

# Arts & ENTERTAINMENT

## Andre 3000 Finds a New Rhythm

Entertainer stars as Hendrix in new biopic

(AP) - Andre Benjamin was uniquely qualified to play Jimi Hendrix in the film "Jimi: All Is By My Side," and not just because his colorfully cosmic style has long owed something to the '60s icon.

The film, written and directed by "12 Years a Slave" screenwriter John Ridley, is a portrait of Hendrix in 1966 - a then somewhat aimless 24-year-old playing backup guitar - finding himself as a frontman and being elevated by the blues-rock scene of Swinging London. As the often reticent half of hip-hop duo Outkast, Benjamin, too, knows something about the psychology of a performer discovering his onstage swagger.

"I had to grow into being an entertainer and Jimi had to grow into being an entertainer, too," Benjamin said in a recent interview. "I can say from being an entertainer and a star, my very first shows were horrible. The shyness. You're put on stage in front of all of these people, and you're kind of in your head a lot. It takes the confidence of knowing, 'Hey, people dig this.'"



Andre Benjamin portrays Jimi Hendrix in the film "Jimi: All Is By My Side." (AP photo)

"All Is By My Side," which opens in theaters Friday, eschews the usual cradle-to-the-grave biopic trajectory, focusing instead on Hendrix's discovery by Linda Keith (Imogen

Poots), his formation of The Experience and his breakthrough in a town dominated by the Beatles and Eric Clapton. Made without the cooperation or approval of the

Hendrix estate, the independently produced "All Is By My Side" doesn't include any of Hendrix's familiar hits.

It's been nearly a decade since Benjamin put out an album, solo

or with Outkast. He's limited himself largely to appearances on the records of others (Frank Ocean, Lil Wayne). Now 39, he's said he'll give up rap when he turns 40.

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