

Governor puts the blues in R&B

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all my life. When I knew what passion was, I knew that I had a passion for music," he said.

On his album, "Son of Pain," which will be released September 12, Governor said he pays homage to different genres of music.

"It's different mental pictures of different scenarios in life. It's not preachy, but it's

honest. People can relate to it," he said.

On his web site, GovernorWorld.com, his gritty "On My Way" plays and introduces listeners to his struggle to make it.

Mirroring his personality, Governor's music is conscious without the pretentious airs usually associated with it. On "Be Yourself," a Jeep-banger with a Compton bounce, Governor, with the pious conviction of a southern minister, charges us to indulge in self-love and self-acceptance. The instant vintage "Winning," which sounds like a copulation between Sade and Jodeci, has the genre-busting singer/songwriter evoking sheer emotional truth. Here, he questions his woman's loyalty and her opportunist motives for loving him. The

slightly off-kilter, keyboard-driven "Under Pressure" begins with Governor hollering, "It's sad when you got an image with no message!" Sounding like that cool teacher in elementary school, it's the closest he comes to the philosophy of one of his musical heroes, KRS-One. It's also the closest he comes to rapping.

Hunt a hitmaker - if he can point to when

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penned for Dionne Farris for the soundtrack of the 1997 movie "Love Jones."

Though he was succeeding as a songwriter and producer, it took some convincing from Jackson and others to put himself in the spotlight. His reluctance to become a performer was mixed with the fear of not being good enough. "I knew that there was a lot of work I needed, as far as vocally," he says with a non-

chance that marks his persona. "To try and learn how to be a singer, a really good guitar player, a really good pianist, it's always lagged a bit behind learning to be the best songwriter I could possibly be because songwriting comes naturally to me. I have to push myself to practice singing. I just felt, if I couldn't do it as well as Stevie (Wonder) or Sly (Stone), what's the point?"

But in Hunt, Jackson saw

promise that one day he could become as great as those legends.

"I think that his big ship is on its way in," Jackson says. "It's going to come in at any second."

Jackson isn't the only one who feels that way. None other than Prince gave Hunt his royal blessing, and even invited him to his purple palace in Hollywood to perform.

There are still the occasion-

al frustrations. During a recent tour with soul singers Anthony Hamilton and Heather Headley, Hunt at times was out of his element; the crowd skewed older and came to hear the silky, old-school soul of the headliners. At times, Hunt would placate the audience by playing some of his smoother soul songs; at other times, he and his band would just rock out onstage, oblivious to who was watching.

Jennings' 'Phoenix' details growth and issues

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make you mad. But if your purpose is right, it's not that you won't get mad but you put that anger in the right place."

On the business end, Lyfe said that he's learned that relationships are key, especially those with radio stations and the like.

"That energy that you would use to be mad is what you use to see how can I hold this audience or how can I pull a new audience," he said.

In other words, rise from the flames like a phoenix.



Lyfe Jennings performs to a standing room only crowd at Club Tempo. His new album drops August 15th.

Oprah says she and King are not lesbians

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK—Oprah Winfrey and her friend Gayle King want to be clear they are not gay.

In the August issue of O, the Oprah Magazine, the talk-show host explains that some people misunderstand her close friendship with King.

"I understand why people think we're gay," she says.

"There isn't a definition in our culture for this kind of bond between women. So I get why people have to label it—how can you be this close without it being sexual?"

In a long article, Winfrey,

52, and King converse about their 30 years of friendship and "four-times-a-day phone calls." King, who hosted "The Gayle King Show" in 1997, is an editor of O, the Oprah Magazine.

The two friends say they would have no problem telling the public if they were in a sexual relationship.

"The truth is, if we were

gay, we would tell you, because there's nothing wrong with being gay," says King.

Says Winfrey, "Something about this relationship feels otherworldly to me, like it was designed by a power and a hand greater than my own. Whatever this friendship is, it's been a very fun ride."

On the Net:
www.oprah.com/omagazine/om_ag_landing.jhtml

Debbie Allen interview on TV One

SPECIAL TO THE POST

Dancer, actress, singer, producer, choreographer and businesswoman Debbie Allen offers host Cathy Hughes a revealing glimpse into the key to her extraordinary success and what's next on the horizon on "TV One on One" July 28 at 8 p.m.

Allen credits much of her success to her upbringing by accomplished yet nurturing parents, who encouraged her and her siblings, including sister Phylicia Rashad, to be creative, independent and willing to work hard to achieve goals. Her mother, Vivian Ayres, was an accomplished poet, pianist and painter, in addition to being a librarian at Rice University, and her father was a dentist who loved the arts.

"But Momma was always — always about books with us," Allen said. "Books were a big part of our lives, and poetry and music. And she identified in each one of us what we might aspire to, and she pushed us in that direction."

She graduated from Howard University, after being denied admission at the North Carolina School of Art because she was told she had the wrong "body type." After college, she quickly became a success on Broadway, including a Tony-nominated role in West Side Story. But she credits her role in the TV series, Fame, as her biggest breakthrough.

"But I think what really took me to the world of dance was Fame, because when I did the television series, I came into that show as the choreographer and playing Lydia Grant, knowing I wasn't going to really be the star of the show.

Allen told Hughes, "I just wanted to do the choreography. And then it all changed because I could really sing, and I could really dance. And then I had this gang of fantastic young people that I brought [into the series] including Gene Anthony Ray and Jasmine Guy. While at Howard, she came across the story of The Amistad, and became passionately committed to seeing the true story of the slave revolt made into a film. It took 18 years

before the film was produced, in Allen's collaboration with Stephen Spielberg.

The director talks about some of her latest projects, The Fantasia Barrino Story, in which the inspiring American Idol winner plays herself; and Tournament of Dreams, where she plays a principal arguing for more arts education.

The TV One on One Debbie Allen interview will repeat on July 30 at 5 p.m., and August 1 at 1 p.m.

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