

A&E

THURSDAY, MARCH 8, 2007
SECTION D



Can't get read on encyclopedia

Various Artists
Encyclopedia Of Soul, Vol. 1
Various producers
Unlimited Media



Carrying a title of "Encyclopedia of Soul" would be a tall order for any CD, but one that doesn't use the original recordings is doomed to fail.

So is the sad story of volume one of this encyclopedia. The lineup isn't bad. Any CD with Aretha, The Four Tops, The Supremes, Kool & The Gang and Nina Simone has got some history for sure.

But you better make sure the group lineup is the one cherished by fans and not the flavor of the month. Diana Ross is not singing on "My World Is Empty Without You." I don't know who it is, but it ain't Miss Ross.

Actually, the only original versions of these songs are those by Barry White and Aretha. "Let The Music Play" and "You're The First, The Last, My Everything" are true to form and sound as good as ever. "Think" and "Don't Play That Song" are truly part of American music history, along with anything Aretha's ever done.

Sam & Dave, The Commodores, Martha Reeves and the Three Degrees also have songs that were either recorded live or remade with different group members.

There are also some very odd group and song choices. I like the Doobie Brothers, yet "Long Train Running" isn't what I'd call soul. It's soulful rock, and it also isn't the original version. Gloria Gaynor is a soul singer no doubt, but she was in the disco genre. Again, these are not the original versions of her songs. Kool & The Gang's "Jungle Boogie" or "Hollywood Swinging" would have been perfect. A live version of the pop classic "Cherish" is not.

Ratings	
Classic:	☆☆☆☆
Excellent:	☆☆☆☆
Good:	☆☆☆☆
Fair:	☆☆☆☆
Why?:	☆☆☆☆
No stars A mess	



'Girlfriends' grow on you

Girlfriends
Complete
First Season
Tracee Ross, Golden Brooks,
Jill Marie Jones and Persia White
Paramount Home Video



I moaned after watching the first episode of "Girlfriends" back in 2000. Is this the best representation of black women we can get in the new millennia?

Actually, it turned out to be pretty good. Seven seasons and a new network later, the show is still surviving.

Still, it's fun to go back and see how much these characters have grown or changed. Joan (Tracee Ellis Ross) is still waiting for the right man but it isn't as big a focus as it was the first season. Her life's ambition seemed to be married with a house full of kids. Well, until she thinks she's pregnant and all the stuff about a family getting in the way of a career comes into play. Maya (Golden Brooks) was Joan's haughty secretary and friend who didn't seem to fit in with the girls. Her relationship with Toni (Jones), or lack thereof, was certainly a source of laughter.

Then there's Lynn (Persia White) who really can't be defined. It doesn't matter that she has no purpose, job, or structured life, or, well, I could go on. She fits.

The first season was dicey. It looked as if it was only going to be about man-chasing, but on occasion something of substance appears. The most poignant was Toni's decision not to date a dark-skinned man fearing it would lead to marriage and producing a child.

Live 'Wire' buzzes with urban grit – like it or not

By Cheris F. Hodges
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HBO's gritty drama "The Wire" may be a fan favorite, but according to two actors, the mayor of Baltimore isn't a fan.

But his wife is. "The mayor of Baltimore right now hates us," said Andre Royo, who plays Bubbles, a drug addict on the show. "But his wife loves us and when they see us, his wife is like 'ooh, The Wire' and he's like get your (behind) over here."

Now in its fourth season, "The Wire" is one of the most watched shows on HBO.

Corey Parker-Robinson, who plays Detective Leander Sydnor, said the show offers a look at the top and bottom of Baltimore and provides a lesson to viewers.

The show received two NAACP Image Award nominations this year.

"It's not just a TV show about entertainment," said Royo. "There's a little education and social factor. (People) appreciate the truth. One thing that people say about the show all the time is that it's very real and we get it. It speaks to us and that's very rare on television."

Robinson said "The Wire" shows that you reap what you sow.

"It shows all those negative things and if you're so into doing negative, you're going to reap those negative aspects," he said.

Royo added that just as it takes a village to raise a child, it takes that same village to destroy the neighborhood. "Everything plays a part in the



Royo

destruction or the beauty of it and I think 'The Wire' really makes sure it crosses those lines and shows how each piece plays a part."

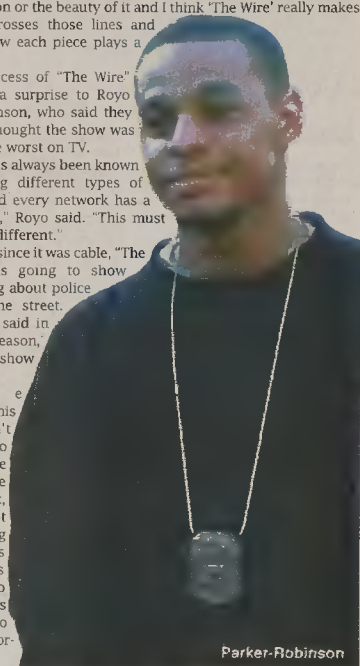
The success of "The Wire" came as a surprise to Royo and Robinson, who said they initially thought the show was one of the worst on TV.

"HBO has always been known for having different types of shows and every network has a cop show," Royo said. "This must be really different."

He said since it was cable, "The Wire" was going to show everything about police life on the street.

But Royo said in the first season, it didn't show anything.

"We thought this show ain't going to last, we don't have any sex, we're not blowing people's brains out," Royo said. "This is going to be real boring."



Parker-Robinson

Please see THE/2D



CHARLOTTE SYMPHONY

Terrence Wilson will play with the Charlotte Symphony March 16-17.

Music always close to classical pianist's soul

By Cheris F. Hodges
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Terrence Wilson has always been surrounded by music. When the concert pianist was 5 years old, he played Stevie Wonder songs by ear.

His interest in classical music was sparked at age 8 when he discovered by chance a New York classi-

cal radio station. Whenever he had a piano available to him, he seized the opportunity to perform, astonishing his teachers and family with the ease with which he could play pieces he heard on the radio or on recordings.

And a piano was always around because Wilson's grandfather was a pastor who had a piano at his

Please see WILSON/2D

Lloyd growing into recent R&B success

By Brandi Woodson
THE CHARLOTTE POST

Vibe Hoops -N- Hip Hop Tour made its first stop at Johnson C. Smith University with basketball demonstrations and live performances by hip-hop artists.

Featured R&B artist Lloyd sang from his debut album "Street Love" due to be released March 13. Students screamed his name as he picked an audience member to be part of his act.

Lloyd spent time at Eastland Mall, Power 98 and 96.1 the Beat, where he chatted with fans and promoted his upcoming album and hit song "You" featuring Lil Wayne. Fans also had the opportunity to meet Lloyd face to face at Manifest Disc and Tapes on South Boulevard.

Lloyd Polite Jr. was born in New Orleans. His father died when Lloyd was 2. He moved to Atlanta, where his career began to take off. "I had my first record deal when I was 10 years old and put out my first album when I was 12 years old with his group N-Toon," Lloyd said. "I then went on to sign my first solo deal with Magic Johnson's music group."

Lloyd's success only increased as he released another album "Southside" with The Inc. Records. Now 21, Lloyd owns his own label, Young-Goldie Music.

With his beginnings in the church, Lloyd has always understood the power of music and the command it has on his life. He has been involved in giving back by helping others.

"My friends at home look to me as a hope," said Lloyd. "So I hope to eventually go back and bring them along for the ride, but it starts with me and it starts with 'Street Love.'"

Traveling and performing brought difficulties in school but Lloyd found ways to continue his education through completion. "At one point in time it was hard and I did home-school for a while," said Lloyd.

Lloyd says he has no regrets and hopes to one day attend college. "I love what I do," he said. "College is to help find what it is you want to do and perfect it, but I found what I want to do and have been perfecting it since I was a kid so I'm glad that I do what I do."

As a young artist, Lloyd has the adoration of fans, especially females. With hundreds of hits daily on his MySpace page, he says he loves the attention. "The only bad side is having to watch what I do, and not be able to

Please see LLOYD/3D

Shhh – New Edition tour quietly rolls into town

By Cheris F. Hodges
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The last stop on the New Edition world tour is in Charlotte.

But the fellas, Ronnie, Johnny, Ricky, Mike and Ralph (possibly Bobby Brown) aren't talking.

Talk about disappointing.

New Edition was hot about 20 years ago. Sure they sell out concerts, but they don't have an album coming out-or do they?

Their fans won't know because their people say they ain't talking.

Keith Sweat is on the ticket with NE. He's not talking either. Are you kidding me? In the early 1990s, Sweat was the man. His begging was heard on every station. But lately his music has been forgettable. Yet he's not doing interviews? Please!

What's on the horizon for Sweat? Who knows, because he's not talking.

I'm as big of a fan of these acts as anyone, but guys-Prince you ain't.

The show is sure to be lovely. New Edition put on a great show at Verizon Wireless Amphitheater in 2005. They're three acts rolled into one group. But they're not musical geniuses. Sure they have fans that will show up holding their "Candy Girl" album (yes album) from 1983, but that doesn't mean they don't have to talk and let people know what's going on.

The New Edition World Tour rolls into Charlotte on March 16 at



New Edition at a more talkative time in Columbia last year

Cricket Arena at 8 p.m.

Tickets range from \$49.50 to \$39.50 and can be purchased at the Cricket Arena box office, Ticketmaster at (704) 522-6500 or online at www.ticketmaster.com.

