

# Black Men

HOLLYWOOD ISSUE!

OUR  
BIGGEST  
ISSUE  
EVER!

HER FELINE  
MAGNETISM

**VIVICA  
FOX**

**AND A STAR  
STUDED  
CAST!**

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TAMALA JONES  
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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



### Marcus Blessingame

Being born and raised in New Jersey gave me a middle ground base where I can relate to people from all over. As an editor-in-chief, I see the talent and professionalism of people before anything else. Being a stylist taught me the importance of image, which inspired my hands while doing the wardrobe of Vivica Fox and Tika Sumpter. I realize the importance of having an amazing team to make my entire vision come true. I have been a Fashion Editor for *Trace Magazine*, image consultant for Clive Davis (Arista, J Records) Alicia Keys, Kelly Rowland, Lil' Kim, Serena Williams, LisaRaye and many more. The experience that I've gained shows me the importance of working with gifted and experienced individuals.

### Howard Huang

NYC-based, Howard Huang was born in Taipei and raised in Hawaii. He studied photography at the Academy of Art College in San Francisco. Howard's training is firmly rooted in a traditional photography background. Trained under commercial photographer pioneer Michel Tcherevkoff, Howard was schooled in digitally manipulated imagery and composite work. In the last eight years, his unique mix of sharp creative vision and veteran technical prowess has catapulted him to become one of commercial photography's fastest-rising stars. His stylish photos graced an impressive range of media—from magazine covers and celebrity fashion layouts to national advertising campaigns for Fortune 500 companies. His list of client work ranges from commercial product photography for corporations, such as Panasonic and Nintendo, to national advertisements for Verizon, Southpole, Lot29, Mecca Femme, celebrity, fashion, and editorial layouts for fashion, music, and other magazines.



### VXN Studios-Photographer

Before becoming the photographer she is known as today, Tiffany, formerly known as Kaylana Reese maintained a successful urban modeling career. She has had features in magazines such as *King* and *Smooth*, and was a centerfold model for Coors Lite. Tiffany was not limited to posing for men's magazines as she also walked the runway during BET's nationally televised *Rip The Runway* two years in a row for brands owned by artists, such as 50 Cent and Snoop Dogg. Before switching gears in her career, Tiffany participated in VH1's reality show as *Classy* and made it through nine of eleven episodes.

Although self-taught, Orlando-based Tiffany believes that her experiences as a model were invaluable and has helped to make her an even better photographer. Just ten months after picking up the camera, Tiffany became signed to TSD Agency and her work published in *Black Men* magazine. Tiffany's goal as a photographer is to continue to add to her celebrity portfolio, build her fashion portfolio, and one day have work that can be seen all over the world. If she keeps up the pace, she may meet her goals sooner that she thinks.



### Joe Exclusive-Wardrobe Stylist/Image Consultant/Designer/ Socialite

San Francisco Born and raised Joe Exclusive has been an industry style guru since he relocated to Los Angeles in 1997. He was introduced to celebrity styling by Ruff Ryders First Lady Eve. He went on to work with such stars as Destiny's Child, Kimora Lee Hounsou, Tyrese, Stacy Dash, Kim Kardashian, Taraji Henson, Carmelo Anthony, Vince Young, and LisaRaye, not to mention image consultant for the introduction of Keyshia Cole. As our new West coast Fashion Editor, Joe brings a lot of creative ambition to our celebrity stories. Through his full-service firm, Destination 1610, which is a photography studio, recording, dance rehearsal, fashion and showroom, he has created a Hollywood socialite gathering and place of service. In addition he also has a photo and glam team all in one. [www.destination1610.com](http://www.destination1610.com)



- 4 Contributors
- 6 Kerry Washington
- 10 Anthony Mackie
- 11 Idris Elba
- 12 Zoe Saldana
- 16 Pooch Hall
- 17 Collins Pennie
- 18 Tika Sumpter
- 28 Elise Neal
- 36 Cover Story: Vivica Fox
- 52 Tamala Jones
- 60 Kali Hawk
- 68 Angell Conwell
- 75 Wendy McKenzie
- 76 Maya Gilbert
- 82 Christian Keyes
- 84 Laila Odom
- 90 Sharri Jones
- 100 Sundy Carter
- 104 Claudia Jordan
- 110 The New Black Hollywood
- 114 The American Black Film Festival
- 118 Jeff Friday
- 119 Will Packer
- 120 Modelquest: Angel
- 126 Modelquest: Casie
- 132 Modelquest: Farrah
- 136 Modelquest: Emmaly
- 142 Modelquest: Draya
- 148 Modelquest: Blac Chyna
- 154 Modelquest: Gia Maria
- 162 New Films
- 166 Runover
- 168 New Day Events
- 172 Filmmakers On The Rise

# BlackMen

OCTOBER 2010

# THE HOLLYWOOD ISSUE

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

EXECUTIVE PUBLISHER

**John Blassingame**

EDITOR IN CHIEF

**Marcus Blassingame**

ART DIRECTOR

**Stuart Koban**

ADVERTISING DIRECTOR

**Marty Puntus**

201-843-4004 X113

mpuntus@enoblemedia.com

CONTROLLER

**Frederick D. Zott**

OFFICE MANAGER

**Adriana Passamano**

SUBSCRIPTION SUPERVISOR

**Ray Errico**

CIRCULATION MANAGERS

**Evan Honig, Brian Gregory**

201-843-4004



### **"St" Anthony Cherry-Hair Stylist**

International hairstylist, Anthony Cherry, was the key hairstylist in Plies' new video "Want It Need It" featuring Ashanti, which is already being played and climbing the charts on BET. The video showcases Cherry in his element doing hair and highlights which is another one of his many talents. St. Louis born and raised Cherry is well known in the urban mainstream market for print covers, such as *Billboard* with Tila Tequila, Stacy Dash's famous comeback cover on *King* magazine, Sharon Leal, and currently the Grammy weekend, with a bang. He worked with Prince on the set of his new video "Crimson & Clover," Missy Elliott, Tiera Marie and the press junket for *Madea Goes to Jail* with Tyler Perry and Keshia Knight Pulliam. The list just goes on and on. "I feel truly blessed," says Cherry "The crazy part is I am just getting started, there is so much I still want to accomplish" claims the funny and passionate Cherry. He is less of a hairstylist and more of a "personality" and hair icon.



### **Diana Chan-Fashion Stylist**

LA-based fashion stylist Diana L. Chan attended the University of California, Davis, where she graduated with a B.A. in Dance and a B.S. in Costume Design. She topped off her education with an A.A. in Fashion Design at FIDM. While there she was among the top 10 in her program. Her passion and understanding of colors, shapes, and movement has helped her become the successful stylist she is today.

Diana styled for celebrities Joey Fatone, Alfonso Ribeiro, Kelly Hu, Lindsay Price, Nadia Bjorlin, and Navi Rawat. Her work has been shot by top fashion photographers, such as August Bradley, Tom Concordia and Odessa Barbu. Chan's work can also be seen in magazines, such as *944*, *Audrey*, *Yellow*, *Thirteen Minutes*, and *Pacific*. Her advertising clients include Chinese Laundry, International Women's Apparel, Napoleon Perdis, and Westfield.

"I love making people feel and look sexy, comfortable and beautiful. It's a blessing to be able to pursue my passion and make it into a career."



### **Scott Hebert-Photographer**

Originally from Lake Charles, Louisiana, photographer Scott Hebert spreads his "southern boy" charm and talent coast to coast. While doing commercials, and modeling in Chicago, Scott fell in love with the camera. As his amazement grew, he began researching the art. His father later purchased a professional camera from a local pawnshop in 2002, and from there the love of photography grew even more.

Scott attended Louisiana State University pursuing a career in dentistry. He shot under the name of Studio 360 Imaging. He lived in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, which could only contain him for so long. He made the move to Los Angeles late in 2006 to finish his studies of dentistry and continue expanding his photography.

### **Sharri Jones-Guest Editor**

San Antonio born and raised law student/Actress Sharri Jones' passion for film and theater gave her the drive to research everything that she could about this issue. Seeing her motivation as a struggling thespian motivated Black Men to not only feature her story, but also have her pen the detailed stories about Hollywood. She is an active participant in the pursuit of theater and film training. ■



Black Men, October 2010, Vol. 13, No. 4 (ISSN #1092-0365) (USPS #016-641) is published bi-monthly by Black Men Publications, Inc., 46 Violet Avenue, Poughkeepsie, NY 12601. Periodicals Postage rate is paid at Poughkeepsie, NY and additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to: Magazine Services, Dept. BM, P.O. Box 9863, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33310. Subscriptions (one year) U.S. \$18.00, Canada \$24.00, Foreign \$27.00. All orders must be in U.S. funds. Contents copyrighted © 2009. All rights reserved. Reproduction or use in any part of the contents without prior permission of the publisher is prohibited. Return Postage must accompany all manuscripts, drawing or photographs. All manuscripts, drawing or photographs sent to Black Men will be treated as unconditionally assigned for publication and copyright purposes and are subject to the magazine's right to edit and comment editorially. All models are at least eighteen (18) years of age. All photographs are posed for by professional models except as otherwise noted. Neither said photographs nor the editorial nor quotations accompanying such photographs are to be construed as an indication of the person's sexual orientation, conduct, personality, or actual quotation. Black Men assumes no responsibility for the advertisements made therein of the quality and deliverability of the products themselves. Black Men assumes no responsibility to determine whether the people whose photographs or statements appear in such advertisements have, in fact, endorsed such products or consented to the use of their names or photographs or the statements attributed to them. The publisher is exempt from the record-keeping requirements and disclosure statements mandated by 18 U.S. Code Section 2257 a-c and the pertinent regulations, 28 C.F.R. Ch 1, Part 75, since all of such material falls within the exempted material set forth in Section 75(a)(1-3) of the regulations. Editorial offices at 210 Route 4 East, Paramus, NJ 07652-5116. PRINTED IN THE USA by Great Eastern Color Lithographic Corp., 46 Violet Avenue, Poughkeepsie, NY 12601.

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HOLLYWOOD STARS

Kerry

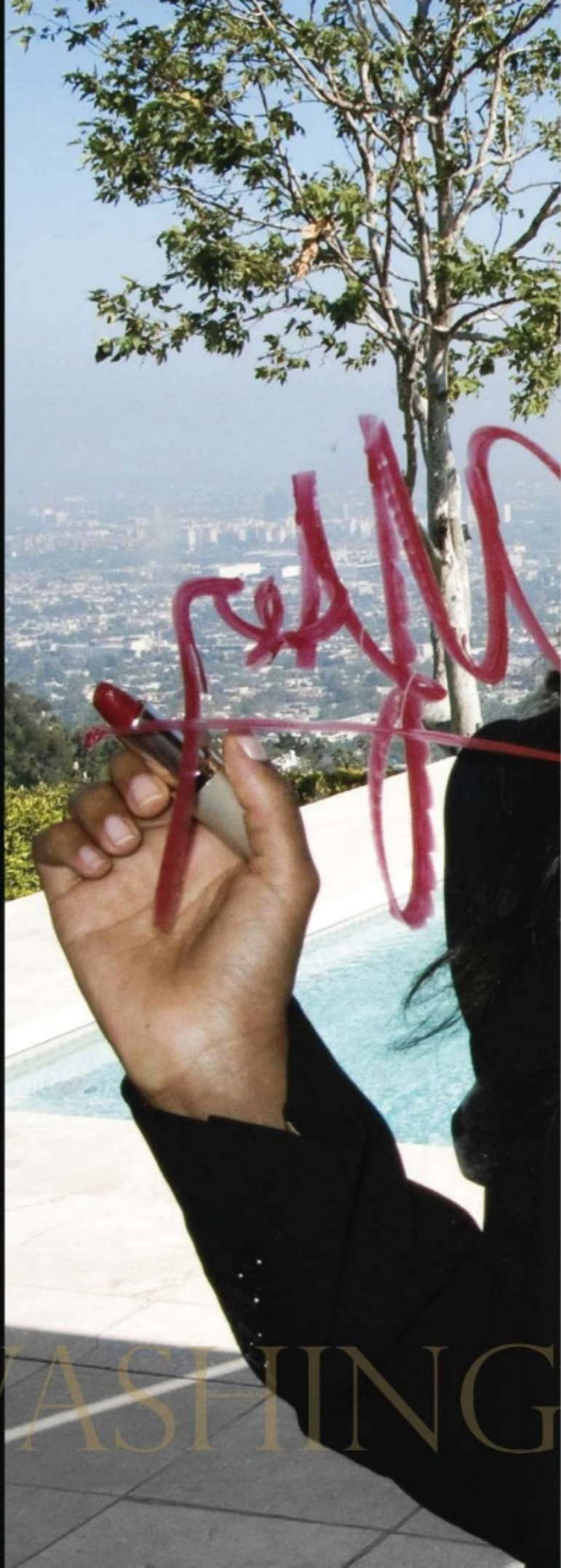
H O L L Y W O O D

BY SHARRI JONES

**B**ronx, NY native Kerry Washington graduated from The Spence School in 1994 and George Washington University theater program in 1998. Washington began her career in independent projects, such as *Our Song* (2000), and *Lift* (2002) as well as *Save the Last Dance* (2001), for which she received a Teen Choice Award for Best Breakout Performance. Besides booking day-player roles in popular TV series, she was recognized for her talent in 2004 when she starred in four great films which include, *Against the Ropes*, Sidney Lumet's *Strip search*, Spike Lee's *She Hate Me*, and *Ray*. She also won an award for Outstanding Actress in a Motion Picture for *Ray* at the NAACP Image Awards. She had another great year in 2005 when she appeared in *Mr. and Mrs. Smith* starring Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie, *Fantastic Four*, and *Wait*. That same year Washington was awarded Americans for the Arts Young Artist award for incredible accomplishments and exemplary leadership.

In 2006, the stakes got higher for Washington when she starred along with Forest Whitaker in the *Last King of Scotland*. She was nominated for Outstanding Supporting Actress in a Motion Picture at the NAACP Image Awards in 2007. Washington starred in the Wayans brothers film *Lil Man* (2006). In addition, she received recognition for *I Think I Love My Wife* (2007), opposite Chris Rock, *Fantastic Four* sequel *Rise of the Silver Surfer* (2007), *Miracle at St. Anna* (2007), *Lakeview Terrace* (2008), starring opposite Patrick Wilson

PHOTO: MIKO LIMI/CONTOUR BY GETTY IMAGES



KERRY WASHINGTON

6 BLACKMEN

A C T R E S S

TONY GERRY WA

# A C T R E S S



PHOTO: MIKO LIM/ CONTOUR BY GETTY IMAGES

and Samuel L. Jackson. 2008 was a great year for Washington who received the Women's Project Women of Achievement Award, the GWU Alumni Association's Recent Alumni Achievement Award, and the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation Phoenix Award, for her commitment to social advocacy.

In 2009, Washington received the U.S. Conference of Mayors Artist-Citizen Award for public leadership in the arts. She also made her Broadway debut in David Mamet's play *Race*. When asked about her experience appearing in her first Broadway show she states, "I grew up in New York, so I fell in love with acting on a stage, not in front of a camera. Theater has always been very important to me, and I had been looking for the right project to do as my Broadway debut. I'd been looking for a while, and when this came along, it was a no-brainer. I really, really wanted it, and it seemed like a good way to come back home, so to speak, to New York and the stage." (Movieline, 2009) Washington starred in Howard Zinn's documentary *The People Speak*, along with Matt Damon, Josh Brolin and Sean Penn, which premiered on the History Channel. Other 2009 projects included the voice of Princess Shuri in the animated series *Black Panther*, *Life Is Hot in Cracktown*, and *Mother and Child*, which also stars Annette Bening and Naomi Watts.

Washington's beauty can also be found outside the big screen as a spokesperson for L'Oreal Paris and as a brand ambassador for Movado. In November 2009, she was appointed by President Barack Obama to the President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities. In addition, she is also an active member of the V-Counsel, which is a group of advisors to V-Day, an organization whose aim is to end violence against women and girls. Washington also serves on the board of Voices of a People's History, which is a non-profit arts and education group that uses live performance and educational programs to illuminate the primary source material that inspired the book, *Voices of a People's History of the United States*.

This year be sure to catch Washington's stellar performance with Anthony Mackie in *Night Catches Us*, which premiered earlier this year at Sundance and the American Black Film festival. Washington is set to star in *The Details* (2010), *A Thousand Words* (2011) opposite Eddie Murphy, and Tyler Perry's *For Colored Girls Who Have Considered Suicide When The Rainbow is Enuf* (2011) ■





PHOTO: MIKO LIMI / CONTOUR BY GETTY IMAGES

BY SHARRI JONES

# ANTHONY MACKIE

HOLLYWOOD INTERVIEW

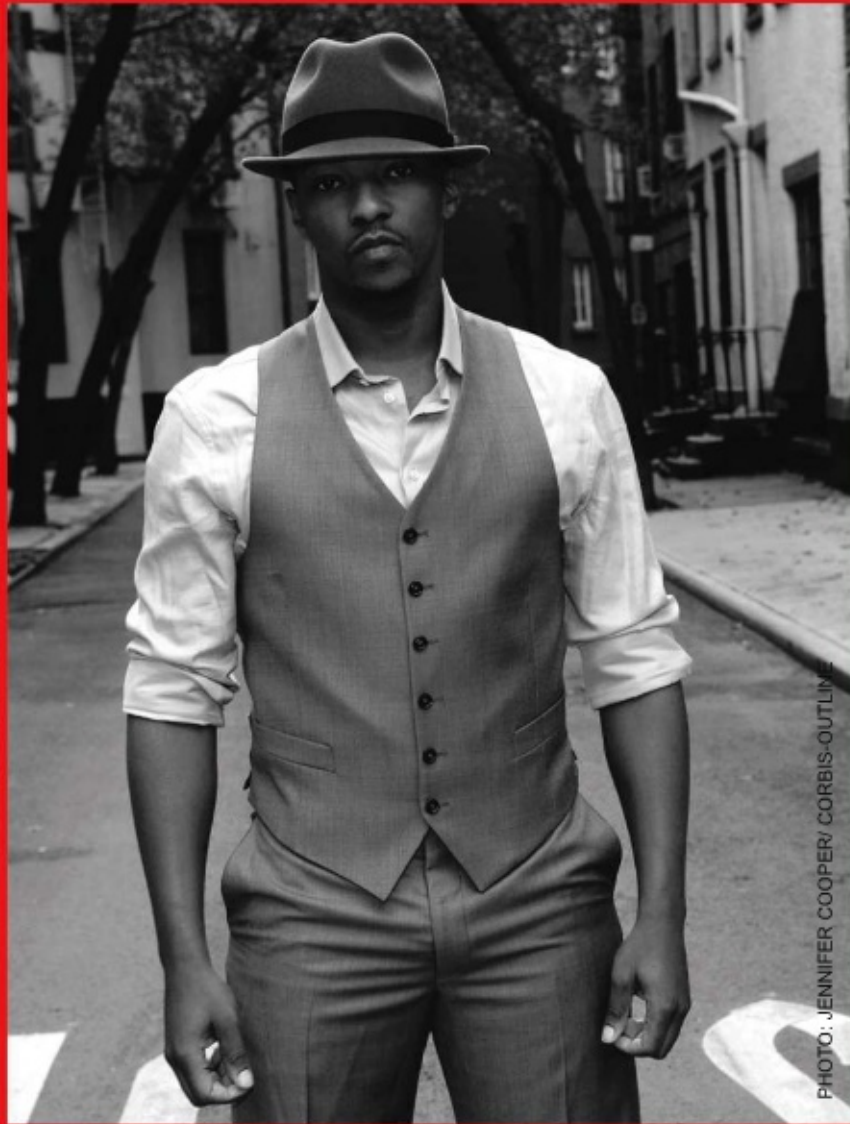


PHOTO: JENNIFER COOPER/ CORBIS-OUTLINE

**A**nthony Mackie was born and raised in New Orleans. After the death of his mother, during his teens, he was encouraged to direct his energies to an after-school theater program. He soon realized his love for acting, and after graduating from the New Orleans School of Creative Arts, and North Carolina School of Arts was convinced to train at Juilliard. During his Juilliard years, he earned his first critical accolades for his portrayal as rapper Tupac Shakur in the play *Up Against The Wind* (2001). He followed up with another great performance in the New York production of *Talk* which earned him an Obie award. Mackie was also Don Cheadle's understudy in the play *TopDog/UnderDog*. These performances won Mackie recognition in Hollywood, which led to his feature film debut in *8 Mile* as the main antagonist, Papa Doc, to Eminem's character. He booked many other day-player and supporting roles in films, such as *Crossing* (2003),

*Hollywood Homicide* (2003), *Law and Order: Criminal Intent* (2003), *Brother to Brother*, which is about the lives of a young art student and a homeless man. His performance earned him an Independent Spirit Award nomination (2004). In addition, Mackie starred in *The Manchurian Candidate* (2004) before receiving his first lead role in Spike Lee's *She Hate Me*. That film was followed by another lead role in Spike Lee's *Sucker Free City*. When asked about his breakthrough roles in two of Spike Lee's films, Mackie responded, "I was flabbergasted. Everybody knows when you've got a role in a Spike Lee movie, you're gonna blow up. But I happen to be the only person who's had the lead in two Spike Lee movies nobody saw. It was a humbling experience."

Mackie's career began to take off, when he booked *Haven* (2004), *Sucker Free City* (2004), *Million Dollar Baby* (2004), *Freedomland* (2006), *Crossover* (2006), *We Are Marshall* (2006), *Ascension Day*, where he portrayed Nat Turner. He also had a significant role in the 2008 action thriller *Eagle Eye* starring Billy Bob Thornton, Rosario Dawson, and Shia LaBeouf. Mackie was cast to play Tupac Shakur, yet again, in the 2009 film *Notorious* about the life of famed rapper Notorious B.I.G. Additionally, he was scheduled to follow up with *Desert Flower* (2009), alongside Ethiopian supermodel Liya Kebede, and the romantic drama that takes place in the 1976 Black Panther movement *Night Catches Us* (2010) with his *She Hate Me* cast mate, Kerry Washington.

Mackie's most recent accomplishment was his stellar performance in Kathryn Bigelow's Oscar award-winning drama, *The Hurt Locker*, which won Mackie a Black Reel award for best supporting actor, a Gotham award for best ensemble cast, and a Washington D.C. Film Critics Award for best ensemble cast, followed by a plethora of other nominations.

His upcoming projects in production include: *The Adjustment Bureau* (2010), *Bolden* (2010), *Real Steel*, and *Babylon* (2011), rumored do be in the pre-production stage, *Jessie Owens*. ■

BY SHARRI JONES

# IDRIS ELBA

HOLLYWOOD INTERVIEW



Idris Elba has had one remarkable journey, and we had the pleasure of following his career from small day player roles in UK shows to his journey to the states. He struggled to survive in New York while he DeeJayed downtown to make ends meet. In addition, he performed in Shakespeare off-Broadway performances until his 2002 breakthrough hit TV series *The Wire*. This was followed by his onscreen debut in the 2005 Rainforest Films' *The Gospel*. His latest Rainforest Films project is *Takers*.

Idris Elba was born in Hackney, East London, to a Ghanaian mother and a Sierra Leonean father. In his teen years he began to DeeJay and eventually set up his own company. With the help of a Prince Trust Grant, he was accepted into the National Youth Music Theatre. He had his mind set on studying acting at an early age, thanks to encouragement from one of his drama teachers. After booking small guest starring roles in the British TV series *2Point4 Children* (1994) and *Space Precinct* (1994), Elba was recognized for his first supporting role in 1995 in the award-winning UK comedy series *Absolutely Fabulous*, as well as the TV drama *Bramwell*. Elba was on a roll, the following year he began booking consecutive guest starring and recurring roles in many popular British TV series, such as *Ruth Rendell Mysteries*, *The Governor*, *Silent Witness*, *Insiders*, *Family Affairs*, *UltraViolet*, and the BBC crime thriller *Dangerfield*, among others.

During an HBO interview, Elba stated, "It is rare for producers in the UK to take a chance on unknown actors, especially since there is a small Black audience in England, which for economic reasons, would result in insufficient financial return because of ratings." He knew that he would consistently be pigeonholed in supporting roles and felt he would always be typecast as the best friend, crook or detective. According to a recent

(continued on page 166)

PHOTO: JUST LOOMIS; CONTOUR PHOTO BY GETTY IMAGES

HOLLYWOOD STARS  
Zoe

H O L L Y W O O D

BY SHARRI JONES

# CELESTIAL STAR

**Z**oe Saldana can most recently be seen in the comedies *Death at a Funeral*, *Idiots and Burning Palm*. Zoe starred in *The Losers*, where she played a member of a CIA black ops team targeted for assassination (alongside Chris Evans, Idris Elba, Columbus Short and Jeffrey Dean Morgan). Her most recent project *Takers*, starring Paul Walker, Idris Elba, Hayden Christensen, Michael Ealy, Matt Dillon, Jay Hernandez, Chris Brown, and (TI)Tip Harris. *Takers* was the opening night premiere at the 2010 American Black Film Festival.

Zoe Saldana was born in New Jersey and raised in Queens, New York. During her early years her family moved back to Dominican Republic where Zoe began training at the prestigious ECOS Espacio de Danza Dance Academy. After moving back to the states, as a teenager she began performing dance and picked up a talent agent along the way. This resulted in Saldana's film debut in the dance drama *Center Stage* (2000), where she was also able to showcase her ballet dance background.

Shortly after Zoe began appearing in such films as *Get Over It* (2000) with Kristen Dunst, *Snipes* (2001) with Nelly, and *Crossroads* (2002) playing the best friend of Britney Spears and Taryn Manning's characters. She received great recognition in 2002 when she played the lead and love interest alongside Nick Cannon in *Drumline*,

which she was nominated for an MTV award for best kiss. Zoe's career really began to take off and has been consistently non stop ever since, it's as if she has commanded the attention of a leading lady over night. Zoe has also appeared in *Guess Who* (2005) alongside Ashton Kutcher inspired by the 1967 film *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner*. She was nominated both for teen choice award for breakout female performance and black movie award for outstanding supporting actress in *Guess Who*. She can be seen in *Pirates of the Caribbean: The Curse of the Black Pearl* (2003), *Haven* (2004), *The Terminal* (2004), *Constellation* (2005), *Dirty Deeds* (2005), *Premium* (2006), *The Heart Specialist* (2006), *After Sex* (2007), *Blackout* (2007), *Vantage Point* (2008).

Saldana's career took a whole new turn when she played Neytiri in the most anticipated film of the year, *Star Trek*. *Star Trek* won an Oscar along with 12 other awards and 45 nominations. That same year Zoe followed with yet another career altering film *Avatar*, which touched many peoples lives. *Avatar* won 3 Oscars for art direction, cinematography and special effects. Zoe also received multiple nominations for best actress and animated character in a motion picture. This proved to be a big year for Zoe. And based on her rumored 2011 projects, *Columbiana* and *The Untitled Star Trek Sequel*, she may continue this climb onto even greater accomplishments. ■

PHOTO: JAS LEHAL/REUTERS/CORBIS

ZOE SALDANA ZOE



E SALDANA ZOE SA

A C T R E S S



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PHOTO: LARRY BUSACCA / GETTY IMAGES

STOMP THE YARD 2

BY SHARRI JONES

# POOCH HALL

HOLLYWOOD INTERVIEW



(L to R) Pooch Hall and Nicki Minaj having fun on the red carpet at BET Rip the Runway (Photo: George Napolitano/Film Magic/Getty Images); Still from "The Game" episode "Fool Me Twice...I'm the Damn Fool" with co star Tia Mowry as Melanie Barnett (Photo: Scott Humbert/The CW/Landov); Pooch Hall hosting the 6th Annual 2010 BET Rip The Runway with co-host Nicki Minaj (Photo: Bryan Bedder/Getty Images); Pooch Hall on the red carpet (Photo: George Napolitano/Film Magic/Getty Images) Pooch Hall still image on the set of "Stomp The Yard 2" (Photo: Sony Pictures/Screen Gems)

**B**rockton, Massachusetts native, Pooch Hall is best recognized for his role as Derwin Davis in the CW Network comedy series *The Game*, alongside Tia Mowry, Coby Bell, Wendy Raquel Robinson, Hosea Chanchez, and Brittany Daniel. Earlier this year Pooch Hall and Nicki Minaj hosted the 6th Annual BET *Rip The Runway*.

Prior to his acting career, Hall attended the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth, and played football in both high school and college. He always loved basketball and boxing. He is also a trained boxer, who won the 1994 Southern New England Golden Gloves. His acting talents were discovered when he decided to enter a stage production while in college.

Hall was cast in his first role in the 2002 film *lift*, opposite Kerry Washington. He spent a few years grinding the pavement with guest starring and day player roles in various independent films and TV series. He appeared in *Without A Trace* (2004), *The Division* (2004), and the made-for-TV movie, *Christmas at Water's Edge* (2004). Hall also starred as Ty'ree in a recurring role in Spike Lee's miniseries *Miracle's Boys*. From this point, his career took a whole new turn, appearing in the NBC series *Heist* (2006), the WB's *Pepper Dennis* (2006), Snoop Doggs' *Hood of Horror* (2006), the romance comedy *Blind Date* (2006), *The Game* (2006-2009), *Girlfriends* (2007), and the FOX pilot *Courtroom K* (2008). Hall debuted on the big screen in Rainforest Films' *Stomp The Yard 2* alongside Collins Pennie and Tika Sumpter. He is currently working in a recurring role on the CBS prime time series *Accidentally On Purpose*, airing this fall. ■





BY SHARRI JONES

# COLLINS PENNIE

HOLLYWOOD INTERVIEW

PHOTO: ALEX FREUND/ CONTOUR BY GETTY IMAGES



**C**ollins Pennie seems to be swiftly climbing his way up the ladder. He is best known for his roles in the remake of *Prom Night* (2008) starring Idris Elba and Brittany Snow, and *Fired Up* (2009). As well as the remake of the hit musical, *Fame* (2009), which is an updated version of the 1980 musical centered on the students of the New York

Academy of Performing Arts. Pennie was recognized for his outstanding performance in a supporting role in his Academy Award nominated film *Half Nelson* (2006) about an inner-city junior high school teacher with a drug habit who forms an unlikely friendship with one of his students after she discovers his secret.

Pennie was born and raised in Brooklyn, New York. Collins spent most of his childhood years in numerous foster homes and then decided to move out on his own at age 15. Pennie was an ordinary kid who wanted to get away from the Brooklyn projects where drugs and violence prevailed. Pennie began singing, acting and dancing and soon realized that he can use his talent to get out of the projects. Collins knew he was talented and was determined to make sure that the major players in the industry knew it to.

Collins was in the business only six months before landing his first role on the hit CBS daytime drama *As The World Turns*, as Sean. After two months Pennie landed a guest-star role in NBC's *Law & Order* (2004). Pennie has had many recurring and dayplayer roles in other TV series, which include CBS' *Without A Trace* (2005) and *CSI: Miami* (2008).

In addition to acting, Collins is an accomplished dancer and has appeared in videos for P Diddy's "Show Me Your Soul" for the *Bad Boys 2* soundtrack and Beyoncé's "Get Me". Pennie's image on the big screen caught the attention of Ford Model Management, who signed Collins immediately. Soon after, he was chosen to be apart of the "cK One" fragrance campaign for Calvin Klein.

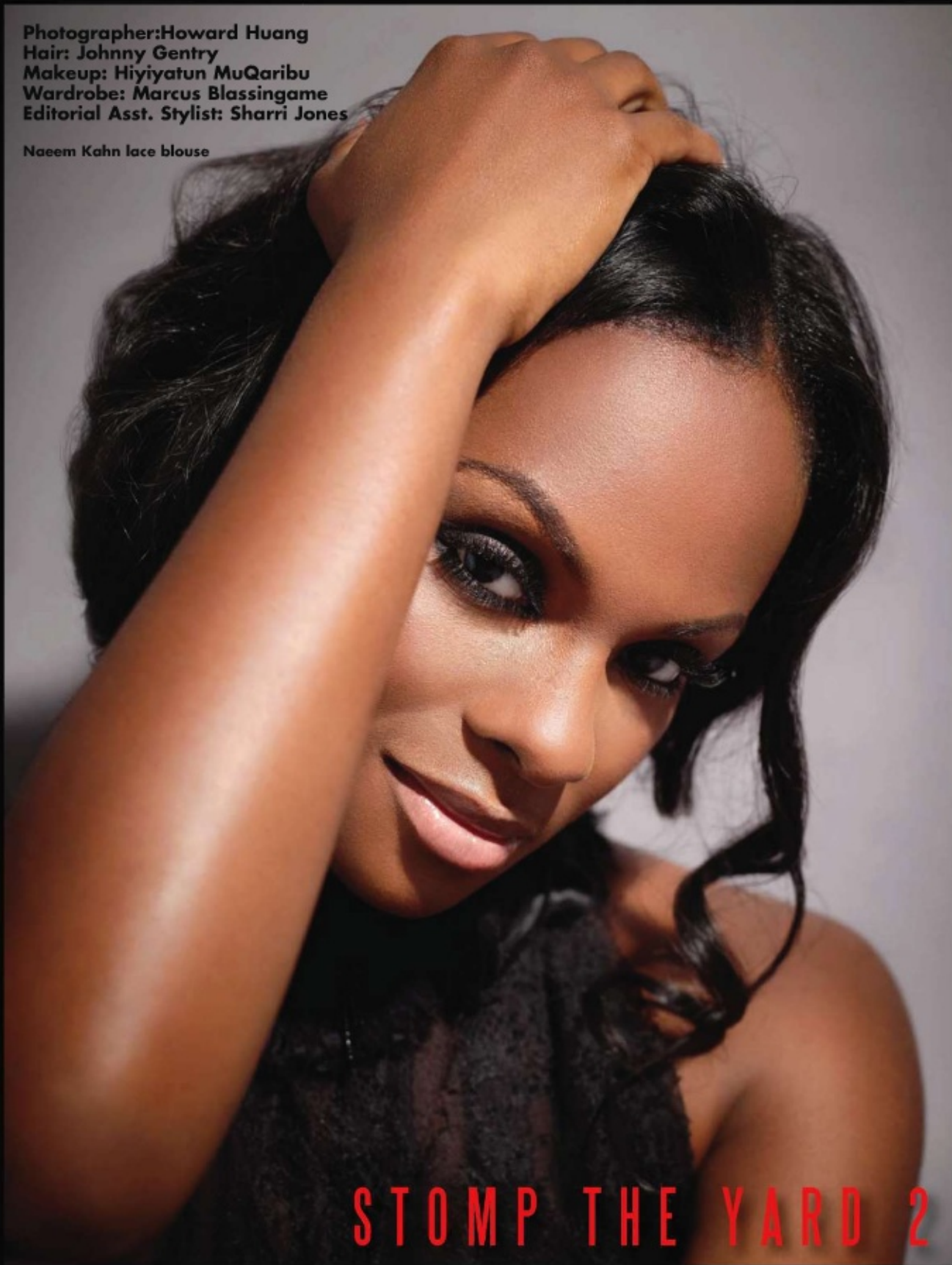
When Collins is not consumed in the world of film he likes to workout and play street football and boxing. What most people wouldn't guess about Pennie is that he loves collecting sneakers and currently has over 200 pairs.

Collins is excited about his new 2010 projects, *Stomp The Yard 2: Homecoming* alongside Pooch Hall, on dvd this fall. He also has a recurring role in the new TNT drama series, *Hawthorne* starring Jada Pinkett Smith. ■

# A C T R E S S

Photographer: Howard Huang  
Hair: Johnny Gentry  
Makeup: Hiyiyatun MuQaribu  
Wardrobe: Marcus Blassingame  
Editorial Asst. Stylist: Sharri Jones

Naeem Kahn lace blouse



## STOMP THE YARD 2

BY SHARRI JONES

# TIKA SUMPTER TIK

18 BLACKMEN

HOLLYWOOD STARBUZZ  
*Tika*  
HOLLYWOOD

Alice & Olivia one-piece  
bodysuit with leather  
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Alice +Olivia suede floral and pearl inlay choker

**L. RAQUEL PERTERSON**

**M**ainly reserved for desperate housewives and senior citizens who have the time to watch them, soap operas are filled with complicated plots, twisted cliffhangers and unending treachery. Despite the excitement and scandal, the (obvious) secret to catching and keeping the interest of viewers far and wide—you included—is to keep beautiful, charming women, such as *One Life to Live*'s Tika Sumpter, on camera.

Sumpter, best known for playing *OLTL*'s Layla Williamson, has been blowing away viewers with her on-screen presence on the show since 2005. While she's enjoying sweet success, it wasn't too long ago that Sumpter was struggling just to get by. "I barely had furniture in my apartment and was struggling to make ends meet, but I was busting my butt to do what I had to for my career every day," Sumpter recalls. Moving out at the tender age of 17, Sumpter remembers handling auditions between classes at Marymount College during the day and waitressing at trendy East Village café, Life, during the evening. She'd head home to an apartment nested within a drug-infested neighborhood between breaks.

Most bosses avoid letting go of their best employees. Ironically, it was Steven Lewis, founder of Life and Sumpter's boss, who jumpstarted her career by submitting her credentials to a boutique modeling agency. Sumpter believes her persistence and passion influenced Lewis' desire to assist her. "He saw talent, and my desire and passion to fight for what I wanted. I fought for him to hire me. I was super-young when I was working at that club. To work at a club of *that* stature at such a young age...there has to be some sort of grit and passion to succeed," Tika asserts. "[Working at Life] lit a fire under me. I'd see a lot of my heroes and people I look up to there. I mean, Janet [Jackson], Mariah Carey, Angie Harmon—up close and personal. It drove me more and he observed that."

In addition to her pivotal role on *One Life to Live*, Sumpter has successfully branded herself as a valuable commercial asset and voiceover artist. Never one to lock herself into one profile, Sumpter's image and likeness has been featured in major advertising campaigns for Liz Claiborne's Curve, computer giant Hewlett Packard and Cascade

On a philanthropic note, Sumpter is

Valentino  
Red ruffle  
blouse,  
La Perla lace  
lingerie,  
Yves Saint  
Laurent Tribtoo  
black platform  
pump,  
H&M top hat,  
Brioni black  
bow tie.



TIKA SUMPTER


worldmags



Alice & Olivia one-piece bodysuit  
with leather shoulder accessory,  
Ann Demeulemeester zippered  
choker accessory.

22 BLACKMEN

worldmags



Lila Nikole one-piece  
sheer swimsuit,  
Ann Demeulemeester  
white blazer,  
Christian Louboutin  
purple knotted suede  
pumps, Afaze gold/  
pearl bow  
ring.



Herve Leger peach v-neck dress,  
Christian Louboutin gold slingback sandals  
Afaze Jewelry gold rhinestone ball earrings and gold/pearl bow ring

**FOR MORE TIKA  
GO TO [WWW.BLACKMENDIGITAL.COM](http://WWW.BLACKMENDIGITAL.COM)**

24 BLACKMEN





Alice & Olivia one-piece bodysuit with leather shoulder accessory, Ann Demeulemeester zippered choker accessory.



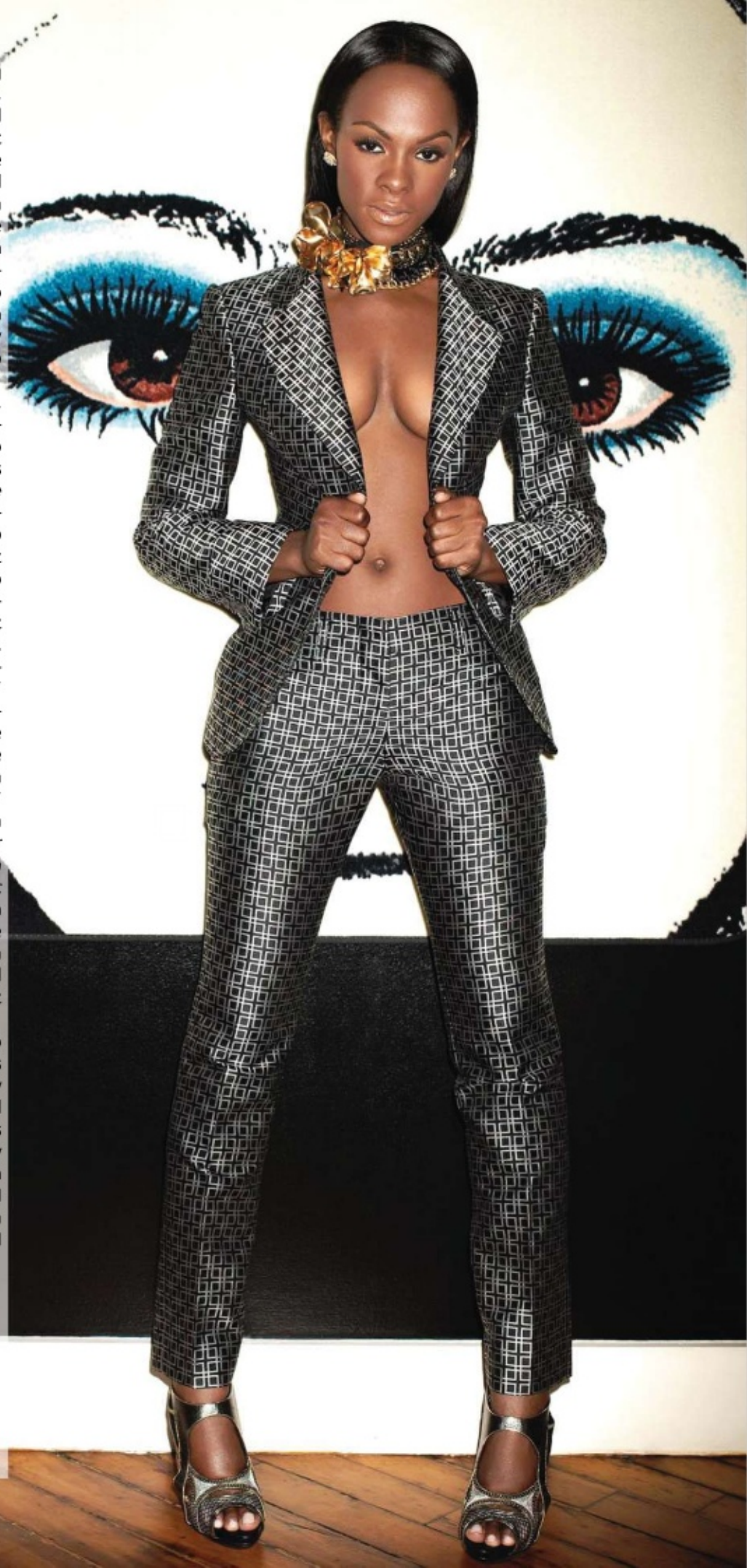
passionate about giving back, lending her business to non-profit ventures, such as Mobius Pictures' educational public service videos that highlight teen issues. "When you see someone hurting or struggling, I would think all human beings would want to help in whatever capacity they could," she casually offers. "I've seen my mom struggle—I mean really struggle, especially as a single mom. So, the desire to give back—it's just in me. If I see a need, I try to fulfill it to the best of my ability. It makes me feel good to help as well."

When asked about the big screen, Sumpter reveals two upcoming feature appearances on what are sure to be blockbusters. The one she's extremely excited about is *Stomp the Yard 2: Homecoming*. "I'm really looking forward to the release of *Stomp the Yard 2: Homecoming*. It's my first role as female lead and I learned so much working on this amazing project. [Director] Rob Hardy and the rest of the cast were so supportive of me. Working with so many talented people was such a great experience!" Sumpter says, "Learning the step routines were her biggest challenge throughout filming. It was a challenge at first, but after a while, I just had fun with it and got it down pretty well!" She will also play the role of Jamie in the romantic comedy *What's Your Number?*, starring Anna Farris (*Lost in Translation*) and Chris Evans (*Fantastic Four*). Though this sounds cheesy a la *Sex and the City*, Sumpter reveals the film's female characters engage in more honest dialogue about sexual needs and desires in a manner most films shy away from.

Nevertheless, Sumpter continues to work hard and stay focused. "This much I know is true: I've had so many challenges on this journey—and still do. Ultimately, all of my challenges and crazy experiences make up my character. At the end of the day, I'm gonna win, no matter what, and I know this because I've gotten through all those and many other struggles. I know I'm a fighter for sure." ■

**Junya Watanabe vintage style  
checked monogram suit,  
Marni gold floral choker,  
Diego Dolcini Collage Cutout sandals,  
Afaze gold rhinestone ball earrings.**

**OPPOSITE PAGE  
Naeem Kahn lace blouse,  
La Perla lace bottoms,  
Aldo Boear gold shield ring.**



ACTRESS

ELISE NEA



Photographer: Scott Hebert  
Hair/Makeup: Sasha Kemp  
Stylist: Joe eXclusive for [www.destination1610.com](http://www.destination1610.com)  
Assistant: Ariel T.  
Location: KPR Studios

KPR fur stole; Biatta Intimates lingerie; Raju of Beverly Hills jewelry

28 BLACKMEN

L ELISE NEAL



## T I M E L E S S

BY JG

**W**ith the lust for reality TV at an all-time high over the landscape of Hollywood and network programming, the vintage days of true, multi-faceted talent that once graced Hollywood has become a thing of the past. Tinseltown's once regal face renowned for its mystique has been replaced by the superficial desire for quick fame and the incessant pursuit of the most intimate details of an entertainer's life. TMZ now garners just as much attention as *Variety*. The game has changed and so has the talent level. Legendary entertainers the likes of Lena Horne and Eartha Kitt, who blessed audiences with their variety of talent in theater, film, TV, music, and production, have now given way to reality stars named Kardashian and Ocho Cinco. The existence of truly talented individuals in today's Hollywood is not dead, but it is being severely tested and overshadowed by producer's desire to "keep it real."

Biatta Intimates lingerie  
Raju of Beverly Hills jewelry

worldmags



# ELISE NEAL

Biatta Intimates lingerie  
Raju of Beverly Hills jewelry

Entertainer Elise Neal answers the prayers of many who yearn for the return of the complete entertainer that once personified Hollywood culture. A classic, immensely talented 44-year-old beauty from Memphis, TN, Neal began to tap into her God-given talent at an early age with ballet study. She would further nurture her ability during her time at the University of the Arts in Philadelphia where she developed a love for musical theater and performance. Her experiences on stage provided her an easy transition into acting and resulted in success on the small and large screens. She appeared in such notable projects as *Malcolm X*, *Money Talks*, *Rosewood*, the Oscar-nominated *Hustle & Flow* and television series *The Hughleys*, *All of Us*, *K-ville* and *My Manny*.

As a seasoned veteran among the talented new crop of African-American actresses in Hollywood today, Neal also sees a landscape heavily dominated by the aforementioned thirst to keep it real. In her opinion, keeping it real has gone wrong. She cites the Screen Actors Guild strikes of the past decade as a major catalyst in Hollywood's changed mentality. Starved for entertaining and intriguing content, many networks turned to reality programming to fill voids. As a result, a European mentality has entrenched itself within industry culture. Some filmmakers such as Tyler Perry and Will Packer have managed to surpass this mindset but for many others, the current environment is very difficult to overcome without studio ownership and creative control.

The beautiful quality of Neal that elevates her above many of her Hollywood contemporaries is that she can wear many hats. Her versatility allows her to progress and create new experiences with each project she takes on. Thus, she's able to adapt to Hollywood's "New Deal." She's not stunted by the current trend. She approaches every role, every project differently. One is never the same. She can be the sexy video vixen (50 Cent "Follow My Lead"), men's magazine beauty (*King* and *Black Men*), dynamic performer (check out her group Assorted Flavors), feisty, pregnant girlfriend (*Money Talks*), a faithful, supporting wife (*Hustle & Flow*) or a 1970's prostitute as she depicts in her new film *Love Ranch* starring Joe

*(continued on page 166)*



LSO designs bustier  
Biatta Intimates lingerie  
Raju of Beverly Hills jewelry

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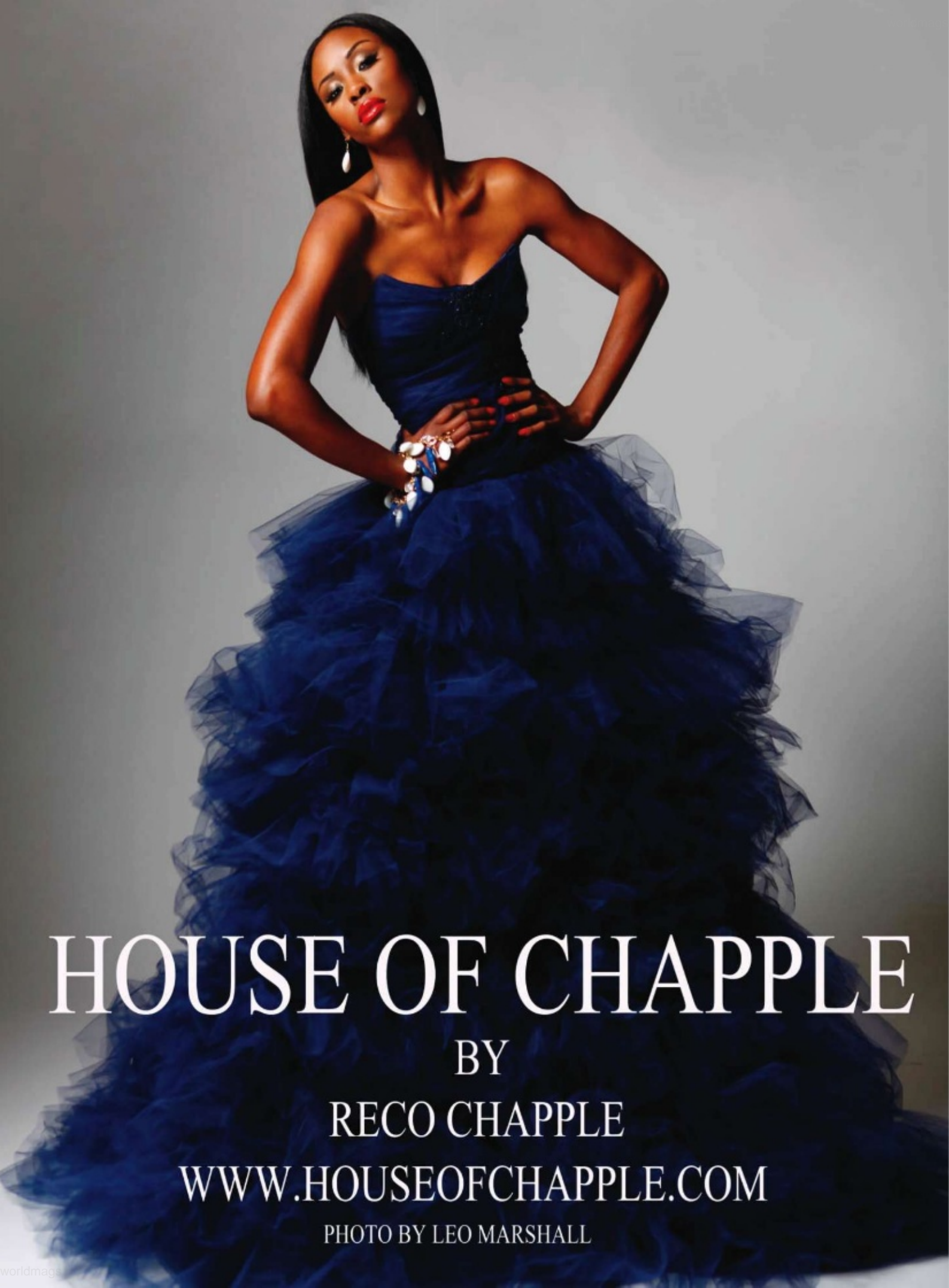
BLACKMEN 33

worldmags

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LSO designs bustier  
Biatta Intimates lingerie  
Raju of Beverly Hills jewelry  
Diabolina L.A. patent shoes





# HOUSE OF CHAPPLE

BY

RECO CHAPPLE

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PHOTO BY LEO MARSHALL



**Stylist Marcus Blassingame**  
**Diana Chan**  
**dianacstylist@gmail.com**  
**Tsd Agency Stylist Assistant-**  
**Sharri Jones [www.tsdagency.com](http://www.tsdagency.com)**  
**Hair Stylist-Lawrence Davis**  
**Makeup Stylist-Samuel Paul**  
**Photographer-Nick Saglimbeni**  
**Videographer-Caleesh Lewis**

**STORY BY CYNTHIA HORNER**

Btempted for Saks lilac lace lingerie

36 BLACKMEN



COVER STORY

# VIVICA

H O L L Y W O O D G L A M O U R

**S**urrounded by gorgeous clothing, Vivica Fox slips into a stunning array of outfits someone would kill for. Her exquisite face transforms into a variety of expressions, from sultry pursed lips to delighted smiles as she peruses the choices made available. She's slightly tired from an intense shooting schedule, but the treasure trove of garments and lingerie were enough to salivate her fashion taste buds.

"This photo session is wonderful, she reflects later. "I love doing a Black Hollywood issue. This is sexy and sassy." Working exquisite fashions, including an Herve Leger dress, a beautiful



suit, and some really hot swimsuits and excellent jewelry, Vivica's all-day shoot was classy and mature Esquire-ish theme rather than the drop it like it's hot, booty shaker theme.

But she can still show off that booty, which is in perfect shape through her religious exercise routine, "I do cardio and elliptical machines. I also do water work. I don't want to bulk up; I like to look lean, because if you're too bulky, you look heavier. I like having a lean, tight frame.

As the cover model for *Black Men*, she goes on to say, "I love being on the cover. It's always fun when you are the cover model. To know that I am respected and that people still love to pick up magazines and see images of me on it is gratifying. It means that I am doing what I am supposed to do."

Since this issue of *Black Men* is themed around Black Hollywood, Vivica passionately addresses the issue. Enscathed in her lovely dwelling, relaxing during a day off, she chooses her words with care. "It has changed. Urban life has evolved. It is interesting to see the baby boomers, Will Smith, Jada Pinkett, Halle Berry, Queen Latifah, etc. doing things. We are still here, but we have matured into a new chapter. We are actors, directors, entrepreneurs. We used to feel like we have been chewed up and spat out and complain how the business has not taken good care of us. But the baby boomers of today have let the business work for them and are passing on to a younger generation, wonderful images."

Vivica is talking about the rise of such actors as Will and Jada Smith's son Jaden, KeKe Palmer, with whom she appears on *True Jackson*, and of course, Ray J. "And Queen Latifah is employing a lot of people. We are all working together and keeping Hollywood alive for African-Americans."

Although Vivica says that there is work to be had in Hollywood, "we can always use more but I am not the kind of person who sits around and says they should be doing this or they should be doing that. Don't you sit around and complain, no. You do the best with what you have. For instance, I am producing and starring in a stage play and films. Will and Jada have *Hawthorne*. Their son is in *The Karate Kid*, the top grossing movie of the summer. Latifah is producing a reality show. Tyler Perry has movies and television series. I am not looking at what we don't have but letting people know that we are doing the best with what we have to offer."

**Junya Wantanabe by Comme De' Garçons**  
charcole tailored women's suit,  
Kendall v. Bretton body jewelry,  
YSL tribtoo platform pumps

Btempted for Saks lilac lace lingerie  
Theory button-down blouse  
Domenico Spano purple tie



VIVICA FOX



Dolce and Gabbana rose lace strap dress  
Christian Tse 18K pink gold ring  
Christian Tse gold micro pave medallion earrings  
Christian Louboutin peep-toe studded heels



Dolce and Gabbana leopard fur coat  
Limonada studded two-piece bathing suit  
PRB black cocktail ring  
Bollare black tear drop earrings



VIVICA FOX

“I AM ALWAYS ON MY HUSTLE. THAT HAS KEPT ME HERE FOR SO LONG, BECAUSE I AM ALWAYS HUSTLING.”





**FOR MORE VIVICA GO TO [WWW.BLACKMENDIGITAL.COM](http://WWW.BLACKMENDIGITAL.COM)**

Herve Leger plum dress with zipper front  
Christian Tse 18K white gold blue sapphire earring  
Christina Tse 18 K white diamond octopus ring  
Michelle Monroe faux diamond cuff with floral design  
Fendi navy blue suede pumps

BLACKMEN 43

Btempted for Saks lilac lace lingerie  
Theory button-down blouse  
Domenico Spano purple tie





Eres black one-piece bathing suit  
T.Cyia multi strand chain necklace  
Michelle Roy black stretch band  
cuff with silver metal chains

# VIVICA FOX

Vivica Fox has been on her grind, bringing the sexiness for over two decades. How she has survived is no mystery. Offering eye contact she confides, "I am always on my hustle. That has kept me here for so long because I am always hustlin. That's the key to my longevity. I am always trying to figure out the next chapter."

In addition to producing films, plays and other projects, she recently launched her own wig line. "Right now, I am branding the name Vivica Fox. A lot of people have made money off my name and image over the years. I want to work smarter, not harder. The hair business is a multi-billion dollar business. I want to get a piece of that cake!"

Although the long-haired doe-eyed beauty works hard, she finds time to play. Currently, she dates a much younger Atlanta club promoter, Slim, who has oftentimes been seen with her in photos on the Internet. Her lovely lips remain sealed as she is reluctant to expose their relationship to the public. "I've learned not to say too much. What I will say is that we are still together and that I am glad he has come into my life." She does share that as she slipped into her sexy garments and posed for *Black Men's* provocative photo session, that she thought of him as she exuded sexiness for the camera.

Although Vivica is in a relationship, she confesses that

the men who impress her most are "confident, spiritual, down-to-earth with their own identity." As an attractive woman in her 40's, she says that "For men to still be attracted to me and find me sexual is a huge compliment; I don't think you should feel like you should stop being sexual after you have reached a certain age,"

What makes her feel sexy? Clothing! "I feel sexy when I have on a hot dress. I really do. Gowns are restricting and you have to be really careful in them. I just like wearing a great fitting dress and walk into a room and have people say, 'wow, nice dress.' I like a hot beautiful well-made dress that fits you tight in all the right places. My favorite designer is Herve Leger. He makes what is like a walking girdle, it holds everything in." Underneath these designer garments, she wears undergarments by La Perla or Victoria's Secret.

In closing, when asked to name her favorite movie star of all-time, she unhesitatingly replies, "Pam Grier is the ultimate. I even named one of my companies, Foxy Brown Productions, after her. What I love about Pam is that she has longevity. Men still drool over her. You evolve in life, but you still want people to say, 'man, what a woman that is right there!'" ■



Btempted for Saks lilac lace lingerie





Image by **Comme des Garçons**  
Tailored women's suit by **Brette Wood** jewelry by **St. Libtoo** platform pumps



Btempted for Saks lilac lace lingerie  
Theory button-down blouse  
Domenico Spano purple tie

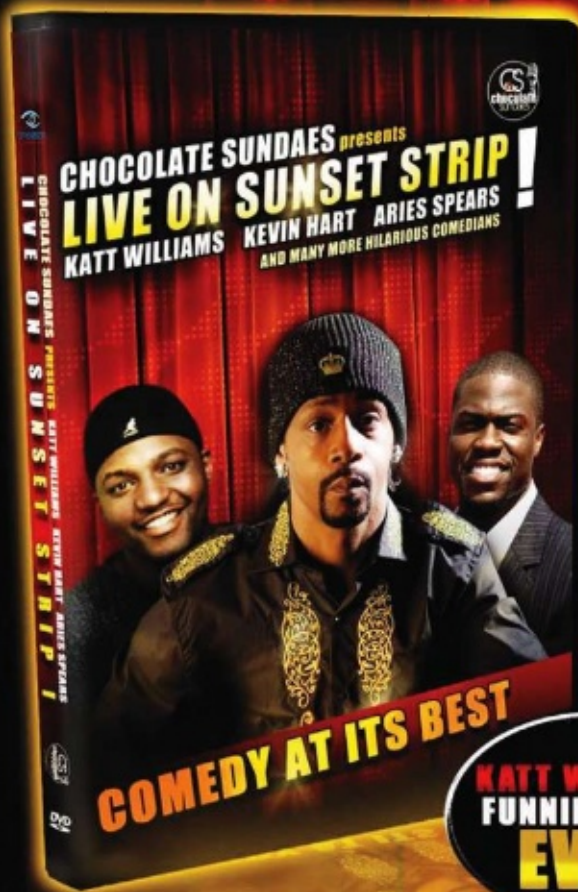


Dolce and Gabbana  
leopard fur coat  
Limonada studded  
two-piece bathing suit  
PRB black cocktail ring  
Bollare black tear drop earrings

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Executive Producers: Pookey Wigington and Al Blackwell



# TAMALA JONES T

52 BLACKMEN

A C T R E S S



Photographer: Scott Hebert  
[www.studio360imaging.com](http://www.studio360imaging.com)  
Hair: DaRico Jackson [www.daricojackson.com](http://www.daricojackson.com)  
Makeup: Gabriela Ramos  
Wardrobe: Joe Exclusive for  
[www.destination1610.com](http://www.destination1610.com)  
Asst Wardrobe: Daisry De Jesus

# TAMALA JONES T

Calvin Klein lingerie, Raju Rasiah jewelry, Les Tropeziennes-Caris Cipria shoes

BLACKMEN 53



### BY CHEQUETTA JONES

**T**amala Jones is known for her engaging smile, creamy chocolate skin and sassy attitude. She's been working this industry since the '80s and hasn't skipped a beat. After making Tommy Davidson gravel in *Booty Call* and setting the boys straight in *The Wood*, Tamala is doctoring it up on ABC's new show *Castle*. All work and no play is not her motto, she lives life to the fullest and always gives a helping hand to the youth when possible.

**BLACK MEN:** The infamous Tamala Jones, how are you, what's going on?

**TAMALA JONES:** I'm good, trying to keep busy. I co-produced an independent movie called *35 and Ticking* with Kim Whitley, Russ Parr, Kevin Hart, Nicole Ari Parker, Meagan Goode, Keith Robinson, from *Dream Girls*, and Wendy Raquel Robinson. Everybody was in this movie and it was such a great experience. That was [all] during my downtime from my TV show *Castle* that I do on ABC. But now we're back and we're shooting our third season.

**BM:** What made you gravitate towards the entertainment industry?

**TJ:** I was a character and I still am. When I was a little girl, I was always imitating family members, or something that I saw on television. I remember my aunt was pregnant and she was walking around spitting in a tis-

sue. So I went and put something in my shirt like I was pregnant and was walking around the house spitting in a tissue. They were like 'This girl is crazy.' I was dressing up like different people. It was so bad my mom was like 'I gotta put you in a workshop.' She put me in a workshop and the teacher loved me. The next weekend, a talent agent came there, and she told me to go take pictures. My first gig was an IBM commercial. I booked it and I've just been going ever since.

**BM:** What are your thoughts on getting into the business now—harder or easier?

**TJ:** Honestly, it was a lot easier back when I did it because we were just coming out of the '80s and people were worldly, open and more receptive to differences and nationalities. I feel like racism in the business is really active now. When I started out it wasn't like that. It was really based on your skill and if you were good, you got the job. For people trying to break in the business now, it's really based on whom you know and what you look like, versus your skill. It's not based on the intensity.

**BM:** Even though you have made your mark in the industry, do you feel that you still have to go the extra mile to prove yourself against the newbies with no talent?

**TJ:** Yeah. When that started, 'Let's go with this color or I don't want them to be too ethnic', I was like, "That's pretty cold but I can play that game too." So I called my

(continued on page 166)

Elle Macpherson Intimates lingerie top, B. Tempted by Wacoal lingerie bottom  
Les Tropeziennes-Raso Imp. Rosa shoes, Charter Club-Pearl Earrings  
OPPOSITE PAGE-Calvin Klein lingerie



T A M A L A J O N E S

# THE GIRL NEXT DOOR IS ALL GROWN UP!



Calvin Klein lingerie  
Raju Rasiah jewelry  
Les Tropeziennes-Caris Cipria shoes

56 BLACKMEN



Calvin Klein lingerie  
Raju Rasiah jewelry  
Les Tropeziennes-Caris Cipria shoes



Catherine Malandrino top  
Honey Dew bottom  
Les Tropeziennes-Caris Bianco  
Raju Rasiah necklace & earrings



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# KALIHAWK KALI

60 BLACKMEN



**A C T R E S S**

**HOLLYWOOD STARS**

*Kali*

**H O L L Y W O O D**

**BY SHARRI JONES**

**N**ative New Yorker, Kali Hawk is a versatile and comedic actress who has built an impressive list of credits in a relatively short amount of time. She recently starred in the comedy *Couples Retreat* (2009) alongside Vince Vaughn, Jon Favreau, Faizon Love and Tasha Smith. Hawk also stars in *Get Him To The Greek* (2010), opposite Jonah Hill and Sean P. Diddy Combs. Kali is excited about her upcoming projects in the comedy, *Answers to Nothing* starring opposite Dane Cook, *Trivial Pursuits*, *Answer This*, *Let Go* and *Bridesmaids*.

Kali is an up-and-comer who's definitely paid her dues on both small and big screens. At age 6, young Kali skipped two grades in elementary, by age 13 Kali was attending highschool. Prior to her 16th birthday, she was accepted to New York Arts University SUNY Purchase where she studied acting formally. She then relocated to LA where she studied improvisation at the Groundlings. When asked how she ended up in Los Angeles she says, "I was doing music in New York and someone invited me to Los Angeles so I came out, nothing really happened quickly enough for me, so after about a day in LA I thought oh yea didn't I want to be an actor. So I went on to craigslist and looked up auditions, and I went on my first audition and it all kind of started from there."

**Photographer: Scott Hebert**  
[www.studio360imaging.com](http://www.studio360imaging.com)

**Hair: DaRico Jackson**  
[www.daricojackson.com](http://www.daricojackson.com)

**Makeup: Gabriela Ramos**

**Wardrobe: Joe Exclusive for [www.destination1610.com](http://www.destination1610.com)**

**Asst Wardrobe: Daisry De Jesus**  
**Editorial Asst: Sharri Jones**

Calvin Klein lace top  
Lip Service Vice patent shorts  
Elegant Moments thigh-high fishnets  
Express pearl necklace, chandelier earrings & ring  
Devious patent ballerina heels

**HAWK KALI HAWK**



Rich Knits crop top, Maidenform shorts  
Elegant Moments thigh-high fishnets  
Gianmarco Lorenzi shoes



Oscar De La Renta cocktail dress

# K A L I H A W K



Rich Knits crop-top, Maidenform shorts  
Elegant Moments thigh-high fishnets  
Gianmarco Lorenzi shoes

Her career officially began when she booked a role on *Issues* (2005) with Laz Alonso and Todd Bridges. Hawk then landed a role opposite Mariah Carey in Spike Lee's *Lovers and Haters*. She later co-starred in the Lionsgate thriller *Holla* (2006). Kali has appeared on guest spots on *Untold Stories of The ER*, *Apt. 2F*, *Who's Got Jokes?*, *The Game* and *Jimmy Kimmel Live*. Hawk's other film credits include *Gotham Café*, *Where is Love Waiting*, *Caregiver*, *Killer Sound* and *Pushing Thirty*.

Kali states that she is obsessed with cinema, probably as much as Quentin Tarrantino, (she laughs). She says that Quentin Tarrantino has such a great quality in his work from studying films. She believes that it helps to know as much as you can about film. Your game is better when you are watching the best. You always wonder what are these actors' formulas. She began watching other actor's techniques to be inspired, and most admires Hallie Berry, Queen Latifah, Will Smith, Gwen Stefani, Jeff Bridges, Jodi Foster and Julia Roberts. When asked about her possibly playing, the late singer/actress Aaliyah, she chose not to comment, although there has been much speculation to her resembling Aaliyah and in talks about a possible project. I guess we will have to follow up with her to find out.

**For more on Kali visit her website [www.kali-hawk.com](http://www.kali-hawk.com)**





Rich Knits crop-top  
Maidenform shorts


A woman with long dark hair is lying down, wearing black lace lingerie and a multi-strand pearl necklace. She is holding a black ring to her lips. The background is a black and white damask pattern.

Calvin Klein lace top  
Lip Service Vice patent shorts  
Elegant Moments  
high-high fishnets  
Express pearl necklace  
chandelier earrings & ring  
Dorothy's patent ballerina heels

FOR MORE KALI GO TO [WWW.BLACKMENDIGITAL.COM](http://WWW.BLACKMENDIGITAL.COM)

66 BLACKMEN





**E**ver since her breakthrough feature role in John Singleton's *Baby Boy*, Angell Conwell has been one of Black Hollywood's most familiar faces. Whether she's playing Raven's cute cousin on *That's So Raven!*, the gold-digging cashier Antoinette on *The Wash*, or a super-sexy stewardess on *Soul Plane*, Conwell consistently delivers top quality for every role she accepts. The sultry Leo's efforts didn't go unnoticed. Every perfectly executed performance seems to increase and diversify Conwell's opportunities with strategic precision.

Worldly, focused and spiritual, part of her success is due to the genuine infusion of her personality and life into her characters. Asserting that she "always seems to find similarities in myself and the characters I play," the vibrant South Carolina native allows each character to weave a tapestry in her human experience, using them for self-exploration and discovery.

Fans can catch Conwell one of several ways. They can see her live and on-stage as Fallon in the stage play *Friends with Benefits*.

In addition to *Friends with Benefits*, fans can check out Conwell's other recent works, which include acting alongside Christian Keyes in the romantic comedy *Perfect Combination* (DVD in stores now), and starring in the notoriously funny comedy franchise National Lampoon's newest film *Sex Tax: a True Story*, which premieres in theaters October 1st this fall.

*Black Men* was lucky

BY L. RAQUEL PETERSON

HOLLYWOOD STARDUST

# angel

H O L L Y W O O D

Photographer: Scott Hebert  
[www.studio360imaging.com](http://www.studio360imaging.com)  
Hair: St. Anthony Cherry  
Makeup: Gabriela Ramos  
Wardrobe: Joe Exclusive for [www.destination1610.com](http://www.destination1610.com)  
Asst Wardrobe: Daisry De Jesus  
Editorial Asst: Sharri Jones  
Dresses: Herve Leger  
Shoes: Oscar Generale Showroom



enough to briefly get an interview with Conwell as she discusses, among other things, her spiritual evolution, growing to embrace her sensuality and beauty as a woman, and her love for charitable giving and helping others smile.

**BLACK MEN: Tell us about your role as Fallon. How does she reflect you as a person?**

**ANGELL CONWELL:** Fallon is a young woman finding success as a news reporter. She's intelligent, caring, spiritual, loyal to her friends and family, and very passionate about love. I relate to her quiet independence and the fact that she's a peacemaker. I'm very much the peacemaker in my life, the one who's always like, "Can't we all just get along?" I've had my moments, but for the most part, I don't do drama—unless I'm doing it like I'm doing it for TV! (Laughs) At the same time, Fallon is a lot more conservative and spiritual than most of my past roles. Quite uptight, which is a quality I don't possess, but she's still fun to play. I love Fallon and love this role.

**BM: Does theater frighten you? After all, you're required to give your all each and every night.**

**AC:** First and foremost, I hold tremendous trust in Him, so I don't fear much. Fear is not natural, nor is it good for the body. So I do my best to challenge anything that causes me to feel afraid. I normally gravitate towards [the fear] so I can explore and give myself the opportunity to face it. The only way to it is through it! Now, theater definitely requires an enormous amount of energy. We're still rehearsing right now and I definitely feel myself using a lot of fuel, but I love a good healthy challenge—that's what keeps me alive and kicking! I *never* want to get complacent or regret anything. I'm learning the best way to avoid having regrets is to completely get in there and go for it. "Ain't nothin' to it but to do it!" That way, I can avoid all the "woulda-coulda-shoulda's" later in life.

**BM: Are you comfortable with the experience overall? Will it improve your delivery for Hollywood?**

**AC:** I certainly hope so. Theater is where I began. I explored it in South Carolina as a child. My first play was August Wilson's *Fences*. It's where I came to a definite conclusion that I was going to be an actress. As far as Hollywood, I'm not certain how anyone will look on it. You never know what mood folks will be in. (laughs) I just love work. I love what I do; I'm blessed and very fortunate to be a working actress.

**BM: What are the craziest misconceptions about you? I'm sure being curvy, pretty and obviously carrying yourself with respect comes with a lot of responsibility.**

**AC:** Sexiness. It seems as though when a





woman exudes any type of sex appeal, folks tend to think that it's all she's about. This is totally false. Personally, I don't find myself sexy. I'm clumsy as all outdoors. But, some very classy women raised me, and as I mature, I feel as though I'm becoming more and more like them. I'm proud of that. At one point, not too long ago, I was steering clear of doing "sexy" photo shoots because I felt folks wouldn't take me "seriously" as an actress. Then I thought about it...As hard as I work out, push myself to the limit [and give] blood, sweat and tears...I *better* do a damn sexy shoot. I work *too* hard! I just want people to understand that a woman may be sexy but that doesn't mean she's not serious. I don't take life too seriously, but I'm serious about life and certainly serious about my business.

**BM: How has the entertainment business changed over time for you as you've progressed?**

**AC:** Everyone seems to be stepping it up a few notches when it comes to creating opportunities for Black people, which is wonderful. We're realizing that if we don't clear a path for ourselves, the path may never be cleared, or we'll be waiting for a long time. It's not worth the wait when we're highly qualified and highly capable of making it happen ourselves, so I'm very proud of our growth.

**BM: What are your secrets to all-around natural beauty and poise, especially when you're feeling crazy rough inside?**

**AC:** Thank you for the compliment! Well, I certainly keep our Creator first in my life. I lean not on my own understanding. I know this gift of life is not all about "me." It's about giving back, finding and following my cause, and giving love. Keeping these truths in mind on a daily





## A C T R E S S



basis allows me to remain confident and excited about life. I read more often than most folks are aware of and take the time to take care of myself, which is also important because when I do that, it keeps me level and focused on the path to being the best me I can possibly be.

**BM: Genuine answers and truer words never before spoken! How did you learn how to embrace, love and revel in your feminine sensuality?**

**AC:** Thankfully, I've never been afraid to love. But what I have been afraid of is getting hurt, which can totally cause a person to hold back. But I've come to a point in my life where I know that giving your all leaves you with no regrets. I love everything about being a woman except PMS and bad hair days! (Laughs) However, it's taken me a while to become comfortable in my skin and fully embrace my sensuality. I developed at a very early age and because of that, I was different. My shape was a topic of conversation. I was very uncomfortable with it for a long while. Finally, at the age of 27, I'm closer than I've ever been. I still have a ways to go, but I appreciate what God has given me. I love the skin I'm in and learning to love it more with each passing day.

**BM: Did you enjoy your shoot with *Black Men* this time around?**

**AC:** The shoot was a blast! I'm excited to be embracing my 20 sexy years! Some call your later 20s the dark side of the 20s, but I call it 20-sexy. Contrary to what many of us have been conditioned to believe, it's an enjoyable experience. I did a shot in a gorgeous Herve Leger dress. I felt quite fancy and feminine, if I may say so myself. (Laughs)

**BM: Would you say we captured your personality well?**

**AC:** Yes! Absolutely! This shoot has a lot of subtle glamour, but most of my shots were playful, which is a great representation of my personality. One of my friends calls me "Jokey Smurf" and I hope that side shines through in the photos. I mean, I have shy moments as well where I sit back and observe. These aspects may come through the photos as well. I was also *geeked* about doing the shot in the men's collar shirt with the tie. I've always loved that look. There's just something sensual and powerful about being in your man's shirt. I've always enjoyed it and loved bringing that to life with you guys!

**BM: As we wrap this up, tell us about other things you're into and involved with that you'd like to share with your readers and us.**

**AC:** I try to involve myself in as many charities as possible. There are several causes that I'm passionate about. I give back on a low-key basis. Seeing others smile triggers me to do the same. It may seem as though I'm blessing them when in actuality, they're blessing *me*. It's fulfilling, to say the least. I love to connect myself with organizations involving our youth, and I also work closely with *My Friends House* ([www.MyFriendsHouseLa.org](http://www.MyFriendsHouseLa.org)) which feeds and clothes the homeless weekly on skid row. Of course, I have many other irons in the fire, but I'm taking it one day at a time. ■

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BY BEN WESTHOFF

# WENDY MCKENZIE

HOLLYWOOD INTERVIEW

## ACTING COACH AND CASTING DIRECTOR



**U**pon our lunch meeting in Manhattan's West Village, Wendy McKenzie is a bit intimidating. She wears bangs and stands well over six feet tall in sandals, her statuesque figure dwarfing mine. Though her modeling days are behind her, the London-born, Jamaica-bred casting director has seen her profile grow due to her work on the \$40 million-grossing Biggie Smalls biopic *Notorious*.

McKenzie's roots in Trelawny, Jamaica—the home parish of Biggie's mother Voletta Wallace—helped her win the job, as did her experience working with Big while he was alive. She'd auditioned him for the 1995 film *New Jersey Drive*—although the part somehow went to Heavy D. [*Notorious* producer] Wayne Barrow asked what I was looking for, and I said, "I'm not looking for someone who's 6'5" and overweight just like Biggie, I'm looking for someone with his swagger and charm." In Jamal Woolard she found her man, and also helped cast the film's Lil' Kim, Naturi Naughton. During the audition, McKenzie encouraged Naughton to draw from the pain she felt after parting ways with her former R&B trio 3LW.

McKenzie also works with runway models and acting hopefuls, and has put together countless commercials, MTV promos and music videos over the years. "I call my company In The Wink Of An Eye because I can get things done like that," she says. (See [inthewinkofaneyebiz.com](http://inthewinkofaneyebiz.com) for more information.) Her resume also includes casting for an Aretha Franklin video, "A Rose Is Still a Rose," Wyclef Jean's "We Trying to Stay Alive" and the live-action production of Snoop Dogg's *Murder Was the Case* at the 1994 MTV Music Awards. McKenzie credits her success to keeping her ear to the streets. Sure enough, by the time lunch is over, she has given her card to our waitress. You guessed it—the server is an aspiring actress. ■

HOLLYWOOD STARS

Maya

H O L L Y W O O D

BY JG

**M**aya Delese Gilbert, who portrays Dr. Lyric Stansfield-Cruz on *Zane's Sex Chronicles* embodies the spirit of the current generation of young Hollywood. With a potent combination of talent, beauty and wisdom beyond her years, the Kent, Ohio native has grabbed Hollywood by the throat in just a few short years. Armed with desire and trained in theater appreciation and Shakespeare, Gilbert moved to LA in 2004, and after only five months, she aced her first real audition. She subsequently booked the SOAPnet show *I Wanna Be a Soap Star* where she finished as runner-up during the premiere season. This success led to several appearances on popular daytime soaps, *Days of Our Lives* and *General Hospital* and numerous independent films, such as *Mary Mary*, *The Broken Hearts Club*, and *The Welcoming*. She worked with some of the entertainment industry's biggest names, including Spike Lee, Mariah Carey, and hip-hop artists Nelly and Snoop Dogg.

Since her successful inception into what she cynically refers to as "The Land of Oz," Maya has definitely noticed that roadblocks to opportunity still exist for ethnic actresses in Hollywood. She cites

**Photographer: Scott Hebert**  
**Hair: Anthony Cherry**  
**Makeup: Artelia**  
**Stylist: Joe eXclusive for**  
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MAYA GILBERT M

76 BLACKMEN





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AYA GILBERT MA

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BLACKMEN 77



Dalia red dress, Animal Print sandals

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lingerie,  
Oscar Generale  
sandals,  
Raju of Beverly Hills  
jewelry



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80 BLACKMEN



that strife in race relations and media stereotypes still prevail and result in scarce work for ethnic talent. She experienced this mindset firsthand at a recent audition when she was told by casting that they were seeking someone a little more "waspy" or more bluntly "white." Such statements are indeed evidence that certain American institutions have yet to adjust to the more eclectic society that it has become. And, even though women are becoming more of a force, Gilbert is quick to point out that the industry is still very much controlled by men.

Her perspective on the current condition is conveyed by her comparison of today's Hollywood to her favorite film *The Wizard of Oz*. She states, "Oz (Hollywood) is controlled by The Wizard (Media) who manipulates the sheep. This lasts until he is revealed. The Wizard, much like the media, is able to manipulate his followers because he understands that most of the answers they seek are already within them. It simply takes the proper circumstances to bring the qualities out." The Hollywood media such as TMZ and the paparazzi act very much in the same fashion by revealing truths about individuals and celebrities that are often suppressed or denied by that person to the public. As a result, the media is able to have influence in the lives of many until self awareness is reached and accepted.

Maya counters these influences by staying grounded and focused on her goals. She understands, accepts and embraces the reality that her journey as an actress is lifelong and that there will be highs and lows along the way that you must persevere. She works hard to convey the honesty of the human experience through each of the roles that she books. Her goal isn't centered on instant fame by way of entertainment rags, reality shows, or sex tapes. She strives to be the overall talent, the actress, writer and producer with longevity. She pulls inspiration to accomplish those goals from those that have provided strong blueprints for success, such as Meryl Streep, Ruby Dee, Johnny Depp and Steven Spielberg. With upcoming film projects in the works, such as *Forgiveness*, *Subject 15* and the straight to DVD film *The Perfect Man* alongside Elise Neal, her dedication to being a strong, viable, versatile force for years to come is indeed in full swing. To define and understand her, you must simply "undefine" her. She's discovered the answers that the Wizard has known all along. ■



**Biatta**  
 Intimates  
 white pinstripe  
 lingerie,  
 Oscar  
 Generale  
 sandals,  
 Raju of Beverly  
 Hills jewelry

BY L RAQUEL PETERSON

# CHRISTIAN KEYES

HOLLYWOOD INTERVIEW



*What's Done in the Dark*, a stage play whose DVD release has sold more than 500,000 copies to date. Keyes is also known for playing Sonny in *Madea Goes to Jail*, which has sold over 1 million copies. Keyes has also modeled for book covers and worked in commercial advertising campaigns.

Never one to be typecast, Keyes explores his talent by selecting different roles which challenge him and drive his development, stating that it's important for him to know "whether or not I can honestly bring them to life" before he commits himself to it.

"I want to bring justice to the role as far as what the writer and the director wants. I don't want a character that's too easy and I don't want to be typecast. I want to make myself work. You do your best work when you're uncomfortable and step outside of that comfort zone." He names the pretentious Stylz, his character in *Dysfunctional Friends*, as an example of a challenging script. "I tried to make him likeable as opposed to difficult. It took a lot of work but was one of the most fun roles I've played. I'm very proud of it."

**BM: What makes you such a talented actor?**

**CK:** I take my work seriously. I put a lot into practicing, performing and being ready. Therefore, I'm better prepared when one of these opportunities come. I also maintain a healthy lifestyle by going to the gym five days a week. I've been doing it for years and can't function without it. It

*(continued on page 166)*

Photographer: Howard Huang  
Wardrobe: Marcus Blassingame  
Editorial Asst: Sharri Jones  
Location: Destination 1610

Diesel for Saks purple plaid shirt  
Tom Ford sunglasses

**W**orking in the entertainment industry is tough. Success isn't easy to come by. An aspiring actor can easily attend hundreds of casting calls in which he's just another eager face before he lands a role. Then, when he makes it, he still has to fight the deceptive demons that come with the industry—false delusions of grandeur that he's made it, snakes in the grass waiting to take advantage of his naiveté, and, of course, those who will do anything to pull him off his path.

Christian Keyes refuses to fall prey to such deceptions. A Detroit native, Keyes is a singer and actor whose extraordinary talent has led Tyler Perry to say, that he is one of the "most consistent male actors" he's worked with. Despite such praise, this levelheaded brotha remains as hardworking, grounded and driven as the day he entered the entertainment industry. Keyes maintains his tenacious focus by remembering who truly takes care of him at the end of the day.

"I don't walk around with a Bible, but I know where my blessings come from. I know it's God who opens doors for me, [and] I'm humble and appreciative," asserts Keyes, adding that he tries to be an example with his walk as opposed to showing off his knowledge of Bible scriptures.

Keyes has an established record for excellent performances as both an actor and singer. He toured as a cast member in Tyler Perry's

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HOLLYWOOD STARLET

Laila

## THE FUTURE IS NOW!

BY JG

**W**hen the urban erotic series, *Zane's Sex Chronicles* hit Cinemax "After Dark" on October 11, 2008, it not only introduced the love/sex lives of five female friends, it also introduced Laila Odom as the unfaithful comedienne Ana Marie Hawkings and Maya Gilbert as Dr. Lyric Stansfield-Cruz. These two very talented women represent the best and brightest of Hollywood's next generation of African-American stars. They personify the focused, dedicated, immensely gifted, young and restless youth movement engulfing today's film and television industry.

### LAILA ODOM

During the first five minutes of speaking to Laila Odom, you know that she's a winner who dreams big and allows her spirit and imagination to take flight. All the qualities are there—focus, education, desire, understanding, talent, strength and faith. The beauty from Orange, NJ is very well suited and in many ways destined for the career she's chosen. She studied theater, dance, gymnastics and martial arts since the age of five and received a BFA in Modern Dance from Rutgers University: Mason Gross School of The Arts. During her tenure at the Mason Gross School, she engaged in the modeling and fashion industry. Her activities as a model provided her the opportunity to bless the runways of New York, Germany and South Africa.

Today, Laila can be seen as the sexually unabashed comedienne Ana-Marie who carries a troubled past into season two of *Zane's Sex Chronicle*. This role has groomed and motivated her to develop a plan for success within today's young and



LAILA ODOM LAILA

ACTRESS

MODA LAILA MODA





restless Hollywood. The winds of change are slowly opening doors for African-American actresses to excel in different genres of film previously unavailable, such as the genre of action adventure and physical comedy. Halle Berry reopened the door to the action genre in 2000 by her appearance as Storm in *X-Men*. Today, Zoe Saldana is kicking the door down through her appearances in *Star Trek*, *Avatar* and *The Losers*. Wendy Raquel Robinson (*The Game*), Tamala Jones (*Castle*, *Janky Promoters*) and Regina Hall (*The Boondocks*, *Southland*) are proven leaders in the physical comedy genre.

Taking notice of these shifts and the paths blazed by the actresses above, Laila is honing the comedic skills learned via her role on ZSC to create her own lane within the physical comedy sector. She's tapped into her sexuality to enhance these endeavors with the understanding that in order for women to come across effectively as a comedic actor, sexuality is key to providing balance for the audience. It downplays the comedy and provides layers and substance that become the essence of characters. Sexuality and attractiveness is simply a party to the entertainment business and should be channeled.

Fans will be able to bear witness to the growth of her comedic genius on the upcoming comedy DVD *LMAO with Brian Hooks* which will be available late 2010. She is also a cast member of the new film *Dysfunctional Friends at a Funeral* starring Stacy Dash, Reagan Gomez-Preston, Meagan Good, Jason Weaver, Wesley Jonathan, Persia White and Tatiana Ali. Odom also signed on for the third installment of *Nora's Hair Salon*.

Every character is approached differently. She looks to embody every role and bring genuine qualities to her characters that the audience can identify and connect with.

Such skills, as she quickly attest, only come with hard work and dedication to your craft. Such discipline is vital in overcoming the criticism and rejection you will face as an entertainer.

As Hollywood changes, African-American directors and the acting community will move toward independent means to produce their projects. Community support will be an essential component of its success. Support Black films and creativity, even if it doesn't make sense at first. With that support, young starlets such as Laila Odom will soar and lead the next generation of stars to new heights. ■

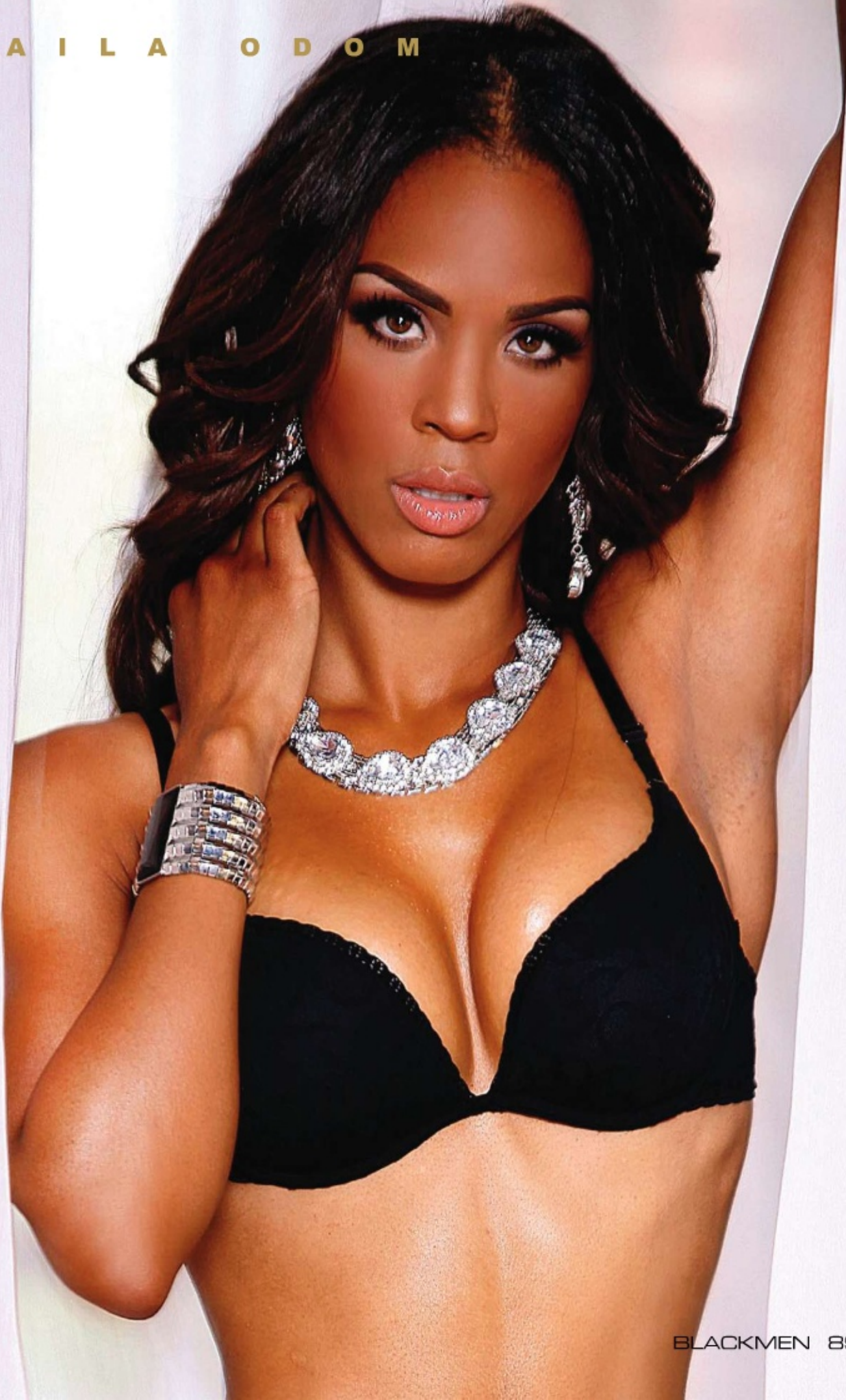
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L A I L A O D O M



A C T R E S S

JONES



**Photographer: D Brown**  
**Hair/Makeup: K Smith Qos**  
**Wardrobe: Marcus Blassingame**  
**Location Scout: Kenny Baker**  
**Sharri Jones for TSD AGENCY/celebrity legit talent**

**Michael Kors black one piece w/clear vinyl straps & panel; BCBG sequin scarf**  
**Aldo gold boar sheild ring; Yves Saint Laurent cranberry platform slingback pumps.**

SHARRI JONES SH

90 BLACKMEN



HOLLYWOOD

STARLET

*Shanice*

H O L L Y W O O D

HARRI JONES JON



Versace one piece bodysuit, Fendi peep-toe pumps  
Afaze black flower ring & animal print round button earrings.

Vintage caged shoulder dress



# S H A R R I J O N E S

**S**an Antonio, TX beauty Sharri Jones began her pursuit in entertainment through local pageants. After being crowned *Miss Bexar (Bear) County*, she began to pursue print, commercial and runway work. During her freshman year in high school, before getting bored with modeling, Jones landed campaigns with EyeMasters, Sprint, Saks Fifth Avenue and international runway shows such as Roberto Cavalli.

Although she was accepted into San Antonio College to study theater and law at the age of 16, on her 18<sup>th</sup> birthday her mother moved her to New York to pursue acting. With no regrets of her incomplete collegiate career, Jones began training at acting studios, such as TVI, Stella Adler Conservatory, Weist-Barron Studios and Black Nexus under the tutelage of Susan Batson. She also trained with Jordan Bayne and is now working with Tony Greco. Jones will also be training at Lee Strasberg Institute in the fall/winter and at the Ivana Chubbuck Studio. Jones says, "My goal is to learn different coach's methods who have taught only the best, such as Phillip Seymour Hoffman, Taraji Henson, Angelina Jolie, and Nicole Kidman. If nothing else, I want to see if they are the right coach for me. I have come to realize that a really good acting coach for someone else may not be a good acting coach for me. I plan to eventually stick with a select few, and Tony Greco is definitely one of them." (She smiles).

After freelancing with a few boutique agencies, Jones noticed that though her look was in demand, she found herself competing for slots for the same look. She joined TSD Agency, an image-consulting firm that worked with the likes of Alicia Keys, Kelly Rowland and Vivica Fox.

Confident of her new designer image, Jones began inserting herself back into the casting network market, and booking independent roles, such as Natalia in *Still A Teen*, directed by Melvin James, *Cool Kids* directed by award-winning director/actress Rosalyn Coleman of Redwall Productions, *Blackmail* with award-winning independent film director Suraj Das, director Larry Rosen's latest zombie film entitled *Forever Yours* and *The Club* directed by Michael Pinckney.

While engrossed in the studies of film and stage, Jones' curriculum includes an AA in legal studies and a BA in Forensic chemistry as Law is her second passion in addition to entertainment. Besides an Oscar, passing the LSAT is a goal for this rising star.

A self-proclaimed bona fide scream queen, Jones has been getting a lot of horror flick callbacks. However, some of her goals include working with companies such as Rainforest Films and Tri destined Films.

**BLACK MEN: You're tall, you're beautiful, you're fit, smart, well versed, funny, and have great ethics and social/professional qualities, why hasn't the industry given you your well-deserved break?**

**SHARRI JONES:** As we know some actors get their break before others, for various reasons. However, I have no problems paying my dues and working my way up the ladder. I love indie films and have really been digging into those types of projects a little more, and branding myself at the same time. That's just the thing; people look at tall and beautiful first. Now don't get me wrong it's nice to look attractive and it's pleasing to know that's how most people view me. But I have more to bring to the table, there's more depth to me; I consider myself strong enough to also carry those roles that may not require one to get by on just looks, which is sometimes the case.

**BM: With all the training, the hot new image and the editorial support, what do you think is the next step in furthering your career?**

**SJ:** I am prepping for the 2011 release of four of my projects. Until then I am in the studio training constantly. I am going to take the route that any other smart actress would take. I am going to brand and market myself more than anything as soon as all these projects hit. I never believe that training should

Versace one piece bodysuit; Fendi peep-toe pumps  
Afaze black flower ring & animal print round button earrings





worldimage

BLACKMEN 95

worldimage



Michael Kors black one piece  
w/clear vinyl straps & panel  
Yves Saint Laurent cranberry  
platform slingback pumps

**OPPOSITE PAGE**

Versace one piece bodysuit  
Fendi peep-toe pumps

Afaze black flower ring & animal print round button earrings





cease or slow down when you start booking, I want to be a better actor than the day before every time I step into the studio.

**BM: Of any successful Actress, which would you model your career after?**

**SJ:** I know it sounds like a cliché to say Halle Berry but let me tell you it goes beyond being beautiful. She is a great actress who took risks; risks are important. When I saw her in *Jungle Fever* I was like, "wow!" I admire her, it's easy to have people gasp about how pretty you are on camera, it's another thing to play a crackhead and people gasp at your talent.

**BM: What do you feel holds you back?**

**SJ:** I wouldn't say anything is holding me back, I just think that when it's your time it's your time. I am waiting on the right person to notice me, and I believe it's right around the corner.

**BM: How have you overcome inhibitions? Do you have any inhibitions now?**

**SJ:** I ran away from roles that made me uncomfortable and scared, and trust me, that was a lot of roles. According to my acting coach, Tony Greco, it's not okay to be afraid. I have embraced those fears and sometimes my work is better than something that makes me comfortable. Also, while training with Susan Batson, she gave me any eye-opener and she is really intimidating at that, so I know walking through her door my inhibitions better be out the window. I think she scares the inhibitions out of me. (laughs)

**BM: How have acting coaches, such as Squeaky Moore and Wendy McKenzie inspired you?**

**SJ:** These are two fantastic coaches. Squeaky Moore is a talented actress with an MFA in theater and she is that one person who practically books any and everything she auditions for. I wanted to know how she does it. She has been that one coach I can call or skype the day of an audition or call-back to help me break down roles. She encourages me to push for roles that are not the most comfortable. Without her I would not have begun to scratch the surface in most of these projects. Wendy McKenzie is a casting director for *Wink of an Eye*, and as an acting coach she is very cut and dry. She tells you like it is. When I had a really major callback for a film in Atlanta, Wendy prepared me for that, and she is one who will not waste your time and cut around corners. If you suck she

(continued on page 166)



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A C T R E S S

HOLLYWOOD STARLET

*Sundry*

BY SHARRI JONES

**P**hiladelphia born and raised Sundry Carter studied at the prestigious Freedom Theatre and also attended Temple University where she majored in drama. Stemming from her earlier debut in the Abdul Malik Abbott directed film "State Property 1 and 2". She continues to maintain her fan base status via marketing in the urban community through personal appearances, numerous community projects and an occasional music video cameo with her recording artist friends. Method Man/Red Man, JaDaKiss, DJ Drama, Kanye West, Tamar Braxton, Musiq Soul Child and Busta Rhymes are amongst some the industry social butterfly's A-list associates which whom's projects she has appeared.

Sundry, a loving mother of three, a boy and two girls, one of which she shares with Cleveland Cavaliers basketball Player Larry Hughes has had her hands full juggle television appearances such as "Cutz", "One on One" and "Buffy The Vampire Slayer".

This Drama major puts her everything into her roles. Her character in films like "Code Blue" shows her ability to identify with the person that she is playing. That ability to diverse between comedy and drama allowed her to appear in such films as Bringing Down The house, Soul Plane, Boss 'n Up, It Ain't Easy, 4 Life, After Autumn, Expendable and Next Day Air.

Sundry is masterful at dividing herself between the Urban and music industry and feature film and television with the ability to entertain all genres. ■

SUNNDY CARTER

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Hasan  
LA Stylist-Joe Exclusive  
Make Up-Gaby  
Hair-Anthony Cherry**



HOLLYWOOD STARS

# Claudia H O L L Y W O O D

BY CHEQUETTA JONES

**C**laudia Jordan is more than just a model holding a briefcase on NBC's *Deal or No Deal*. She's in business with two powerful men, Jamie Foxx and Donald Trump, and has a resume that many women would love to claim as their own. After working on shows like *The Price is Right*, *Extra*, *Access Hollywood*, *Celebrity Apprentice*, and *Deal or No Deal*, Claudia Jordan's curves and beautiful face have been her business card for the past ten years. Now it's time to brand her name.

**BLACK MEN:** When someone says, "Who is Claudia Jordan?" and their response is "She's the girl from *Deal or No Deal*," how does that make you feel, especially when you have so many layers?

**CLAUDIA JORDAN:** I understand why they say that; it was a huge show, but I feel of all the things I've done, not to diminish that, it's certainly on the lower end to me as far as talent is concerned. I was a reporter at the Million Man March. I was one of the few Black girls that co-hosted the Miss Universe pageant. It kind of bothers me sometimes, like, "Oh, that's the model" or "You did videos." I did videos years ago, but I do understand that some of the things I've done that, to me, are more meaningful, maybe people just didn't know. I worked for Fox Sports, co-hosted a show with Carmen Elektra called *Living Large*, *Extra*, *Access Hollywood*—A lot of stuff. I was on the show *Ballers*, the only female on a sports show carrying my own and covered extreme sports. [So] It's a little frustrating at times. I wish people would know me for more than a briefcase. I guess that means I just have more work to do in the business.

**BM:** What's really interesting about you is that you have Oscar winner Jamie Foxx on your left



# CLAUDIA

# JORDAN



**A C T R E S S**  
**THE REAL DEAL**  
**IMAGES BY NEIL FAVILA**



CLAUDIA JORDAN

“I KNOW WHAT I AM, I KNOW WHAT I’M GOOD AT, AND I KNOW WHAT MY STRENGTHS ARE.”



and real estate mogul Donald Trump on your right. How does it feel to also have Donald Trump on your team?

**CJ:** It’s crazy. It’s a good look to be associated with Donald Trump. Some people don’t like Donald Trump but you can’t deny the man’s success. He’s a billionaire; he knows what he’s doing. There’s a show he wants to do with me and I feel flattered that he wants to be in business with me because I want to be in business with him. I always thought Donald Trump was like the richest man in America growing up as a kid. Now it’s like he’s my personal friend. It’s a legitimate business, real friendship and if he rides for you and he believes in you, he will have your back. I want to be in business with successful people that are doing way better than myself. That’s the only way to make you better. It’s crazy, like you said, I have Jamie on the left and Donald on the right. I feel very blessed that these people have respect for me, and they are from different genres and different parts of the entertainment business. I feel pride in my upbringing and in always being myself.

**BM:** Now that you’re back on Jamie Foxx’ *Foxx Hole* Sirius Radio Show where you can be as dirty as you want to, is that liberating or do you try to preserve your wholesome image?

**CJ:** It’s liberating but it’s also definitely conflicting when it comes to it. I’m not going to lie to you. I struggle with it all the time because I am a smartass by nature and I come from a family of comedians, they’re hilarious. My grandmother tells dirty jokes; my uncles and cousins are funny. The *Foxxhole* is kind of how my family is; they go in on each other and I think it’s hilarious. But then part of me likes the classy, no cussin’, lady, the pageant girl—I’m con-

flicted. Part of me wants to have that clean, wholesome, marketable, daytime TV persona. But then I also feel that I have an edge. If only I could find something in the middle.

**BM:** What’s the next big thing for Claudia Jordan?

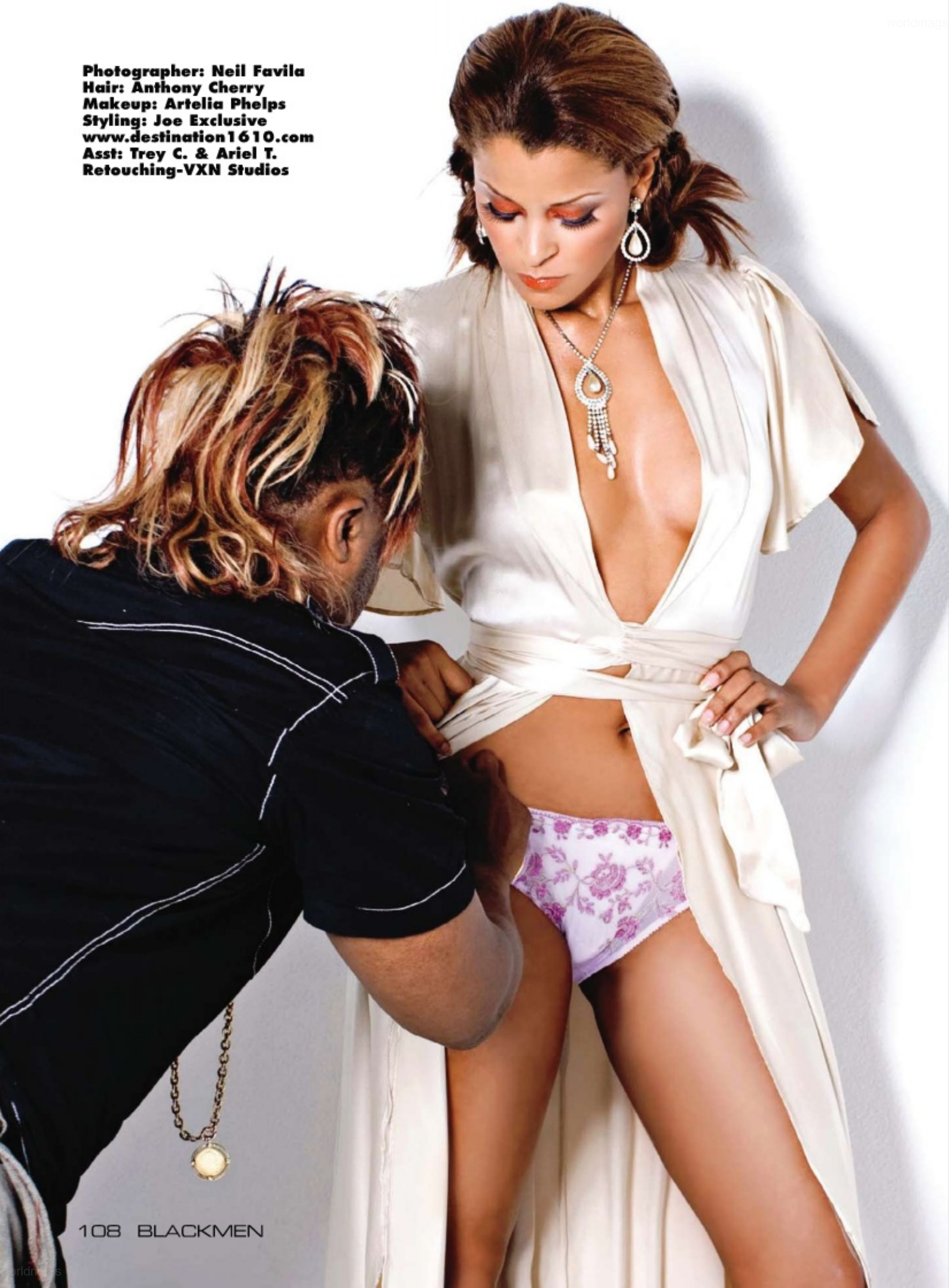
**CJ:** I’ve been talking with a production company [Bright Ideas] in Atlanta. [We are working on a sitcom. I don’t do a lot of acting because I don’t think I’m good at it [laughs] to be honest with you. I stay in my lane. I don’t have any misconceptions about where I stand on certain things. I know what I am, I know what I’m good at, and I know what my strengths are. There is a sitcom I’m working on called *My Parents, My Sister and Me*. Debbie Allen is one of the executive producers along with Will Hollins. I play a schoolteacher, Angela Wilson. Robin Givens is also in it. She has a daughter and is married to a White man who also has a daughter. It’s about combining the two families together. There are a lot of messages in the show, which I really like. I appear in about seven episodes. In addition, I’ve been in talks to do a talk show and I’m working on that. I’m hammering out the details, such as set design, contract and what it’s going to be about. That’s my ideal dream job. I’ve been talking about that for a long time. You need to have a talk show, and that’s what I want to do.

**BM:** What are your plans for the Holidays?

**CJ:** Last year was my busiest year ever. I didn’t really spend that much time with my family, I’ve gone a whole year without going home. This year I’m really going to go home for Thanksgiving. I always do what has kept me the same. Hopefully, I’ll figure out the details on the talk show or another radio project I have, but really just spending time with my family. ■



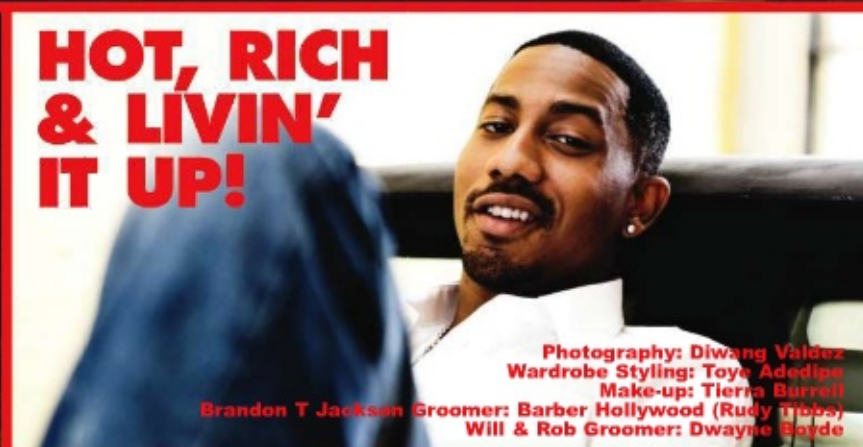
**Photographer: Neil Favila**  
**Hair: Anthony Cherry**  
**Makeup: Artelia Phelps**  
**Styling: Joe Exclusive**  
**www.destination1610.com**  
**Asst: Trey C. & Ariel T.**  
**Retouching-VXN Studios**



# BRANDON T. JACKSON

## HOLLYWOOD INTERVIEW

**HOT, RICH  
& LIVIN'  
IT UP!**



Photography: Diwang Valdez  
Wardrobe Styling: Toya Adedina  
Make-up: Tierra Burrell  
Brandon T. Jackson Groomer: Barber Hollywood (Rudy Tibbs)  
Will & Rob Groomer: Dwayne Bayde

**S**it down and talk with actor/comedian Brandon T. Jackson for ten to fifteen minutes and you quickly learn that the stand-up comedian and now highly requested actor is all about action. With rave reviews for his roles in recent box office hits, such as *Roll Bounce* (2006), *Tropic Thunder* (2008) and *Percy Jackson and The Olympians: The Lightning Thief* (2010), the Detroit native is using his humor, suburban guile, carefree approach and inner city swag to usher in the next generation of young Black superstars. Currently, his immense talent can be witnessed alongside Bow Wow in the Erick White directed summertime hit *Lottery Ticket*. And, if that's not enough to convince you that Mr. Jackson is a star, wait until he unleashes another facet of his comic genius next to his mentor and comedic legend Martin Lawrence in the next installment of the *Big Momma's House* franchise, *Big Momma's House 3—Like Father, Like Son*. It was only fitting that *Black Men* sit down with one of today's brightest young stars in Hotlanta to talk about the love for his profession, the upbringing that helped shape him, his father and Barack.

**Black Men: How do you feel about the current position of African Americans comedic actors in today's Hollywood?**

**Brandon T. Jackson:** Right now, Black comedy is lost. It's very redundant. My goal is to change that and set a new tone for the next generation. It's tough though because everyone is trying to use the same formula.

**BM: What are some roles that you would like to see more comedic actors portray?**

**BTJ:** Hmm...as a Black comedian or as a man? It's two fold. Major culture can do crossover or just cool, let's just have a good time on film type projects. Black films have to evolve outside of the hood. This is one thing I love about Tyler Perry productions. His settings aren't in the hood. He takes the audience to different places. We need to provide this same type of setting to the younger generation. I love *Lottery Ticket* because it shows us coming out of the hood. Hood movies are not good right now with a Black president in office. We need to show more sophisticated problems among the younger generation.

**BM: Besides comedy, what is the key quality you bring to each role that you play?**

**BTJ:** I always have a heart. My characters are never just funny. You always get a back story. For instance, with my character Benny in *Lottery Ticket*, there were things in the script that I wrote and wanted to portray because we couldn't have a movie set in the hood without heart. That's the special element behind *Lottery Ticket*. It has heart and layers. You know what the characters are feeling. You can see what the average nineteen year old is thinking. Benny and even I do not want to be in the hood. It's been overlaid in sitcoms like *The Jeffersons* and every movie it seems. Benny is a hustler, not a drug dealer. He's the type of person that can do anything to get a dime. He's smart and is seeking a way to escape the hood. It's not an escape to never come back. Benny is seeking a way to get out, return and give back. Besides Magic Johnson, you don't see many of us sharing our success by openly giving back to the community. We need to see more examples of this. Definitely make sure that you go see the film. There's a great dramatic scene that sums up all that I've just said.

**BM: What surprises should fans of the *Big Momma's House* franchise look for in *Big Momma's House 3—Like Father, Like Son*? How was your experience working alongside Martin Lawrence?**

**BTJ:** *Big Momma's House 3* has a love story. I was blessed and allowed to have a love story in this film with the beautiful actress Jessica Lucas who *Black Men* has previously shot. I always dreamed of having a romantic situation on film and in a very cool way, I was able to do so in the film by portraying a girl. Just imagine if you were able to find out all of your lady's secrets by being a woman. You sit there and listen as a woman and then emerge from the costume all knowing and apologetic. My character does this for the love. The film is a great insight into what a person will do for love. Martin Lawrence is an amazing mentor—very smart and progressive. Current day comics are in their positions today in large part because of Martin and Will Smith because they defined their own brand of comedy.

**BM: Per your recent appearance in *Italian Vogue*, you definitely have a flair for fashion. What are some key fashion "must haves" for you that define your personal style and personality?**

**BTJ:** I like sophisticated, high class things. Not cocky sophistication to where I look down or think I'm better than anyone. I simply like cool things that exude a certain ambiance. My tastes stem from my background. I grew up in a Jewish neighborhood. My father was a pastor and public figure in the hood where his church was located. So, when we go to church, we're in the hood. But, when I go home, I'm around my white friends. So, I have a duality. I have to balance both worlds equally. That's why all of my girlfriends are mixed. I like both. That's why I love Barack.

**BM: In *Ebony's March 2010 Issue*, you stated that "there ain't nothing like a Black woman." What qualities in a Black woman are you seeking?**

**BTJ:** White women are cool, but there is just something about a Black woman. My mom is Black. If you were a Jewish man you would probably want a Jewish woman. It's a motherly thing. Now, White girls act very logically. They always try to think things through. Let's figure out why. Black women are more like "No, it's not going down like that!" So, if you mix both, you get the "not going down like that" with the logical. That's why Barack is so cool. He has that White swag, but he's still Black. He has a balance of both. Even in my own movies, life always comes back into play. Each woman that I've been involved with in a movie has been mixed. ■



PHOTO: PHOTO PRO / LANDOV

**Jurnee Smollett**



PHOTO: ROBERT PITTS / LANDOV

**Brandon T. Jackson**



PHOTO: KOROL / REUTERS / LANDOV

**Jessica Lucas**

# THE NEW BLACK HOLLYWOOD

BY SHARRI JONES

There are so many emerging and established talent in Hollywood that it is hard to keep up with them. African American culture contributes much to the success of Hollywood. There are many Black actors, whose names swiftly fall under the radar for various reasons. Yet, these actors have done some extraordinary work with directors, such as Spike Lee, Antoine Fuqua, and Tyler Perry, to name a few, along with talented actors, such as Denzel Washington and Don Cheadle. The goal in Black Hollywood is to spotlight these actors in all their talented diversity. Their contributions to the art of acting are enormous. These actors are climbing the same ladder that actors/actresses with household names once climbed, such as Halle Berry when she played in *Jungle Fever* and *Strictly Business* (1991), Samuel L. Jackson in *School Daze* and *Coming to America* (1988), Denzel Washington in *Carbon Copy* (1981), *Glory* (1989), and Gabrielle Union in *She's All That* and *10 Things I Hate About You* (1999), and Zoe Saldana in *Drumline* and *Crossroads* (2002). These actors have paved the way for new Black Hollywood actors. Because of them they can climb the very same ladder to success.



PHOTO: LANDOV

**Kali Hawk**



PHOTO: MICHAEL GERMANA / LANDOV

**Sydney Tamiia Poitier**



PHOTO: MICHAEL GERMANA / LANDOV

**Collins Pennie**



PHOTO: ARIEL RAMIREZ / LANDOV

**Shannon Kane**

# Tiffany Hines

**T**iffany Hines was born in Cincinnati, Ohio and raised in Tallahassee, Florida. Many people don't know that she has a colorful musical background. When she was younger, she played the piano and violin. She is also a skilled singer and dancer and hopes to one day incorporate all her talents into her busy acting career. She has guest starred on *Grey's Anatomy*, *Heroes*, *Criminal Minds*, *Miss Guided*, and *Lie to Me*. She also had recurring roles in the ABC family series *10 Things I Hate About You*, *CSI: Crime Scene Investigation*, the FOX television series *Bones*, and *Lincoln Heights*.

Her most recent film projects include *Perfect Combination* co-starring Christian Keyes and Angell Conwell. In addition, she is appearing in *The Dark Party* directed by Kadeem Hardison.

She got her big break instantly on her first LA audition for a major series and went in to have fun and give it her best shot. She booked the principal role of Birdie Scott in the N/Teen Nick TV series *Beyond The Break*. Hines is anticipating this season's release of her new CW action series *Nikita*, playing the role of Jaden.

PHOTO: ANNETTE NAVARRO

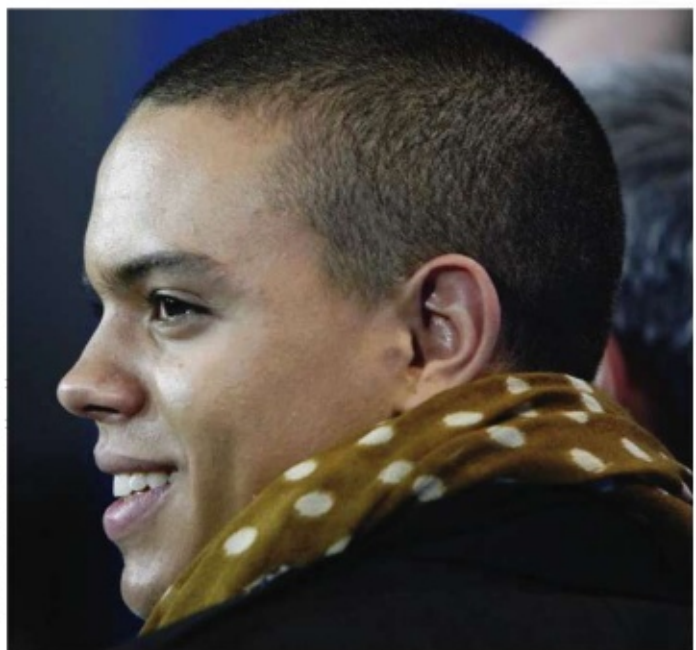


# Evan Ross

**E**van Ross is the son of legendary singer and actress Diana Ross and sister actress Tracee Ellis Ross. Ross made his feature film debut in the 2006 film *ATL with T.I.*, Lauren London and Keith David. He starred in the ESPY and Image award nominated film, *Pride* (2007) with Terrence Howard, Kimberly Elise and Bernie Mac. Ross was also nominated for the 2008 NAACP Image award for Outstanding Actor in a Television Movie, for his performance in the Golden Globe Winning film *Life Support* (2007) also starring Queen Latifah, Tony Rock, Darrin Dewitt Henson and sister, Tracee Ellis Ross. The two years following, Ross began booking more consistently with *Gardens of the Night*, *Shelly Fisher*, *Linewatch*, *Black Water Transit*, *According to Greta*, *Life is Hot in Cracktown*, and *The Family Tree*, which premiered at the 2010 Seattle International Film Festival.

Ross is persistent in making acting seem like second nature with all the projects he has lined up between 2010 and 2011. Jessey Terrero's *Brooklyn to Manhattan* (2010), *Mooz-Lum* (2010) with Danny Glover and Nia Long, *Four to the Floor* with Naturi Naughton, *96 minutes* (2011) starring Brittany Snow. He is rumored to be in *Strife*, *Broken Doll*, *The Suspect of St. Marks Place*, *Upstate*, and *Prep School*.

PHOTO: RAINER JENSEN/ DPA/ LANDOV



# Rutina Wesley

**L**as Vegas born actress, Rutina Wesley studied performing and visual arts at the Las Vegas Academy of International Studies. She received a BFA in theater at the University of Evansville, and then later graduated from Julliard's four-year acting program in New York. Rutina is not only a triple threat but is known in Hollywood as defying the odds of being thin, like most actresses. She takes pride in having a great muscular physique. According to her latest *Fitness Magazine* interview, she states that her fit frame is not just for her character in *True Blood* but it contributes to her healthy lifestyle. She says she works out about every other day.

Wesley began her career in theater with a *New York Times*, critically-acclaimed, Broadway performance of *The Vertical Hour*. After transitioning into film she landed a guest-starring role in *Numb3rs*, as well as a leading role in *How She Move*, which received nominations for grand jury prize and audience award at 2007's Sundance Festival. Wesley received her biggest break in 2008 as Tara Thornton in the award-winning HBO series *True Blood*.

PHOTO: YVES BOTTALICO/ CONTOUR BY GETTY IMAGES





PHOTO: ERIC RAY DAVIDSON / CONTOUR BY GETTY IMAGES

# Jessica Lucas

**D**rop dead gorgeous, Canadian-born actress, Jessica Lucas has been acting since the age of seven. She attended a children's art theater school in Toronto, Canada where she performed in theater productions, such as *Grease*, *Cinderella*, *Mousetrap*, among others. Lucas was then recognized as a series regular in the popular Canadian teen drama *Edgemont* in 2001, as well as ABC series, *Life As We Know It* in 2005, alongside Missy Peregrym & Kelly Osbourne. Although the show was cancelled during the first season, Lucas went on to film guest TV spots in projects such as *CSI*, *90210*, and *The L Word*. Lucas has proven to be a real scream queen in past horror flicks, such as *Amusement*, *The Covenant*, and *Cloverfield*. Lucas' most notable credits came in 2009 as the sexy, yet wholesome, schoolteacher in the latest installment of *Melrose Place*. She is now set to star in a new comedy series, *Friends with Benefits* airing on NBC. Also, look for her latest film being released in early 2011, playing opposite Martin Lawrence as the love interest of Brandon T. Jackson in *Big Mommas: Like Father Like Son*.



PHOTO: ASHLEY NGUYEN

# Michael B. Jordan

**N**ewark, NJ native, Michael B. Jordan is currently one of the hottest leading young actors on television. He started acting at a young age appearing in day player roles on *The Sopranos* and *The Cosby Show* in 1999 before landing a role in *Hardball*. Jordan received critical acclaim for his role of Wallace in the HBO hit series *The Wire*. In 2003 he became the youngest Black actor to have a contracted role in ABC's *All My Children*, in the role of Reggie, which won him three NAACP image award nominations for Outstanding Actor in a Daytime Drama Series (2005-2007), and a 2005 soap digest award nomination for favorite teen. After his lead role in the 2007 film *Blackout*, starring Zoe Saldana and Melvin Van Peebles, he hit a dry spell. He made a triumphant return in NBC's *Friday Night Lights*. When asked how he got the role in FNL he says, "I auditioned with Peter Berg, doing some improv, which is a big part of FNL. Peter told me to talk shit to him so I am in the audition room cursing, and he just kept pushing me and asking for more. I literally ran up to him and semi-tackled him out of his chair. I figured I either got the job or I am going to be escorted to jail when I get out of the audition room. Needless to say, I got the job." Jordan made his feature film debut in *Pastor Brown*. He will be appearing in *Redtails* (2011).



PHOTO: IAN WEST/ PA PHOTOS/ LANDOV

# Jurnee Smollett

**N**ew Yorker, Jurnee Smollett started off her career as a child actress appearing in such shows as *Full House*, *Hanging With Mr. Cooper*, and *The Cosby Show*. You may remember her as the adorable Eve Batiste in *Eve's Bayou*. She won the Broadcast Film Critics Choice Award for best child performance, and an image award in addition to three young artist awards. After a short break, she made a comeback with *Roll Bounce*, *Gridiron Gang* and *The Great Debaters*. The movie, directed by Denzel Washington and produced by Oprah Winfrey, won her an image award for best actress in a motion picture. Her latest project is Peter Berg's hit TV show *Friday Night Lights* on NBC, in which she plays Jess Merriweather.

Smollett is also on the Board of Directors of Artists for a New South Africa, along with Samuel L Jackson, President Nelson Mandela, Alfre Woodard, CCH Pounder, Carlos Santana and others. This organization combats and provides assistance for victims of HIV/AIDS in Africa.



# Shannon Kane

**S**hannon Kane was born and raised in Kalamazoo, Michigan. During her early years she attended an Education for the Arts Program that resulted in her receiving a full dance scholarship to Western Michigan University. Shannon started her career doing print modeling with Elite Agency Chicago. On graduation she relocated to Los Angeles to study acting and appeared in guest starring roles in *Entourage*, *Young and the Restless* and *CSI*, all while working as a DJ for extra income. Shannon is also known for her recurring role as Natalia on the popular daytime soap *All My Children*. Kane recently received the Breakthrough Actress Award from the 2010 Capri International Film Festival for her performance in *Brooklyn's Finest*, co-starring Richard Gere and Don Cheadle. She recently wrapped production on *SWAT: Fire Fight*, which is set for a 2011 release and stars Giancarlo Esposito and Gabriel Macht.

Shannon starts shooting Tyler Perry's *Madea's Big Happy Family* this fall where she plays a young mother and wife too wrapped up in her career because of a secret.

PHOTO: RICHARD RADSTONE



# Omari Hardwick

**O**mari Hardwick grew up in Dacatur, Georgia and played football from high school to college at the University of Georgia. During that time he minored in theater, and says that sports contributed to his success in the entertainment business. Hardwick's football career with the San Diego Chargers was cut short due to a knee injury. It was at this point that he decided to move to New York, to train and perform Off-Broadway. He has certainly paid his dues saying that his experience arriving in LA was surreal. His first big break came in 2003 as a series regular in Spike Lee's *Sucker Free City*. His biggest film credits include *The A-Team* (2010), *Kick-Ass* (2010), *Next Day Air* (2009), and *Miracle at St. Anna* (2008). He also appeared in *The Guardian* (2006) opposite Kevin Kostner and Ashton Kutcher, *Beauty Shop* (2005) with Queen Latifah, and *Gridiron Gang* (2006) with Dwayne Johnson and Xzibit. Hardwick is also best known for his roles in TNT's *Dark Blue* (2010) and TNT's *Saved.* (2006). He will also appear in *I Will Follow* (2010), *Bolden* (2011) alongside Anthony Mackie, Tyler Perry's *For Colored Girls*. There is a rumor that he will also appear in *Kick Ass 2: Balls to the Wall*. In addition to acting, Hardwick is a founding member of Plan B Inc. Theater Group, and a co-founder of Los Angeles Actor's Lounge. He is also the CEO of Brave Life Production Company.

PHOTO: EMILY PEREZ



# Sydney Tamiia Poitier

**T**his 5' 11" Amazonian beauty, Sydney Tamiia Poitier, was born in Los Angeles to Oscar Award-winning actor Sidney Poitier, and Canadian actress, Joanna Schimkus. The NYU graduate studied acting at Stella Adler Conservatory in New York and is known for booking recurring roles in the NBC miniseries *First Years* and *Noah's Ark*. She also appeared in the WB's hit teen show *Veronica Mars*, and also the award-winning CBS series *Joan of Arcadia*. Her latest project is NBC's *Knight Rider*.

After hitting a dry spell in her early career, her momentum picked up when she starred opposite her father in *Free of Eden*, followed by *True Crime* with Clint Eastwood. In addition, she later got the lead in the UPN sitcom *Abby*, in which she played the love interest of Kadeem Hardison's character. Sydney can be seen in films, such as *Nine Lives*, *The List*, with Wayne Brady, Flex Alexander & Tatyana Ali, Snoop Dogg's *Hood of Horror* alongside Danny Triejo, Pooch Hall and her most notable role as Jungle Julia in Quentin Tarantino's thriller *Death Proof*. She is definitely her father's daughter.

PHOTO: DEATH PROOF (2007) DIMENSION FILMS



**Film Life's 14th Annual American Black Film Festival (ABFF) took place in Miami, Florida on June 23-26, 2010. ABFF is known as the most prominent film festival for Black and urban content. ABFF was established in 1997 with the purpose of promoting cultural diversity in the motion picture industry by bolstering the Black filmmaking community through education, networking, artist collaboration and career development.**



# AMERICAN BLACK FILM FESTIVAL

BY  
SHARRI  
JONES

PHOTO: TERRENCE JENNINGS



**SPIKE LEE DIRECTING CLASS.**

***"Last year I attended the ABFF for the first time and left the festival inspired to produce my own film. The ABFF master classes I attended gave me a comprehensive crash course in the filmmaking process, and provided a foundation for my future professional pursuits in the motion picture industry."***

**Terrell Suggs—Baltimore Ravens Pro Linebacker.**

**T**he ABFF festival kicked off with the opening night screening of *Takers*. It concluded with an awards ceremony honoring director/producer Lee Daniels. The festival also included film screenings, workshops, networking, competitions and parties. During the festivities Spike Lee lead "The Art of Directing Class."

One of the most notable workshops was the Pro Hollywood Initiatives program (PHI), which was created to stimulate athletes' interests in the motion picture industry. The PHI classes this year focused on the art of directing led by Spike Lee, along with screenwriting and cinematography master classes led by industry professionals. PHI is open to current and retired athletes from all professional sports, and seeks support from major sports leagues and player associations.

Idris Elba was the brand ambassador for the 14th annual American Black Film festival and is a loyal supporter of independent films. He says, "it is an honor to serve ABFF in this capacity." Idris Elba is known for his past roles in Tyler Perry's *Daddy's Little Girls*, *Obsessed*, *American Gangster*, *The Losers*, and *Takers*. He will also star in upcoming films, *Thor* and *Trust in Her*.

***"It was this very platform that allowed me to be cast in a supporting role in the independant film, The Gospel, as Reverend Charles Fran. Jeff Friday's vision and passion allows actors such as myself to emerge and to become sucessful in the business."*** —Idris Elba

Thanks to the support of all the sponsors who made this possible: HBO, Grey Goose, Wachovia (A Wells fargo Co.); American Airlines; BET Networks, CNN; Codeblack Entertainment; Gold Peak Tea; Nickelodeon, The Nielson Company; Stella Artois; City of Miami Redevelopment Agency; Greater Miami Conventions & Visitors Bureau; Miami Beach Visitor and Convention Authority; Fox Searchlights Pictures; Halle Berry Pure Orchard; MTV Networks; SAG Indie & the Writers Guild of America; West, AOL Black Voices; Black Enterprise; Automotive Rhythms; Heart & Soul, MIA, Monarch; Precious Times; *Upscale* and *Uptown* magazines.

PHOTO: WILSON MORALES



Oscar-nominated director/producer, Lee Daniels was honored with the Career Achievement Award at the ABFF closing night awards ceremony. Past honorees of this prestigious award include Spike Lee and Melvin Van Peebles. Daniels started his filmmaking career screenwriting and managing actors and then progressed to producing, followed by directing. He is best known for his most recent film, *Precious*, based on the Novel *Push* by Sapphire, which received six Oscar nominations, one of which was for best director. Daniels is also known for making Oscar history with his 2002 hit *Monster's Ball* (which was his debut as a producer) and which earned him two Oscar nominations for best original screenplay and best actress. I am sure we all remember a turning point in Black cinema when Halle Berry won the Oscar for best actress alongside best actor, Denzel Washington. In addition, Daniels is the first African American to be nominated for a Directors Guild Award. His past films, as director, include *Shadowboxer* and *Tennessee*. He is currently in production for *Selma*. Rumor has it that according to IMDB, he is in development on four other projects.

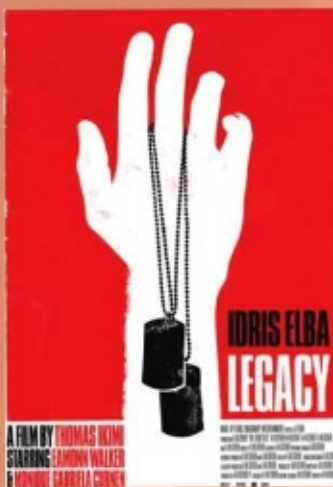


## Films Screened at American Black Film Festival



### NIGHT CATCHES US

Director: Tanya Hamilton  
 Producer: Sean Costello, Jason Orans, Ron Simons  
 Cast: Anthony Mackie, Kerry Washington, Wendell Pierce, Jamie Hector. In 1976 in the midst of the Black Power movement Marcus (Anthony Mackie) returns to the race torn Philadelphia. While his arrival raises suspicion among his family and former neighbors, he finds acceptance from his old friend Patricia (Kerry Washington) and her daughter.



### THE INHERITANCE

Director: Robert O' Hara Producer: Effie T. Brown  
 Cast: Golden Brooks, Keith David, D.B. Woodside, Darrin DeWitt Henson, Andre DeShields  
 Friends and Family gather for a during a winter storm for a 'secret' reunion at the family estate. The reunion turns deadly when the elders have to make good on an ancient pact with a spirit of an ancestor. Now, it's this generation's turn to make the ultimate sacrifice. It is their duty and the destiny, but they won't give up with

### LEGACY

Director: Thomas Ikimi Producer: Thomas Ikimi, Idris Elba, Jessica Levick  
 Cast: Idris Elba, Eammon Walker, Monique Gabriella Cumin, Clarke Peters  
 Idris Elba stars as a black ops operative who returns home after a botched mission in Eastern Europe. A Set of mysterious circumstances leaves him holed up in a Brooklyn motel room, where

he is torn between retribution and personal salvation as he mentally unravels. When the walls close in, his story may be all he can leave behind.

### THE CONFIDANT

Director: Alton Glass Producer: Kenya Moore  
 Cast: Boris Kodjoe, Kenya Moore, David Banner, Richard Roundtree, Bai Ling, Camila Alves, Billy Zane  
 An intricate tale between childhood best-friends (Boris Kudjoe & David Banner) that have an unusually strong bond and a morbid intriguing secret. Both young men are on the right path to promising futures, a first round NFL draft pick, and a talented art major on a full scholarship. A complicated web of lies, gambling, murder and a pact between friends sends an innocent friend to prison and the other to fame. After spending eleven years in prison, the innocent comes to collect a debt and is determined to have the life he was promised, by any means necessary.

### EVERYDAY BLACK MAN

Director/Producer: Carmen Madden  
 Cast: Omari Hardwick, Henry Brown, Tessa Thompson  
 A small-time grocer has to become the man he used to be when his store is taken over by a drug dealer (Omari Hardwick).

## And The Winner Is...

### HBO® Short Film Competition

*Stag & Doe*, Directed by Daniel Patterson and Justin Staley

### Grand Jury Prize for Best Actor

Actress Golden Brooks for her role as Karen in *The Inheritance*

### Grand Jury Prize for Best Film

*Legacy* directed by Thomas Ikimi

**2010 ABFF Star Project Winners** Emayatzy Corinealdi and Stephen Hill

### Grey Goose Rising Icon Award

Singer-Songwriter Christette Michele

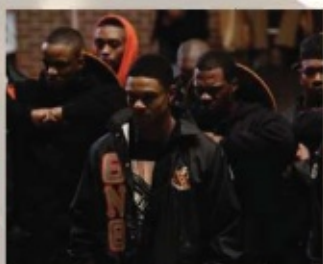
### Career Achievement Award

Oscar Nominated Producer/Director Lee Daniels



ALL PHOTOS: WILSON MORALES

## American Black Film Festival Premieres



### Opening Night Film: **TAKERS**

(Screen Gems & Rainforest Films)

**Director:** John Leussenhop **Producer:**

Will Packer, Chris Brown, Morris Chestnut, George Flynn, Glenn S. Gainor, Jason Geter, Nicolas Stern, Gabriel Casseus, T.I.

**Cast:** Idris Elba, Zoe Saldana, Hayden Christensen, Paul Walker, Matt Dillon, Michael Ealy, and T.I.

**Synopsis:** A notorious group of criminals baffle police by pulling off a number of perfectly executed bank robberies while leaving no traces behind. But, when they decide to pull off one more heist, with way more money at stake, their plans are interrupted by a hardened detective, persistent in solving this case.

### Centerpiece Screening: **STOMP THE YARD 2** (Courtesy of Stage 6 films, RCR Partners & Rainforest Films)

**Director:** Rob Hardy (director of *The Gospel*, *Trois*, *Pandora's Box*) **RELEASE:** SEPTEMBER 21, 2010.

**Producer:** William Packer, Columbus Short, Dianne Ashford, Meena Payne

**Cast:** Keith David, Collins Pennie, Pooch Hall, Tika Sumpter, Kiely Williams, (Also featuring: Terrence J, David Banner, Lil Duval & Teyana Taylor)

**Synopsis:** Chance Harris (Collins Pennie) struggles with adjusting at Truth University, while balancing school, girlfriend issues, a full-time job, and prepping for the nationally televised competition. Chance faces many obstacles along the way, all while owing an outstanding debt to a street thug (David Banner) who is out to get him. Look for it on DVD.

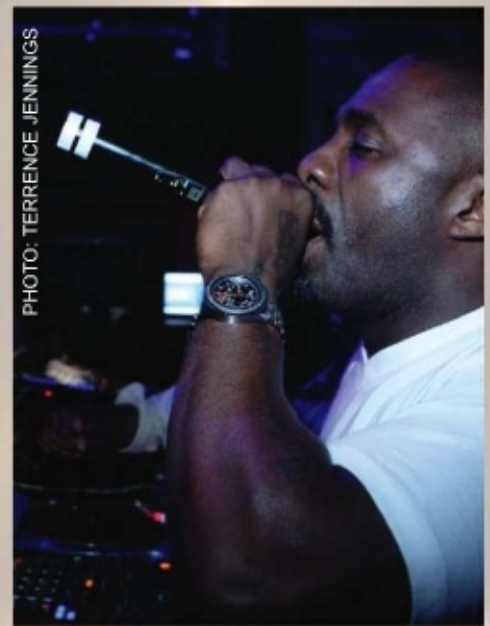


PHOTO: TERENCE JENNINGS



1. Actress Elise Neal & Melysa Ford at an ABFF event 2. Actress Sharri Jones & Macus Blassingame (Editor and Chief of Blackmen Magazine) at the ABFF awards 3. Idris Elba (DJ Driis) dj @ the "Takers" after party at Fontaine Bleu 4. Golden Brooks, Jeff Friday and Rochelle Aytes on the red carpet at ABFF 5. Rainforest films director Rob Hardy and producer Will Packer 6. (l to r) David Banner, Pooch Hall, Tika Sumpter, Rob Hardy, Collins Sumpter, George Alexander and Will Packer at the Stomp the Yard 2 premiere 7. Actress Kenya Moore at the Stomp The Yard premiere 8. Omari Hardwick, Rochelle Aytes & Darrin Dewitt Henson at an ABFF after party 9. Actor, Lamman Rucker at ABFF red carpet event 10. Actor/Director and ABFF chairman Robert Townsend with ABFF CEO Jeff Friday



All Photos, unless otherwise noted, provided by Wilson Morales Photography





**W**ith a resume like his, it's hard to believe that Jeff Friday has the time to be the consummate family man. But the CEO of Film Life and founder of the American Black Film Festival is half man half amazing. It has been 14 years since the father of four changed the face of Hollywood by creating the annual international film festival that draws film industry elite from around the world. The American Black Film Festival has played host to the likes of Halle Berry, Spike Lee, Denzel Washington, and this year Lee Daniels. Friday was the man of the moment being honored with the Career Achievement Award.

However, the ABFF is more than a place where film industry professionals and film enthusiasts alike convene under the Palm trees of Miami Beach to party to the signature sounds of DJ Driis [Idris Elba]. Yes, it is all of those things too, but most of all, it is a platform for films made for us by us. Jeff Friday is the man behind the vision, and he's got his eyes set on a Hollywood takeover. We caught up with Friday to talk the future of Black Hollywood, why Idris Elba is the leader of the pack of leading men, and the American Black Film Festival year one to 14.

**BLACK MEN MAGAZINE: How do you manage family life with film life?**

**JEFF FRIDAY:** I had a lot of practice. I started the family really young. I've got four children, two, four, eighteen and twenty-three. I've been doing it since I was in my late teens or early twenties. But, of course, family always comes first. I don't get a lot of sleep. I probably sleep about four hours a night. Yeah, so I got 20 hours to run.

**BM: What were you doing prior to starting the ABFF?**

**JF:** I had my own company but at the time we started the festival, I was the president of Uniworld, an African-American advertising agency, probably the longest running one. Uniworld had been around a long time before I got there, and I had my own marketing consultation company prior to that. I was also the brand manager for Bristol Meyers and Hennessy Cognac. Uniworld wanted to launch a film division, so Byron Lewis created this subsidiary of Uniworld called Uniworld Film, and I ran that company. The very first project we got was a film called *Amistad* produced by DreamWorks.

**BM: What inspired you to create the American Black Film Festival?**

I was the president of the film division of Uniworld. Back in 1997 Jessie Jackson called for a boycott of the Oscars. He called my boss, Byron Lewis, and a bunch of other professional leaders because he said that the Oscars excluded Black people. This was before Denzel and Halle got their Oscars. There was a long drought prior to that. Byron [Lewis] invited me to lunch. We invited Warren Cutler, one half of the Cutler brothers. We were all talking about the Jessie Jackson thing—this is like January '97. He asked me what I thought. I had been in film a long time. I went to Sundance and the Cannes film festival. I said I thought that was kind of purposeless because the Oscars are a relatively kind of open minded arch first organization. If we were going to boycott anybody, we should be boycotting the studios because the studios make the movies, not the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. If we really want to do something, we should create our own Sundance. Most of the really good stories come from the independent films and if we really wanted to change the game, we should do one for Black people. That's essentially how it started, from that conversation. He said, "all right, let's do it." We decided over lunch, very serendipitously we were going to do a Black film festival. That was in January '97 and we decided to do the first one June of that same year. We planned the first one, in three and one-half months. It's funny, the less you know the better off you are. Now it takes up to a year to do it when the first time it took us three and half months.

**BM: How did you do it? Did you just call up Halle Berry, Robert Townsend and Bill Duke?**

**JF:** Once we decided to do it, he said, "What does it take to do a film festival? I said, "It's going to take a whole lot of money because we are not going to get any sponsors the first time, so we need some celebrities." There were a few people I knew pretty well. We called Robert [Townsend] and Halle [Berry] and Debbie [Allen]. Spike Lee and John Singleton, started coming the second year. There was no Internet in '97, so to be honest, I don't know how we even got the word out. I had this amazing mailing list that I had used for different things I had done for private parties. The second year we honored Denzel Washington. Denzel Washington came and that's when it really hit because *Access Hollywood* came and *Entertainment Tonight* came down.

**BM: You had the chance to see a lot of careers blossom. Two of them are Rob Hardy and Will Packer of Rainforest Films. Packer's two films *Stomp The Yard 2* and *Takers* both premiered at the festival this year. What is it like to see their growth?**

**JF:** Will Packer and Rob Hardy came to the second [festival]. I remember they were real green. They called me up, with this film called *Trois* and the submission deadline had passed or was approaching. Will called me up and asked if they could have two more days. They ran out of money, and I was like, "No, the rules are the rules. If I extend it to you, I have to extend it for everybody." This might have been a week before the deadline. He just called me and wore me down, which is real hard to do. They called me up again, three times and begged. He told me the whole story. He eventually got the film in. We gave him a couple of extra days, I don't like to say that, but I did and he came, and his film played well. They did *Trois 2* a couple of years later. They released it and it did really well theatrically. We introduced him to the people at Screen Gems and basically that's the story. You know they've become kind of poster boys for the festival. Believe it or not, we still get questions from media, the general market media, asking why is there a need for a Black film festival. I just laugh. I don't get defensive about it. I tell them to go to [rainforestfilm.com](http://rainforestfilm.com). Those guys are very talented; I didn't make them talented. Their mother made them talented, but we gave them a platform for showcasing who they were and what they could do. Without the ABFF, I don't know if those movies would make it. The whole trick is to give people a chance. This year to open with *Takers*, their film, the whole thing for me really did come full circle. Those are the rewarding parts.

**BM: Idris Elba served as Festival Ambassador this year. Why did you choose him?**

**JF:** We choose one ambassador every year and we try to select people who are not only popular but people that have an appreciation for what we are doing. The fact that Idris was there before he got well known makes him the best ambassador we've ever had by far.

(continued on page 166)



# Will Packer & Rob Hardy

## Power Packed

**F**or those that avidly follow the institution of entertainment so often referred to as Hollywood, then you should be highly aware of the seismic shift that is taking place with location and production of some of your more prominent black films, TV shows and programming over recent years. Black Hollywood is definitely alive, but not within the confines of Starstruck Town. Today, black entertainments finest and most sought after brands such as Tyler Perry Studios and BET have relocated to the new mecca Atlanta, GA...a city that's always been rich in black history, prosperity and entertainment. It is here where the next generation of African American filmmakers and the story of Black America will be told for years to come.

Leading the way are the power team of Will Packer (Producer) and Rob Hardy (Director) of Rainforest Films. The two friends and Florida A&M alum founded Rainforest Films in 1994 and quickly began blazing significant trails for inde-

pendent black filmmakers and talent with their first film *Chocolate City*, a relatively successful film that earned them a small distribution deal. After *Chocolate City*, the duo made the decision to relocate to Atlanta to pursue their vision of making films that would appeal to black audiences who had yet to see genre films starring people like themselves. It was here that they would make their first huge impact with their first theatrical release *Trois* starring Gary Dourdan and Kenya Moore. *Trois* would go on to gross over \$1.2 million dollars and became the fastest million dollar grossing film distributed by African American's, thus establishing Packer and Hardy as future stars on the rise. Needless to say, they have continued to set trends consistent with their brand name.

Just as the world's rainforest presents us with complex, diverse and scintillating forms of life, Will and Rob have managed to infuse the same feelings and visualization into their presentations of the black experience. Via films such as *Motives*, *The Gospel*, *Stomp the Yard* (1&2), *This Christmas*, *Obsessed* and *Takers* (released in August), Rainforest has managed to bring forth the beauty, love, passion, determination, action, sincerity, love for family and God that permeates black communities across America. It was Black Men's privilege to converse with these storytellers regarding their journey and what they see for the future of black entertainment.

### **On the current position of black filmmaking...**

Black filmmaking is vastly different today than say five years ago. Every studio seemed to be into making black films at that time. It's not like that anymore. Now, only a handful of studios focus on black films. But, it is a lot easier today for black filmmakers to break in as opposed to years ago when it was more so about filmmakers Spike Lee, John Singleton and The Hudlin Brothers.

### **On the respect Rainforest has gained from the diversity displayed in their films such as *Trois*, *Stomp the Yard*, etc.**

The fact that we produce all different types of films is 'our' advantage because people see us as filmmakers that can produce all types of films and not just black films. Our movies tend to focus on universal themes such as love, action, horror, mystery, erotic thrillers and comedy. We want to present it all so that our young filmmakers and audience can see themselves on the screen, relate and enjoy it.

### **Did you see Atlanta's potential as a filmmaking mecca fourteen years ago when you relocated here?**

Not to the level that we have currently witnessed. The potential of the city was definitely there due to the selection offered through its strong black community.

### **How does *Stomp the Yard 2: Homecoming* differ from the first film?**

Homecoming will showcase a lot of aspects you witness at black college homecoming event such as stepping, dancing etc. You'll also see the dynamics of the conflicts between true students and locals within the community. The world is the same in regards to city, location but different in regards to characters and storyline. We pulled a lot of our own college experiences in Tallahassee into the *Stomp the Yard* films such as a student's first time on campus, issues with females and conflicts with other guys.

### **You collaborated with *Grand Hustle*'s Jason Geter and *T.I.* on your new film *Takers*. What about the film excited you and why was the opportunity to produce it so attractive?**

*Takers* is the first time that Rainforest has had the opportunity of producing an action film. This was also the first time we've had an opportunity to create an entirely diverse cast. So, the same perspective that you would see with films such as *The Italian Job* or *Heat*, we now have, but with a bit more versatility. We have the cool and hip side via T.I., Michael Ealy and Chris Brown combined with people that audiences are already used to seeing such as Idris Elba, Zoe Saldana, Matt Dillon Hayden Christensen and Paul Walker.

### **What do you look for in actors/actresses when you're seeking to cast roles?**

We're looking for people that lose themselves in the role and become the character rather than being themselves and trying to act.

### **On the key to the future of black filmmaking...**

Black filmmakers need to continually focus on telling stories. Be as creative as possible no matter if you have a lot of money or studio. In turn, black audiences should go see black films and support instead of buying bootlegs.

**Photography: Diwang Valdez**

**Wardrobe Styling: Toye Adedipe**

**Make-up: Tierra Burrell**

**Brandon T Jackson Groomer: Barber Hollywood (Rudy Tibbs)**

**Will & Rob Groomer: Dwayne Boyde**

**Production: Shawn King**

BlackMen's  
**MODELS REQUEST**

**ELITE**

**THE CREAM  
OF THE CROP!**

Bold,  
Beautiful,  
Driven,  
Or Even  
Outrageous

Presenting  
Those  
Who

**STAND OUT!**

Angel Davis  
Casie  
Farrah  
Emmaly  
Draya Michelle  
Blac Chyna  
Gia Marie

Betsey Johnson floral bikini  
Angel Davis custom earrings

**Angel**



# ANGEL

Photographer-  
Hasan-Facet Studios  
Makeup-  
Hasan-Facet Studios  
Wardrobe-  
Marcus Blessingame  
Editorial Asst-  
Sharri Jones  
Model-  
Angel of TSD Agency  
[www.tsdagency.com](http://www.tsdagency.com)

French Connection black  
and silver sequin dress;  
Angel Davis custom  
earrings

Vintage bikini  
LF stores bolero vest  
Angel Davis custom earrings



### **Resume**

#### **Magazines**

King , The Source , Black Men , Urban Ink

#### **Video(s):**

Common

"Universal Mind Control"

Lil Wayne and Birdman

"Pop Bottles"

Pharrell

"Announcement"

TI - "You Can Have Whatever You Want"

The Game feat. Justin Timberlake "Dream Love king"

#### **Commercial/Ad**

Miss New Orleans Seagrams gin

#### **Favorites**

**Drinks:** Moët Rosé

**Food:** Creole cooking

#### **Mood Music:**

"Let's keep it slow"—Luther Vandross

#### **Favorite vacation experience:**

I would have to say

New Years 2010 in Miami.

#### **Favorite car:**

I think the drop top Bentley is sexy.

#### **Music Artist:**

Marvin Gaye, Michael Jackson, Luther Vandross, Betty Wright, Maze, Trey Songz, Mary J. Blige, Lil Wayne, Jill Scott

#### **Rap quote or Lyric:**

It's all natural baby, pretty face,  
tiny waist and some thick hips.

Make the fellows hold tight with a strong grip. I'm just free styling.

#### **Old school or slow jam:**

I love old school

#### **Favorite place to be kissed:**

I would have to say at the park  
on a picnic

**Favorite body part on your man:** Well, at this moment I'm single. So, when I get that special guy, I'll let you know.

#### **Craziest position:**

I would tell, if I thought you could keep a secret.

#### **Craziest place:** giggles

#### **Ultimate Goals:**

There's so much I want to do. My heart is so big for older people and babies. My first game plan is to start working on my foundation for the elderly. It's a non-profit organization for the terminally ill elderly and those with life threatening diseases.

My second plan is to use my talents as a model and networking avenues to garner attention to me as an actress.

#### **Accomplishment**

I just graduated from nursing school. That was a really big accomplishment for me. I also have a BS in psychology and a BS in biology. The sky is the limit for me, and what better place for an Angel to fly.

#### **Marketing Tools**

**Agency:** TSD Agency

**Contact:** 973-970-4589

#### **Fan Site**

**E Mail:** [www.tsdagency.com](http://www.tsdagency.com)

**Twitter:** [twitter.com/iloveangel2](https://twitter.com/iloveangel2)

**Facebook:** Angel iluvangel Davis,  
also check out my fan page.

**Name:** Angel Davis

**Nickname:** Angel  
Cakes

**Hometown:** New  
Orleans

**Born:** New Orleans

**Raised:** New Orleans  
and Detroit

**Zodiac:** Scorpio

**Sizes:**

**Bust** 32DD

**Waist** 24

**Hip** 40

Dolce and Gabbana-animal print dress

Dolce and Gabbana-animal print dress



for more Angel go to  
[www.blackmen  
digital.com](http://www.blackmen<br/>digital.com)

Betsey Johnson floral bikini  
Angel Davis custom earrings

BLACKMEN 125

# MODELQUEST

ELITE





# CASIE

**Name:** Casie Griffin

**Nickname:** Jordan

**Hometown:** Willow Grove, PA (Philly)

**Born:** 8/10/87

**Zodiac:** Leo

**Sizes:**

**Dress Size** 4

**Bust** 34C

**Waist** 24

**Hip** 40

**Photographer:** Howard Huang

**Hair:** I.C Art by Traci

**Makeup:** Jackie Sanchez

[www.jackiesanchezmakeup.com](http://www.jackiesanchezmakeup.com)

**Wardrobe:** Marcus Blassingame

**Editorial Asst:** Sharri Jones

**Location:** 70 Green (Jersey City, NJ)

**Model:** Casie G. of TSD Agency

[www.tsdagency.com](http://www.tsdagency.com)

Bathhouse asymmetrical swimsuit  
YSL platform sandal



**Resume**  
**Ford Modeling Agency**  
BET Rip the Runway '06-'07

**TSD Agency**  
Black Men magazine  
Urban Ink magazine  
BET Rip the Runway '08

**Magazine**  
Maxim magazine  
Complex magazine  
Black Men magazine  
Urban Ink magazine  
Un Chin magazine

**VIDEO**  
Project Runway season 3 season finale  
Diddy (Dirty Money)-Angels music video (lead)  
Jamie Foxx - Digital Girl Remix music video

**COMMERCIAL/ADS**  
Marc Ecko Cut & Sew Commercial  
Marc Ecko Cut & Sew Ad  
Coogi Ad  
Crown Holder Ad  
Alenver Ad  
Film

**TV**  
Project Runway Season 3 - Season Finale  
BET Rip the Runway '06-'08

**RUNWAY**  
Project Runway Season 3 Season Finale  
BET Rip the Runway '06-'08

*(continued on page 166)*

Bathroom asymmetrical swimsuit  
YSL platform sandal



Bathhouse double-strap  
animal print bikini  
YSL platform sandal



Bathhouse asymetrical swimsuit



for more  
Casie go to  
[www.blackmen  
digital.com](http://www.blackmen<br/>digital.com)

130 BLACKMEN



Bathhouse asymmetrical swimsuit  
YSL platform sandal

# MODELQUEST ELITE

## FARRAH

**NAME:** FARRAH NICOLE

**NICKNAME:** Blondie and Dollface

**Ethnicity:** My mother is Mexican and Irish. I've never met my birth father. My mother was a rock star/free spirit. She told me she met my father on the beach in Cabo San Lucas. She also told me that he was over 6 feet tall, blonde, and had big blue eyes. When she laid eyes on him, she wanted to have his child. They made me that night and then she went home to her husband. I haven't seen my father since...true story.

**Born:** JULY 25, 1984. I just turned 26.

**Raised:** I was born and raised in Southern California (Los Angeles County).

**Residing:** I own properties in both California and Nevada, and I just closed on my new condo in Manhattan in New York. I have closets on both coasts. I guess you could say I'm bicoastal.

**Schools:** I graduated high school with honors, and went straight into the real estate business with my family.

**Zodiac:** I am Leo—the lioness. The strong-willed, the passionate, the dominant, the over-achiever, and the creep up in “yo bushes and pounce on you sign! RAWWWWWRRRRR!

**SIZES:**

**BUST** 36D

**WAIST** 26

**HIP** 38

**HEIGHT** 5' 8" (ALL LEGS)



American Apparel blue bodysuit  
Gucci pumps



American Apparel blue bodysuit  
Gucci pumps  
Louis Vuitton Vernis Alma  
MM bag in Rose Florentin

**RESUME**

No resume. I just hit the modeling scene. However, I do have seven magazine features coming out this year. My management is currently in negotiations for two independent films. One film is to play the lead role and the other is to co-star. My Web site will be launching in the fall, [www.farrahnicole.com](http://www.farrahnicole.com). In the meantime, you can follow me at [www.twitter.com/misfarrahnicole](http://www.twitter.com/misfarrahnicole). God willing, this year is going to be an amazing year for me.

**Favorite Drink:** Anything Rosé, Dom, Moet, Perrier, Ace of Spade, I don't do Cristal anymore; I believe they are racist.

**Favorite Food/Restaurant:** Ahhhh! I'm having anxiety just trying to decide on one. I love food. MMM! The Peking duck from Phillipe Chow...Yummy!

**Mood Music:** This varies. I can go from Gucci Mane to Tejano to Sade. It just depends on my mood. I may want it hard, fast, or slow.

**ULTIMATE GOAL**

Wow! This is a big one. I've got so many different goals. But I guess they all lead to my ultimate dream. My grandmother always told me never let your left hand know what your right hand is doing. Honestly, I'm not going to lay all my cards on the table. However, it would be safe to say my ultimate goal is to put one hundred percent into everything I do and whatever I do—be the best at it.

**Why should I be a Black Men model?**

I should be a *Black Men* magazine model because I'm what the industry is missing—diversity. I'm a tall long legged, natural blue-eyed blonde, a fun, sexy, confident loving woman who is proud to be who she is and comfortable in her own skin. In my opinion that is the definition of a *Black Men* magazine model. We are strong bold and beautiful!■



**Photographer:**  
Howard Huang  
**Hair:** I.C Art by Traci  
**Makeup:** Jackie S  
[www.jackiesanchezmakeup.com](http://www.jackiesanchezmakeup.com)  
**Wardrobe:** Marcus Blassingame  
**Editorial Asst:** Sharri Jones  
**Location:** 70 Green (Jersey City, NJ)

American Apparel  
bodysuit Gucci pumps

**"Honestly,  
I'm not  
going to  
lay all  
my cards  
on the  
table."**

**American Apparel bodysuit  
Gucci pumps**

**BLACKMEN 135**

# MODELQUEST ELITE

## EMMALY

**Name**

Emmaly Lugo

**Nickname**

Emma "The Total Package"

**Hometown**

Rochester, NY

**Born**

Rochester, NY

**Raised**

Miami, FL

**Zodiac**

Libra

**Sizes:**

**Bust** 34C

**Waist** 24

**Hip** 36

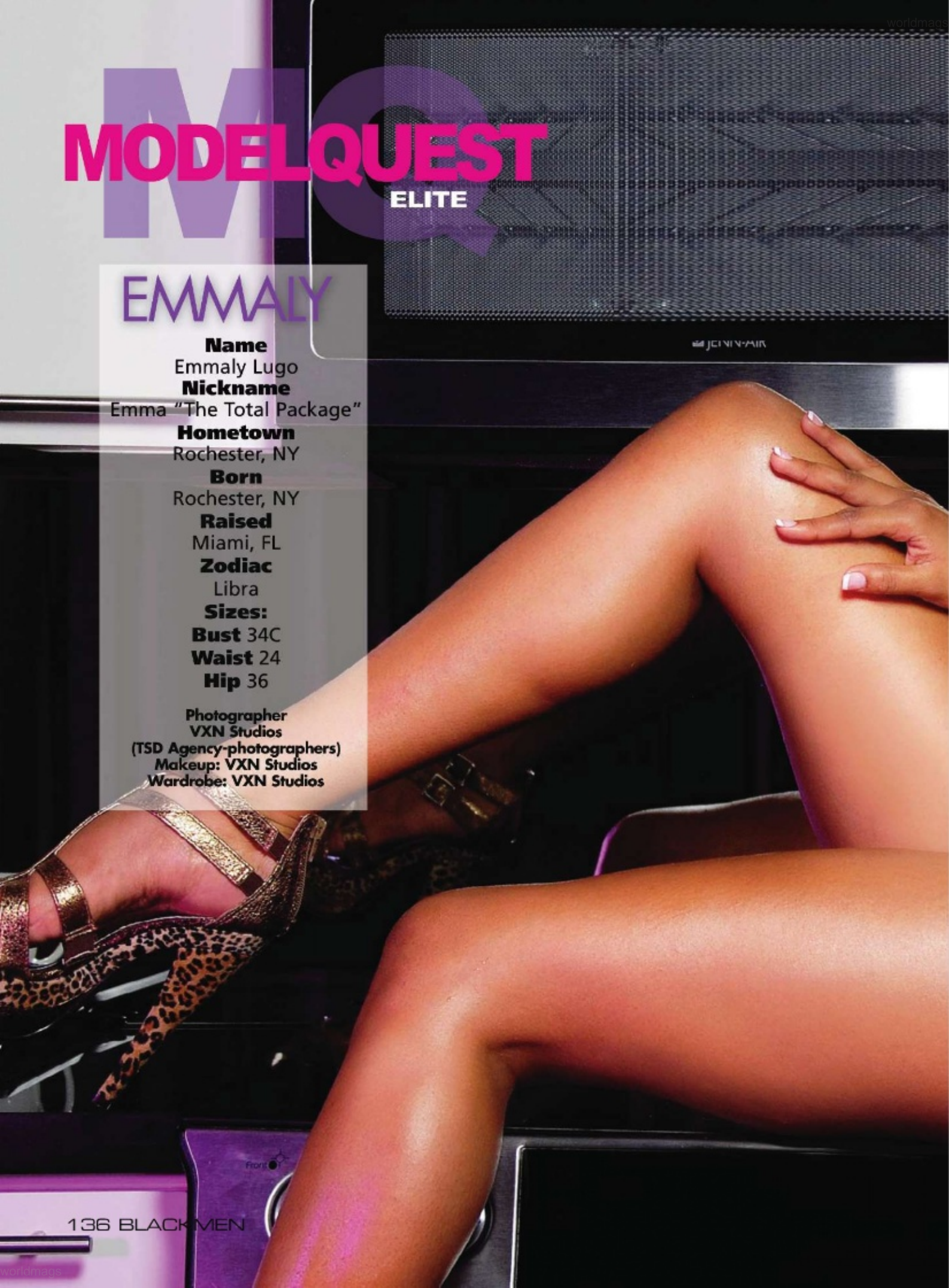
Photographer

VXN Studios

(TSD Agency-photographers)

Makeup: VXN Studios

Wardrobe: VXN Studios











For more  
Emmaly,  
go to [www.  
blackmen  
digital.com](http://www.blackmen<br/>digital.com)





#### RESUME

Brisco feat Lil Wayne  
"On the Wall"—lead  
Keith Sweat feat Joe  
"Test Drive"—lead  
Boo Rossini  
"Come Back"—lead  
Boo Rossini  
"I Stop I Quit"—extra  
Tmann  
"I'm 100"—lead  
Dj Khalid  
"Holla at Me Baby"—extra  
Ying Yang Twins feat Busta Rhymes  
"Get Low Remix"—extra  
Tyrese  
"Why You Wanna Act Like That"—  
extra

#### COMMERCIAL / ADS

BET Spring Bling 2010  
Big Tigger Top 20

#### FILM

The Cookout 2—extra

#### TV

BET Spring Bling 2010 Big Tigger Top  
20 Countdown  
Nip Tuck  
Club Opium Scene—extra

#### RUNWAY

Honey Child Clothing Line—  
Nikki Beach Show, Miami  
Chic Threadz Fashion Show—  
Newport Beach Hotel, Miami  
GES Models World Cup—  
Brazil Show, Miami

#### REALITY WEB

Dynasty Series Spotlight  
Pure Cash Magazine—Model

(continued on page 166)

# MODELQUEST ELITE

## DRAYA

**Name:** Andraya Michele Howard  
**Nickname:** Draya Michele  
**Ethnicity:** African American and Italian  
**Born/Raised:** Reading, PA  
**Zodiac:** Aquarius  
**Sizes:**  
**Bust** 34D  
**Waist** 23  
**Hips** 37  
**Height** 5'6"  
**Favorite Drink:** Dirty Martini  
**Favorite food/Restaurant:**  
 Love sushi and Chipotle  
**Mood Music:** Sexy R&B



**Photographer:** Howard Huang    **Hair:** I.C Art by Traci  
**Makeup:** Jackie Sanchez [www.jackiesanchezmakeup.com](http://www.jackiesanchezmakeup.com)  
**Wardrobe:** Marcus Blassingame  
**Editorial Asst:** Sharri Jones  
**Location:** 70 Green (Jersey City, NJ)  
**Model:** Draya of TSD Agency [www.tsdagency.com](http://www.tsdagency.com)



**Bathhouse-  
gold animal print bikini**



Bathhouse-gold animal print bikini

144 BLACKMEN





Bathhouse-gold animal print bikini  
Camilla Skovgard cutout sandal



for more Draya go to  
[www.blackmendidigital.com](http://www.blackmendidigital.com)

Bathhouse-gold animal print bikini, Camilla Skovgard cutout sandal



# Delightful Draya American Beauty

## **Resume**

Magazine(s):

*Show - Two Covers*

*King*

*Black Men*

*Urban Ink*

## **Video(s):**

Fabulous- "When The Money Goes"

Pleasure P- "Under"

The Dream- "Walking on The Moon"

Erk Tha Jerk- "Right Here"

The Game- "Shake"

The Dream- "February Love"

## **Ultimate Goal:**

To pursue acting

(Commercials and Film)

# MODELQUEST

ELITE

## BLAC CHYNA

**Name:** Angela White

**Nickname:** Blac Chyna

**Hometown:** Washington, DC

**Born:** Washington, DC

**Raised:** Maryland

**Zodiac:** Taurus

**Sizes:**

**Bust** 32D

**Waist** 27

**Hip** 41

**Photographer:** VXN Studios  
(TSD Agency-photographers)

**Makeup:** VXN Studios

**Wardrobe:** VXN Studios







**RESUME**

I'm a newbie to the business. No training, videos, commercials, film, TV, Runway, or Reality shows.

**Magazines:** This is my first magazine shoot. Thank you *Black Men*

**Web:** [www.Blacchyna.com](http://www.Blacchyna.com)

**Twitter:** [blacchyna\\_mia](https://twitter.com/blacchyna_mia)

**Facebook:**

<http://www.facebook.com/blacchyna#!/pages/I-LOVE-BLACCH>

NA/122603961086433?ref=ts  
Model Mayhem

<http://www.modelmayhem.com/blacchyna>

**Favorites**

**Drinks:** Patron

**Food:** Baked Fish

**Mood Music:** His heart-beat

**Favorite vacation experience:** I'm still waiting on that.

**Favorite car:** 650i BMW

**Music Artist:** Gucci Mane

**Rap quote or Lyric:** Ass on her insane I want it—  
Young Jeezy

**Old school or slow jam:** Slow Jam

**Favorite place to be kissed:** Feet

**Favorite body part on your man:** Chest

**Craziest position:** Doggie style

**Craziest place:** Anywhere the mood happens.

**Favorite position to fall asleep in after sex:** On top of him.



**ULTIMATE GOALS**

My ultimate goal is acting.

**Game Plan:** To grind until I'm dead.

**Accomplishment:** A big accomplishment for me would be to move away from the comfort zone of my birthplace, Washington, DC to Miami.

**MARKETING TOOLS**

**Agency:** Lyon Ent.

**Contact:** booking@blacchyna.com

**Web Site:** www.blacchyna.com

**Fan Site:** www.blacchyna.com

**E-Mail:** booking@blacchyna.com



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# MODELQUEST

ELITE



Photographer: Howard Huang  
Hair: I.C Art by Traci  
Makeup: Jackie Sanchez  
[www.jackiesanchezmakeup.com](http://www.jackiesanchezmakeup.com)  
Wardrobe: Marcus Blassingame  
Editorial Asst: Sharri Jones  
Location: 70 Green (Jersey City, NJ)

Chantal Thomas for Victoria's Secret lingerie  
ZIGlNy peep toe pumps



GIA MARIE

BLACKMEN 155



**RESUME**

**Magazine:** This is my first time being published in a national print magazine. I have been blessed and given the opportunity to showcase my many talents right here and be a part of the sexy movement. I would like to thank *Black Men* magazine and *Urban Ink* magazine for the opportunity to appear, not once but twice, in their magazines. This is only the beginning; I'm here to stay!

**TV:** I've appeared in an ABC pilot series *See Kate Run*, I've also been on a Salon Red Commercial, and I did my first cameo in a Wale's music video in 2009, "Chillin' feat Lady Gaga"

**Other:** I have a biweekly, naughty but very comical, Internet show by the name of *OMGIA* on the hugely popular verge cultured website, [www.karmalooptv.com](http://www.karmalooptv.com). The focus of my show is love, sex, relationships and myself. You never know what you'll get with a rockabilly such as myself with a blowup doll for a sidekick. Make sure to check it out.

**Ultimate Goal:** I want to help break down the barriers for tattooed models and actresses. Eventually, I want to have my own flash dance/burlesque show in New York.

**Why do you think you should be a *Black Men* Model?**

I should be a *Black Men* model because not only do I appeal to the audience *Black Men* represents, but I also fill a void for women and men who are in the same verge cultured scene as I am. Fetishes, extremes, addiction, and passion for something dangerous and painful are really sexy to me. With tattoo models becoming more mainstream with each passing day, I feel that a girl who is comfortable in her skin, whatever that may be, is the sexiest of all.

**XOXO animal print lingerie  
Bordello mary jane platform pumps**

**STATS**

**Name:** Regina M. Bueno  
**Nickname:** Gia Marie  
**Ethnicity:** Italian/Dominican  
**DOB:** 10/21/88  
**Born/Raised:** Boston, MA  
**Residing:** Boston  
**School(s):** I am currently finishing up my last year in college majoring in communications with a minor in public relations.  
**Zodiac:** Libra

**Sizes:**

**Bust** 36C

**Waist** 23

**Hip** 36

**Height** 5'5"

**Favorite Drink:**

My favorite drink is Chianti (a sweet red wine)

**Favorite Food/Restaurant:**

I love Italian and Japanese food. My favorite Italian restaurant is located in the heart of the North End, which is Boston's "Little Italy." I have been going to Strega since I was very young.

**Mood Music:**

My go-to-mood music would be the Red Hot Chili Peppers. My musical taste is fused traditional funk with elements of other genres, including hip hop, hardcore, house punk rock, and psychedelic rock. ■

**XOXO animal print corset lingerie**





XOXO animal print thong bikini



**for more Gia Marie  
go to [www.blackmendigital.com](http://www.blackmendigital.com)**

Chantal Thomas for Victoria's Secret lingerie  
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www.xomax-man.com

## F.A.Q. About XOMAX

Q. How soon do you see results?

A. Most men see results with their first dose and the results continue to improve over 60 - 90 days.

Q. How do I gauge my results?

A. For most men, if **XOMAX** is taken continuously for three to four months, followed by a maintenance program, the results are outstanding.

Q. How does **XOMAX** compare to others brands?

A. With a 97% success rate nothing comes close to matching **XOMAX** results.

Q. Is **XOMAX** natural?

A. **XOMAX** is 100% natural, safe and Doctor recommended for those looking for advanced male enhancement, plus **XOMAX** has no side effects.

Q. What makes **XOMAX** the #1 natural male enhancement formula?

A. **XOMAX** has a highly effective proprietary blend of concentrated nutrients. These natural compounds are amazingly stimulating to the male penis. You won't find a stronger blend of nutrients in any other male enhancement product. The reason? **XOMAX** contains extremely expensive imported ingredients and many manufacturers won't spend that kind of money. Instead, they pass off less expensive ingredients, such as Ginseng or low-end forms of L-Arginine.

Q. Is **XOMAX** guaranteed to work?

A. **XOMAX** is 100% GUARANTEED! If you're not completely satisfied, return the bottle(s) within three months to receive a refund. Men now have an effective way to increase the size of their penis. Why pay for imitations that will not solve the problem? You may spend a little more on **XOMAX**, but the results will be worth it! You often get what you pay for, so remember that the genuine ingredients in **XOMAX** are GUARANTEED to work!

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Individual results may vary. These statements have not been evaluated by the FDA. This product is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure, or prevent any disease. If you have any health concerns it is recommended that you consult your doctor prior to using Xomax. Xomax is intended for healthy adult men and should not be used by individuals under the age of 18.



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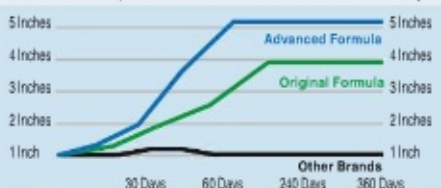
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# EVERYTHING FILM

BY SHARRI JONES



### RESIDENT EVIL: AFTERLIFE

The fourth installment of Resident Evil returns to theaters in 3D where Alice (Milla Jovovich) continues her journey to finding survivors in a world ravaged by a virus infection. This film has a whole new species of infected mutated zombies among other creatures that are sure to top any other zombie film you have experienced this year. It also stars Ali Larter, Kim Coates, Boris Kodjoe and Wentworth Miller. (Sony/Screen Gems)

**Releases:** September 10, 2010

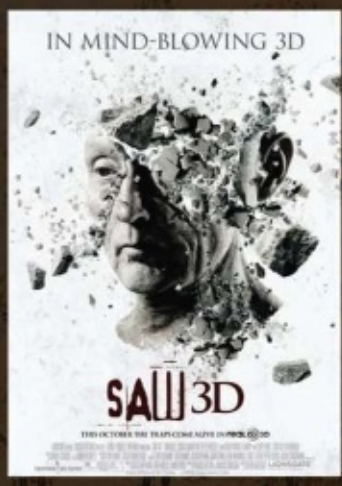
### BURIED

Paul Conroy (Ryan Reynolds) is not ready to die. But when he wakes up six feet underground with no idea of who put him there or why, life becomes a hellish struggle for survival. Buried with only a cell phone and a lighter, his contact with the outside world and ability to piece together clues that could help him discover his location are maddeningly limited. Poor reception, a rapidly draining battery, and a dwindling oxygen supply quickly become his worst enemies in a tightly confined race against time. Fighting panic, despair and delirium, Paul has only ninety minutes to be rescued before it is too late. (Lionsgate/Versus Entertainment)

**Releases:** September 24, 2010

**SAW VII 3-D** arrives in theaters in vivid, chilling 3-D just in time for Halloween. SAW VII 3-D brings the horrifying games of Jigsaw to life like never before. As a deadly battle rages over Jigsaw's brutal legacy, a group of Jigsaw survivors gather to seek the support of self-help guru and fellow survivor Bobby Dagen, a man whose own dark secrets unleash a new wave of terror. (Lionsgate/Twisted Pictures)

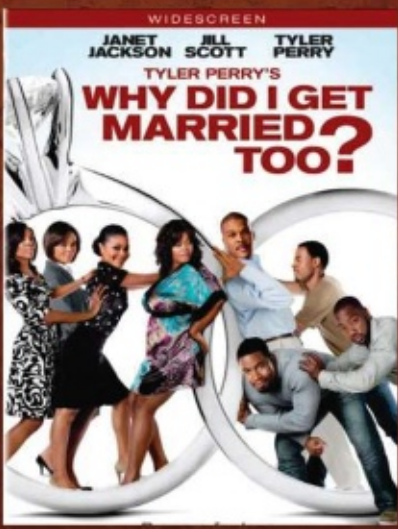
**Releases:** October 29, 2010



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Tyler Perry's *Why Did I Get married Too* brings back the same charismatic cast and characters that you know and love from the comedy/drama *Why Did I Get Married?* Tyler Perry brings the next chapter in the lives of lifelong friends, which takes place in the Bahamas on the perfect getaway vacations for the eight former college classmates celebrating their lifelong friendship during their annual reunion. But just as the four couples unwind and get ready for the fun, the drama begins with the unexpected arrival of Sheila's (Scott) ex-husband, who hopes to break up her new marriage and win her back. Tensions flair, and the challenges of commitment and fidelity quickly trickle down through all four couples. When they return home, they must find a way to mend their strained relationships. The cast include: Janet Jackson, Jill Scott, Sharon Leal, Malik Yoba, Richard T. Jones, Michael Jai White, Tasha Smith and Lammon Rucker.



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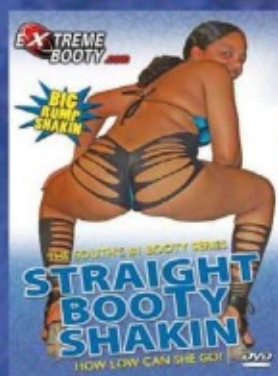
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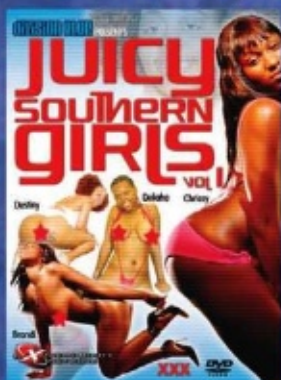
BIG BOOTY BOUNCIN 2



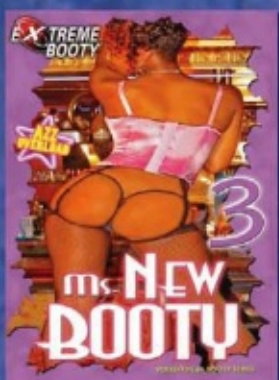
THICK STRIPPERS 2



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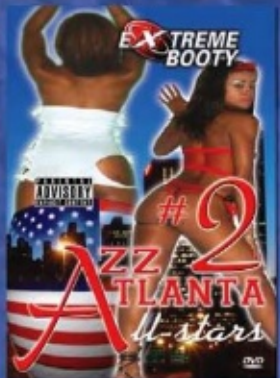
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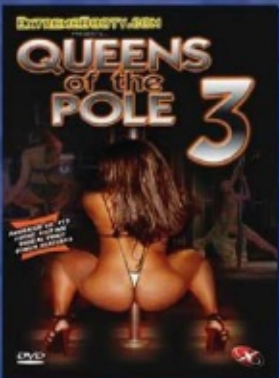
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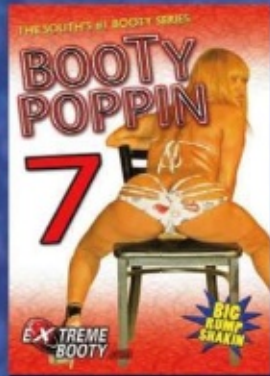
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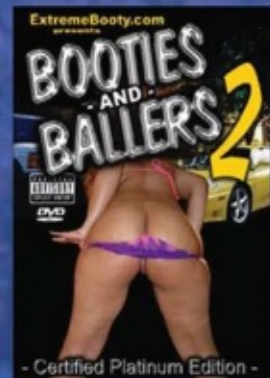
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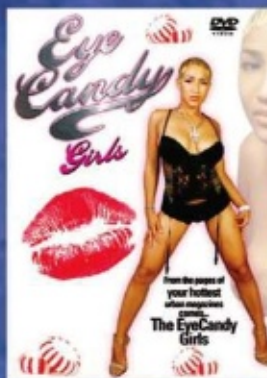
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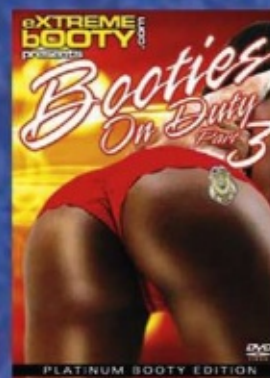
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## CASIE GRIFFIN

(continued from page 128)

### WEB

**Twitter** @casietds

**Facebook** Casie Griffin

**Model** **Mayhem** Casie Griffin

### FAVORITES

**Movies** I'm the biggest movie buff ever. Anything worth seeing, most likely, I've seen it.

**Drinks** Blood orange martinis or vodka rocks

**Food** I'm a protein and carbs kinda girl, steak and almost any pasta—in moderation of course.

**Mood Music** Maxwell, The Dream

**Favorite vacation experience** Haven't had an amazing vacation experience yet, I'm still taking applications for that unforgettable memory.

**Favorite car** Audio R8. I'm a sports car type of girl

**Music Artist** Kanye West, The Dream, Drake, Maxwell

**Old school or slow jam** Although I love a good slow jam, I gotta say nothing compares to a feel-good old school.

**Favorite place to be kissed** My forehead, it makes me feel loved and special. But if you wanna be nasty, you know where (wink)

**Favorite body part on your man** Arms and ass

### ULTIMATE GOALS

My ultimate goal is to graduate college and have a good career and happy healthy family. I've been very blessed to have the looks to model and be successful in this industry, but beauty fades and can only take you but so far in your life. I just want to be happy

**Game Plan** Man! There are so many directions this can go. Gotta give this acting thing a shot and go all the way in. I also wouldn't mind switching my look up and do something crazy—if my agent doesn't kill me. I wanna do something different and stand out, which I don't think will be too hard. Not many 5'10" urban models around.

**Accomplishment** Just being able to have been a part of both the high fashion and urban worlds of modeling, even though both were saying that I didn't fit the description and still finding a way to fit in no matter what.

### Marketing Tools

**Agency** TSD Agency

**Contact** 973-970-4589

**Web Site** www.tsdagency.com

**Fan Site** E Mail: tsdagency@gmail.com

## EMMALY

(continued from page 141)

http://www.purecashmagazine.com/2010/06/11/emmal-y-the-total-package-lugo/hoodlollywood.com/http://hoodlollywood.com/blog/tag/emmal-y-lugo/

**Twitter** @imatotalpackage

**Facebook** www.facebook.com/thetotalpackage

**Model** **Mayhem** www.modelmayhem.com/thetotalpackage

### FAVORITES

**Drinks** Water aka Patron and Green Tea

**Food** Spinach and chicken breasts

**Mood Music** Anything Maxwell

**Favorite vacation experience** Key West

**Favorite car** CLS 550

**Music Artist** Too many to choose from, but I love Outkast, Wayne, and Maxwell

**Rap quote or lyric** "I started out Starvin'. Now they got me out here Brett Farvin'...tryna see if I still got it" Outkast

**Old school or slow jam** "Sarah Smile" by Hall and Oats

**Favorite place to be kissed** My Neck

**Favorite body part on your man** Abs

**Craziest position** Froggy style

**Craziest place** Balcony of a penthouse

**Favorite position to fall asleep in after sex** Spooning position

**Ultimate Goals** Graduate school, make Emmaly Lugo a household name.

### Game Plan

Continue my education while still pursuing modeling. I plan to pick and choose which opportunities I embark on, that way the steps I take toward my career are significant.

### Accomplishment

My greatest accomplishment so far is my spread in *Black Men* magazine.

**Marketing Tools:** Agency-Contact Web Site

www.emmalylugo.com

**Fan Site** All my fans are welcome to connect with me on any social network.

## SHARRI JONES

(continued from page 99)

will tell you that you suck. She is intimidating and yet the sweetest person. I was used to her bringing me to tears, but when I did my last private lesson with her she just nodded her head and said, "great." I was like, "Huh, are you sure." I thought I did well, but I needed her approval and was surprised that I got it. What I learned is that acting coaches aren't there to nurture you, they are there to teach you. You may not always have things your way but be assured you will be learning.

BM: I noticed you have been credited for freelancing for a few magazines on the side. Is there some learning advantage to experiencing that side of the industry?

SJ: Well I freelance doing wardrobe and I am also a journalist. We all have that side job, and I refuse to waitress again for as long as I live. (laughs) The advantage is being around actors, musicians and directors on a daily basis on my job. They don't know anything about me until I meet them at an audition or on a set but by then I have already had the initial meeting.

BM: Your mother seems to have played a major role in your career, and I hear she is involved in music as a hobby and is really good.

SJ: My mom put her music career on hold to get me around the world, especially as a minor. I couldn't really go to any auditions alone and she would even sleep in her car while I

was on set sometimes for ten hours. She continued to show me what a go-getter really is. Now that I'm all grown up, she is back in the game and taking the Memphis Blues Circuit at large. She was actually nominated at this year's Memphis Blues awards, under the name Mz Pantheress. Her music is funky and soulful.

BM: Dating in the industry, your thoughts?

SJ: I don't see an issue with dating in the industry as long as it is kept to a minimum. I prefer to date in the industry because I have someone who can relate to my everyday stresses of training and being on set all day. I need someone to understand that I am going to have to leave town sometimes, and it may be for a day or for a few weeks. Also that I am going to have to change our plans if I get a last minute callback or audition. It's just much easier.

BM: The downside of multiple dating is the negative label given to some women, but what upsides have you witnessed in watching others do it?

SJ: Well yeah, the labeling depends on where you are in the industry. Certain women who hop around from guy to guy celebrities are labeled groupies. The upsides are that some people have gotten upgraded, like Amber Rose. It shows if you date the right person your status and value goes up, and it does help many people in their careers whether they admit it or not. I have dated someone in the industry for years and my opportunities did change based on his name and his contacts. It should never be the reason you date someone even if the opportunities come with the package.

BM: What is your goal to reach by 2012?

SJ: I hope to be working on multiple projects and be a bit more grounded in the industry. I also plan to take my abilities to the ultimate heights. ■

## JEFF FRIDAY

(continued from page 118)

We have had some major people, but his spirit, how he communicated what the film festival did for him made him the best person. I think the fact that he came as an unknown actor first really made it all sort of make sense. He felt a different kind of appreciation for it.

BM: What's your advice for aspiring Black actors, producers, and directors?

JF: My advice would be two things. For aspiring people I would say information is power. You have to be as informed as you can if you want to be successful. There are a lot of film fakers—people who just bought a camera and equipment and don't have any experience. Then there is Spike Lee and John Singleton who went to film school. I know everybody can't afford to go to film school, but I think your goal should be to go to film school. If you want to be a doctor, you don't just pick up the medicine bag; and if you want to be a professional anything, athlete, you know you got to put in work [shooting] free throws. You've got to also be a networker because this business depends on influence. It's about who you know. ■

## IDRIS ELBA

(continued from page 11)

interview with *Essence*, Elba stated that there wasn't much room to grow as an actor in London, not only due to type-casting, but also because of his Cockney accent. This ignited his determination to relocate to New York in hopes of having the opportunity to grow as an actor. He stated that he struggled his first few years in New York and stayed at the YMCA. Also, he thought he would be successful in a year, but after three years he was still broke and got a real eye opener, (*Essence*, 2010) To supplement his income while living in New York, Elba Deejayed under the name "DJ Big Driis" at nightclubs in the East Village and Alphabet city.

Elba earned acclaim for his performance as Achilles in the Off-Broadway production of the Shakespeare classic *Troilus and Cressida*. Additionally, in 2001 he landed a day-player role in an episode of *Law and Order*, which later resulted in his next breakthrough in the award-winning HBO TV series *The Wire*. Elba was cast as Russell "Stringer" Bell the drug-dealing kingpin who aspired to be a high-powered businessman. After three successful seasons on the show (2002-2004), along with an image award nomination, Elba was officially "on the map." After gaining recognition in guest starring roles in popular US TV series *Girlfriends*, and *CSI Miami*, he was finally ready to make his transition into film. Success came in 2005 in *Sometimes In April* and *The Gospel*.

For the HBO award-winning and Emmy-nominated made-for-TV film, *Sometimes In April*, Elba received nominations at the Black Reel Awards for Best TV actor, the Image Awards for outstanding actor in a TV movie and the NAMIC Vision Awards for his stellar portrayal of Augustin Muganza, a Hutu captain during the Rwandan genocides in 1994. According to SuperPics in a 2009 interview, Elba said that during considerations and castings for the role of Augustin, there were many A-list actors being considered. However, the producers preferred someone of African descent, and Elba's relationship with HBO, from his past show *The Wire*, and his African roots made him a considerable candidate along with the novice actors in favor. Needless to say, after being brought in during the last round of auditions, he booked the role and the rest is history. That same year Elba became a part of the Rainforest Films family with his role as the Southern Baptist minister, Reverend Frank, in *The Gospel* alongside Boris Kodjoe, Nona Gaye, Clifton Powell and Keshia Knight Pulliam. Later, roles have consistently come his way, and have failed to cease. Some projects include: Tyler Perry's *Daddy's Little Girls* (2007), *The Reaping* (2007), *28 Weeks Later* (2007), *American Gangster* (2007) (nominated for a Screen Actors Guild Award for outstanding performance by a cast in a motion picture), *This Christmas* (2007), *Prom Night* (2008), *RocknRolla* (2008), *The Unborn* (2009), *Obsessed* (2009) (received an image award nomination for outstanding actor in a motion picture, shared with Denzel Washington, Russell Crowe, Chiwetel Ejiofor and Josh Brolin), Award winning comedic series *The Office* (2009), *The Losers* (2010), and the 2010 UK crime drama *Luther*.

The journey has yet to end for Elba whose latest film *Takers*

is one that you surely don't want to miss. Elba plays Gordon Jennings, a member of a notorious group of criminals (also co-stars Paul Walker, T.I., Chris Brown, Hayden Christensen, Matt Dillon, Jay Hernandez, Zoe Saldana and Michael Ealy) who baffle police by pulling off a number of perfectly executed bank robberies while leaving no traces behind until a hardened detective interferes.

Elba is preparing for his 2011 release of *Thor* based on the Marvel Comic of the same name about a god who is cast down to earth to live among humans as punishment and defends the earth against villains. Elba plays the role of Heimdell, a Nordic God. ■

## ELISE NEAL

(continued from page 32)

Pesci and Helen Mirren. Her desire to never be complacent and to always pursue the things she loves to do is what fuels her ambition. She gets what she wants and how she wants it.

For those seeking further insight into the journey that has taken her to the forefront of African-American actresses in Hollywood, be sure to check for her upcoming episode on TV *One's Life After* set to air later this summer. Neal shares jaw-dropping confessions with surprising and sometimes shocking twists.

Armed with an infectious personality, warm spirit, beauty, experience and wisdom, Elise Neal is set to provide you with her dazzling beauty, entertainment and inspiration for years to come. She's a throwback to the old and taste of the new—a talent whose contributions will be felt for generations to come. Only one word can describe her—timeless. ■

## TAMALA JONES

(continued from page 54)

managers and agents. I was like, "send me out for every ethnicity, I don't care what color this is written for, I want to go in for it." The worst thing they can say is "no," and that's how I got Lanie. It was written for a White actress and my people called the casting person and said, "Tamala really wants to come in, just give her a shot." I showed up early in the morning, I didn't have but two lines to say but it was all about my skill. You do have to step your game up.

BM: What does a day in the life of Tamala involve?

TJ: The days I don't have anything to do, I try to get myself involved with different charities. One of them that I do is called Girl Prep. It focuses on self-esteem awareness and building young girls up. After we break from the show, I try to get involved with any movie that I can as I did with *35 and Ticking* when we went on our hiatus—and it was great.

BM: How do you hold down your love life with such a busy schedule?

TJ: My love life, you know what, I kind of put it on the back burner. I date, go out, and I've met some really nice gentlemen but the problem is not them, it's me. I have so much that I want to accomplish in my life. To have a relationship and to try to do that at the same time becomes real challenging—especially with the things I'm doing now, such as getting on planes and leaving. When you have a man, he doesn't want you to have to go all the time. He wants you to be with him. I love to just lie around and be up under a guy, but I can't, I can't just sit down and not do anything. It's about finding the right match for me as well.

BM: What about having children, do you feel the business has made you put that on hold?

TJ: You would laugh at me if you would see me in public every time I see a baby. I'm like, "Oh my God, how cute!" I love children and I do plan to have them at some point. I know there is never a perfect time to start a family, but I know for right now, I can't do that. Maybe, in a year or two, or three years tops, you will see me walking around with a little stomach hanging out. Being a woman in this business, if you're going to do this and have kids, then just know right after you pop them babies out you better be working out and getting down to your regular size. You don't have to be tiny, tiny but you have to be shapely. This business is very demanding.

BM: What do you do to keep your body on point?

TJ: I'm very honest with myself; I love food. I love to cook it, and I love to eat it. I love to go to great restaurants and eat. I may order 20 things off the menu and take a spoonful. You just got to work out. Work out, eat what you want, eat healthy, have a day of junk food, "cause we all need one day, which is Sunday for me. I have a couple of drinks and some dessert after we eat. You've just got to be good to yourself.

BM: What do you do to make yourself feel sexy?

TJ: You're going to laugh at me. I get the Brazilian bikini wax. I know it doesn't sound like it but it is. You just feel so liberated after they wax that hair off. Oh my God! I feel so wonderful. I actually do feel sexier after the Brazilian bikini wax, but I just take care of myself. If you don't pamper yourself, I just feel like there is no way for you to feel sexy or feel like you are a hot woman. ■

## CHRISTIAN KEYES

(continued from page 82)

allows me to stay ready for whatever roles come up. I never know when a role calls for me to engage in hand-to-hand combat, play football or be athletic all around.

BM: Tell us about your personal fashion sense.

CK: I wear what's comfortable for me. I don't care what other people wear. I don't use it as a guide to my style. I will say this: I don't wear skinny jeans. I'm not knocking them; it's just not for me. I dress to my comfort and feel, whether it's Tims, jeans and a button-up or guy shoes with jeans and a blazer. I've just never been in the fashion herd and following the crowd.

BM: What's the biggest misconception most people have about you?

CK: People look at me and think I'm arrogant and that's far from the truth. I am reserved sometimes because I'm not always sure whom I'm dealing with. Sometimes you never know why some people are around you, whether it's for you or for something else. I'm far from arrogant or conceited. I don't even like people who possess those qualities or characteristics. ■

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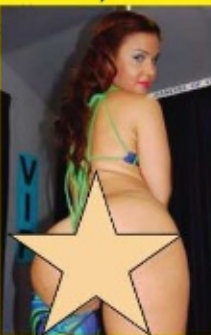
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(L-R) John Blassingame, president and CEO New Day Associates, Inc., Jeff Friday, CEO Black Film Festival, Debra Hall, 1987 winner of 1st International Model of the Year, Wil Packer, Rainforest Films, Bob Sumner, VP Def Jam Comedy.



(L-R) Charles Watkins, 1st place female winner, Jessica Crawford, John Blassingame.

**ALL-STAR FASHION WEEKEND**

This fall New Day Associates, Inc. presents the 24th Annual Designer of the Year and the 14th Annual Hype Hair Natural Beauty contests hosted by *Today's Black Woman*, *Black Men*, and *Hype Hair* magazines. The two-day weekend of fun, fashion and industry networking will be held at the Marriott Hotel at Newark Liberty International Airport in Newark, New Jersey.



(L-R) Charles Watson, 1st place male winner, Rob Edward, John Blassingame

On Saturday, November 27, 2010, New Day Associates, Inc. will celebrate the 15th Anniversary Party for *Black Men* magazine to be held in the Grand Ballroom of the Marriott Hotel. Present will be specially invited guests from the fashion, film, music industries, Also present will be guests Bernard Bronner publisher of *Upscale* magazine, Wil Packer of Rainforest Films, Edward Avant publisher of *Heart & Soul* magazine, Wendy McKenzie lead casting director of the movie *Notorious B.I.G.*, Francis Romeros publisher of *Hombre* magazine and one of the producers of the Puerto Rican Day parade, and many other special guests.

Doors open at 9 p.m. and show time at 10 p.m. Feast on hot and cold hors d'oeuvres and party until 2:30 a.m. Tickets are \$15 with invite and \$20 at the door.

On Sunday, November 28, 2010, *Today's Black Woman*, *Black Men*, and *Hype Hair* magazines, in conjunction with New Day Associates, Inc., will present the 24th Annual International Designer of the Year and our 14th Annual Hype Hair Natural Beauty contest.

Doors open at 5 p.m. and show time starts at 6 p.m. Tickets are \$30 in advance and \$35 at the door.

For out-of-town guests, there is a special room rate of \$99 for single or double occupancy when reservations are made under the New Day Associates, Inc. block of rooms.

For information about accommodations, call 973-623-0006. For more event information, call John Blassingame at 609-655-3667 or visit [www.lindennewday.com](http://www.lindennewday.com) and click on competition information, or e-mail [info@lindennewday.com](mailto:info@lindennewday.com). ■

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# ON THE RISE FILMMAKERS

BY SHARRI JONES



**S**amad Davis, a Newark, NJ native, made his directorial debut with his 2002 release of *Durdy Game*. It stars Tawny Dawl, and received accolades at the 2002 American Black Film Festival.

Davis is the director of *Three Can Play That Game* starring Vivica Fox, Jason George, Terri J. Vaughn, Jazmin Lewis, and Tony Rock. He is also producing a TV series entitled *The Minds of Men*, that let's women deep inside the thoughts of men and their respect, dealings, and/or relationships with women. He is anticipating the release of his 2010 projects, *Three Blind Mice*, and *Mooz-Lum* about a young African-American Muslim who is trying to find himself. It stars Danny Glover, Nia Long, Evan Ross, and Summer Bishil. He also recently launched a production company in Ghana, West Africa. He will be developing and producing TV shows and films with a major Ghanaian TV network. **Mody Mod Films**



**Melvin James** was born and raised in Newark, NJ and holds a political science degree from Howard University. He began his career as a production assistant for world-renowned director, Sidney Lumet, and also worked with acclaimed directors Martin Scorsese, Roland Emmerich, Mike Newell, Spike Lee, and Ron Howard. James directed and produced many award-winning projects, such as BET's *College Hill*, *King of Hearts*, *Honey Bee* and his critically acclaimed film, *A Miami Tail*, an urban comedy based on the Greek play *Lysistrata*. It stars singer/recording artist Trina. James is currently in production for his 2011 projects, *The Rumspringa Massacre*, and *Caramel*, based on *American Graffiti*. In the meantime, be on the look out for his new Web comedy series releasing soon at [www.daaminc.com](http://www.daaminc.com)



**Michael Pinckney** started his career in 1991 working under Spike Lee, which he continued for about 14 years. He is a member of the Directors Guild of America. Pinckney worked as the Assistant Director on such projects as *Precious*, *The 25th Hour*, *7th Heaven*, *Law and Order*, *Inside Man*, *Miracle's Boys*, *Miracle at St. Anna*, *Bamboozled*, and *She Hate Me*, among others. In addition, he is also the second assistant director for the 2011 release of *S.W.A.T Fire Fight* under the direction of Benny Boom. Pinckney also directed various short films under The Black Noise Foundation, which helps to give back and assist young aspiring filmmakers. His directorial feature film debut is a crime thriller entitled *Your Nobody Till Somebody Kills You*. It is executive produced by his long-time mentor, Spike Lee. ([www.blacknoisemedia.com](http://www.blacknoisemedia.com))



**Trey Haley** majored in radio, TV and film at the University of North Texas. He later relocated to LA and was mentored by top music video directors and production companies, such as Revelations Entertainment and A Band Apart. Haley made is co-directorial debut in *American Dream*. The film is about Houston-famed rapper Mike Jones starring Tamala Jones. He also Directed the Inner City Destiny Awards,

Farmers Angel City Classic, and The Comedy Kids. In addition, he was creative consultant on BET's *The Best Shorts* with Host Hill Harper. Haley is also the president of Tri Destined Media Enterprises and oversees in-house production services. He is also known for the romantic comedy, *Perfect Combination*, released earlier this year, starring Christian Keyes, Tiffany Hines, and Angell Conwell. Tri Destined Studios' indie film label also recently completed *We Are Family* starring Monique Coleman, Christian Keyes, Chyna Lane and Omarosa. Tri Destined Studios and Dark Skin Productions (headed by Morris Chestnut and Haven Mitchell) are also in production on the romantic comedy, *Ring My Bell*. Haley is also currently developing *The Life Story of Bev Kearney*, about the world-renowned track coach from the University of Texas who took her team on a miraculous quest for success. Haley is currently directing *S.L.O.W.* (Secret Lives Of The Wives) this Fall/Winter, featuring an ensemble cast showcasing some of the hottest talent in the business. ([www.tridestined.com](http://www.tridestined.com))

172 BLACKMEN

## FILM FORUM

**Blackmen: What is your take on dating in the industry?**

**Melvin:** It's no differently than dating in any other profession, people are more likely to date one another when they run in the same circles

**Trey:** I don't think there is anything wrong with it as long as you're mature on how you balance the working and business relationship. Some people think you shouldn't mix the two, but if you have good judgment of character and you're in it for all of the right reasons, everything should be okay.

**BMM: Do you think nowadays that this industry is more so built on talent, or who you know?**

**Melvin:** I don't think that most people who care about their career are going to put someone in a position who (isn't qualified) simply because they know them. Real talent speaks volumes but if you happen to know the person as well of course it's natural for you to want to work with them.

**Michael:** I think the industry is more built on who you know.

**Trey:** This business is a mixture, no one can make it in this business by themselves. Any successful person had someone to help them reach the next level of their career and it's imperative to make sure your ready to show what you can bring to the table when opportunity comes knocking.

**BMM: How do you feel about films that focus on A-list actor names and special effects over story-line or plot?**

**Micheal:** Character driven films with strong plots are making a comeback. There's many Hollywood Block Busters that had big name actor's and expensive special effects that flopped at the box office.

**Trey:** You need a little bit of both to keep the industry flourishing. As long as there's balance, it's a good thing.

**BMM: What is your favorite project thus far?**

**Melvin:** "On My Way Home From School", a CBS short film I directed about the issue of bullying in school.

**Micheal:** *Inside Man* with Spike Lee and Denzel Washington. It's always magic when these two icons get together. Guns, bank robbers, hostages and shoot outs in the heart of Manhattan, it was a fun and a excellent script.

**Trey:** I'm really excited about my upcoming release 'We Are Family'.

**BMM: Have you ever gotten to that point of thinking "I should choose a new career this isn't working"?**

**Melvin:** If you ever start to think that then I think you need to re-evaluate why you're in the business. People who love what they do and get up everyday willing to do it for free don't ever have doubts about it.

**Michael:** Yes, I've worked on films that have made me question if I was on the right path. Films can be very sporadic, with it's up and downs. You definitely have to make sacrifices. It's something I was born to do and I can't see myself doing anything else.

**Trey:** Never. Going after this career was a lifetime decision. It takes a certain kind of mental toughness to make it in this business. That's why it's key to make sure you love what you do so the challenges don't deter you from your goals.

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