

By Victoria Elmore THE CHARLOTTE POST

Hill Harper has written an inspirational guidebook for young men.

"Letters to a Young Brother" is a book of letters and e-mails that Harper received from young men from all over the country.

Harper stars in the CBS hit series "CSI:New York." The seasoned veteran works his talents on stage, film, and television.



Harper

When Harper is not on stage, he is fulfilling a more rewarding job—speaking to young men. Through the Big Brothers organization in Los Angeles, he takes the opportunity to reach out to young males in high school and college.

After speaking with so many, Harper realized the need for mentors.

"I needed to write a book that would serve as mentorship for young men," he said.

Harper said when he was growing up his grandfathers mentored and encouraged him along the way. He hopes to do the same with young men by setting an example as a positive role model.

"I can be to young men what my grandfathers in their infinite wisdom were and continue to be to me," Harper said.

Even his name lies in his grandfathers' wisdom.

Please see ACTOR/2D



PHOTO/CUSH CITY.COM

Novelist Zane is in the forefront of taking erotica to the mainstream.

Beyond romance

Novelist Zane is a catalyst in growing erotic genre

By Chris F. Hodges THE CHARLOTTE POST

Take one look at best selling erotic author Zane and you'll wonder if a woman with a face that innocent can pen novels like "Addicted," "Nervous" and "The Heat Seekers."

Talk to Zane, the pen name for Kristin LaFerne Roberts, and you still wonder if a woman that soft-spoken could be the catalyst to moving erotic books to the front of retail stores on the same display as Harry Potter.

But she did it and is proud of it.

"That's the one thing I

will take credit for," Zane said about the mainstreaming of erotica. "When I first started writing, most erotic books were still housed in the tiny section of the bookstore or hidden away. It shocked me the first time that I walked into a bookstore and (immediately) saw 'The Sex Chronicles.'"

That was almost as shocking as finding out that her minister father had read "Nervous" and thought it was brilliant. "I knew what he meant when he said it was brilliant, but all of the sex scenes just flashed through my mind,"

Zane said.

It's not that Zane's ashamed of anything she's written, but come on, it's her dad. Zane believes women relate to what she writes because many have those fantasies.

"I write characters that I believe a lot of women would be if they didn't have that fear of being judged or have the label of being a whore," Zane said. "The freedom that they would have if we didn't live in a disease ridden society. Characters in books could get away with anything."

Though it's the sex that sells Zane's books, they

have messages and that's her purpose.

She said that each book she challenges herself to write about characters that people can identify with and to send a message to the reader.

With her latest novel "Afterburn," the message was about life being too short to waste time.

"You can be going along and life could be going good and that's just it," she said.

"Afterburn's" main characters — Yardley and Rayne — see each other on a daily basis, but assume the other is taken. By the time they

See EROTICA/2D

GALLERY CRAWLS

Any taste and any place, Charlotte has exhibits

By Sandy Seawright THE CHARLOTTE POST

One of Charlotte's great cultural traditions happens the first Friday of the month. The gallery crawl is a great way to see new art and perhaps meet other art lovers.

And the big news is that not every great gallery here participates in every or any gallery crawls.

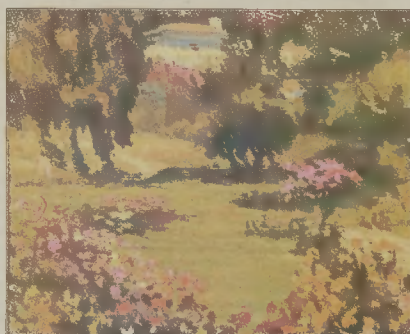
Here are the best places to crawl Friday, most from 6-9 p.m.

• In South End, one of Charlotte's most exciting galleries is Joie Lassiter Gallery in a new location 1440 South Tryon St., Suite 104, near Camden Road. Lassiter, a

native of England who has worked in New York City art galleries, shows very exciting cutting edge contemporary art.

April should continue that tradition as the gallery presents "Judy Pfaff: Recent Works." Her prints are inspired by Indian Sanskrit ledger books. The artist also applies encaustic paint and fabric dyes to her prints. Call (704) 373-1464 for more information. The gallery has a parking lot across the street.

• Ride over to modern gallery, 1923-A South Blvd and enjoy the "Lyrical Abstractions" of Linda Luise. Please see GALLERY/2D



PAINTING/LARRY ELDER

Van Stein's "Rose Garden" is on exhibit at Elder Gallery.

Hip-hop powerhouse couple decides to split

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK—The marriage of hip-hop mogul Russell Simmons and his model-turned-entrepreneur wife, Kimora Lee, has come to an end.

In a statement provided to The Associated Press on Friday, Simmons announced the pair had decided to break up after seven years of marriage. Rumors had swirled for the past week that a split was imminent. The couple, who

live in Saddle River, N.J., have two young daughters.

"Kimora and I will remain committed parents and caring friends with great love and admiration for each other," Simmons said. "We will also continue to work side by side on a daily basis as partners in all of our businesses."

Simmons is head of Rush Communications, but is perhaps better known as the founder of Def Jam Records and for his Phat Farm clothing

line. In recent years, he has become more involved in politics, and helped to create the Hip-Hop Summit Action Network.

Over the years, Kimora Lee Simmons has become almost as famous as her husband, thanks to her successful Baby Phat clothing line and her glamorous diva persona, which has been documented in numerous magazine spreads.



PHOTO/URB1.COM

Russell Simmons and wife Kimora Lee are splitting up.

Adult porn moves mainstream, some fight to stop the trend

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK—The industry's VIPs mingle at political galas and Super Bowl parties. Their product is available on cell phones, podcasts, and particularly the Internet—there it's an attraction like no other, patronized by tens of millions of Americans.

It's pornography. And if you're a consumer, John Harmer thinks you're damaging your brain.

Harmer is part of a cadre of anti-porn activists seeking new tactics to fight an unprecedented deluge of porn which they see as wrecking countless marriages and warping human sexuality. They are urging federal prosecutors to pursue more obscenity cases and raising funds for

high-tech brain research that they hope will fuel lawsuits against porn magnates.

"We don't think it's a lost cause," said Harmer, a Utah-based auto executive and former politician who's been fighting porn for 40 years.

"It's the most profitable industry in the world," he said. "But I'm convinced we'll demonstrate in the not-too-distant future the actual physical harm that pornography causes and hold them financially accountable. That could be the straw that breaks their back."

The activists' adversary is a sprawling industry that, by some counts, offers more than 4 million porn sites on the Internet, that in the United States alone is estimated to

be worth \$12 billion a year. A tracking firm, comScore Media Metrix, says about 40 percent of Internet users in the United States visit adult sites each month.

Porn products are featured at popular sex expositions and retail chains such as Hustler Hollywood. Major hotels provide in-room porn, and adult film stars are now mainstream celebrities. Mary Carey attended a VIP Republican fund raiser in Washington in mid-March; Jenna Jameson's "How to Make Love Like a Porn Star" hit the best-seller lists and she hosted a racy pre-Super Bowl party in Detroit in February.

As much as there is national consensus on the evils of child pornography, there is

none whatever on porn featuring adults and marketed to them. It's more pervasive than ever, yet activists and experts disagree bitterly over the extent of harm it causes.

"The form of entertainment is no problem," said Paul Cambria, general counsel for the porn industry's Adult Freedom Foundation. "There are individuals who are going to react abnormally to normal material, but it's not a problem for the average person."

For every couple driven apart by porn, there are others whose relationship is enlivened, Cambria argued. He dismissed contentions that porn is highly addictive or brain-damaging.

"Some people lie about it," Cambria said. "It's their way



Rawls CD is legend at best

Lou Rawls The Best of Lou Rawls: The Capitol Jazz & Blues Sessions Various Producers Blue Note Records



Most will remember the late Lou Rawls for his string of R&B hits that include "Natural Man," "Lady Love," "Groovy People" and "You'll Never Find (A Love Like Mine)," but he was a much more diverse entertainer.

Rawls was a member of The Soul Stirrers - even replacing Sam Cooke as lead singer. He also was also an accomplished blues and jazz singer.

Blue Note Records is honoring Rawls' memory with a 20-song set of memorable jazz and blues recordings. Actually, most of this stuff could be considered big band, but I quibble.

After reacquainting myself with this side of Rawls, it's easy to see why Frank Sinatra was such a big fan. Rawls' voice is truly something special. That rumbling baritone could handle any genre of music but its jazzy side is a thing of beauty. His reading of "God Bless The Child" is nearly breathtaking for its clarity and depth. When Rawls moves to the swinging "Nobody But Me," you can nearly picture Sinatra nodding in approval.

"Fine & Mellow" and "Long Gone Blues" have a big band backing but the lyrics let you know this is pure blues. On "Long Gone," Rawls tells his lady "I've been your baby/But before I see you go/I'll see you in your grave." I know, not terribly PC, but entertaining in a low brow sort of way.

The highlight of this CD is Rawls doing "Georgia On My Mind." No doubt, this was Ray Charles' signature, but Rawls handles it with such finesse he nearly steals Charles' thunder.

I'd call "Motherless Child" more gospel and "Let's Burn the Cornfield Down" more funk than blues or jazz, but that doesn't stop either from being good. Rawls fans will be pleased. Casual listeners looking to learn more about his astounding career may be surprised. But both groups will get their money's worth.

Ratings

Classic:	★★★★★
Excellent:	★★★★★
Good:	★★★★
Fair:	★★★
Why?	★★
No stars - A mess	★

Please see PORN/2D