

# Focus

## Heading Up the State

Chris Rock calls his character is the "Rocky" of politics

Funnyman Chris Rock sets his sights on the highest office in the land in the comedy "Head of State," scheduled for release nationwide on Friday, March 28.

In addition to starring, the increasingly multi-faceted Rock makes his directorial debut with "Head of State." He also co-wrote the film with long-time collaborator and "Head of State" producer Ali LeRoi.

Rock stars as Mays Gilliam, a Washington D.C. neighborhood alderman, who's about to be re-elected out of his job. But after the untimely death of the party frontrunner, Gilliam is plucked from obscurity and thrust into the limelight as his party's nominee for President of the United States.

"This film is about the little man running for President. He's the lowest guy you could imagine getting a shot at the biggest title in the world. He's a 'Rocky' of politics," Rock said.

Rock said Gilliam appeals to the public because he has a unique campaign style.

"He tells the truth—which is unique in politics today," Rock said. "He's not constricted the way other politicians are, so he tells it like it is."

The film also stars equally hilarious Bernie Mac, of "The Bernie Mac Show," as Mays' older brother Mitch, who becomes his running mate.

"Just like Mays, Mitch tells the truth. He is a bold, crazy bail bondsman from Chicago," Rock said. "Since I can't trust anybody in the party, I ask him to be my Vice President."

Lynn Whitfield, the vivacious



Chris Rock stars as Mays Gilliam, a Washington D.C. politician who is plucked from obscurity and thrust into the limelight as his party's nominee for the President of the United States. Lynn Whitfield (left) plays Deborah Lassiter, Gilliam's campaign adviser, whose job it is to help him lose gracefully without embarrassing the party.



actress best known for her starring roles in "Eve's Bayou" and "A Thin Line Between Love and Hate," plays Deborah Lassiter, Gilliam's campaign adviser, whose job it is to help him lose gracefully without embarrassing the party. The comedy comes out of the natural con-

That's why the two collide."

Robin Givens, known for her starring roles in "Book of Love," "A Rage in Harlem" and "Boomerang" was Rock's first and only choice to play his crazy ex-girlfriend.

"Basically, she dumps me a week before I'm asked to run for Presi-

dent," Rock said. "She thinks I'm going to be a nothing, and the next thing she knows, I'm the nominee for President. So, she spends the whole rest of the movie trying to get back with me. She is perfect in the part."

The other woman in Gilliam's life is Lisa Clark, played by Tamala Jones, a beautiful actress whose most recent film roles were "Two Can Play That Game" and "Brothers." In "Head of State" she plays the convenience store worker, who steals Gilliam's heart.

"We had great chemistry together," Rock said. "I selected her for the role, because she's a good actress and she's just so cute." Rounding out the main cast are Dylan Baker ("Road to Perdition") as Gilliam's campaign manager, Nick Searcy ("One Hour Photo") as Mays' opponent and James Rebhorn ("Far From Heaven") as the head of the political party.

Another interesting choice Rock made was rapper Nate Dogg, who narrates the movie.

"Nate has long been a narrator of hip-hop culture," Rock said. "By giving him that role, we make the movie relevant to kids and everybody. Nate is great."

*He tells the truth—which is unique in politics today. He's not constricted the way other politicians are, so he tells it like it is.*

—Comedian Chris Rock on his role as presidential candidate Mays Gilliam in "Head of State"

flict between Gilliam and Lassiter.

"The two are going after two different things. Mays Gilliam has been hired to lose, but he wants to win at any cost," Rock said. "She wants him to lose without tarnishing the party's future chances.

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The other woman in Gilliam's life

## Hip Hop Duel Explodes in 'Dakota Grand'

A look at rough-and-tumble world of rap

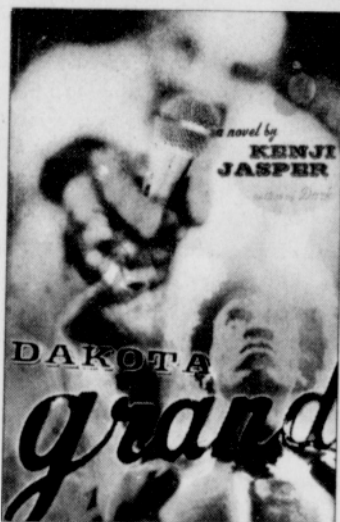
Can one brave African American writer take on the star-making machinery of music journalism and hope to survive?

In the rough-and-tumble world of multiplatinum rap artists and the cowed and complicit music magazines that have grown up around them, millions of dollars — and one honest, disillusioned writer's life — are at stake.

Kenji Jasper's new novel, "Dakota Grand," is the story of a passionate young music writer who leaves his Southern roots behind to cover the glittering and occasionally violent world of rap music in New York City.

The young, talented, sometimes deeply troubled rappers — and the mythology that music writers have built up around them — are used to move product and feed fans' insatiable appetites for celebrity.

But successful freelance writer Dakota Grand is bone tired of living hand-to-mouth and hopping from bed to bed "on Planet Hip-Hop, the



tiny spinning ball that the white kids in Kentucky model their lives after, the one that pays for many emperors' new robes while gradually eroding itself in the process."

When Dakota gets his biggest break yet his article ignites a feud with Mirage that escalates into increasing violence and ultimately becomes a battle for Dakota's pride and the honor of music journalism.

## 'Boat Trip' is a Story of Misadventure and Love

Take a vacation cruise you'll never forget with "Boat Trip", a hilarious high-seas voyage of love and misadventure starring Academy Award winner Cuba Gooding, Jr., Horatio Sanz, Vivica A. Fox and Roselyn Sanchez.

Hoping to get his mind off his ex-girlfriend Felicia (Fox), heart-broken Jerry (Gooding Jr.) decides to join his best friend Nick (Sanz) on a tropical singles cruise for a week of sun and possible romance. But when Jerry and Nick realize they've been accidentally booked on a gay cruise, all they can think of is jumping ship — that is, until Jerry falls head-over-heels for Gabriella (Sanchez), a gorgeous dance instructor who, after a string of bad boyfriends, has given up on love.

Hoping to get past Gabriella's stalwart defenses, Jerry pretends



Cuba Gooding Jr. stars in "Boat Trip," along with Vivica A. Fox.

to be gay. But matters get complicated when both Jerry and Gabriella start to feel the heat of mutual attraction. And when Felicia unexpectedly appears on board hoping to win her ex-boyfriend back, Jerry is suddenly faced with the decision of a lifetime.

Brimming with fresh laughs and winning performances from its knock-out cast, "Boat Trip" is a sexy, uninhibited romantic comedy about following your heart — no matter where it leads you.

## ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE

### Reparations Thursdays

David Park's new band, The Reparations, will play every Thursday at 9 p.m. with DJ Chill and special guest performers and DJs at The Red Sea, 318 S.W. Third Ave. Admission for those 21 and older is \$5.

### Faces of Art and Psychology

'Faces' by Gary Mac Smith will be showing through March 28 at Portland State University's Littman Gallery. Smith is a Portland Psychiatrist specializing in individual psychotherapy.

### Bosko VIP Lounge Party

On Thursday, March 27 Bosko, one of the northwest's most talented musicians, will showcase his skills with Cool Nutz, Maniac Lok, Brotha Luv, The Reparations and DJ Chill at The Red Sea, 318 S.W. 3rd Ave. Bosko has produced songs for Tyrese, E-40, Limp Bizkit, Jimmy Cozier, Tupac and the Outlaws, Junior Mafia, The Luniz and many other groups. The show starts at 9 p.m. with \$10 admission for those 21 and older.

### NW Photography at the Talisman

A show featuring two northwest photographers, Dan Bronson and John McAnulty, will open at the Talisman Gallery, 1476 N.E. Alberta, on Thursday, March 27 with a reception from

5:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. Bronson explores the beauty of life by capturing infrared life on film to create surreal landscapes and figure studies with a sensuous yet classic quality. McAnulty shows the beauty of nature with highly saturated images of the northwest and southwestern deserts.

### Joe Mus Paintings

The Alberta Arts Pavilion and Our Dream Gallery will feature the paintings of Joe Mus all month long at 2315 N.E. Alberta St. There will be a Last Thursday opening for the artist on Thursday, March 27 from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. For more information, call 503-282-7700.

### Tim Acock Photography

Photographs by Tim Acock will be showing at the Guardino Gallery, 2939 N.E. Alberta, beginning with a Last Thursday art reception on Thursday, March 27 from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. Acock is an Alberta Street neighbor who focuses his lens on the street at night and uses the ambient light of street lamps and store windows to illuminate features that go unnoticed during the day. Also showing with Acock are Rachael Chenven Powers mixed media constructions. For more information, call 503-281-9048.

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