

Bobbi Kristina Brown, daughter of Whitney Houston, dead at 22

Jonathan Landrum Jr.,
Associated Press

DULUTH, Ga. (AP) — The brief, chaotic life of Bobbi Kristina Brown was never really her own.

Born and raised in the shadow of fame and litigation, shattered by the loss of her mother, Whitney Houston, Bobbi Kristina was overwhelmed by the achievements and demons of others before she could begin to figure out who she was.

Her demise was the most awful inheritance of all.

Bobbi Kristina died on Sunday at Peachtree Christian Hospice in Duluth, Georgia, about six months after she was found face-down and unresponsive in a bathtub in the suburban Atlanta townhome she shared with Nick Gordon, the man she called her husband. She was 22-years-old.

“Bobbi Kristina Brown passed away July, 26 2015, surrounded by her family. She is finally at peace in the arms of God. We want to again thank everyone for

their tremendous amount of love and support during these last few months,” Kristen Foster, a representative for the Houston family said Sunday.

The Fulton County Medical Examiner’s Office confirmed Bobbi Kristina’s death Sunday night and will issue a news release on Monday.

Police said she was found Jan. 31. A police report described it as a “drowning.”

Bobbi Kristina was the only child between Houston and Brown.

She was hospitalized for months in Atlanta — eventually being placed in hospice care — after being found in a manner grimly similar to the way her megastar mother died three years earlier. Gordon said at the time it seemed Bobbi Kristina wasn’t breathing and lacked a pulse before help arrived.

Brown — the sole heir of her mother’s estate — did have dreams.

She identified herself on Twitter as “Daughter of Queen WH,” “Entertain-



Bobbi Kristina Brown

er/Actress” with William Morris & Co., and “LAST

of a dying breed.” She told Oprah Winfrey shortly after her mother’s death in 2012 that she wanted to carry on her mother’s legacy by singing, acting and dancing. But her career never took off. Actor and producer Tyler Perry said she had a future as an actress after her debut on his TV show “For Better or Worse” in 2012, but she only appeared in one episode. Aside from two ill-fated reality TV shows and the occasional paparazzi video, her image mostly showed up in the “selfies” she posted online.

She attended award shows and appeared on red carpets with her mother and father. She performed a duet with her mother in 2009, singing “My Love Is Your Love” in New York’s Central Park. She became social media sensation, sending more than 11,000 tweets and attracting 164,000 followers.

As the news of her death spread across social media, several celebrities tweeted their condolences.

Grammy-winning performer Missy Elliot tweeted, “My heart is truly heavy. May u rest in peace with your mommy #BobbiKristina sending prayers 2 the Brown/Houston family.”

“Empire” star Taraji P. Henson tweeted, “Rest in heaven.”

“RIP #BobbiKristina My deepest sympathies 2 your father #BobbyBrown n your GrandMa #CissyHouston We will miss ya 4sho darling :) Actress Vivica A. Fox said on Twitter.

And Winfrey tweeted, “Peace at Last!”

Kids Co-Write Play about Racial Tension

By Arashi Young
Of The Skanner News

Zara Smith stands alone in her classroom. She gets good grades and is pleasant to her teachers, who all believe she will achieve great things in her life.

She is also lonely, bullied and harassed for her success. She is the subject of relentless teasing, being labeled an “Oreo” — too Black on the outside, too White on the inside.

Only 10 years old, she wonders aloud to the empty room.

“Acting White? What does that even mean? My mom says we have to work five times as hard to get one step forward,” she asks.

Zara’s story is one of many told in *Between the Lines*, a play from the Maverick Main Stage Production Company. The dramatic company hosted encore performances of the drama at the Alberta Abbey on July 24 and 25.

Nearly all of the performances in *Between the Lines* are from youth between the ages of six to 14.

Jennie Brown, the director and founder of Maverick, told *The Skanner News* every play Maverick produces is an original work inspired by the cast.

Between the Lines grew out of cast conversations about race. In rehearsal exercises leading up to the writing of the play, Brown kept hearing her young actors tell each other things like, “You’re acting White,” or, “You’re acting ghetto.”

“We kind of explored that together. ‘What does that mean? What does race mean to you guys?’ We really had some very in-depth conversations around that, and it just seemed like a perfect time to make it something for public to come take part of,” Brown said. “It’s an issue that is very real, particularly in this area.”

The play tells stories of racial tension and gentrification through the eyes of elementary school kids, their teachers and parents. At the center of plot is Zara’s teasing by another girl, A.J. Both girls compete with each other through singing and dancing performances and an upcoming talent show, which only heightens the tension between them.

The Skanner News spoke with some of the young cast members about their experiences co-creating and acting in the play. Sinai Jones, who plays Zara Smith, said the play makes people think about racial tension beyond Black versus White.

“I think that our community feels like racial tension is always about it being Black and White, when that is not necessarily the case. But people get bullied and judged because of their circumstances, their stereotypes, what they have and what they don’t have,” she said.

Eleven-year old Dakhi Davis, who plays the class clown Milo Sweets, said the play combats the prejudice that Black students can’t be successful without “acting White.”

“Black people can be smart, too, and get good grades and so can White people. Any race can do good and be successful,” Davis said.

Many of Maverick’s young actors met Brown when she brought theatre arts classes to local public schools. When budget cuts dropped the theatre program, Brown would move on to another school, often bringing performers with her during after-school workshops.

Eventually, she started Maverick independently so that any student could access the program, regardless of school attendance.

Between the Lines closed with the school talent show.

Milo arranged a show-stopping medley of Jackson 5 songs and Zara and A.J. mended fences through compassion, understanding and duet.

Tanisha Jones, mother of Sinai and her younger sister (and fellow cast member) Nia, said she was proud to see youth show off their talents and represent their communities.

“I’m proud to see the cast of youth from our community who really reflect what our community looks like and the fact that this play was based off of ... their experiences,” Jones said. “I was eager for them to get the message out and be able to deliver that to the community.”

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