

# Williams and Bellows find *the Courage to Love*

Vanessa Williams ("The Odyssey," "Dance with Me"), actress and Grammy-nominated singer, executive produces her first television film and stars in the LIFETIME Television Original Movie Event, "THE COURAGE TO LOVE." Inspired by the life story of Henriette Delille, the film details one woman's rebellion against tradition and her battle against racism. The LIFETIME Original Movie premieres on Monday, January 24 from 9-11 p.m. ET/PT.

Gil Bellows ("Ally McBeal"), Diahann Carroll ("Having Our Say") and Stacy Keach ("Mike Hammer") co-star.

"The Courage to Love" depicts a tumultuous time in American history, an era before the Civil War in New Orleans when the French outnumbered the Americans, and when free people of color enjoyed many privileges of white society. During a lavish gala called the "Quadroon Ball," wealthy French and Spanish men coupled with young women from multi-racial backgrounds. Although the interracial couples entered into a socially accepted courtship and raised families together, they were forbidden to marry.

Set in 19th century New Orleans during a period of religious and political unrest, "The Courage to Love" tells the heroic life story of Henriette Delille (Vanessa Williams), a woman of color who rejects the hypocrisy of class, race and tradition.

As racial and political tensions from the North and South infiltrate the isolated New Orleans community, Henriette's mother, Pouponne (Diahann Carroll), worries about her daughter and warns her not to resist tradition. Pouponne urges her to participate in the "Quadroon Ball" to ensure that she will be provided for financially in the uncertain future.

Instead, Henriette turns to the Church to teach and to care for the poor and needy. She becomes one of the first women of color to take an active part in the day-to-day activities; however, she feels frustrated by the politics and racism from both the Church's hierarchy and the wealthy patrons of the parish.

Henriette Delille is the founder of the Sisters of the Holy Family, an international order of nuns dedicated to serving the poor and elderly. Her devotion and life's work continues to provide inspiration. In 1989, she became the first woman



Gil Bellow ("Ally McBeal") and Vanessa Williams ("The Odyssey," "Soul Food") star in the LIFETIME Original Movie, "THE COURAGE TO LOVE," premiering on Monday, January 24 from 9-11 PM ET/PT. Set in 19th century pre-Civil War New Orleans, Williams stars as a woman from a privileged class who shunned tradition and battled racism and religious politics in search of a higher love. Diahann Carroll ("Having Our Say") and Stacy Keach ("Mike Hammer") co-star.

of African-American descent in the United States whose cause for canonization has been officially recognized by the Roman Catholic Church.

LIFETIME Television is dedicated to providing the highest quality entertainment and informational programming for women. LIFETIME is available on more than 11,000 cable systems and alternative delivery systems nationwide, serving over 75 million households. The Lifetime Movie Network is a 24-hour service launched in July 1998. Learn more about both networks on the Lifetime Online site at <http://www.lifetime.com> LIFETIME Television and LMN are part of LIFETIME Entertainment Services, a 50/50 joint venture of The Hearst Corporation and The Walt Disney Company.



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