

CLIK

America's #1 Black Gay Lifestyle, news, Entertainment, Fashion, and Travel

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SEXY LOOKS THAT ROCK

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UNRAVELLING THE BALLROOM LEGEND

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CANCELLED

Is The Announcement Of A Movie Just
A Smoke Screen To Pacify The Black
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Los Angeles

A CALL FOR A NATIONAL HOLIDAY

National Black LGBTQ Week

Community Calendar
February 12-18, 2007

MONDAY,

February 12, 2007

Media Day/ Press Conference

4067 W. Pico Blvd., LA, CA 90019

To contact the organizers, (323) 733-4868

TUESDAY,

February 13, 2007

Community Town Hall @ In The Meantime

4067 W. Pico Blvd., LA, CA 90019, Time: 7:30 PM

Book reading and signing with Leroy Richardson III, Art Collector and author of *Black Hollywood Tragedies*.

*Start this day by giving thanks for your history, herstory and the journey of our people with a focus on Black LGBTQ people. Examine yourself to see how much you know about your history/herstory and commit or recommit to learning more.

WEDNESDAY,

February 14, 2007

Club Metro/ Ivan Daniel Productions "We Want Freedom"

Time: 10:00 PM – 2PM

661 N. Robertson Blvd, Los Angeles, CA 90067

*Start your day by giving thanks for who we are. Make a commitment to recognize the good in you each day that you rise and at night before you close your eyes to sleep.

Soulful Salon

The Black Artist Collective

Vendors, Panel, Performance, Exhibit & Reception

4067 W. Pico Blvd., LA, CA 90019, Time: 7:00 PM- 10:00 PM

*Start your day by giving thanks for the blessings in your life and make a contribution to a Black owned business and strive to support Black LGBTQ organizations through volunteering and/or financial contributions.

THURSDAY,

February 15, 2007

FRIDAY,

February 16, 2007

Day of Reflection

*Spend an hour alone in a quiet space at home, after or before work, at the beach, or in the park, and allow yourself to reflect back on this week's experiences.

SATURDAY,

February 17, 2007

The Catch One, Celebrate Liberation

Time: 10:00PM – 4:00AM

4067 W. Pico Blvd., LA, CA 90019

*Spend time out in places where Black LGBTQ people congregate. Party at the clubs and embrace your people with love and respect.

SUNDAY,

February 18, 2007

Caliente, Unity Black Tie Affair

Cocktails, Dinner, Dancing / Event Coordinator, Egypt Thompson 818-415-6903

Sportsmen's Lodge, 12833 Ventura Blvd. Studio City, CA 91604

*This is the day of Coming Out, prayer, chanting and/or meditation for the healing and illumination of Black people. This day is also for the open inclusion of Black LGBTQ people all over the world. This is a day to tell someone that you are Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual, Transgender, or still Questioning.



Letter² the EDITOR

I know you don't have time to write to everyone who responds to you, but I have to say I personally think you have done an excellent job as Editor-In-Chief! From the first time I saw it on the stands of a little store in D.C. during Black Pride week, I've been hooked. I am probably not your normal average reader. I am 41, married to the same man for just about 10 years and we've adopted 1 child and are working on a second.

I was just so excited to see a magazine where I can see myself in. Sort of like Noah's Ark. We, as black people rarely get to see ourselves in any form of media realistically. That's why I love your magazine and I will continue to be a subscriber, even with the bumps (lol). It's ok, because it just keeps getting better.

I will be looking for the next issue and wish you all the best and THANK YOU!

Pete Prescott,
Washington DC

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**FEBRUARY
2007**

CLiK

Featured Model:
**Christopher
Goodwin
AKA Chico**

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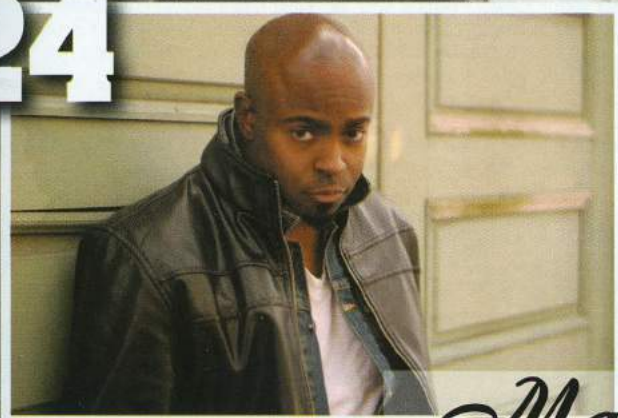
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Rock The Runway

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Maurice Jamal

We get down and dirty with the writer and director of *Dirty Laundry*

On the Cover:
Maurice Jamal

EXCLUSIVE ON NOAH'S ARC

THE OFFICIAL WORD: CANCEL OR "MOVIE"

Logo Answers Noah's Arc Concerns Story By Clay Cane

Cast: Chance, Noah, Alex & Ricky



Well, it seems like the drama on the screen is as high-octane as the drama behind the scenes when it comes to the first black gay television series Noah's Arc. Logo's January 24th press release stated that Noah's Arc will be the channel's first theatrical film production in 2008. However, according to Jasmyne Cannick, "My guess, and it is just that, is that Logo canceled the show and offered the movie as a consolation prize. It makes sense to me that if you want to silence the criticism for canceling the show that you would wait until the last day possible to make the announcement without really making the announcement, if you know what I mean. Hey, who's going to be upset the series is canceled when there's the possibility of a movie in the works? Now back to the NPR interview that says point blank in plain English that Logo representatives confirmed a third season." Cannick adds, "My guess again, is that someone over at Logo fucked up royally." Rumors are swirling that some of the cast are upset about this supposed movie and the press release was only to pacify Noah's Arc fans. Sounds like a scandal...to clear the air **CLIK Magazine spoke with Steven Fisher in Logo Communications and Public Affairs.**

CLIK: Word has it that Noah's Arc is definitely canceled and the press release from Logo was just something to pacify the Noah's Arc fan base—that there will be no film.

Steven Fisher: We actually made the decision, as you can see in the press release, we wanted to take the story and find the dimensions—I think you see all the quotes in there. The film format gives us more freedom and certainly more opportunities creatively. We want to take it to the next level

as so many other television shows have done. Go to the movies and obviously the door is still open for additional sequels, TV seasons and specials.

CLIK: Some are saying the show is canceled and race is involved.

Steven Fisher: This network is built on a foundation of diversity. We're so proud of the show that's why we're taking it to the movies, it takes it to the next level, it helps us find who the whole audience is. This is great news—if you saw in the press release Patrik is as excited as we are.

CLIK: So, Patrik will definitely be involved in the theatrical version and this is definitely going to happen in 2008?

Steven Fisher: Talks have begun right now, obviously you have to have all of those movie things, which are have talks and get deals—all those other things. The plan is to go into production now and have it in theatres at the beginning of 2008. That's the plan—obviously you have to do all those other things. We're in talks right now of finding a distribution partner, production, putting the production together, hiring talent and all that other good stuff.

CLIK: Noah's Arc is the number one rated show on Logo, but your ratings aren't really traditional and I've heard the DVD sales didn't do too well. So, how is it documented that it's the number one rated show?

Steven Fisher: We've never said it's the number one rated show because we're not a rated network yet. We do anecdotally from our viewers, we see it as our most popular series, certainly visits to our web sites, it's one of the most popular destinations online so we do see it as our most popular show. You're right, we're not rated, so it's harder to gage statistically in that way, but in terms of visits to our web sites it's our most popular show.

CLIK: According to NPR Logo confirmed there would be a third season.

Steven Fisher: I think what the reporter said was that we confirmed it, which we didn't. We said that the show would not be canceled. I think she reported there would be a third season, but we haven't announced a third season yet. We're doing a movie, there maybe a third season, there maybe sequels, as I explained to you before.

CLIK: Is the movie going to have the original cast, or it might be a new cast?

Steven Fisher: As I said, talks are underway now in terms of production—to get everybody on board so that is what we are working on right now.

CLIK: Idealistically, would you like to have the same cast?

Steven Fisher: Yeah, we want to get everybody on board. That is what we're working on now. Talks are on the way and when we have announcements about that we will let people know soon as we have more information.

CLIK: Are you at all disappointed about the little bit of controversy surrounding this?

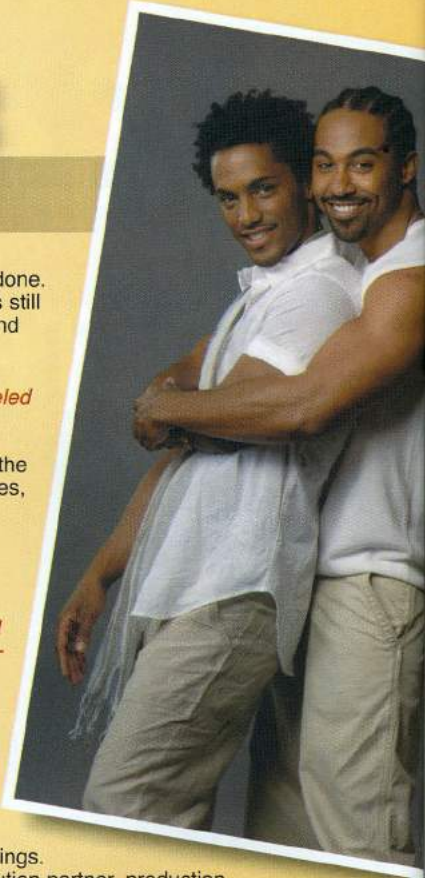
Steven Fisher: All I can tell you is we are really excited. Patrik is really excited; I think you saw his quote in the press release. We're taking it to the next level and we're thrilled. We're making the movie specifically to excite our fan base. That's really exciting, the same thing happened with Star Trek when they made the films for Star Trek fans. Certainly, Simpsons' fans for years were asking for a movie—it's coming out this summer and Sex and the City. So, I think people correctly see the evolution of a TV show into a film as an exciting step, a continuation of the story and one that they love.

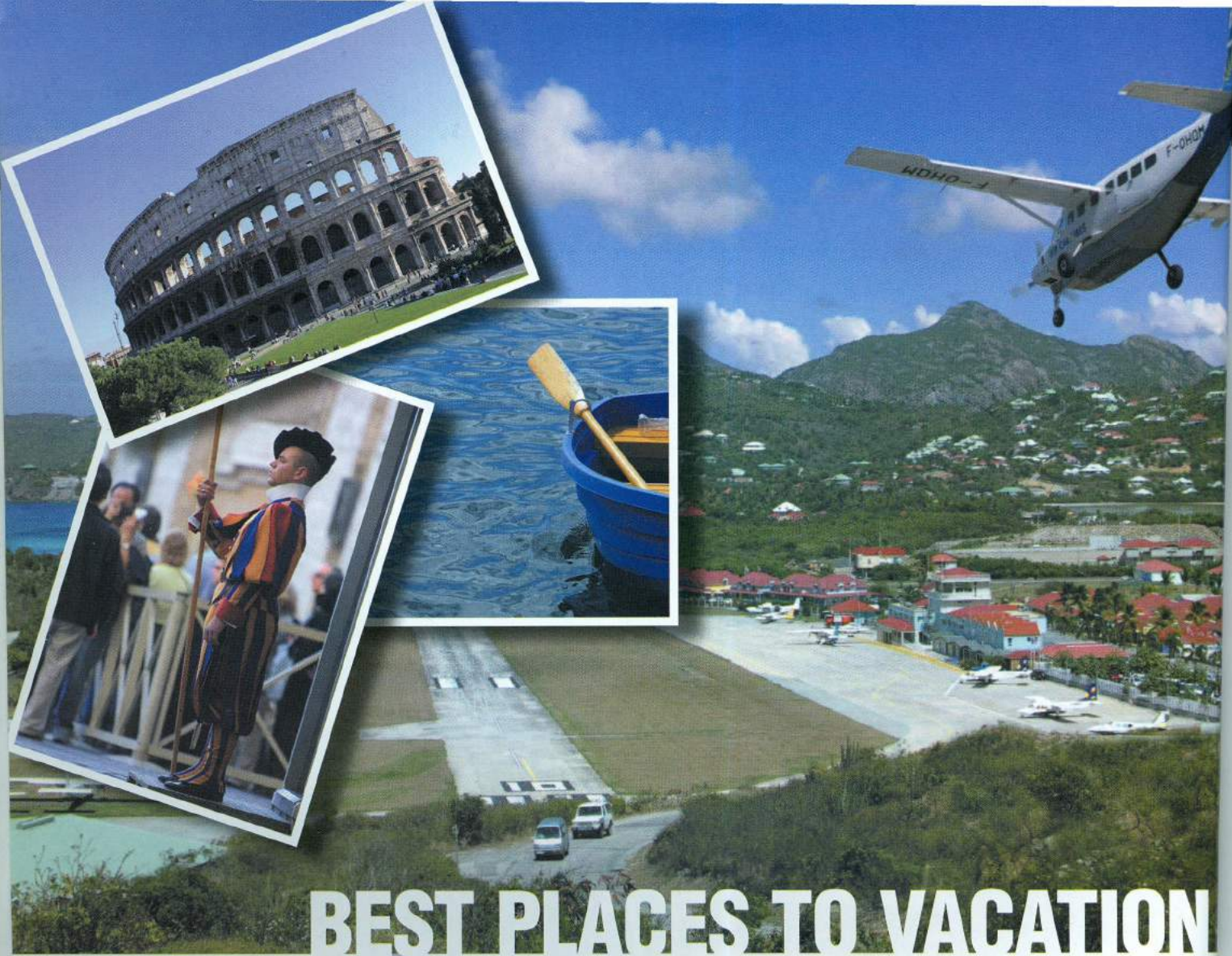
Steven adds, "Everything I've heard from Patrik has been very positive and my understanding is that his blog has been very positive."

Clay Cane is an established writer in New York City For social commentary and provocative takes on pop culture please visit <http://www.CLAYCANE.net>.



Show Creator:
Patrik-Ian Polk





BEST PLACES TO VACATION

CLiK is filling you in on the hottest vacation spots...giving you all the info you need to enjoy yourself

WHEN January & February

WHY Chilly weather keeps most tourists away from Europe in winter. But the temperatures in Rome, typically in the mid- to high 50s at this time of year, are about 15°F warmer than in most of the rest of the continent. True, that's probably still too cool to enjoy a glass of Chianti outdoors at one of the Via Veneto's many sidewalk cafés. But it's perfectly comfortable for visiting the city's many historical attractions, such as the Roman ruins and Spanish Steps, as well as the bountiful museums, galleries, monuments and churches, without the crowds of tourists that can detract from the experience in the peak summer and early fall travel times.

A few restaurateurs and hoteliers may shutter their businesses for the winter months, but the ones that remain open will offer discounts, and "they are thrilled to see you," says Victoria Goyet of Endless Beginnings Tours in San Diego. "In September, people are grouchy."

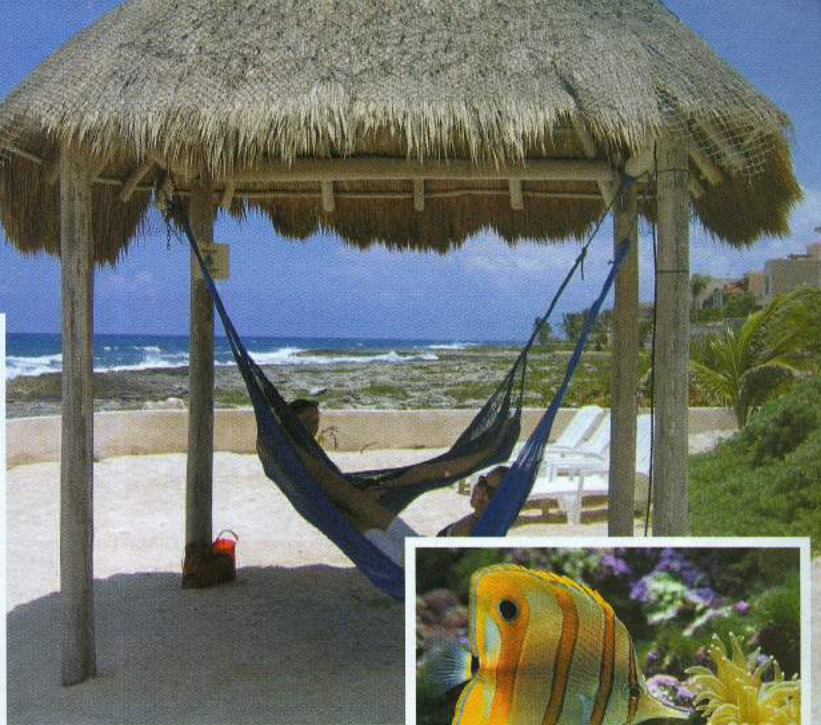
THE DEAL Air fares are dirt cheap in the winter: \$427 on Delta for a round-trip ticket from New York City in late January and early February vs. \$788 for the exact same flights during the Easter holiday. You'll get big savings on hotels too. For example, the recently renovated Hotel Fontanella Borghese, a 17th-century hotel that is just steps away from the Borghese Palace, Spanish Steps and other important monuments, offers antique-furnished rooms for two, including breakfast, for \$185 a night, compared with \$225 to \$250 in high season.

If you prefer luxury to quaint and charming, the rate for an eight-night January and February stay at the upscale St. Regis Grand is \$348 a night; over Easter, it's \$497 a night.

THE CARIBBEAN

WHEN April, May, June

WHY Stay at a luxury hotel for up to half off the high-season price after winter vacationers head home, and you'll have the beach practically to yourself. Sure, you won't have the cachet of a tan in February, but the weather is practically the same — 78°F to 88°F during the day — though it will be a bit more humid, so it will feel hotter.



THE DEAL Hotel rates drop 20 percent to 50 percent after April 15. For example, a garden cottage with daily breakfast at the Hotel Le Village St. Jean on St. Barthelemy goes for \$180 a night in spring; that same deal will cost you \$270 a night in the winter. Meanwhile, rooms at the ultra-luxurious Four Seasons Nevis start at \$450, compared with \$625 a night in the winter. In June the rate drops even further, to \$325 a night.

INSIDER'S TIP Many islands hold their music festivals, carnivals and other events outside of peak season. In Barbados, for example, enjoy the Celtic Festival, GospelFest and an International Folk Festival, all in May.

The Riviera Maya, Mexico

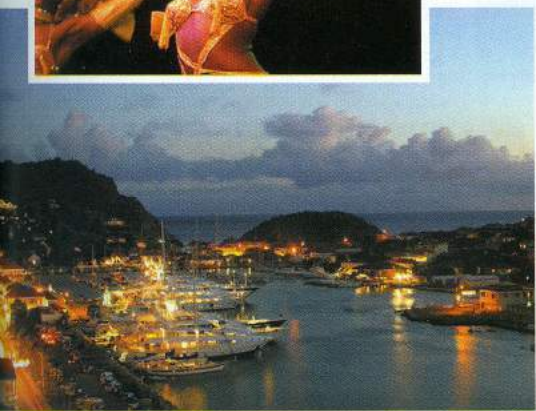
WHEN Late April and May

WHY With its long stretches of white beaches, translucent waters and proximity to the U.S. (only about an hour and a half flight from Miami), the Riviera Maya, just south of Cancún, attracts thousands of honeymooners, families, and vacationing students each year. Trouble is, if you go during the peak spring break and summer seasons, the endless lines at restaurants and crowds of English-speaking tourists will make you feel as if you haven't left home. But the months after college kids have headed back to school and before the beginning of summer family travel offer a lull when you'll find perfect beach weather, little rain and far fewer crowds at spectacular Mayan ruins like Chichén Itzá.



THE DEAL Hotels are about 25 percent off peak rates. At the Shangri-La Caribe in Playa del Carmen, an ocean-view room costs \$135 a night after April 16 vs. \$180 in the winter. You'll also find good packages. For instance, the Viva Wyndham Maya Resort has all-inclusive deals (food, drink, lodging, activities and taxes) starting at \$180 a night in May, down from \$244 in high season.

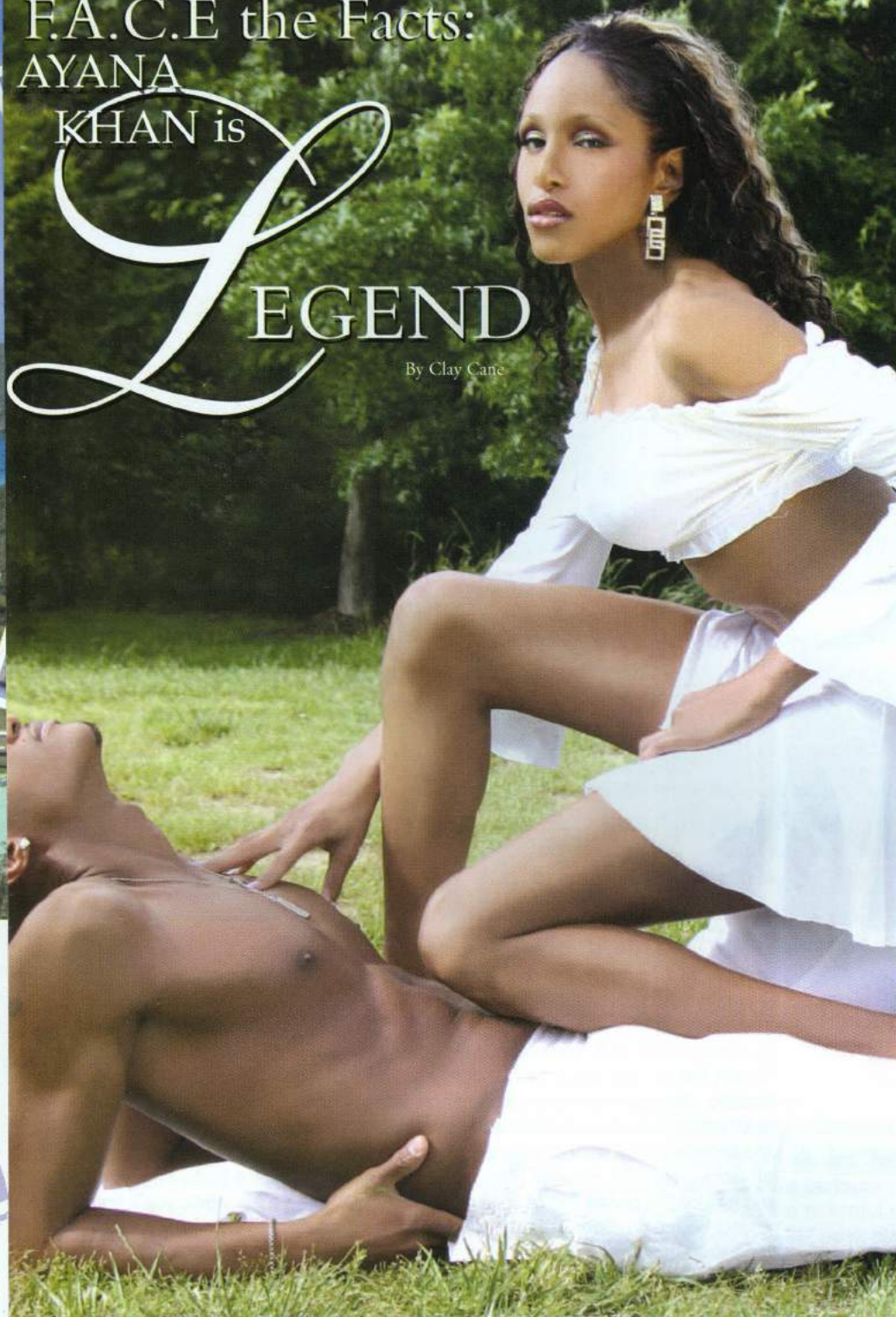
INSIDER'S TIP For the best prices, consider using a charter company like Apple Vacations, which offers four-night, all-inclusive packages to the Riviera Maya that include flights, hotel, food and drink for as little as \$700 per person — only slightly more than you might pay during peak season for a flight alone.



F.A.C.E the Facts: AYANA KHAN is

LEGEND

By Clay Cane



In Native American cultures what we now label as transgenders were not considered to be outsiders of their communities, but rather medicine persons, nurses during war, or even chiefs. In the 15th century Spanish explorers documented at least two transgenders in nearly every village, or tribe, explored in Central America. In addition, one of the first accounts of alternative gender roles in Africa is of Queen Nzinga who ruled over the Ndongo Kingdom and fought off Portuguese invasion for four decades. According to *Boy-Wives and Female Husbands*, "Nzinga was not queen but 'king' of her people. She ruled dressed as a man, surrounded by a harem of young men who dressed as women and were her wives." There are reports of transgenders in nearly every sector of non-Western culture. When European domination began to deracinate the planet, colonized laws would forever change ideals of sexuality and gender identity across the globe. Centuries later transgender identity is a taboo conversation in the heterosexual and sometimes even homosexual community. The ballroom scene is one of few communities that still embrace transgenders, and most importantly, without the transgender community there would quite possibly be no ballroom culture.

Over ten years ago femme queen legend, Ayana Khan, entered the ballroom scene originally as a member of the House of Allure. In 1999 she would be one of the first femme queens to join the House of Khan and would become Mother of the House of Khan. Ayana's reign in the ball-



room scene was before balls expanded to nearly every major city, before ball clips could be viewed on Youtube.com, or before balls were available on DVD. In order to become a star, statement and then a legend, one had to prove themselves to the iconic divas before them. Snatching grand prizes and being one of the main faces to put the Washington D.C. ballroom scene on the map would label Ayana as a legend. Ayana's success has transcended ballroom, she is a registered oncology nurse, has a Bachelor's degree and is in her first year of Graduate school at the University of Maryland.

On February 17th Mother Ayana Khan is paying unprecedented homage to the femme queens of the ballroom scene in her highly anticipated *E.A.C.E. The Facts I Am Legend Ball*. Ayana states, "A tremendous effort has been put forth to bring you this night of passion, glamour, and prestige. Please join me in honoring the women of our community. The women who have made the ballroom scene what it is today... the Female Figures." In a candid interview with Clay Cane, Ayana Khan discusses her journey as a transgender woman, politics of the ballroom scene, her upcoming ball and much more.

Clay: You are the mother of the House of Khan; explain what the role of a house mother means to you.
Ayana: Clay, actually I'm really just now being able to understand with myself what the role of being a house mother is all about. When I took the position seven years ago I was still a baby, I was very young and my ballroom career was still primitive so I think my role back then was basically like a figurine type. Something similar to the Queen of England, she doesn't really have power, but she is there. That's what it was for me back then versus today...I feel that my role as a mother has turned more into mentoring and fostering a relationship with my house kids who are still connected with their families of origin, and some who aren't. I think that my role as the mother has really just come about.

Clay: You're a ballroom legend. Nearly every person I've interviewed have commented on how people in the scene are becoming legendary way too fast—how do you feel about that?

Ayana: Clay, do you really want me to go on that? (laughs) Well, I have actually been around for a little awhile now and I personally felt in my own aspect it took me hard work and dedication to get out here and get what has been labeled as "legendary status." When I first started it was identified as five or more years, nonstop, reigning on the scene and at this point in time that seems to no longer be the standard. There are some people out here who are being labeled as legends, and they haven't even been on the scene two years. So, I think there has been this new division, what has been labeled as "local legend." That means in your own town, in your own city, on the local ballroom circuit versus all over. When I imagined myself, or someone else, being a legend I envisioned everyone, no matter where you go and what corner of the country — when you say this name, everybody knows. For some of these "new legends" that's not the case. I, myself, don't want to put any extra light, or shine, on my own name, but I still find it kind of flattering when you can have someone say your name, or speak your name, and everyone knows who you are talking about. It feels good, I think I've worked hard for that and I've earned it.

Clay: What do you think is missing from the ballroom scene now versus ten years ago?

Ayana: The female figure participation—it's not what it used to be. That's what my ball essentially is trying to do, take a flashback to those moments and those high-lights. To that day and time when the whole ball was about the femme queens, the femme queen categories, which femme queens are going to be there, which femme queens were going to walk and looking beautiful, or "sitting", as we say. On February 17th were paying special honor and tribute to those days. We have so many of the legendary femme queens who no longer participate because they've moved on and taken different directions in their lives, but we want to have everyone come out to return to those days because that's what's missing now. Everything is about the guys, or the gay males.

Clay: That really is true when I used to go to balls heavily back in the mid '90's it was really about the femme queens. Why do you think that happened — what was that transition about to where it went to the guys?

Ayana: Honestly, I think that any female figure, and this is true about a natural born women, every woman wants to be adored. She wants attention; she needs to feel like there is this small sense of longing for her presence. You don't get that anymore, I assume how you do that is the categories you have at your ball, the prizes and trophies that you give away at your ball. I, myself, have taken to having a grand prize that's \$2000 and something dollars for a category that is everything to everybody. Though it takes so much money to get prepared for this category you want to make them feel like they're coming for a purpose, not just for the applause and adulation, but because they are going to get something out of it. That was really big for me when I was on the scene because it takes a pretty penny to get yourself together to walk a ball — if you're femme queen.

Clay: Where do you see the ballroom scene going ten years from now?

Ayana: I'm hoping that the ballroom scene really becomes more mainstream. I know there have been talks of doing balls on reality television. I'd honestly like to see that but I don't think I'd be a part of the scene at that point in time. Though this is my outlet I am so into other things with my own personal life that the ballroom scene is a distraction at some points, not all, but at some points. I don't have the time and commitment like I used to when I didn't have a job and I didn't go to school. Now that I have so many other things going on this has become a very minute portion of my life. It seems like I'm going to have to scale back even more.

Clay: Let's talk and little more about Ayana and your transgender female experience. What were those feelings like when you first started to realize you were female?

Ayana: It was definitely innate, just a natural sensation because nothing I did was masculine in nature. People around me picked up on that and no one can ever see, or tell, what they're doing, everyone has to tell you — that's how you learn, from your environment. Everyone picked up on my female characteristics, my mannerisms, it was like, "You're a girl, and you act like a girl." Then you look essentially like a girl...when I actually took the time out to stop and look at myself —

take myself out of the situation so I could look back at it... This was me, this was my life. Everything I did, I looked at my wardrobe, the things that I liked, the things that I didn't like — it was just so woman like that it was, what are you going to do, how are you going to be? If you choose to be something that society doesn't necessarily condone, how are you going to be able to tackle that?

Clay: How did your family and your close friends react to transitioning to being a complete woman?

Ayana: Well, when I first got the courage to tell my mother that I wanted to have a sex change operation, my mother said, "Talk to God, ask God and when you ask Him, He'll give you the answer, He'll show you the answer." And, I did just that. I said a prayer and maybe a month and a half later I had a girlfriend who had actually had the surgery the past summer. She just came out of the blue and we have never had a close relationship. She just contacted me and started talking to me about the whole procedure and... I thought it was kind of odd. After I thought about it for a couple days I realized this was my sign, this was my answer that I had asked for. He had sent me this message, He sent me her because anyone who is a female figure always talks about wanting to be a full woman, and to go through with the complete transition, but it's just that—it's just talk till you start putting it into action and start taking actions to do things to have the surgery. I just thought when she called me that this was my cue that I was to go head and start seriously looking into doing it. Since that happened my parents have been full-steam ahead in supporting me. I had dinner with my whole family the week before I left...it was actually my dad's birthday and I had a very meaningful talk with my dad after dinner. He told me he was proud of me and supported me in anything that I did and that was enough for me to go. I came back as the new me and it has been a beautiful thing in terms of having my family and my close friends. Of course my friends were scared for me because with medical advances and technology they just weren't sure if this was ideal, but I'm in the healthcare profession — I'm not going to let anybody do anything to me that I don't see it as being thorough and fully developed. Also, they were afraid I was going to take this and I was going to leave and disappear with my new —it hasn't been that. I'm actually more embedded in this thing that I've ever been and I'm sometimes afraid of myself because I'm like, am I too deep in this and did I do this to get out and to make a change? However, I feel good about my whole input into giving back to what so many people have given to me in my friends, my family and also in the ballroom scene because I've learned a lot...I've learned a whole lot.

Clay: Getting silicone injections and underground surgery is a big issue in the transgender community. Being that you're in the healthcare profession — how do you feel about that?

Ayana: Oh my Gosh... you're amazing, Clay! (laughs) I get a lot of phone calls from a lot of people and a lot of people know that I'm a registered nurse. They call me and they tell me these stories about this big rampant wave of witch doctoring. I kind of feel like there's something I should do about it, but I'm not sure what I should do. Is this really of any of my concern, or am I truly the one who should be picking up this plight? There are numerous stories that I've heard about people

having bad experiences with silicone injections, either the result, the aesthetic look of it, or quite a few deaths as well. I have spoken out at some transgender health groups in which I was very adamant about expressing my concern about transgender women allowing inexperienced, unlicensed people to perform these procedures. This is very dangerous to introduce foreign substances to your body; it's such a big deal. People cannot imagine, having autoimmune response to these things. They can literally kill you, or just make you terribly sick that you feel like you want to die. Most of our community isn't educated and not well informed. It's very hard to say to them, no you shouldn't do this because look at me—I've had my own transformation performed. No, it has not been by a licensed professional because silicone injections in the United States are illegal, but it was performed by someone who is well experienced. You can tell that because I'm not having some of the poor results, or maybe it might just be luck. I'm not experiencing some of the results many of these transgender women are experiencing now. They're calling me; they're having difficulty with breathing if they've had their chest pumped. They're having bruising and lumps in their hips if they've gotten their body done. You can't help but to feel very sad for them, and knowing how mainstream healthcare view these women

when they go to a doctor's office, or an emergency room, it's disparaging. I'm going to do my doctoral dissertation on transgender access to healthcare. When I have a problem, or trying to get someone to take care of me because I'm ill and then I go to the healthcare professionals, it is not necessarily addressed. My gender identity is a big hang up that kind of shadows everything in which I'm there for. In the aspect of this silicone, I definitely tell all of the young transgenders in my house—If I could do some things over that I did before some of the things, like the silicone injections, I would not have personally done myself. Everybody's always so concerned about how it's going to look now nobody's ever worried about what it's going to do. These younger kids they go out and they have these things done to them, they let people pierce them, they let people operate on them—do all of these things to them and no one's ever thinking about the long road, twenty years from now. God knows when I had it done I didn't think about it. I'm thirty years old, I'll be thirty one in February, and I know I didn't even think that I would still be here for some odd reason. I just didn't even have any outlook on the future. These things that I was doing to myself was when I was 19 years old—I never thought about what impact they would have when I got older. That wasn't my concern, I wasn't able to see that far, but now that I'm here I'm just thanking God that I'm here and I'm okay, and I didn't do that much stuff to myself that I'm living to regret it now. Gosh...

Clay: Thank you for sharing that. I think it's really important to talk about this and a lot of young kids will read this.

Ayana: Clay, you wouldn't believe these girls—they find my number, although I think I'm hiding in the cut somewhere, I'm not, I'm really not. These girls, they get my number and every time I get a phone call about something like this, it's all so unreal. It's always some new person trying to perform these procedures. This is weird, I know the human anatomy back and forth, but I would never even think to introduce silicone injections to someone because I know it's something that is not eventually going to be good. I'm an oncology nurse so I see this cancer everyday. Patients that I take care of that essentially live normally healthy lives—vegetarians, people that just take care of themselves, they look amazing and then they have this thing, this uncharted phenomenon that just comes and destroys everything from the inside out. Medical science has not gotten a handle on this, they say what you eat can

cause cancer, what you do in your daily life; they say if you don't exercise you can get cancer. So, that's got to tell someone somewhere, knowing how cancer works, if you put something that does not belong in your body—cancer is only normal tissue turning into something bad. So, if you put something in addition to the natural risk of cancer that has got to make you shudder. Like I said, if I knew then what I know now I would not even have thought twice.

So many people are shocked when they hear about transgenders in college. How was your experience in college and being transgender?

Ayana: Well, my first year of college I really don't think I had my mind made up about what I was going to do with my gender identity. I think I was pretty late compared to some of these young kids who are getting started today. I mean they're 16 and 17, they're in high school, or either high school drop outs. I had finished high school by the time I had fully made my transition. When I was in high school I did go to school in women's clothing, in drag as they say, maybe two or three days a week, but that was not really a full transgender transition in my eyes. I still had my birth name and everyone still knew me by my birth name and I was identified in the male gender. I actually did my first year of college and then I just stopped. I gave that a rest, I put it on the back burner then I worked on getting me together. I took my time to formulate myself into the person I am now. So, it's self determination thing with education and your pursuit of goals because when I was maybe 19 or 20, there weren't very many places that were amiable to having transgenders in their work environment.

Clay: Your ball is the same day as the Karan Ball in Philadelphia; well, the Karan Ball is during the day, are you concerned about pulling the Philly and New York crowd?

Ayana: You did your research! (laughs) Well, Clay - I will say this... I have been talking about this ball since the summer. I had my noticed posted on essentially the biggest outlet for the ballroom scene, which is <http://www.walk4mewednesday.net>—I had my ball posted on their events calendar since August of 2006. There are actually two or three other balls that have since made their way on February 17th. Though I would think most people would be worried having another ball on the same day as theirs — I'm not. I think those who are close associates and friends of mine that I have come to be close with over the last ten years—we have such good rapport that those who know me, or who have heard about me would essentially just want to come and support. Not just because I'm me, but what we're coming to do. We're coming together to pay tribute to some of the most interesting, the most beautiful, the most talented figures on the ballroom scene and that's the female figures. I know everyone has their own favorite female figure and we have set out to pull in the female figures. I've been mainly pulling on the female figures; I've made personal phone calls and emails to female figures. I've haven't even begun to solicit the participation of the general audience and that's because my concern is getting the ladies there. If the ladies are there I would just be satisfied. Everybody else, if my friends are there, my loved ones, and I have so many close relationships with so many people in the ballroom scene, even if they're just there that would be enough. I wouldn't even think about letting a low turn out ruin this night that I set out to do. I've personally worked very hard on this Clay, and so it definitely means a lot to me.

Clay: If you weren't in the House of Khan what house would you be in?

Ayana: I couldn't see myself being in any other house other than the house in which I am. Why? Clay, the House of Khan is my family. They are my family, my

If you have never been to a ball now is the time to experience the drama, glamour and creativity!

F.A.C.E. The Facts I Am Legend Ball
Knights of Columbus Bryne Manor
1501 Southern Avenue
Oxon Hill, MD 20745

Saturday, February 17, 2007
Doors Open @ 10:00 p.m.
Stars, Statements and Legends promptly at midnight

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Father Harold Balenciaga 301-379-2291
Grandmother Steve Khan (DC) 240-398-6363 for Table Reservations

Clay Cane is an established writer in New York City and is the author of the forthcoming novel BALL-SHAPED WORLD. For social commentary and provocative takes on pop culture please visit <http://www.CLAYCANE.net>.

friends that I've grown up with and I've come out with. I was telling you in the beginning that I started out in another house. I started out in a house in which there were more femme queens because I didn't want to be the only one. I needed someone to teach me the ropes, to put me in the right track, in the right direction and show me all that needed to be shown. All of my true friends were in a house in which I wanted to be, but I wasn't going to get nurtured like I needed. I had to make a decision on what I was going to do. Yeah, I caught a lot of flack from that but it was a very intricate decision to just make me into me, by being connected to someone who knew the ropes. If I didn't have a female figure mentor how was I going to do it? There were none in my house; I'm essentially the first female figure in the House of Khan. When I did come over it was me and my best friend and that's how we got more female figures. No, I really couldn't see myself being in any other house, but the House of Khan.

Clay: When I interviewed Jazmine Blahnik she said, "As many trophies as I've won, I feel like I can still get spooked." Although you are "real as rain" as they say—do you ever worry about getting clocked, does that even cross your mind anymore?

Ayana: Yes and no. In a personal aspect I worry about it, on a dating aspect with a male suitor, yes. Professionally, no—ask me how backwards that is and I know it is! But, I am so confident and so secure in who I am that I've laid all of the foundation building my self-esteem to a point where in my professional life I can never worry about anybody judging me for who I am. At the end of the day I have a professional duty, a license backing me up with education backing me up to say that no matter what you think of me—there is nothing you can take away from who I am professionally because I am transgender. On a personal level, who wants to deal with all the negative of being outed by a guy? It seems sort of shallow to me, but like I said, I'd be more worried about being spooked on a personal level than on a professional level. It's like you are who you are, the person is trying to get to know what they ultimately think is a natural born female, which I'm not. I think on a professional level that really doesn't have anything to do with it. At the end of day I'm a person there to perform my roles and responsibilities; I don't see that at all being jaded by my gender identity.

Clay: What else should we know about the *F.A.C.E. The Facts I Am Legend Ball*?

Ayana: This is my very first ball that I've thrown with my name on it...with my hard work, my sweat, and even my tears. Believe me because I didn't realize that giving a ball was so hard in terms of putting my own money out there, my hard earned money because there's nobody here helping me with this. I work 36 hard hours a week and I'm putting my own funds into this. To be able to do this and to have it come out the way I want to would essentially be the best reward. I just encourage everyone to come out and enjoy this night with us as we come to commemorate, like I've always known, the most influential part of the ballroom scene, what makes the ballroom scene...and that's the ladies.

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2nd- Dwight & Luis Birthday – shout-out to the Clik's EIC and his boy celebrating their birthday on the same day. WOW how about that!

11th- GRAMMY AWARDS Beyoncé, the Dixie Chicks, Gnarlz Barkley and the Red Hot Chili Peppers are the first performers announced for the 49th Annual GRAMMY Awards telecast on Feb. 11, it was announced today by The Recording Academy. Critically acclaimed actor Terrence Howard, Acade my Award nominee Samuel L. Jackson, two-time GRAMMY winner Pink, and R&B sensation Rihanna will appear as presenters.

<http://www.grammy.com/>

25th- ACADEMY AWARDS
Ellen

DeGeneres has been set to host the 79th Academy Awards telecast, producer Laura Ziskin announced. It will be DeGeneres' first time as Oscar® host, as well as her first appearance on an Academy Awards telecast. www.oscars.org/



See Page 6 For Details



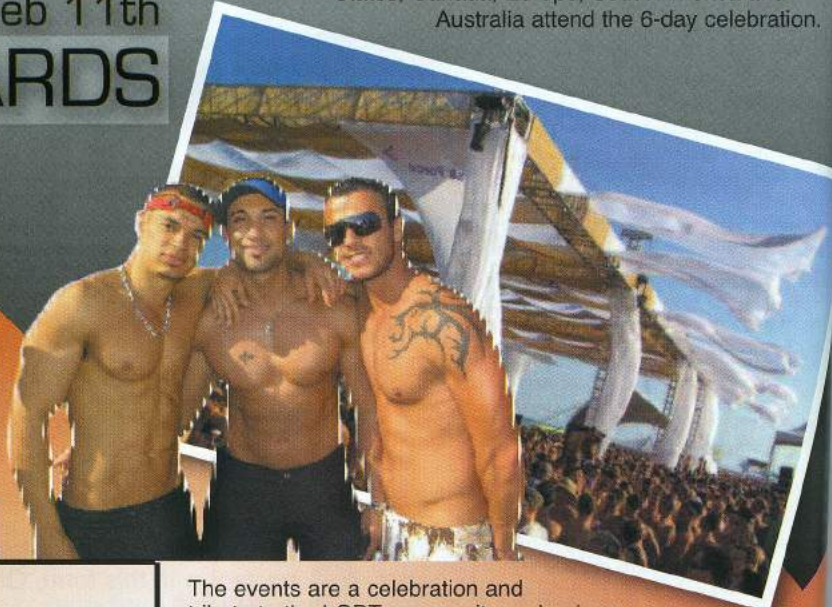
Feb 11th

GRAMMY AWARDS



Wanna be on our calendar? Simply send announcements to us at: mail@clikmagazine.com

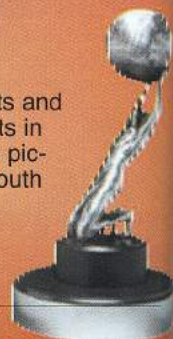
Feb 28th- Mar 3rd WINTER PARTY



The events are a celebration and tribute to the LGBT community and unique culture. The celebration is non-discriminatory and includes men and women of all ages. Official Winter PartySM Festival events are held at several of the hottest nightclubs and venues in town, and at some of the most popular hotels and restaurants in South Beach, making the event an attractive destination for all participants. Clik is a proud national media sponsor <http://winterparty.com/>

March 2nd- NAACP IMAGE AWARDS

The NAACP Image Awards honors projects and individuals that promote diversity in the arts in television, recording, literature and motion pictures. The theme of this year's show is "Youth Create Change. The 38th NAACP Image Awards will air live on Friday, March 2nd (8:00 – 10:00 p.m. ET/PT) on FOX. <http://www.naacpimageawards.net>



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ESSENTIALS



A



B.

A. Robert Talbott Seven Fold Silk Tie \$225

Seven sumptuous layers of Italian silk are folded and hand sewn to create a single impeccable tie. Limited-edition and hand-numbered. Width: 3 3/4". Silk; dry clean. By Robert Talbott; made in the USA of imported fabric. Men's Furnishings. Exclusively ours. Comes in a shiny black box with a velvet bottom and cream leather lining.



D.

B. Juicy Couture Canvas Messenger Bag \$295

Leather and metal hardware detail a vintage-inspired messenger bag. Edgy screenprints line the inside flap. Internal pockets snap in and out. Cotton lining. Cotton; spot clean. By Juicy Couture; imported. The Rail.

C. Ben Sherman 'Bradford' Argyle Zip Sweater \$89

Tricolor argyle fronts a full-zip sweater, trimmed with a ribbed mock neck and cuffs.

D. Studded Leather Belt by BAD Belts \$72

Studded and whipstitched belt has an allover faded finish and a large brass buckle, tarnished and dented for a vintage feel. Seven holes for an adjustable fit. Embroidered 'B' logo before buckle. Leather. By BAD Belts; imported. The Rail.



F. DIESEL® 'Hey' Oxford (Men) \$99.95

Sporty lace-up combines leather and suede with a unique sidewall wrap and antiqued hardware. Leather upper/synthetic lining/TPR sole. By DIESEL®; imported. Men's Shoes.

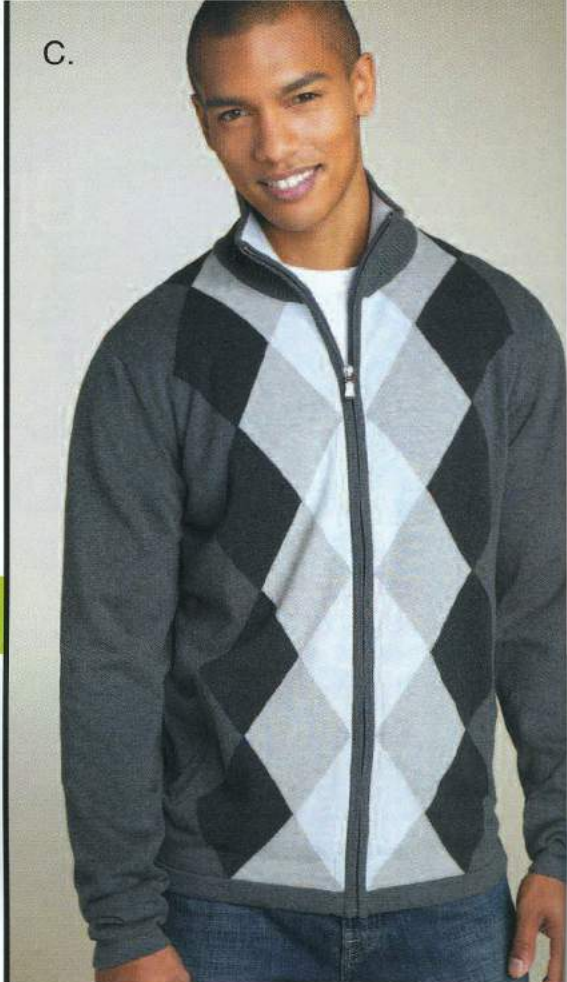
G. DIESEL® Digital Display Watch \$120

Stainless-steel watch with an easy digital dial and an embossed leather strap. Band width: 1 1/3". Case diameter: 1 1/3". Water-resistant to 5 ATM. Leather/ polyurethane/ stainless steel/ mineral crystal. By DIESEL®; imported.



F.

C.



E.



G

Cool VALENTINE'S DAY

GIFTS FOR MEN



Valentine's day is around the corner again. You have no clue about what to get your significant other and simply want to give him something different than the typical button down shirt and tie. Well lucky for you I have created a list of cool gifts for men.

1. A gift basket- Yes, I know! It seems a little weird but, the gift basket business is "in" right now and they even carry gift baskets for beer lovers. An example of this basket would be: 6 beers from different countries and all type of munchies to go with it. If your mate enjoys drinking beer this is the perfect gift for him. Price range can be anywhere from \$30 and above. Champaign gift baskets are available for those of you that are thinking about a sexier, sophisticated night.

2. Jewelry- Women love it when men give them jewelry as a present but, it does not mean he would not enjoy it also.

3. Electronics- I do not know about your partner but my husband drools all over electronic items. The same way women drool over shoes.

4. Collection- Does your mate have a collection of any type. Buy him one of the missing pieces.

5. Cigars- Just make sure you give them to a guy that smokes or is at least is interested on trying them.

6. Bath & Body products for men- I am sure a man can also appreciate being pampered.

7. Video/computer games- Does he enjoy playing video games Games are no longer for kids only. So if he is into playing, surprise him!

8. Gift Card of his favorite store- If you have no clue of what to get him.

9. What he needs- If you can find something that he needs; buy it for him. What best present than a present that he will truly use.

10. Last but not least, sexy robes and underwear are always cool gifts for the man in your life. For a more sexy/sophisticated look try velour and silky robes.

V-Day Gifts for HIM



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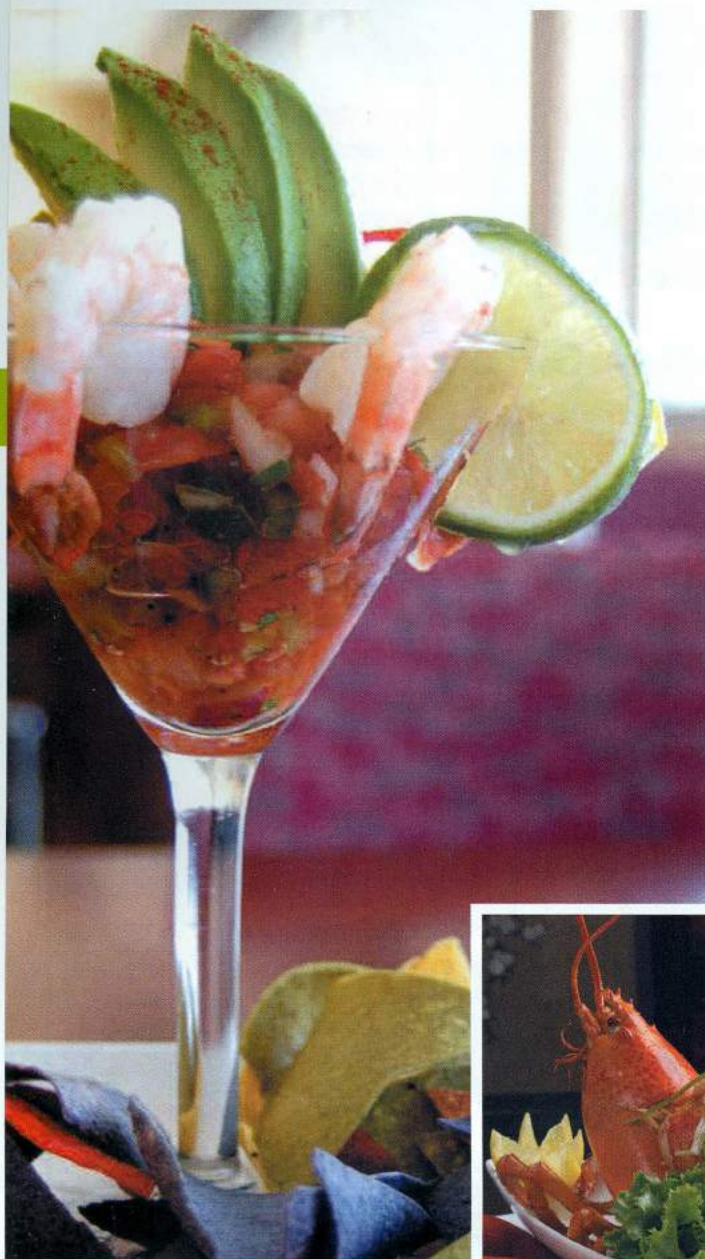
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What's COOKING

This Valentine's Day, treat him to a special meal that's lite, tasty, and easy to prepare. He'll reward you for it!



SHRIMP COCKTAIL

32 shell-on (21 to 25 count) tiger shrimp

For the brine:

1/4 cup kosher salt

1/4 cup sugar

1 cup water

2 cups ice

For the cocktail sauce:

1 (14 1/2-ounce) can diced tomatoes, drained

1/2 cup prepared chili sauce

4 tablespoons prepared horseradish

1 teaspoon sugar

Few grinds fresh black pepper

1/2 teaspoon kosher salt

1 tablespoon olive oil

Sprinkle Old Bay seasoning

Using a pair of scissors or a serrated knife, make an incision down the backside of the shrimp, following the intestinal track. Eviscerate shrimp and rinse under cool water leaving shells intact.

Place cleaned shrimp into a bowl with brine and refrigerate mixture for 20 to 25 minutes. While shrimp are brining, place tomatoes, chili sauce, horseradish, sugar, pepper, and salt in food processor and blend until smooth. Refrigerate cocktail sauce until ready to serve.

Place a baking sheet or broiler pan under oven broiler and preheat for 5 minutes. Remove shrimp from brine and drain thoroughly. Rinse the shrimp under cold water and dry on paper towels. In a large bowl, toss shrimp with olive oil and sprinkle with Old Bay seasoning, if desired.

Place shrimp onto a sizzling sheet pan and return to broiler immediately. After 2 minutes, turn the shrimp with a pair of tongs. Return the shrimp to broiler for 1 minute. Transfer to a cold cookie sheet. Refrigerate immediately. Once shrimp have chilled, arrange with cocktail sauce in a martini glass or as desired.



STEAMED LOBSTER TAIL

1 large (about 10 ounces) lobster tail, thawed if necessary

1 cup white wine

6 tbsp butter

1 lemon

2 cloves garlic, crushed (optional)

1 small bunch fresh dill

Kosher salt and freshly-ground pepper

Preheat oven to 400°. Put wine, dill, salt and pepper, 2 tablespoons of the butter, and half of the lemon, squeezed, into a covered pot or casserole dish. Add lobster tail, hard shell side down.

Bake for 20 minutes. Meanwhile, melt remaining butter. Add garlic and juice from remaining lemon juice.

To serve, snip off shell from the underside with kitchen shears (or cut with a knife and remove). Slice meat and serve with butter.

Serves 1 as main dish, 2 shared with another dish.



TURTLE PIE

Super easy and so so yummy, lobster tail is as lovely as it is delicious. And no bib necessary. To multiply recipe, increase cooking time about 5 minutes for each additional tail. If you can't find large tails, substitute 2 small ones for each large one.

Buttery bits of caramel and creamy vanilla filling are topped with chocolate chunks, pecans, and chocolate syrup drizzle then surrounded by a chocolate cookie crust. Available all supermarkets everywhere or visit <http://www.edwards-baking.com/PieFinder.htm> to find a location in your area

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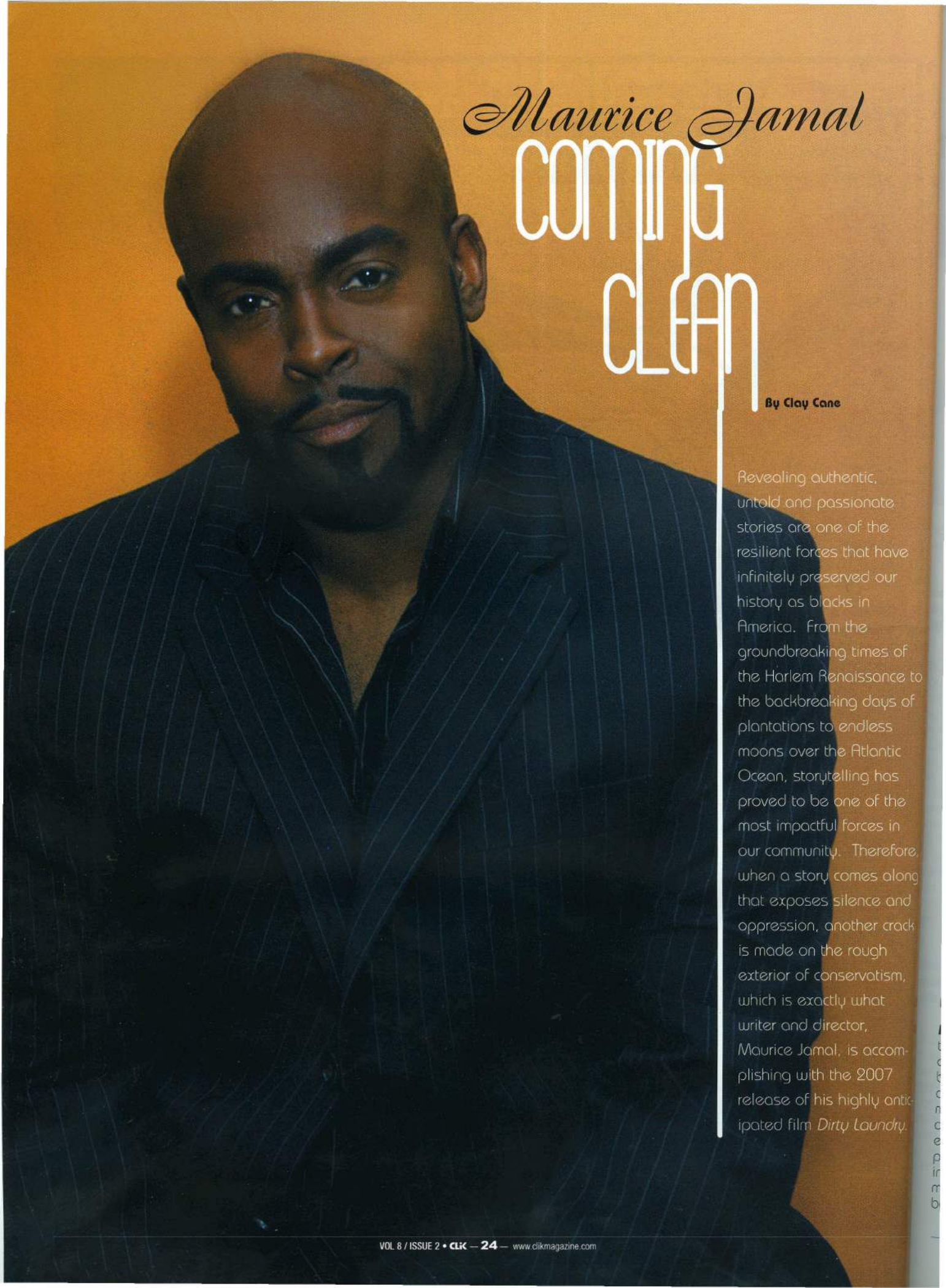
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Presented by JC&JT Productions - Produced by John Campbell

A portrait of Maurice Jamal, a Black man with a shaved head and a goatee, wearing a dark pinstripe suit jacket over a dark shirt. He is looking directly at the camera with a slight smile. The background is a solid orange color.

Maurice Jamal coming clean

By Clay Cane

Revealing authentic, untold and passionate stories are one of the resilient forces that have infinitely preserved our history as blacks in America. From the groundbreaking times of the Harlem Renaissance to the backbreaking days of plantations to endless moons over the Atlantic Ocean, storytelling has proved to be one of the most impactful forces in our community. Therefore, when a story comes along that exposes silence and oppression, another crack is made on the rough exterior of conservatism, which is exactly what writer and director, Maurice Jamal, is accomplishing with the 2007 release of his highly anticipated film *Dirty Laundry*.

We first heard of Maurice Jamal in the cult classic *Ski Trip*, little did we know the bionic jump he would take in less than two years with the "dramedy" *Dirty Laundry*. *Dirty Laundry* is loosely based on the coming out experience of Maurice Jamal, but more importantly the "coming out" tale of an African-American family who are forced to grapple with unspoken issues. Jamal says, "*Dirty Laundry* shows our coming out is about us, but it's not just about us, because it affects our families as well." At the heart of the story *Dirty Laundry* is an introspective and fun take on the sometimes exhausting, but loving family structure. The film has resonated with gay audiences, but it has deeply impressed black heterosexual audiences. *Dirty Laundry* was honored with two awards at the American Black Film Festival (ABFF); one for Blockbuster Audience and another for best film star for Loretta Devine.

Not only is *Dirty Laundry* a fairytale upgrade from the humble beginnings of a 32 year-old California boy, it is also the first black, gay themed film to have nationwide distribution (unless you count Tyler Perry's films!). However, bringing *Dirty Laundry* to the masses could be a script on its own. From rejection by big wiggled industry executives to grassroots fundraising to casting the film, *Dirty Laundry* had to face its own dirt in the diaphanous land of Hollywood. Nonetheless, with the casting of greats like Loretta Devine (*Dreamgirls*, *Waiting to Exhale*), Rockmond Dunbar (*Soulfood*, *Punks*), and Jennifer Lewis (*Jackie's Back*, *The Preacher's Wife*) it is clear that all of the hard work and elbow grease has handsomely paid off. In a one-on-one interview an always charismatic Maurice Jamal goes into detail about the journey of *Dirty Laundry*, his own personal "dirt", and some of the already controversial politics surrounding the first of its kind film.

When did you realize you wanted to be a filmmaker?

MAURICE: I think I always knew that I wanted to be a filmmaker. I remember sitting in front of the television watching old films with my sister. I know a lot of people, and especially African-Americans, say their favorite film was *Cooleyhigh* and *Shaft*, for me it was *Some Like It Hot* — things like that. I love those movies from the fifties and sixties; it really shows who I am creatively, even as a person. My language and my diction is a throwback to that era. For me, I always wanted to do that. I always wanted to create. I've always been a storyteller when I look back at it — so, I'd dabble in theatre, I was working professionally, toured nationally and regionally. Theatre kind of branched off into television, television branched off into film.

What is your first love, acting or directing?

MAURICE: People ask me that and I can't say one or the other. I'd love the idea of creating characters, creating a new person. I like the challenge of both. I like the challenge of someone else's work and having to create with the tools they've given me. Obviously there's a huge thrill in being a director and writer because you are creating everything from scratch and it's your vision. I'd probably say I get the biggest pay off from directing, but I was an actor first. If there was a gun to my head and I had to choose — I guess, I would be a director!

Where did the idea of *Dirty Laundry* come from?

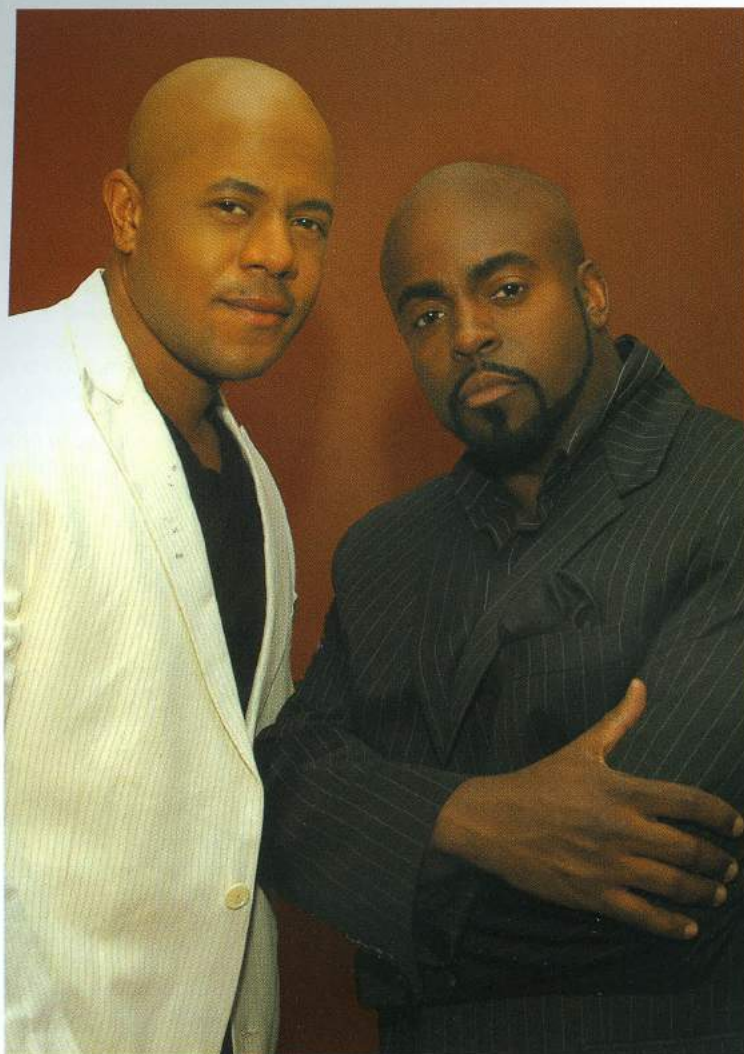
MAURICE: Well, when I started working on *Dirty Laundry* I started passing around a couple of drafts of scripts to people that I trust. I thought it was great fiction writing; I thought I created this amazing masterpiece — all from my comedic mind, my subconscious dream world all kind of merging — this great stuff! I remember we were at the first table read for the film and Rockmond, who plays the lead character, said, "I want to talk to you about the lead character and how you want him played because I know he is you." I was like, "Oh, Rock, what are you talking about? Create your own character, I'm not the lead and the script is not based on my life." He says, "Dude, this character is so you!" It wasn't till we started to shoot the film and there was a confrontation scene between Rockmond's character and Loretta's character — both of them were really concerned about the direction the scene was going in, and so I started telling this coming out story that I had with my mom. At that moment it struck me that scene really was a direct parallel. The writing in the scene was the exact words my mother and I had used in an argument one day on the front porch of our house. As I have sat next to my mom and watched the film a couple times, I realized how some of it is pulled from my own experience. Being a kid whose family is from the South, having gone through some of these things, having felt different and awkward — I think my own homophobia and my own fears kept me from doing a lot things and I think that's reflecting the character in the film. Although some of the circumstances are different and the names have been changed to protect the guilty, (laughs) I think the core essence of the story is my story. Things that I was going through, things that I was feeling, a lot of the fears that were happening for me in the back of my head that effected my relationships with people and effected my relationship with myself. I realized when I was younger I created a world that wasn't so — I felt I needed to create some things that weren't true to justify who I was. It was hard growing up as a really poor kid with these crazy artistic dreams, not thinking that you had the outlet for them. I was the only black kid in my class, or the only poor kid, and feeling often times like I didn't fit in. So, it took awhile for me to get this comfortable in my skin. I think at the core *Dirty Laundry* is about airing your own personal laundry and becoming comfortable with yourself.

How did this great cast come about?

MAURICE: This film was cast by God! (laughs) It really is the only way I can say it because the stories are all so incredible, it just doesn't happen this way in this business. At the time I was going to shoot *Dirty Laundry*, similar to *Ski Trip*, super small budget, a bunch of fresh faces and that was kind of it. We were looking at different people for the role of the mom, no one on the stature of Loretta Devine, but actors who had done sitcoms, or an old singer trying to make a comeback. In that process I was invited to a rehearsal of *The Vagina Monologues*. A small theatre of maybe thirty or forty people with Traci Ellis Ross, Sommore, Loretta Devine and Mo'Nique — I'm like, what the hell am I doing here! I had to leave to go raise some money and this guy named Kevin, who is a fashion designer, stopped me on my way out asking why I was leaving. I said I had to go raise some money, you know, I don't know anybody here. He said, "Well, I thought you told me ten minutes ago that Loretta Devine is at the top of the list and she'd be perfect to star in the film. I just met you, but God doesn't make mistakes. I know Loretta barely, but at the very least I can introduce you to her." This is what he did — I talked to Loretta and told her about my work. I'm tongue tied and tell her that I got this great script, it has all of these wonderful black women in it and I think she'd be great as the matriarch of the film. She tells me to speak to her agent, turns around, begins to walk away and I stop her. I say, "With all due respect I know how the business is. There aren't a lot of scripts out there for women, certainly not a lot of scripts out there for black women and certainly not black women over forty. I think this is a rare story, something unique and I want you to make the decision. If you read the script and you don't like it then I know that you don't like it, but I think you will." She looked at me like I was crazy! (laughs) I'll never forget, she had a gold lamay purse and she pulled out a pink ballpoint pen and wrote on the back of a napkin. She said, "If this gets out I'm going to fuck you up! That's my home telephone number and my home address, if you send me the script I guarantee you I'll read it." I'm in LA and I don't have the script on me! I fly back home on a Thursday, FedEx it to her on a Friday. Sunday evening my cell phone rings and it's Loretta Devine saying, "I just got off the plane, I read your script twice and it's one of the best scripts I've read it decades." She signed up for the film! Loretta was like an angel because when we signed Loretta to the film people were like, this is a real film. The next person we signed up was Sommore and it just kind of rolled. Rockmond and the Jennifer Lewis parts were the last roles we cast. It's the right cast; I can't imagine anything better. That's why I say it was cast by God.

How were the fundraising efforts and what places supported you?

MAURICE: I had a great team! It was really lead by personal connections, we talked to a lot of people that we knew who had big pockets. We convinced them to host parties for us, there was a group called Triple Threat Entertainment who come on board and helped us to raise money as well. It's a really interesting back story, how straight black women have supported the story. They understand at it's essence it is about family. That's something that's near and dear to black women's heart, for so many of us black women are running the fami-



It wasn't till we started to shoot the film and there was a confrontation scene between Rockmond's character and Loretta's character — both of them were really concerned about the direction the scene was going in, and so I started telling this coming out story that I had with my mom.

ilies, if it can humanize gay people in this country that for me is success.

Have you experienced homophobia when screened the film for straight audiences?

MAURICE: Not really from audiences, I've always said audiences are far more intelligent than the industry. In the beginning, people weren't writing checks, we pitched the film to a number of studios who weren't interested — it's not going to sell, no one was going to see that, take the gay character out, make the black character white. That was one of the reasons why I raised money

ly. I never ceased to be amazed by the incredible love and support that black straight women have shown us. It really was the people who wrote the checks, and convinced the husbands to write checks, and we did it one check at a time.

Dirty Laundry won two awards at the American Black Film Festival (ABFF). One for blockbuster audience and one for best film star for Loretta Devine — how was that?

MAURICE: It was absolutely amazing. ABFF is this mainstream black festival so we barely got in and I thought we have a great cast, but at it's essence it is this gay character and this gay storyline. We just didn't know how it was going to play, we screened in front of gay audiences and they loved it, but we had to screen it in front of a whole bunch of straight folks — straight, conservative, black folks. They absolutely loved the film, they got into the storyline that every family is going through in some level, but we never talk about it. One woman told me her grandson is gay and there has been issues with her son. Seeing the film made her see the situation in a way she hadn't done before and she really felt like she needed to go home, pick up the phone and call her son. If this film can help change the dialogue, if it can help heal some of the divisions in our fam-

my own. I worked with a team of people that supported that vision. After ABFF all of a sudden I felt like I went from the being that last picked to play kickball to the captain of the football team. No one would talk to me before hand, no one was interested in the film — would say, "That's sweet," and literally turn around and walk away

With the very few film black gay films that have been made like *Boyz n the City* to *Brother* and *Punks*, there has been some criticism of not showing enough black male relationships. With that said, was it a conscious decision to make Patrick's partner white?

MAURICE: Nice question, Clay. (laughs) It wasn't a conscious decision, it was the right decision. I say the right decision because when I write characters begin to take a life of their own. When I began to write Patrick's background, the choices he made, it was just obvious that he had a white boyfriend. He's one of those brothers in West Hollywood, Chelsea, who is all over a white guy and it's almost like the black community aren't there. It wasn't so much about race for him, it was about him needing space to hide and needing space to recreate himself. This is the kind of person that leaves the state, changes his name, needed space to be able

all of that and it probably would be difficult, or hard, for you to do that with another brother. He didn't necessarily pick Ryan because Ryan was white; I think Ryan's whiteness allowed him space and some flexibility as he's creating this falsehood. The other thing too is the casting of Ryan was really tough; I probably looked at about five-hundred actors in New York and LA for that role. It was Joey Costello, who is an unknown — Joey is a very Lana Turner story, he was my waiter at a restaurant. All the while I was working on drafts of the scripts Joey was my waiter. So, initially I had called Joey in for the role of a waiter, which is a role that ultimately got cut. Like I said, I had looked at hundred of Ryans, Joey came in and I loved him. The big reason why they're together and why Patrick is so enamored by Ryan is because Ryan is wholly accepting of who he is to the point of being ignorant. I think he is one of those guys who doesn't realize that the rest of the world isn't gay and doesn't wear a rainbow T-shirt. For someone like Patrick who is so uncomfortable with his sexuality there is a strength and a comfort that he gets from that. I used to talk all the time to Joey and Rockmond about the uniqueness of their relationship, one of the interesting things that came out is that both of them think the other person is the strong person in the relationship. Ryan thinks Patrick is his rock, many ways Ryan is the rock for Patrick.

This is going to be a question a lot of gay audiences are going to have — you don't see any, except for an almost kiss, male to male affection. Once again, was that a conscious choice, or was it just not necessary?

MAURICE: It wasn't a conscious choice; it just wasn't part of the movie. One of the huge issues I have with these films is what I call gratuitous sex, or gratuitous body. I call it gratuitous because it's not there to move the story along; it's there because the directors, or producers, want you to keep watching. I feel that violence, sex, curse words, any of those things, should be used because they are appropriate and they're right. This is a film about a black gay man and his family. The reality is if you just came out to your family on Sunday, your lover shows up Sunday afternoon, you and your lover are not having sex in your momma's house at any point in time that week! (laughs) So, there just wasn't space for it in the film. The other thing too is I thought it was a more genuine and honest representation of what some gay couples go through when they go back home. You live in New York City, you live in Hollywood, you live in San Francisco, it's all good, you walk down the street and you do whatever you want. When you go to visit your family for the family reunion and they live in Mississippi, or Alabama, you and your lover may not be walking down the street holding hands. I've had that experience. I remember being with my boyfriend over the holidays at my momma's house and we slept in two separate rooms. He slept in my bedroom and I slept in the living room. The way my mother saw it,

we weren't married, she didn't let my sisters have their boyfriend's sleep in the same bed so why would she let me and my boyfriend sleep in the same bed? I didn't pull sex, or affection, from the film it just didn't have a space in the story. My next project will have a bunch of sex! (laughs)

Dirty Laundry is a lot less "gay", so to speak, than Ski Trip. Did you purposely want to go more neutral to appeal to larger audiences?

MAURICE: I didn't realize how gay *Ski Trip* was until maybe like a week ago! (laughs) When I was writing *Ski Trip* I wouldn't watch anything gay. I didn't want it to affect my writing and so I just wrote what I thought was the best representation of gay friends who've known each other for ten years. I was watching it the other day and thought that was a really, really, really gay movie — especially when you compare it to a film like *Dirty Laundry*. I'll be honest with you; my producers wanted me to go in a more commercial direction. I've actually had fights with them about using those terms. I'm too new in my career to actually make that kind of conscious decision. For me, I'm too much of a rebel; I'm like fuck that I'm just going to write the film that I want to write. There were also some people who wanted the film gay, there were people who said why isn't there more affection, why isn't his lover black. The initial script and story was a coming out story and as these stories came to life I realized it was the coming out story of the entire family. Coming out in many ways is a metaphor because I think Patrick's coming out was a pathway for everyone in the family to examine their issues — they are all so deeply connected to Patrick in some way. I think the lack of gayness isn't so much about wanting the film to not be gay; it's just that it became a much fuller story about all the characters and all of the dynamics that they were going through.

I was surprised to see Dr. Bobby Jones, from Bobby Jones Gospel, in the film who is supposedly homophobic. Were there any people in the film who didn't agree with the politics, but still wanted to support you?

MAURICE: There was one person who actually at one point during the film made homophobic comments and I removed him from the set. Yeah, there was none of that, not on this film, it was unacceptable.

So, Dr. Bobby Jones is not homophobic?

MAURICE: Bobby Jones and I had talked for some time, he read the script, we had gone back and forth, he said that he was committed to do the project and he thought it was a good project to do. I remember his first day of shooting I got a call that Dr. Jones wanted to see me in the pastor's office. (laughs) Immediately I felt like I was ten years old and I had caught down the street stealing a Chico Stick! So, I got to the pastor's office and he is there, sitting in his robe, he says, "Sit down for a second, I want to talk to you about this story

that you've written." I'm like, "Oh shit! Here it comes — just what I need!" He said, "The story that you've written is very controversial not because it's not true, but because people don't talk about this. I want to tell you why I wanted to do this film. You could have any actor playing a pastor in a film and I'm sure there are probably people who could do the lines better than I am and they might be funnier than I am and your movie would be great." He said, "I think it is important for me to do this film because I am a man of God, because I am a pastor, because I have a following. This story is important and it needs to be told. There are many brothers and sisters who are suffering in silence. Some of these brothers and sisters are gay men and women who have not been accepted by their family. Gay black folks are in every walk of life, they are at home, they are at school and definitely they are at church as well." He said to me that churches and ministers had begun to go down the path that they shouldn't be going down, and now is the time to talk about these subjects. It's a big deal for someone in the religious community to take that step, to take that risk so I'm honored that he did. I had heard the same thing that he wasn't the most accepting and I don't know about those things. What I can say now is he is fully committed to this film and to its vision. He believes firmly that African-American families and congregations need to talk about homosexuality in our community.

What do you have upcoming next?

MAURICE: I have two televisions that are in development. I can't give the full details now because the ink is not dry, but by this time next year I'll have two television shows on the air. One is a miniseries, the other one is a sitcom and I'm doing a film adaptation. I can't say the book yet, but it is a black gay book series that's hugely popular. I just acquired the rights to it and I'll be shooting the theatrical film version of it. I'm really excited where I am in my life and where I am in my career. Everything has changed in the last year... I'm moving in a new direction, I have new business partners; I've got a new production team. I'm really looking forward to this quantum leap between *Ski Trip* and *Dirty Laundry*. I think with the new folks on my team and continuing with the direction I'm going in there will be an even bigger leap between *Dirty Laundry* and the stuff you guys will see in the future.

Clay Cane is an established writer in New York City and is the author of the forthcoming novel BALL-SHAPED WORLD. For social commentary and provocative takes on pop culture please visit <http://www.CLAYCANE.net>.



one on one

with Lee Daniels
From Ramon Johnson

Gay Producer/Director of *Monster's Ball*, *The Woodsman* and *Shadowboxer*



I took a virtual trip with young, gay producer/director Lee Daniels along the streets of Manhattan, where- between routine stops- we talked about his abuse, his kids, his Oscar award-winning movie *Monster's Ball*, his near death experience, the morbid film *Shadowboxer* and the one thing this mastermind just won't show on camera.

Hi Lee. I've seen *Shadowboxer* many times and I have to say it's one of my favorite films; so it's a privilege to speak with you today.

Thanks. I knew making this film that it would not be everybody's cup of tea. When I did this film, it really paid homage to how I view cinema. Your response makes me feel good because I know that everyone will not have that same response towards *Shadowboxer*.

It seems as if the general tone of your films mirror the darkness of your past- growing up in West Philly, living near a contract killer, having an abusive father and dealing with his violent death. Are there shadows from your past that you won't explore on film?

I can't watch or show a woman being beaten. My mother was beaten by my dad; so if you notice in the beginning of *Shadowboxer*, I blacked out the scene when the mother is beaten. I can't watch it. There are certain things that make me nauseous. Seeing women being physically abused is one of those things. I was beaten as a child, but a deeper pain for me was watching my mother being beaten, so I can't show that.

Let's talk about the power dynamic between men and women in your films. Your lead women- Halle in *Monster's Ball*, Eve in *The Woodsman*, Helen Mirren in *Shadowboxer*- are portrayed

as emotionally conflicted, yet the stable partners in their relationships with the otherwise subordinate and almost drone-like men. In one *Shadowboxer* scene, Cuba Gooding is killing for a living to protect and provide for a mother and child he practically just met, yet he is the one begging to stay. So is it as Beyonce says in her lyrics about relationships, "Run by the men, but the women set the tempo"?

The men in my family have all been sort of violent or physical men and largely abusive to the women in their lives and yet they've been driven by their mothers. They almost become children in front of their mothers. One of my earliest memories was when I was 3 or 4. I was in a high chair. I don't remember being beaten, but I remember there was blood in my rice. I then remember one of my aunts coming in and taking the belt from my dad and attacking him with it. He

was 6' 4" and could have easily taken her, but he did nothing. That's indicative of the men that I write about or that I try to portray.

The women in my family are also the survivors of very abusive men and now it's the women that set the pace of the family. The younger generation men have almost become subordinate to them as well.

I try to portray the power of women in my story telling on a very subliminal level.

Another line that stands out in *Shadowboxer* is the scene where Helen Mirren's character Rose tells the just saved Vanessa Ferlito, "The only man a woman can trust is her son." I see Lee Daniels and a lot of gay men, including myself, written all over that statement. Some would argue that a lot of gay men are strongly attached to their mothers and vice-versa. Are us gay sons the only ones our mothers can trust?

I'd like to do a movie about men on the DL. I think that's such an interesting sub-culture that has not been explored.

I think so. That's such a gay line. [laughs] It's clearly a homosexual memory. However, my mom has not been allowed on my set since *Monster's Ball* because she was telling me how to run the show. So now, she comes the first day to pray before we begin shooting; but after that she's not allowed in. She has a very powerful influence over what I do. She's had such a rough life; it's hard for me to say no to her.

Most of us are accustomed to thinking it's life that is precious, but I almost see a consistent message in your films that death is the thing that's being taken for granted. With death comes life in the form of children, love or relationships. Is that the message you're trying to send?

I think that statement is accurate. I had a heart attack while I was editing *Shadowboxer*. It was then that I realized- when I came so close to death- what it was I was trying to do with my life and how I understood the relationship between life and death. I never thought that that was what I was trying to say because it was on such a subliminal level. Because I didn't know how to deal with some of the sh** from my childhood, I turned to drugs. It wasn't until I got my kids 10 years ago that I sobered up. I do think the drugs led up to my heart attack and forced me to come to terms with death. At that time, I don't think I was doing anymore [drugs] than anybody else in Hollywood, but whatever the case it was enough. I thought I had done the right thing by taking in my brother's kids, then I did *Monster's Ball* and *God* through me a curve ball by giving me a heart attack ten years after my height of drug usage.

Will you ever make a gay-theme film?

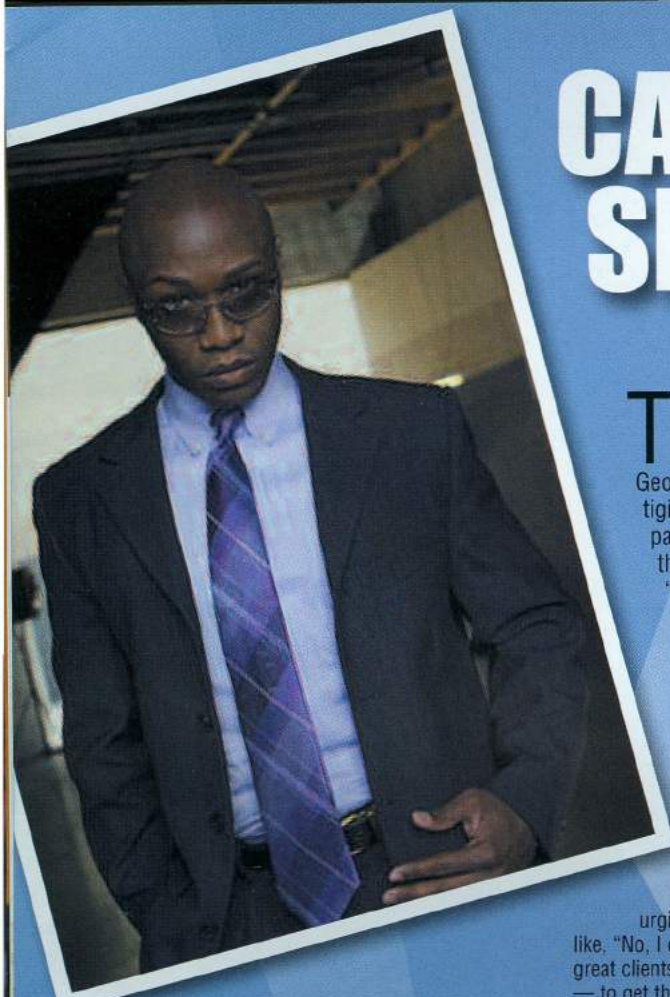
I am constantly looking for good material. I'd like to do a movie about men on the DL. I think that's such an interesting sub-culture that has not been explored. What intrigues me is telling a story about the UPS guy, the minister, the delivery man and why he's doing what he's doing killing so many African-American women. That story intrigues me. In the meantime I'm still looking for that PG-13 story so I can get away from the my reputation as the 'King of Dark.'

Do you see yourself as a career-changer? Halle gets an Oscar from one of your films; Mo'Nique takes her first dramatic role; Cuba Gooding, Jr. is turned into a sex-symbol...

Because I'm such an underdog in the system, I identify with and understand other underdogs. Halle was an underdog, Cuba was an underdog and Mariah, the lead in my new film *Tennessee*, is an underdog. We underdogs stick together because we have a connection. It's invigorating and inspiring taking a chance on people.

*Lee Daniels is the openly gay producer of Oscar-winner *Monster's Ball*, *The Woodsman* and *Shadowboxer*- released on DVD November 7th.*





CAREY SHERRELL: *Not Just Another Apprentice*

By CLAY CANE

There have only been a handful of out black gay men to appear on reality shows—unless you count the plethora of non-singing boys on *American Idol*. Carey Sherrell is the first out black gay man on NBC's *The Apprentice: Los Angeles*. The 26-year-old Atlanta, Georgia native is the owner of a marketing and promotions firm, which have included prestigious clients such as Adidas America, Stoli Vodka and Verizon Wireless through its agency partner Mini Mobile Media. Sherrell is a first of its kind on *The Apprentice*, but after only the second episode, and on Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, he received the legendary, "You're fired!" from the comb-over icon Donald Trump. Sherrell was chastised for his "gay" swimsuit design and strutting all that body on the runway—although he did receive several compliments from Trump saying, "You have a great body!" Unscathed, Carey Sherrell sat down with *Clik* discussing the obvious misconceptions of reality television, facing the Donald and what's next for the marketing guru.

Clik: What made you decide to audition for the *Apprentice*?

Carey: It was not a decision that I actually decided on. Kenny, who is my partner, thought I would be really good for the show and kept urging me everyday to audition. I was just like, "No, I own my own company, I'm with some great clients, and I've worked so hard to get them all—to get them and keep them says a lot." He was like, "No, you're smart, you're intelligent, you do what these guys do in your daily life." He told me to think about it so I kind of thought about it. I was coming back from a meeting in Birmingham, Alabama and the application was sitting on my desk so I filled it out. I guess the rest is history!

Clik: Did you think about your sexuality, or was it a concern, being on a massive show like *The Apprentice*?

Carey: There were some concerns, but I think it's one of those things where you don't care. In the back of my mind, I'm thinking, I don't think my sexuality has anything to do with this interview process. In much like anybody going to get a job, sitting down looking at a resume going over your criteria—are you gay or straight? It's not something that would come up in an interview process. So, I never really thought about it from that end. The concern now comes later on down the road as I'm being introduced to some of my family members that have no idea I'm gay. Looking back in hindsight it wasn't the best—you know what, I can't even say it wasn't the best because, again, I had no idea this would even be remotely part of the show, or even be connected to it.

Clik: Did the producers of the show know you were gay from the beginning, or before filming started?

Carey: Yeah, in the interview process during the casting calls, but, again, in anybody while going to apply for a job you would never imagine that somebody would ask if you were gay. I think if it did it could become a huge lawsuit.

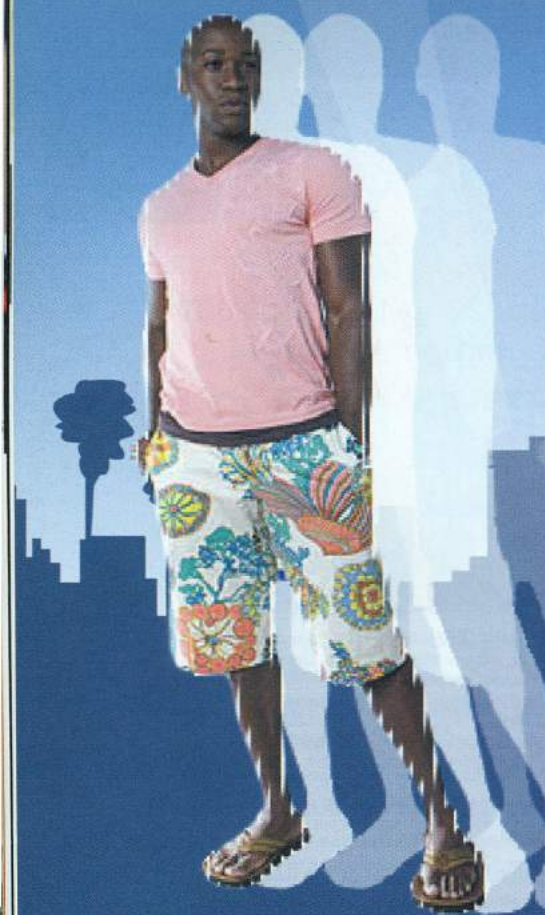
Clik: With that said, if your sexuality wasn't important for the interview, what would made you reveal that you're gay?

Carey: It wasn't in revealing, it was in the answering of questions. Questions about what do you think it's

like to have a relationship in the work place, things like that. Kenny and I both work together; he works with me on doing paperwork, payroll and all the administrative tasks. To answer that question truthfully and honestly, I don't think there's a problem and I would never think there's a problem. So, in the interview if you were to be honest with yourself and answer questions like they should be answered it would somehow come up, or come out. It wasn't like I'm sitting at the table, I got this big sign, I'm gay and deal with it. It wasn't like that at all...

Clik: Let's talk about you getting fired for your swimsuit design. The way it came off to people was the gay guy wanted to wear a skimpy swimsuit, only thinking of a gay audience and forced these designs on his team members. I'm sure that isn't what happened, but that is how it was shown to us. So, what really happened?

Carey: (laughs) You're exactly right—that is not the way it happened. Here is the exact information—Trina Turk is a boutique designer in LA, trinaturk.com. Her stuff really isn't mainstream, she's a wonderful designer I love her dearly, she has a very cool style, but it's not something you can purchase at a Sears or a JC Penny's. It's very high end, a plain white T-shirt costs \$50 in her store. So, when we sat down with her at her store, which you guys don't see, we asked who are your consumers, what are they like, where are they from, where are your stores at—and she had a store in Palm Springs, California. As I talk I say, "Oh, I've been to Palm Springs," and people know that Palm Springs is a gay destination to go. We're also told that 65-70% of the men who shop in that store were gay. So, which meant to us, if we're designing a swimsuit line we had to design something that would appeal to all of our consumers. We discussed the design process and out of the six suits you saw probably five of the suits I designed, including the women's line. There were a lot of suits I designed and the team went, oh we're never going to do that or I think that's too much—they got scratched and we moved on to a different design. They would have you to believe, like you said, this gay guy designed this gay bathing suit, he's gay and he wanted to wear it. The fact of the matter is I never wanted to put the bathing suit on. I designed the swimsuits for the models we had and the team urged me to try on the suit to see what it would look like, I did that without



wanting to do that. At the end of the day we're looking for our models to get there, everybody's like, "Carey you should wear this swimsuit because it looks better on your skin color." I'm like, "No, we have a model from Ford who does this all the time; we should let them do it." They say, "No, it doesn't look good," so, I did it. I did it because I knew it would be beneficial for the team, or at least I thought in my head I would be doing something to make us win. All these things went down, the most important aspect is that we had information about the consumers and people should realize that Donald Trump said our swimsuits were not mainstream enough—Trina Turk isn't mainstream. She is unique, she's got her own sense of style and that's cool, I love her, I love the big prints, the big patterns because that's who she is and that's what we were trying to go for.

Click: To some of the viewers Trump seemed to be really intense with you in the boardroom. Do you think his harshness had anything to do with the fact that you're gay, or was it that he just didn't like what you did?

Carey: I'd like to think somewhere in the back of my head that it's just he didn't like what I did. I'd like to think that was the only reason why the firing went down like it went down. Can I tell you in the truth, like knowing wholeheartedly that is the case—no, I just don't have that information. From people that I saw it, from friends of mine, people have said, "Are you kidding me that was homophobic. I can't believe he said what he said, he did what he did. He looked at you like you were disgusting because you were black and gay." I thought, "No, guys I think it just happened to appear that way." I'd like to think that it was all good natured, but I don't know, you have no idea what somebody's thinking in the back of their head. Honestly, I would hope and pray that he is not because he's such a great business man, he's a class act, he's stellar at what he does. Again, even with calling Rosie a degenerate, it could only be detrimental to his success—actually he's a success already, but I guess success to him personally.

Click: Do you think you had a fair chance?

Carey: You know, I'd like to think so, again, to me it's not about who you are and what you do in your own home, or who you are in your life. When running a business based on qualifications, I most certainly have the qualifications to run any aspect of his business—owning my own business and dealing with the clients that we deal with, they are very high profile clients so I'm more than capable and completely qualified. At that point it becomes a personal choice—do you want someone gay running your business? The answer to that in my opinion is yes, we try to employ as many gay people as possible. We don't ask them that question directly because that's personal to them, but we say that by being a member of the Gay Chamber of Commerce that we want to be part of the gay community, we want to always better where we are and where we're going to go. So, yes, to me, I think I had a fair chance, but it's only because I don't know any differently.

Click: A lot of people who have been on reality TV show contests say it really isn't a contest, but just a reality show trying to get ratings. Do you think that's true for *The Apprentice*?

Carey: (laughs) A lot of what you see the story is told to get ratings, let's be completely clear about that. If it wasn't told to get ratings you would know the other side of the story. You would see it all and you'd have the information that we knew about and things wouldn't come off as this "gay pink thing"

ensued. I think that people remain on the show, or get on the show because they have that kind of quirkiness to them, or they are a characters if you will. It's 50/50, some of it is real, some it is definitely very set up.

Click: As you can imagine a lot of black folks might find it odd that two black men were voted off first—what's your take on that?

Carey: Wow, this is very hard because I was asked this question on MLK Day. People said, "I can't believe two black people were fired back to back." They were very disappointed and very upset. I don't think that Trump knew when this show aired it would air on MLK day, so let's scratch that. Now, onto the part about firing two black people back to back...if I was the producer of the show it's not something I would do because I think it sends a bad message. At the same time in order to maintain the integrity of the show, if there is any, then if there is somebody who needs to be fired, or should be fired, no matter what color they are, they should be fired. Do I think it looked bad? Yeah, I hear about it everyday—I can't believe he fired two black people; you guys are from the same city, why would he do that? I don't know, it doesn't look great but if it is that then it is what it is. There's nothing about it I can change, I can't join a protest—maybe he just doesn't like people from Atlanta. I don't know, I really don't...honestly, I don't think there was any intention, but it definitely was not good PR, for sure.

Click: Is it true you're launching a swimsuit line and writing a tell all book about *The Apprentice*?

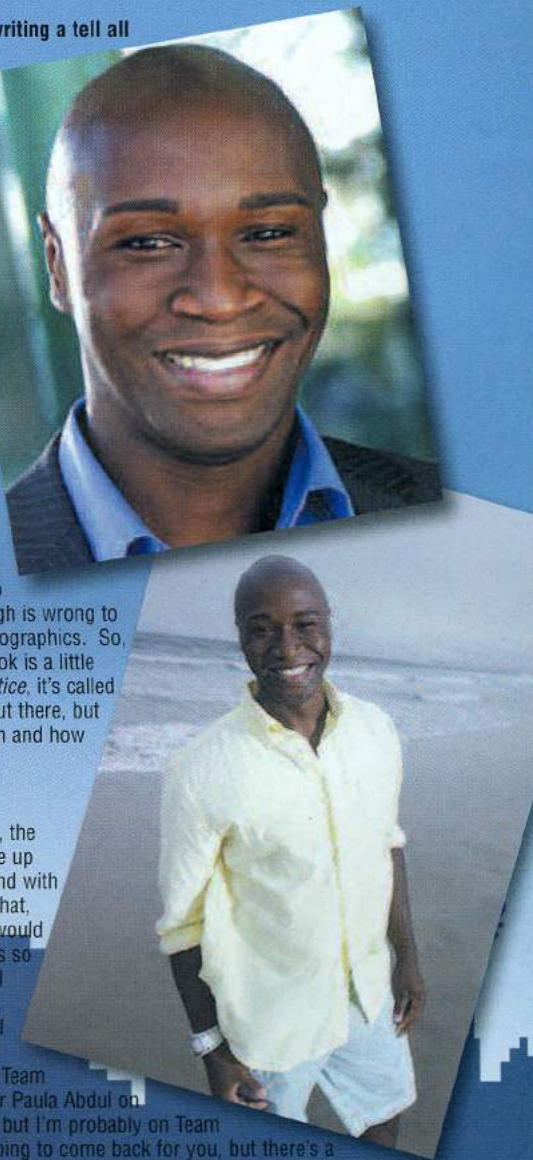
Carey: (laughs) Some of that is true! We are launching a swimwear line on <http://bluemotionsquared.com/>. Trump said some very negative things, I took it very personally, saying the suit was a loser and the suit would never sell, which was sort of reverting back to the fact that I think there were gay consumers who I think would buy the suit. He really didn't understand there's a buying power in this community. To say something won't sell because it's catered to a demographic that's small that doesn't matter—it will still sell. So, it's a very cool unique design, something like you've never seen before. Also, on our site there will be a guy who looks like Trump, he's not Trump at all, you can change the swimsuit on him and see what Trump would like if he were to wear the suit. For someone of his caliber being raised in business he knows you always cater toward your demographic. He has million dollar condos; I don't see him putting up billboards for million dollar condos in the ghetto. That's not where his consumers are so to say that you should deviate from who your consumers are because it's not mainstream enough is wrong to me. The fact is we do it in marketing, we cater to demographics. So, yes the tell all book lets get to that part. The tell all book is a little different, it really isn't a tell all book about *The Apprentice*, it's called "Another Apprentice Book" because there's so many out there, but it would be more about the realness of reality television and how what you see is not always what it seems.

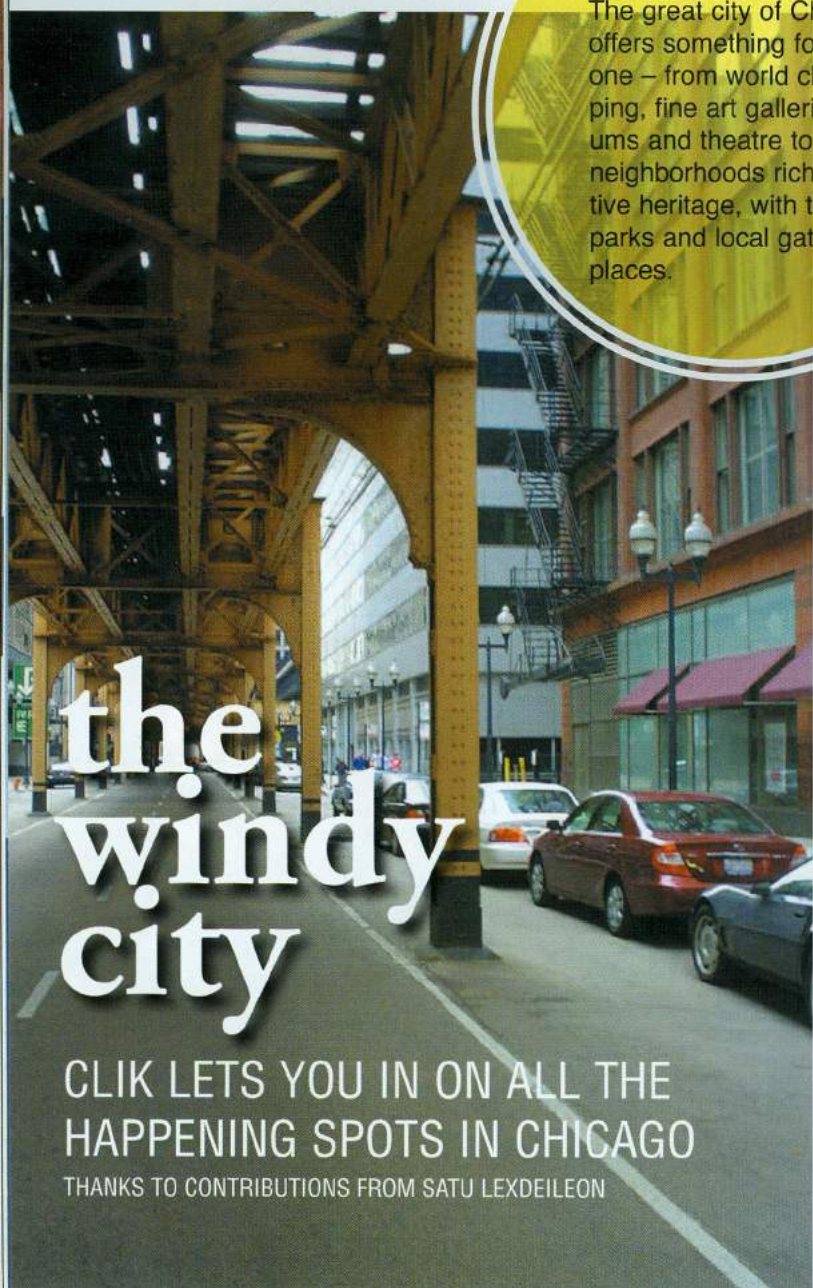
Click: Are you on Team Rosie or Team Donald?

Carey: (laughs) My favorite question—me and Derrick, the other gay guy on the show, we almost decided to come up with these shirts that said Team Rosie, Team Donald and with the tagline, "A nation divided." Here's what I'll say to that, this is with anybody—if somebody attacked you, you would come back for them. At the same time I think Trump is so iconic and such a stellar guy so to stoop down and call the lady a degenerate, make fun of somebody's weight, the way they look—is just wrong. It's wrong today, it'll be wrong tomorrow and it's not something you should do, or anyone should do. I'm probably going to be on Team Rosie's side although I will tell you she's just gone after Paula Abdul on *American Idol* now. I don't know how I feel about that but I'm probably on Team Rosie's side, again, if you come for me I'm probably going to come back for you, but there's a tactful way of doing things, it could be done in a different way.

You can reach Carey Sherrell at <http://www.careylive.com/>

Clay Cane is an established writer in New York City and the author of the forthcoming novel *BALL-SHAPED WORLD*. For social commentary and provocative takes on pop culture please visit <http://www.CLAYCANE.net>.





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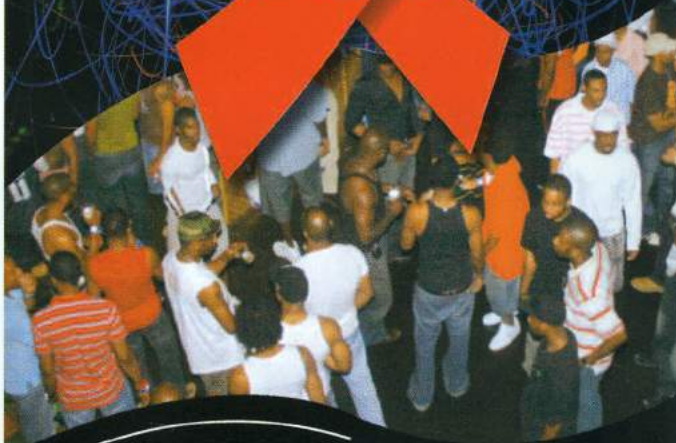
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demn anyone for the person they choose to whole heartedly love. In The Christian's case he thought being straight meant being "closer to God". He told me that he was tired of going to bed thinking that he was going to hell.

There was a point in my life where I felt the same. I didn't want to be homosexual. I wanted to grow up and get married, have a house with a wife and kids and a white picket fence. So I bounce from religion to religion trying to make more peace for myself. When one religion didn't work out, I bounced to the next. This happened for 6 months until I was finally asked by my mother if I was gay.

To play devil's advocate here. The Bible does say homosexuality is a sin. In fact, it says it six times. What the Bible does not discuss is the history of the scriptures and what homosexuality meant 2,000 years ago. I often wonder if God is straight or gay, because if He isn't either than why are the heteros promoting being straight as the lifestyle to be. I don't understand how people bitch and promote about what the scriptures say and when asked to find them, they can't even refer back to it. The church is filled with a bunch of hypocritical and fear-enabling liars.

I recently interviewed a blogger that goes by the name The Captain. Here he revealed his truth and why he wants to be straight.

SM: Ok I'm going to start off with the question everyone wants to know; are you gay?

Captain: Good question. I never confess I am gay.

SM: Are you?

Captain: No.

SM: Are you bi?

Captain: No.

SM: Straight?

Captain: No.

SM: Asexual?

Captain: No.

SM: Than, what?

Captain: Neither one, I cannot make a definitive confession as I am dealing with sexuality and learning to stir away from vile affection for men.

SM: Why are you trying to stir away?

Captain: I am persuaded that homosexuality is wrong and improper within our humanity.

SM: So you're gay but you're trying to stir away?

Captain: I never confess I am gay. If I say that, then I am bound to the validity that I accept the notion of my attraction to men, which I do not accept.

SM: Ok I read on your blog that you're a vers/bottom. Please explain.

Captain: That was the sexual role I played when I was engaged in sexual activities with other men.

SM: When did you decide that being gay was a bad thing?

Captain: I always knew it was wrong, even from my Christian home where I grew up, it was taught this was a sin and immoral.

SM: Ok first off. You're not gay.

Captain: No.

SM: You're a homosexual.

Captain: No.

SM: There's a difference.

Captain: I cannot confess as I do not accept neither, despite the differences thereof.

SM: You're a homosexual. You're not apart of the lifestyle or the scene, yet that's your orientation.

Captain: Incorrect. I do not accept this as my orientation.

SM: Than, what's your orientation?

Captain: Incomplete.

SM: There's no such thing.

Captain: There is.

SM: Are you depressed?

Captain: No.

SM: If you grew up knowing that homosexuality was a sin, than why did you still perform homosexual activities?

Captain: Good question. It's like the curious child wanting to touch the pan of baked cookies after his mother said to him not to touch the pan. My curiosity overtook my teachings as I wanted to experience what it was like to be involved with another man in a sexual manner. Unfortunately, I continued not knowing the spiritual detriment that came along with it.

SM: Do you think you're oppressing yourself?

Captain: No, I do not feel that way. I do know that who I am is a work in progress to make correct to be acceptable to God.

SM: Now the truth of the matter is that the Bible says homosexuality is a sin. That's a reality—that's what it says.

Captain: Yes, I agree.

SM: But we have to understand the media and news misinterpret facts everyday. This book has been around for over 2,000 years.

Captain: I agree, but this book still has power and has been the guide for all humanity for over 2,000 years as well.

SM: If you're not gay why do you read blogs by gay bloggers?

Captain: Well, I read all types of blogs. Rather gay, straight, entertainment, personal, it is open and free to be read. I am fully diverse with the activities of the gay world and in order for me to help others who struggle in their orientation, I need to be aware of the things that are happening.

SM: Struggle in their orientation? Just because you're oppressing your sexuality doesn't mean everyone feels it's wrong.

Captain: No, many people struggle with the identity of their orientation and/or the change needed they wish to make.

SM: I think you crave attention and the truth of the matter is you're getting it.

Captain: No, I crave no attention as I am an average person like the next man.

SM: Your blog is 85 percent on being gay and sinful.

Captain: Yes, I speak candidly and often about this subject.

SM: Often also known as all the time. Why do you call yourself "The Captain"?

Captain: Good Question. I am called the Captain because of my role in an organization I use to be apart of long ago.

SM: Okay, why do you still call yourself The Captain?

Captain: Some people in the past that still know me refer to me as such and I guess it is do with the out spoken knowledge and wisdom I share with others.

SM: I think you share what you think is knowledge and wisdom. What sort of things have you done to "cure" your homosexuality?

Captain: There is nothing for "me" to do. This is in the hands of God.

SM: What if you're wrong? What if homosexuality isn't a sin? If God didn't want you to be gay, don't you think you'll be straight?

Captain: I certainly understand your thought. What proof can you provide that say it is not a sin?

SM: 2,000 years of crusades, war, and ignorant people.

Captain: However, can you deny the reports of people who successfully changed their orientation and are happily attached with the opposite sex? We have an organization, such as Exodus International, that document such reports of people who seek God and dealt with the immorality they were in. I will even further say homosexuality

Heterosexuality Under THE Influence

By: Steven Emmanuel Martinez



Why don't you join the church with me? We can become straight together." One question and a sentence that will forever be inscribed in my thoughts. Those words were uttered by a former beau guy I liked. I call him The Christian. To me he defines everything someone wants in a man. He's kind hearted, compelling, a sweet-talker, and a hard working individual. Til' this day I refer to him as the most charismatic man I have ever met. Except he had one flaw—he wanted to be straight. Consequently, he saw me at a Christmas party thrown by my friends Shawn and Daniel. A few days later he found my myspace profile and sent me a message. From there things escalated. I thought I met "The Guy".

Instead he turned out to be a gentleman who is having a love affair with his church, an undercover straight guy who doesn't like being gay and who thinks homosexuality is a sin. I was induced by his state of mind, enticed by the words he chose to speak, captivated by how articulate he was and moved enough to mentally piece together a life of ecstasy. So why am I still running behind him? Why am I still making out with him in his car? Why do I feel affection for someone who thinks I'm a sin? No, I'm not desperate. I'm running behind this guy because I'm afraid that perhaps he will realize some day he can not be straight and finds another guy to date. He has my emotions running high and I feel like there is no one like him. When he finally finds out that he isn't straight, I want to be the first face he sees and the first person he thinks about when it hits him that there's nothing wrong with being same gender loving, because after all its survival of the fittest and we're all looking for that guy.

The first question I should have asked the preacher's son though was if he thought homosexuality was a sin. But why should I have asked? Why would he be at a gay party if it was filled with sinful people? I still ask myself that question. As a matter of fact, I still ask him that question. He always denies me an answer. Now, don't get me wrong. I am a God-fearing individual. But I refuse to believe that God will con-

Sexuality & All: An interview with Shorty Roc & Marty-Pre

By: Steven Emmanuel Martinez

Their lyrics are hard. Their voices can move a crowd with the poetry they so vibrantly choose to rap. They have what it takes to win Grammy's, perform on MTV live, and have their music blasted out of a car at volume high. So, why haven't they been signed yet? Shorty Roc and Marty-Pre are creating a movement with their music. Making the decision to be openly Same Gender Loving artists. They have had their share of success, creating a fan base and being recognized by what mainstream might consider an alternative audience. With their success has come exclusion. Take Marty-Pre whose single had fair air time play on the radio until an ignorant DJ discovered he was gay. Or a club promoter who chose not to allow Shorty Roc to perform at a scheduled event out of discriminatory purposes—we can only assume. In a revealing interview both Shorty Roc and Marty-Pre go beyond the realm of musicians, letting you know what really makes good music—sexuality & all.

Describe yourself in one word.

Shorty Roc: I consider myself to be "Da Life's Illest MC". I bring hardcore, yet sexy, yet real hip hop geared towards gay men.

Marty-Pre: Fierce would be the word I'd go with. Fierce to me, means strength and the ability to rise above and beyond what's expected of you. Being a double minority, and I product of child foster-care, nobody ever expected anything of me-and to an extent, they still don't. However, my music is like a drug that keeps taking me higher, and my fans are getting just as addicted as I am.

When did you discover your love for music?

Shorty Roc: I always had a love for music. My family played music heavily in the house when I was a kid. I was with a DJ set in my teenage years. We used to go around the neighborhood and play music at parties. I always been a big fan of hip hop music and when I came into the lifestyle my experience just filtered off into music, hip hop music.

Marty-Pre: Music has always been a staple to my sanity for as far as I can remember. As a child I didn't care about being on punishment because somehow they never remembered to take away my radio.

Often musicians take real events from their lives and that inspires their lyrics. Is your music inspired by real events?

Shorty Roc: All of my music is inspired by real events. I either really lived it, I really saw it, or it's just what really goes on in this lifestyle, or how I really feel about a situation. I think that's why my music stands out from others, because it's raw and uncut.

Marty-Pre: All of my music is inspired by real events that either I have experienced personally, or that are happening to my peers; Be it, love, sex, anger, drugs or death. I know how it feels to be in pain. I've watch a man go from alive and well to laying in a hospital bed with an incurable disease waiting to die. Music is a way to voice opinions that society just won't hear in plain conversation. When I write my music, it's almost in journal format writing the material is easy, finding a good beat is the hard part.

What's it like being an LGBT artist? Especially one of color.

Shorty Roc: It's challengeing on both sides of the game. On the gay side it is challenging because gay people are critical. So, I have to try extra hard. As far as the straight side it's challenging because I have to perform in front of straight rappers and in front of straight people and that takes a lot of courage to get out there in front of crowds of people and tell the world who I am, how I get down, and demand respect.

Marty-Pre: For me, being a gay Hip-Hop artist, it's not as tough as one might think as far as respect goes. Gay or not, my talent is undeniable. Hip-Hop was created to give a voice to those who weren't being heard, music was their out-let and for underground talent like myself, it still is. The difference between me and a mainstream rapper is that I'm not acting when I write, rap or perform. Mainstream music is a business, its not about talent, it's about selling products.

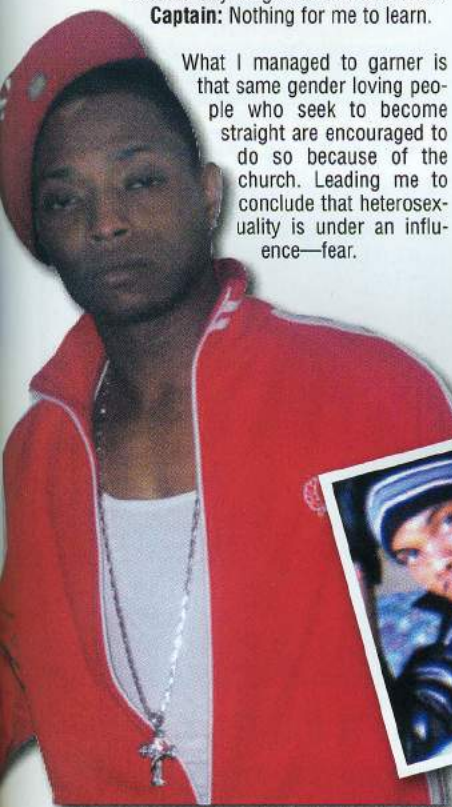
Is there any real difference between mainstream music and music by LGBT artists?

Shorty Roc: Somewhat, but I don't think it will be like that forever. This is something new in the history of music. It still has a lot of growing to do, it's a baby. Give it another 20 years, I predict [music by LGBT artist] to be big and I'll be one of the pioneers of the game.

Has there been any prejudices against your music?

Shorty Roc: Once recently a promoter wouldn't put me

CONTINUES ON PAGE 36



What I managed to garner is that same gender loving people who seek to become straight are encouraged to do so because of the church. Leading me to conclude that heterosexuality is under an influence—fear.



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on. I think it was discrimination because a previous artist got up there and made a lot of anti gay comments and the crowd embraced it, and it almost brought me down. But you know what they say what don't kill you makes you stronger.

Marty Pree: I always have prejudice against my music. People think that because I'm not a thug that I can't rap, but when they hear it, its like 'okay this little bitch has got something here'. There is a particular under-ground radio that I sent a copy of one of my songs too, not actually thinking they'd play it, but just to see. Well, they did, and for about 2 weeks I was getting air-time, until they found out I was gay. It was really a big thing on station because they had no clue just by listening to that song that I was gay. I still don't know who told them, they said it was some anonymous caller. If they'd paid attention to the words they would've figured it out.

How did you make your decision to be an openly LGBT artist?

Shorty Roc: I had to mentally prepare myself. I had to accept the fact that my "don't ask, don't tell" policy would be obsolete. I had to decide on my approach to gay people, how I was going to say it, and how I was going to say it. I had to figure out my purpose. An old friend of mine that gave me the name Shorty Roc passed and it just made me realize that if you have something you want to do in life do it because life is short and you are not promised tomorrow. A week after his wake I recorded my first record *10 Gay Commandments*.

Marty Pree: My decision was made when I was watching an episode of BET's 106th and Park and I saw an obviously gay rapper in a video talking about how many women he's slept with. I just didn't want to be joke of the community. I'd rather be knocked for being real, than fake.

What are your current and future projects?

Shorty Roc: Well my current project coming out is

called *Personal*, my second effort. It's due out in February via CDBABY.Com and my MySpace Page, www.myspace.com/shortyrocdamic. This album I worked very hard on. My first CD was called *The Mixtape Jacking Beats* and that was like a collection of my renditions of some of the hottest chart topping singles. This time on *Personal* its all original beats, flows, lyrics. I got some regular hip hop, some R&B, some Crunk, some House, some straight up hardcore hip hop, some club joints, and some sexual entertainment like my critically acclaimed *Rappers Delight 06*. I feel really good about this project this time. It came from the heart. I talked about alot of personal things and feelings that went on in my life.

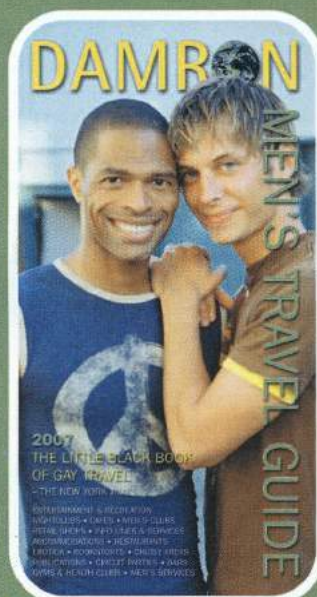
Marty Pree: Well, Marty-Pree is definitely working hard on music. I will be putting out a new mix-tape by the end of March 2007 and possibly doing a guest appearance on some other under-ground mix tapes of other artists as well. All this while still studying at college. Education is very important to me. My myspace page is www.myspace.com/martypree

What stage is the black same gender loving community at now? In terms of politics and being accepting all images of black gay people.

Shorty Roc: We are getting better, but we need to unite and educate more. We need to start fighting these gay bashers back. we need to promote more strength and pride, but we're starting to get our respect. That's why I believe this music is important. It's a way to communicate within our community. We can't have change if we don't talk about it.

Marty Pree: Blacks have just barley begun to accept themselves for being black, throwing gay in the mix only adds to the confusion. Gay Black America is moving very slowly in the direction toward acceptance, but I don't think we are that far behind the rest of America. God Bless us all, because our whole country has some maturing to do.

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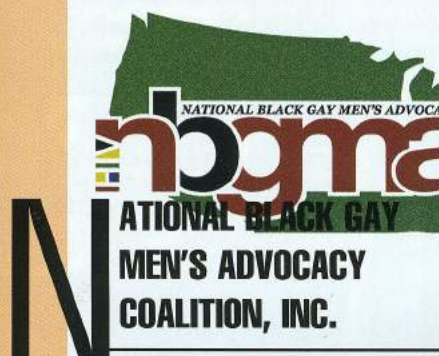
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VISIT: << www.sizzlemiami.com >>
Details Coming Soon



NBGMAC is committed to improving the health and well-being of Black Gay Men through advocacy that is focused on research, policy, education and training

CORE VALUES

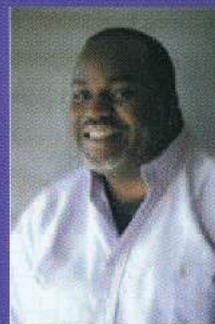
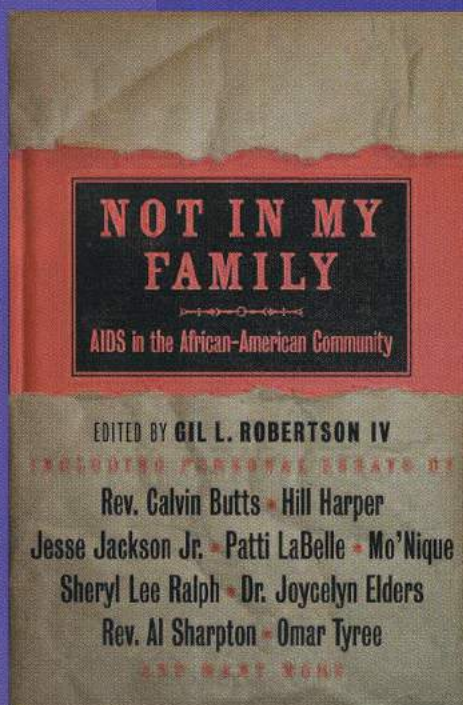
Honesty/ Integrity,
Love/ Caring,
Trust,
Respect,
Independence,
Commitment to Excellence

We are dedicated to the concept that our ability to effect change in the United States HIV/AIDS epidemic and its impacts on the Black community will be determined by our bringing together the rich diversity of the Black Gay communities at a national level - across gender/gender identity, race/ethnicity, disability, education, income, age and geography. If you or your organization would like to join us in the effort to improve the health status and well being of Black Gay communities please complete the membership application at our site.

CORE PURPOSE

To fight for the lives of black gay men

Become a member to improve the health status and well being of Black Gay Communities. Visit our webpage: www.nbgtmac.org



Much has been made of the statistics surrounding African Americans and HIV/AIDS; however, somehow the human face of this disease still eludes our community. Like many situations confronting the African American community, dialogue about this disease has failed to include meaningful communication with those directly involved. *Not in My Family* began as an opportunity for my brother and I to share our family's experiences in living

with him through his journey with HIV/AIDS, however, it soon evolved into a vehicle that explores a wide cross-section of ideas, values and beliefs.

Many of the contributors to this book are famous, but most are not, however, with every essay they all demonstrate their commitment to the community: offering invaluable insights on the joys, pains, triumphs, fears and love that people living with HIV/AIDS and their families deal with everyday. *Not in My Family* is the resulting effort. It is a patchwork of essays that forms a quilt of expressions by individuals who have chosen to come out of the shadows to bare their fears, isolation and pain of living in the age of AIDS.

Not in My Family is revealing and sometimes shocking, but the sentiments expressed very clearly related how HIV/AIDS has reshaped lifestyles and attitudes within our community. *Not in My Family* will provide lessons in courage and pearls of wisdom and inspiration. It will also present an opportunity for families both immediate and extended—to gain the courage to move forward with their lives, dealing openly and honestly about their feelings for each other in sickness and health.

Watching someone you love die is a very difficult thing. To witness a loved ones transition with HIV/AIDS is even more so because this disease creates an environment that leaves many families with few resources or options for support. Underneath such pressure, some families can fall apart. Fortunately, *Not in My Family* demonstrates that our community recognizes the need to face this scourge head on. This book will have long term and far reaching impact on our community and will raise awareness to sectors of our community who need it the most.

My hope is that *Not in My Family* will offer a forum of expression for discovery and healing. It is a wake up call for the black community and larger society to realize that HIV/AIDS is not something we can run away from. It's a reality that we must face, deal with and conquer. AIDS is not only in my family? It's in all of ours!

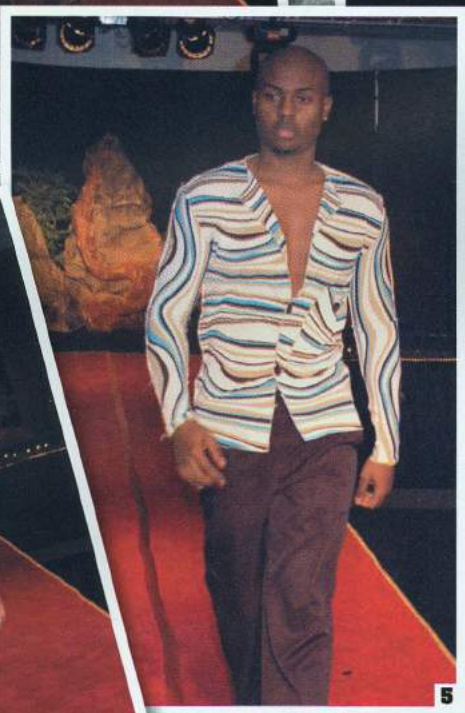
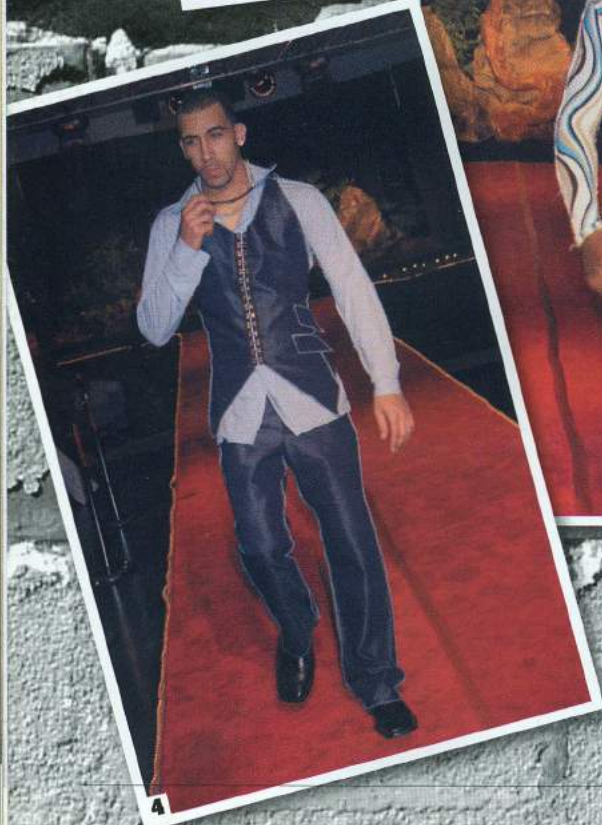
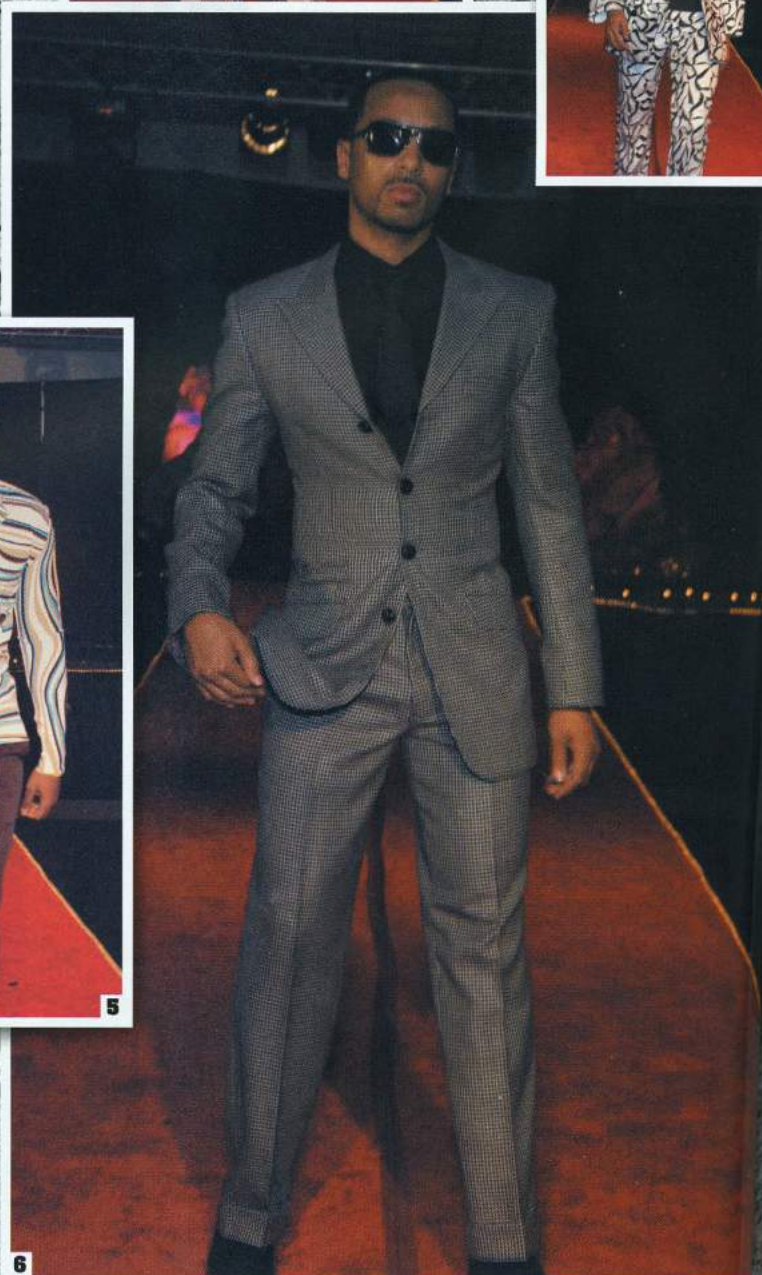
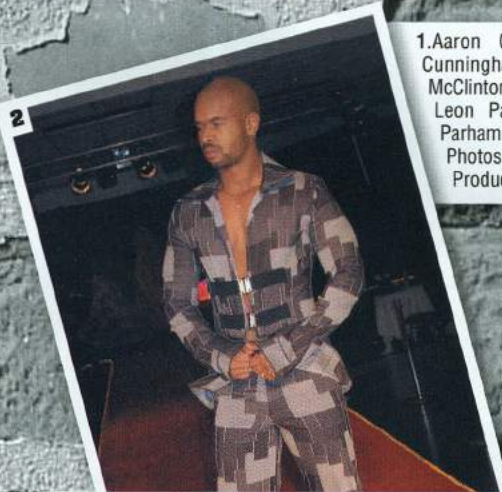
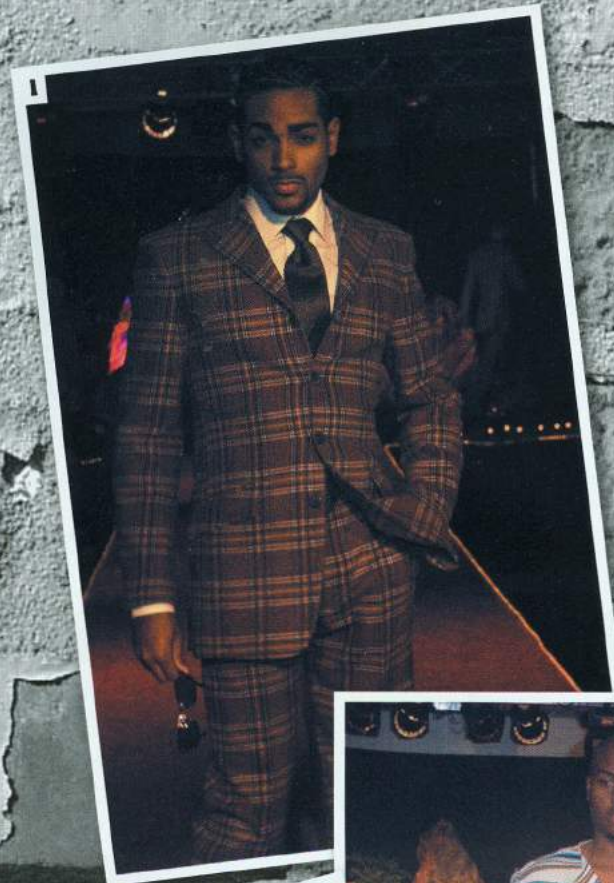
- Gil L. Robertson IV

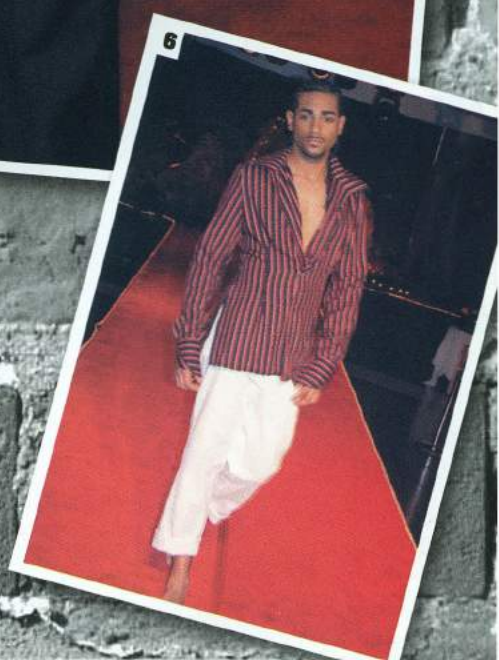
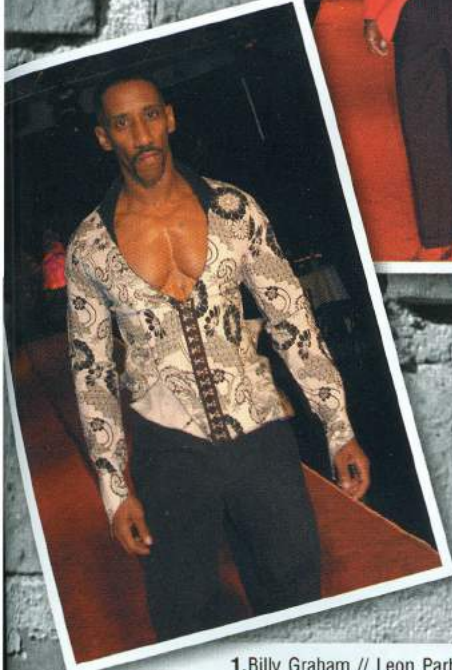
ROCK the RUNWAY

Casual Chic

EVENT HOSTED BY XTREME ENTERTAINMENT IN ATLANTA, GA • JANUARY 4TH, 2007

1. Aaron Chavis // Reco Chapple 2. Tory Cunningham // Leon Parham 3. Brodney McClinton // Leon Parham 4. Lartise McIntosh // Leon Parham 5. Robert Champion // Leon Parham 6. Farod Brooks // Reco Chapple
Photos: **Jerry Boles** /
Producer: **Alkhyseam Watson**





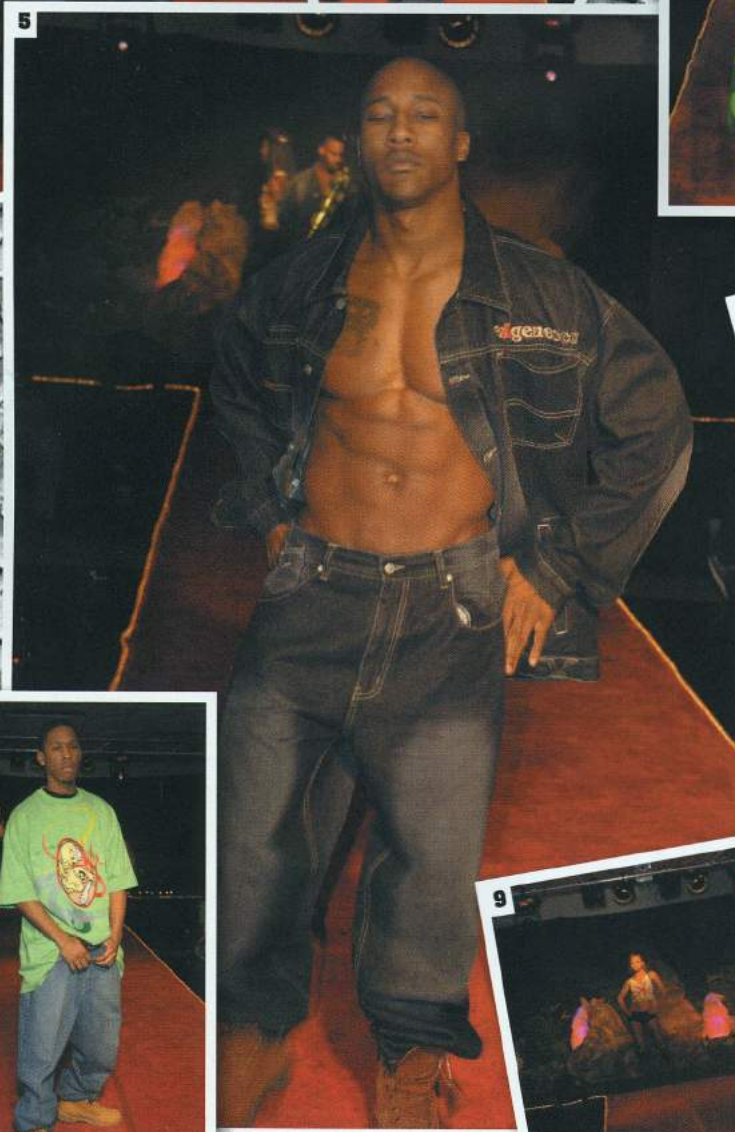
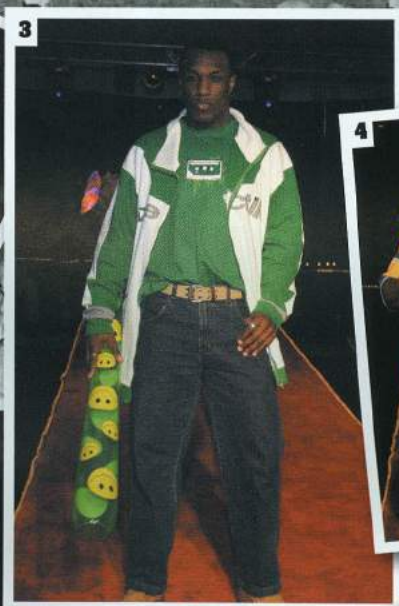
1. Billy Graham // Leon Parham
2. Cory Gwinn // Leon Parham
3. Christopher Goodwin // Reco Chapple 4. Farod Brooks // Leon Parham 5. Jamaine Washington // Leon Parham 6. Aaron Chavis // Leon Parham

THE STREETS meet the RUNWAY

Street Wear

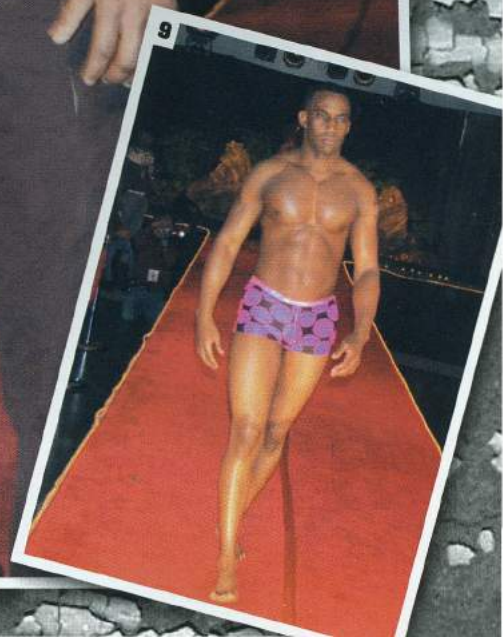
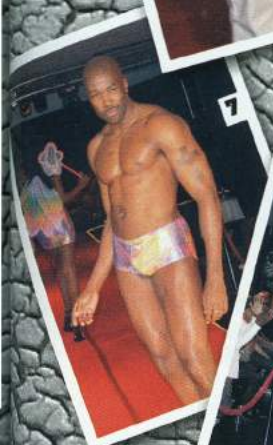
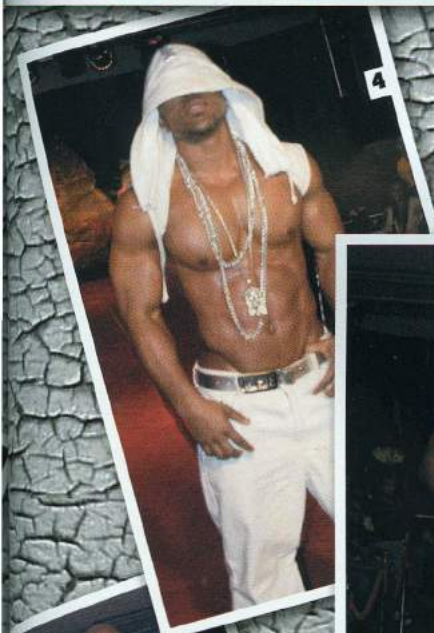
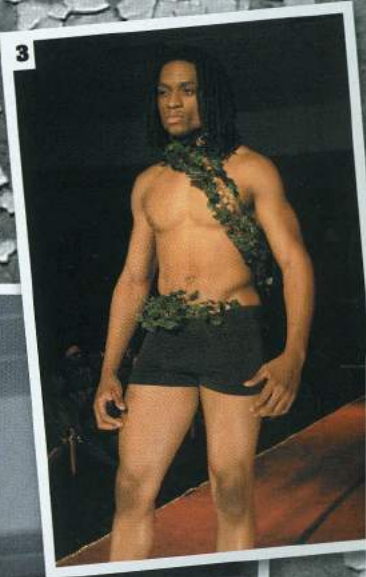
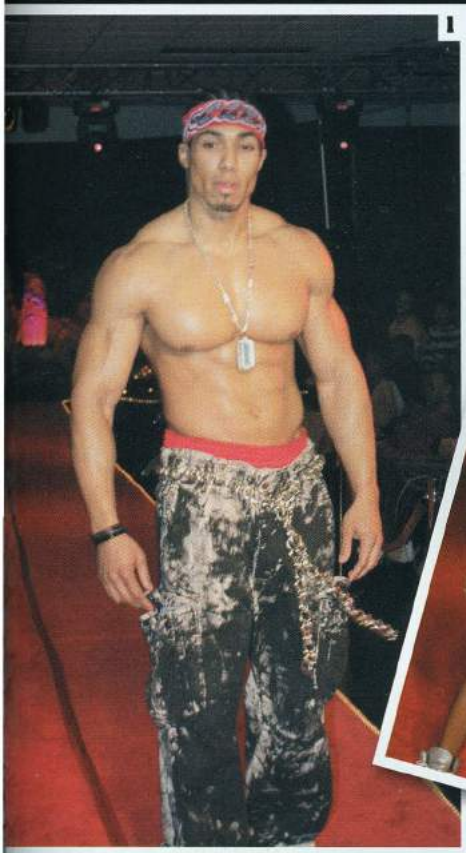
EVENT HOSTED BY XTREME ENTERTAINMENT IN ATLANTA, GA • JANUARY 4TH, 2007

1. James Turner 2. Jarvis Roberts 3. Corey Gwinn
4. Chad Hawkins 5. Chad Hawkins 6. Dhei Javon 7. Aaron
Chavis 8. Brandon Howell 9. Jamaine Washington
All models are wearing clothing by **Eklektik Genes**
www.Eklektik.com



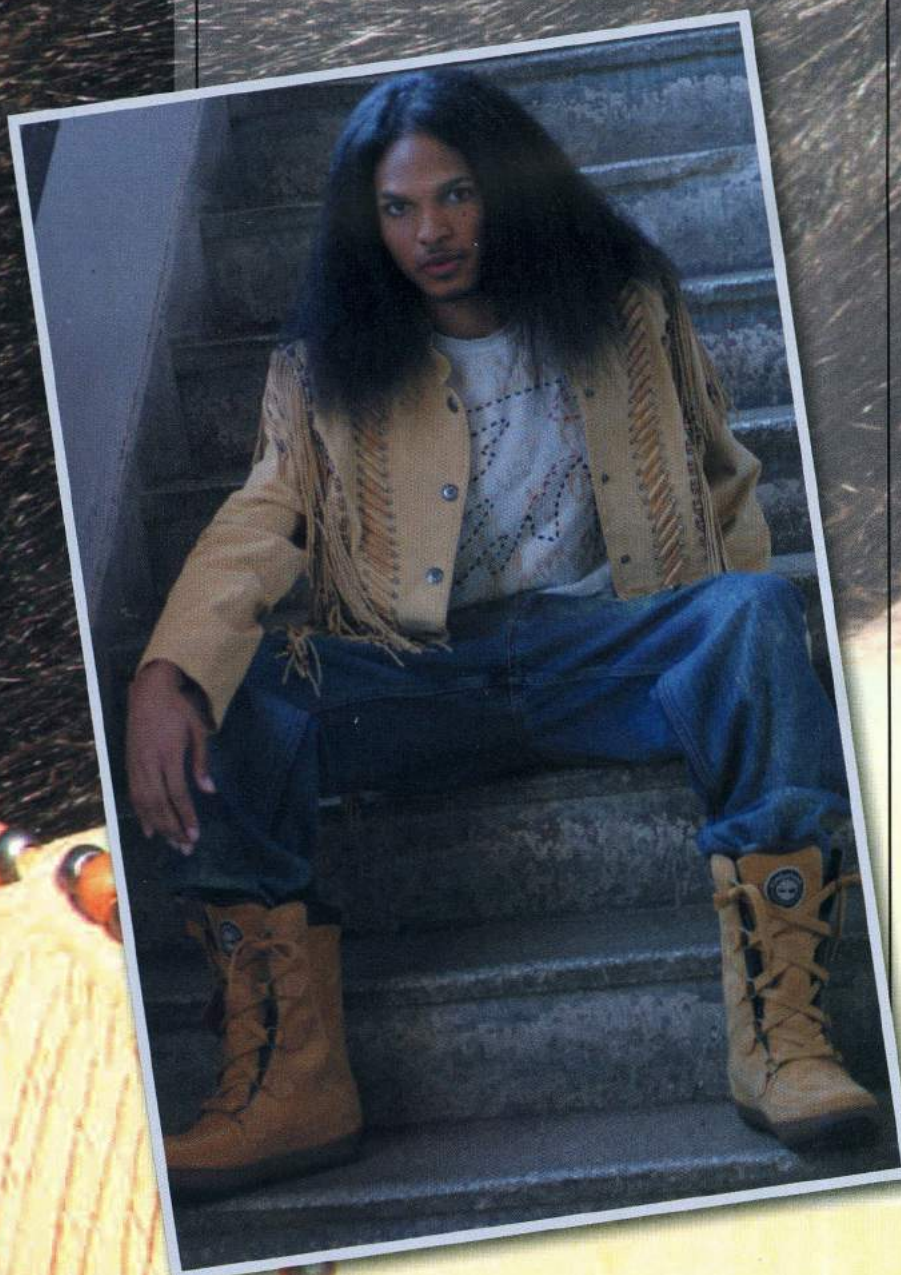
Photos: **Jerry Boles** / Producer: **Alkhyseam Watson**

1. City Gym Boys 2. Charles Salle // City Gym Boys 3. Jamaine Washington // Forshe'- Sherlene Merritt 4. Yusef // City Gym Boys 5. Chad Hawkins // Reco Chapple 6. Yusef // City Gym Boys 7. Kent Blackmon // Forshe'- Sherlene Merritt 8. Brodney McClinton // Forshe'- Sherlene Merritt 9. Patrick Allen // Forshe'- Sherlene Merritt



Move over Justin Timberlake, we're bring sexy back. By way of Nashville TN, tantalize your pallet on this sexy-ass part Cherokee, part Ethiopian hottie now residing Hot-Lanta. Holding his ground as a up-and-coming model, Chico, coming in at 6' serves up an edgy-flow that commands attention from the camera.

“ *My look is exotic, I like taking chances and risk with it. Not much of a follower here. I jump at the opportunity to create new looks for myself, because fashion and modeling are my passion. I dress for myself, so it's doesn't matter that I don't look or dress like the average guy.* ”



Along with all of this beauty, Chico boast intelligence, and smarts. He's a college student studying Education and Philosophy. I'm sure most won't mind him picking their "brains". Sorry, but I just couldn't resist "sliding" that in. Getting a little bit personal, we probed a little further:

What would you like people to know about you?

I love people and helping others. I am also very spiritual. I don't go to church, but my spirituality comes from within. I don't feel one has to go to church to have a strong connection to God.

Describe you ideal mate

"He" has to have tons of personality and dear to be different. Has to be open minded and respectful of others and their differences. Able to love and receive love.

Your ideal evening

It would have to be one that's unusual, anything that's unpredictable... I love being surprised

H O T S T U F F

Clik Magazine
February 2007

Chico

Photos By Jerry Boles

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Reel

PICK OF THE MONTH

IN THEATRES THIS MONTH



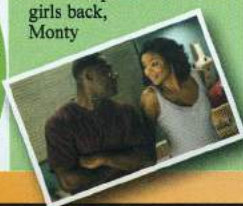
FEBRUARY 9TH
Hannibal Rising

Believe it or not, serial killer/cannibal Hannibal Lecter was once a little boy. During WWII, the young maniac (Gaspard Ulliel) evades both the Nazi war machine and the Soviet menace to grow up relatively peacefully in France with an aunt (Lady Murasaki). But after a chance meeting with some former war criminals, Hannibal begins to develop the darker side of his personality — the much, much darker side.



FEBRUARY 14TH
Daddy's Little Girls

In Tyler Perry's follow-up to *Diary of a Mad Black Woman* and *Madea's Family Reunion*, single father Monty (Idris Elba) loses custody of his three young daughters to his corrupt ex-wife. Desperate to win his girls back, Monty



enlists the help of an attractive, hard-nosed attorney named Julia (Gabrielle Union). As a garage mechanic, Monty is Julia's complete opposite, yet an unexpected romance brews.

FEBRUARY 16TH
Ghost Rider

This is the story of motorcycle stunt performer, Johnny Blaze (Cage), who agrees to become the host of a "spirit of vengeance" in exchange for the safety of his true love, but the price he pays is to be cursed with the avenging



FEBRUARY 23RD
The Abandoned

spirit that takes its form at night as a demon with a flaming skull on a motorcycle of hellfire...



When she was a baby, an American movie producer was adopted from Russia and raised in the United States. When her birth mother dies, she returns to her native home to find a supernatural conspiracy involving spirits haunting her ancestral land — including her own ghostly visage.



DIANE KEATON MANDY MOORE

BECAUSE I SAID SO

HOT PICK

FEBRUARY 2ND

Keaton stars as Daphne Wilder, a mother whose love knows no bounds or boundaries. She is the proud mom of three daughters: stable psychologist Maggie (Lauren Graham), sexy and irreverent Mae (Piper Perabo) and insecure, adorable Milly (Mandy Moore) - who, when it comes to men, is like psychotic flypaper. In order to prevent her youngest from making the same mistakes she did, Daphne decides to set Milly up with the perfect man. Little does Milly know, however, that her mom placed an ad in the online personals to find him. Comic mayhem unfolds as Daphne continues to do the wrong thing for the right reasons...all in the name of love. In a hilarious battle of strong wills, the mother-daughter dynamic is tested in all its fierce, wacky complexity. The girls help Daphne finally discover the truths and impossibilities of motherly love, all while trying to answer the questions: where does it begin and where should it end?

COMING SOON

BLACK SNAKE MOAN FACTS

<http://www.moanmovie.com>

A has-been blues musician (Samuel L. Jackson) is placed in charge of the rehabilitation of a hopeless nymphomaniac (Christina Ricci).

THE NUMBER 23 FACTS

<http://www.thenumber23movie.com>

Jim Carrey plays a man who becomes fixated on the number 23, and begins to notice that it appears everywhere around him.





NOKIA N76 PHONE, MULTIMEDIA COMPUTER

The Nseries **Nokia N76** phone is Nokia's new version of a slim and sleeker multimedia computer phone, featuring tools to help users create, consume and connect, using music, videos, images and the internet. The N76 is based on S60 3rd Edition software on Symbian OS, and has dedicated quick cover keys which let you control music features from the outside of the device. A 2.4", 16 million color screen and landscape mode allows for web surfing with the Nokia Web Browser with Mini Map. Using Nokia Mobile Search local services, you can find restaurants, bars, shops and more with the N76 and locate them with online maps or click to call them. Nokia also suggests Internet services like Flickr and Amazon for searching, shopping or sharing. The Nokia N76 phone is available in Black or Red, and has a 2.0 megapixel (1600 x 1200 pixels) camera.



LG VX9400 V CAST MOBILE TV PHONE FROM VERIZON AND MEDIAFLO

LG and Verizon Wireless are releasing the innovative **LG VX9400 V-CAST** Mobile TV phone in Q1 2007. You have to love the horizontal swivel screen on this slick phone that is designed for watching Mobile TV, accessing V-CAST Music and Video, and viewing photos shot on its 1.3 megapixel digital camera/camcorder. Users can record up to one hour of consecutive video with an external memory card, but the big deal here is that Verizon Wireless will be using MediaFlo technology for Mobile TV broadcasts.

APPLE IPHONE IS HERE

The long awaited **Apple iPhone** was finally introduced by Steve Jobs January 9th, and it's a beauty. The slim and sleek Apple iPhone is actually three devices in one - a mobile phone, widescreen iPod with touch controls, and an Internet communications device with email, web browsing, searching and maps. The iPhone features a patented "multi-touch" widescreen display that let's you control functions with your fingers. Once again, Apple Inc., as the company is now named, comes through with a unique device that could leave other smart-phones in the dust, but it ain't cheap!



iPhone will be available in the US in June 2007, Europe in late 2007, and Asia in 2008, in a 4GB model for \$499 (US) and an 8GB model for \$599 (US), and will work with either a PC or Mac. iPhone will be sold in the US through Apple's retail and online stores, and through Cingular's retail and online stores. Several iPhone accessories will also be available in June, including Apple's new remarkably compact Bluetooth headset.

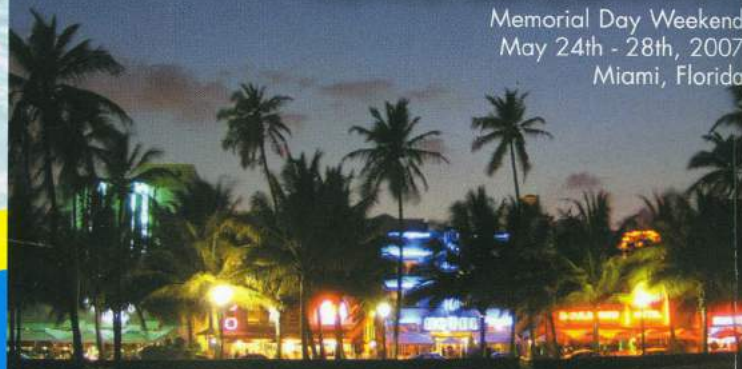
/// JUST IN

It is our belief that Apple intends to agree to the final document." Not so much. We're not quite sure what broke down in talks between Cisco and Apple, but they ain't playing friendly no more. Cisco just announced that it has filed a lawsuit in Northern California to prevent Apple from infringing upon its registered iPhone trademark. The word yesterday was that Apple and Cisco had been involved in "extensive discussions," and that they were expecting Apple to sign up for whatever final agreement they proposed. "Cisco entered into negotiations with Apple in good faith after Apple repeatedly asked permission to use Cisco's iPhone name," says Mark Chandler of Cisco. "There is no doubt that Apple's new phone is very exciting, but they should not be using our trademark without our permission." Obviously all we've heard so far is Cisco spin on the situation, but so far it sounds like they're being fairly reasonable with Apple on this — it is their own dang trademark after all. So what gives, Apple?

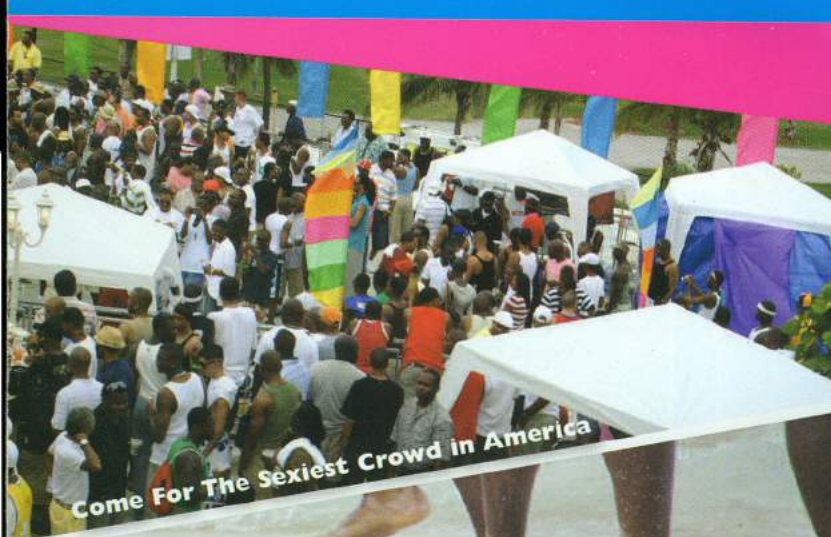
PHONES DIE

SIZZLE2007

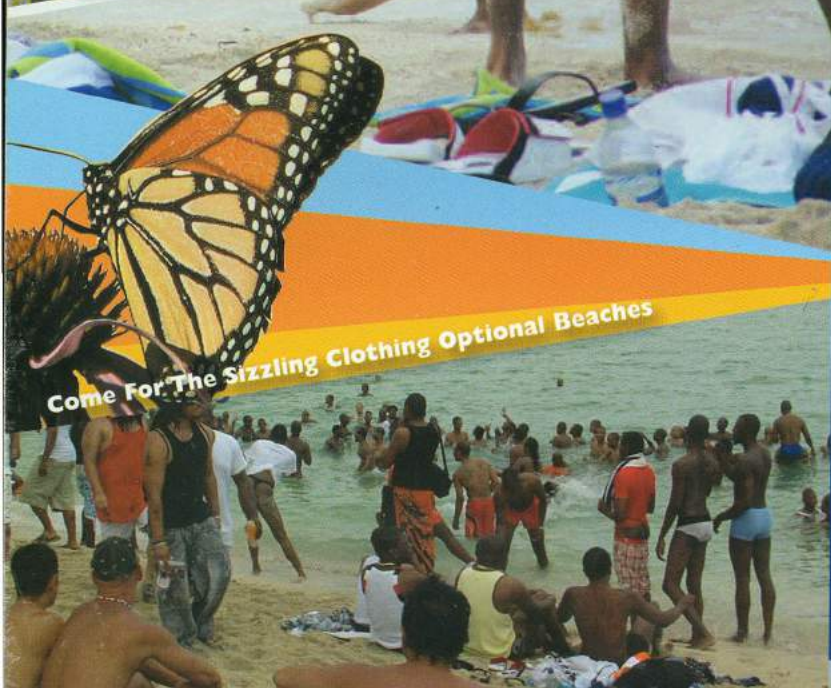
Memorial Day Weekend
May 24th - 28th, 2007
Miami, Florida



Come See What The Fuss Is All About!™



Come For The Sexiest Crowd in America



Come For The Sizzling Clothing Optional Beaches

Memorial Day Weekend • Miami, Florida
Thursday May 24th - Monday May 28th 2007



W elcome to Miami, the home of Sizzle 2007. This Memorial Day Weekend, thousands of men will converge on South Florida for the largest social gathering of the year. Sizzle Miami, conceived almost 6 years ago, has grown to become America's most celebrated and anticipated gay event in South Florida. Originally a one-day occurrence, Sizzle has evolved into a 5-day smorgasbord of *pulsating nightlife*, *sexy men* in an *atmosphere unparalleled to none* from dusk til dawn. For five days beginning on Thursday 24th May, 2007, party seekers from around the world will convene in sunny Miami, Florida celebrating *Life, Pride & liberty!*

Why Miami! Well, Miami is unlike any other city in the United States. It's a city in the making, unpredictable, ever changing, and simultaneously laid-back. Residents and tourists alike consider Miami a lush, exotic paradise, and a smorgasbord of *style, substance, and flare*. Furthermore, Miami has proven to be extremely open and accepting of all, cultures, ethnicity and sexual orientations.



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