

Available at your local



# Philadelphia *Observer*

50 Cents

Speaking Truth to Justice

PhiladelphiaObserver.com

Vol. 29 • No. 33

August 18 – August 24, 2022

# TRIDENT MORTGAGE ORDERED TO PAY OVER \$22M REDLINING FINE



For engaging in  
discriminatory  
lending patterns  
against  
minorities in  
the greater  
Philadelphia  
metro area

Trident's unlawful redlining activity denied communities of color equal access to residential mortgages, stripped them of the opportunity to build wealth and devalued properties in their neighborhoods," said Assistant Attorney General Kristen Clarke of the Justice Department's Civil Rights Division, p3





# CHEVROLET & THE NNPA ARE CHARGING FORWARD WITH YOUNG TALENT!

This HBCU Talent Is Bringing That Energy To *Discover The Unexpected 2022*



**ANTONIO ANDREWS II**  
Tuskegee University

CHEVROLET CORPORATE FELLOW



**RAZA EL**  
Tuskegee University

CHEVROLET CORPORATE FELLOW



**JEVON JAMESWHITE**  
Howard University

CHEVROLET CORPORATE FELLOW



**ASHLEY MCJUNKIN**  
Texas Southern University

CHEVROLET CORPORATE FELLOW



**JVONTE 'JAY' MORRIS**  
Prairie View A&M University

CHEVROLET CORPORATE FELLOW



**MENRA MAPFUMO**  
Clark Atlanta University

NNPA FELLOW



**ASIA ALEXANDER**  
Howard University

NNPA FELLOW



**FREDERICK HARRELL**  
Grambling State University

NNPA FELLOW



**DERRELL GREEN**  
Morehouse College

NNPA FELLOW



**LEYHA WILLIAMS**  
Howard University

NNPA FELLOW



**LEALER SIMS**  
Southern University

NNPA FELLOW

FOLLOW THE DTU FELLOWSHIP STUDENTS ON THEIR JOURNEY!  
[chevydtuverse.com](http://chevydtuverse.com)

f t i d YouTube #ChevroletDTU



CHEVROLET



# Many who feared a recession, express misgivings about a looming downturn

By Stacy M. Brown, NNPA Newswire

In the past, it hasn't always been clear when a recession loomed, let alone when it had already begun.

However, the silver lining now is that unlike in previous downturns, the Federal Reserve and the U.S. government have already taken action by making critical adjustments to fiscal and monetary policies to regulate economic activity.

"The United States currently has certain interim policies and tools, such as automatic stabilizers like the Earned Income Tax Credit and Unemployment Insurance that are automatically triggered to inject funds into the economy and don't require any government action to take hold in the event of a downturn," said Mila Garcia, a finance expert, and the founder of iPaydayLoans.

"And while such programs have proven effective, they should have an even stronger effect with congressional action being taken alongside them. So, if a downturn does hit, we can at least expect to be less vulnerable to economic troubles than before," Garcia stated.

Amid rising inflation and concerns of a looming recession, many have shared their fears and what America should learn from the pandemic-induced economic downturn.

"Given that Americans are struggling to pay their medical bills, inflation is rising quickly at a pace of 9 percent, and gas and food prices are at all-time highs, this subject is one of the most popular and alarming ones for all Americans," said Rinor Zejna, a digital public relations specialist.



According to reports, the average U.S. corporation's after-tax profit margin is around 16 percent. In traditional recessions, the rate drops down to single digits

Zejna offered some findings from research regarding bankruptcy in the United States, noting that one in three Americans struggle to pay medical bills and 750,000 file for bankruptcy each year.

"Medical debt is the number one cause of bankruptcies," Zejna offered. "And 58 percent of Americans live paycheck to paycheck."

Home sales and building have dropped substantially over the past year, and consumer confidence has fallen to its lowest point since the pandemic's beginning.

Still, President Joe Biden remains optimistic.

"Coming off last year's historic economic growth and regaining all the private sector jobs lost during the pandemic, it's no surprise that the economy is slowing down as the Federal Reserve acts to bring down inflation," Biden said in a statement.

"But even as we face historic global challenges, we are on the right path, and we will come through this transition stronger and more secure," the President continued.

He insisted that the job market remains historically strong, with

unemployment at 3.6 percent and more than 1 million jobs created alone in the second quarter.

"My economic plan is focused on bringing inflation down without giving up all the economic gains we have made," Biden asserted.

"Congress has a historic chance to do that by passing the CHIPS and Science Act and Inflation Reduction Act without delay."

Still, corporations have experienced a decline in sales and earnings during recessions and continue to fear what may come.

According to reports, the average U.S. corporation's after-tax profit margin is around 16 percent.

In traditional recessions, the rate drops down to single digits.

Meanwhile, those corporations are collectively sitting on a record level of over \$4 trillion in cash.

"Companies may have raised these funds during the era of easy money and low-interest rates over the past decade," Vishesh Raisinghani wrote for Yahoo Finance.

"Now, this cash is acting as a buffer and could allow companies to retain staff despite the economic slowdown."

# Grand Jury declines to indict Emmett Till accuser Carolyn Donham Bryant

Philadelphiaobserver.com

Even after the discovery of an arrest warrant and an unpublished memoir, the woman behind Emmett Till's lynching has yet again avoided prosecution.

A grand jury on Tuesday declined to indict Carolyn Bryant Donham, the woman who accused Emmett of making a pass at her in 1955, in Mississippi during the Jim Crow Era.

Leflore County district attorney Dewayne Richardson said the grand jury heard more than seven hours of testimony from investigators and witnesses last week and decided there wasn't enough evidence to pursue charges against Donham.

Emmett's family members had amplified their call for justice for the slain 14-year-old, bolstered by the kidnapping warrant they found in a Mississippi courthouse in late June. The grand jury considered both kidnapping and manslaughter charges. It was the fourth time since issuing the warrant nearly 70 years ago that authorities weighed prosecuting Donham. Each time, the evidence has come up short.



Carolyn Bryant Donham accused Emmett Till of flirting with her in 1955. (Photo: Twitter/Black Diaspora Voices)

The Rev. Wheeler Parker Jr., Emmett Till's cousin and the last living witness to Till's 1955 abduction, said the grand jury decision was "unfortunate, but predictable."

"The prosecutor tried his best, and we appreciate his efforts, but he alone cannot undo hundreds of years of anti-Black systems that guaranteed those who killed Emmett Till would go unpunished, to this day," Parker said in a statement. "The fact remains that the people who abducted, tortured, and murdered Emmett did so in plain sight, and our American justice system was and continues to be set up in such a way that they could not be brought to justice for their heinous crimes."

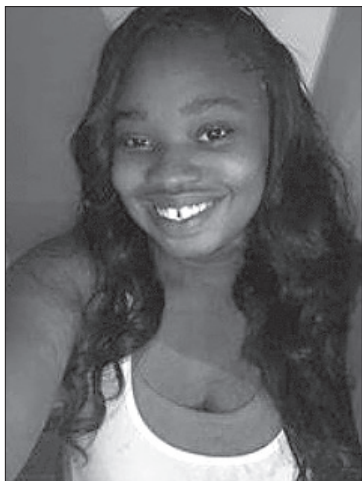
# Independent autopsy reveals the brain of Brianna Grier shifted from one side to the other after the handcuffed woman fell out of Georgia police cruiser

Philadelphiaobserver.com

New reports reveal a Georgia woman who fell out of a moving police patrol car on July 15 while handcuffed and experiencing a mental wellness break suffered two fatal fractures in her skull which caused her brain to shift in her cranium. Her family's lawyer says she is the "Face of the mental health crisis here in Georgia."

On Monday, Aug. 8, civil rights attorney Ben Crump shared the results of an independent preliminary analysis of Brianna Grier's injuries. The review was conducted by Dr. Allecia Wilson, the director of autopsy and forensic services at the University of Michigan, and Roger Mitchell, chair of the department of pathology at Howard University at the request of the young mother's parents, the Daily Beast reports.

During a news conference held in Atlanta at Mt. Zion Second Baptist Church, Wilson unpacked her findings and explained how at the time of Grier's death, she was experiencing internal hemorrhages and swelling of the brain. The



medical expert stated the trauma was so great, it shifted her brain from one side of the skull to the other.

In addition to suffering two fractures on the left side of the head, the 28-year-old also had several hemorrhages, severe cerebral edema, and compression of brain structure.

"What can sometimes happen when the brain or the head has an impact at one side, the brain can move inside of the skull, and that can cause injury directly opposite

to where the impact occurs," Wilson stated as she used her finger to trace a diagonal line across a mockup of Grier's brain, connecting one injury to another.

"This is a large subdural hematoma, and that's blood that is underneath the dura on the right side of the brain."

She said, "What happens when there's this type of impact to the head, is that the brain can start to swell. In this case, the cause of death is consistent with the severe blunt force injury that occurred to the side of the head."

The lawyers believe the cause of the trauma was the "violent collision" of her head hitting the ground after she fell out of a moving patrol vehicle.

Despite one deputy from the Hancock County Sheriff's Department being arrested and bodycam being released to the public, the Georgia Bureau of Investigation (GBI) has not yet released Grier's official autopsy result.

Crump worries the release of the autopsy could be delayed for months and said, "We are demanding that they finish this investigation expeditiously."



# Non-bank lender Trident Mortgage to pay over \$22M for redlining

By Charlene

Map showing redlined sections.

A four-year investigation begun by Pennsylvania's state attorney general attracted the support and resources of the United States' Department of Justice (DOJ) and the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) to bring the first-ever redlining enforcement involving a non-bank lender.

On July 27, Trident Mortgage Company was ordered to pay over \$22 million for discriminatory lending patterns in majority-minority neighborhoods throughout the greater metropolitan Philadelphia region, including Camden, New Jersey and Wilmington, Delaware. The enforcement now goes before a federal court for approval of the second largest redlining settlement in the history of the Justice Department.

"This settlement is a stark reminder that redlining is not a problem from a bygone era. Trident's

unlawful redlining activity denied communities of color equal access to residential mortgages, stripped them of the opportunity to build wealth and devalued properties in their neighborhoods," said Assistant Attorney General Kristen Clarke of the Justice Department's Civil Rights Division. "Along with our federal and state law enforcement partners, we are sending a powerful message to lenders that they will be held accountable when they run afoul of our fair lending laws."

Until it stopped accepting mortgage loan applications in 2021, Trident operated as a non-depository mortgage company in Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania, marketing and selling both first mortgage loans and refinancing home loans. From 2015 to 2017, an estimated 80 percent of Trident's mortgage applications came from the Philadelphia Metropolitan Statistical

Continued on page 4





## Atlanta's image as Black mecca challenged by facts of infamous 1906 race massacre

Philadelphiaobserver.com

Everyone who moves through downtown Atlanta today passes places where innocent Black men and women were pulled from trolleys, shot in their workplaces, chased through the streets and beaten to death by a mob of 10,000 white men and boys.

But few have been taught about the 1906 Atlanta Race Massacre, which shaped the city's geography, economy, society and power structure in lasting ways.

Much like the Red Summer of 1919 in the South and Northeast and the Tulsa Race Massacre of 1921 in Oklahoma would years later, the white-on-Black violence in Atlanta shattered dreams of racial harmony and forced thousands from their homes.

A grass-roots coalition is working to restore Atlanta's killings and their legacy to public memory. Historic markers and tours are planned for this September's anniversary. A one-act play will be performed simultaneously at group dinners across the city. Organizers are seek-

ing 500 hosts, with the ambitious goal of seating 5,000 people to discuss the lasting effects.

These activists say the massacre doesn't fit comfortably in Atlanta's "cradle of the civil rights movement" narrative, but they insist on truth-telling as some politicians push to ignore the nation's history of racial violence.

Mislabeled a riot, the killings of at least 25 Black people and the destruction of Black-owned businesses had a specific purpose: thwarting their economic success and voting power before African Americans could claim equal status, said King Williams, a journalist who gives tours describing what happened.

"The mob began its work early in the evening, pulling negroes from street cars and beating them with clubs, bricks and stones," the Associated Press reported on Sept. 24, 1906, adding that "negroes were beaten, cut and stamped upon in an unreasoning, mad frenzy. If a negro ventured resistance or remonstrated, it meant practically sure death."

## Non-bank lender Trident Mortgage to pay over \$22M for redlining

From page 3

Area (referred to as the Philadelphia MSA) that includes the cities of Philadelphia, PA, Camden, NJ, and Wilmington, DE, as well as Cecil County, MD.

According to the complaint, Trident's application data revealed only 12 percent of its mortgage loan applications came from majority-minority neighborhoods—even though more than a quarter of neighborhoods in the Philadelphia MSA are majority-minority. Of the mortgage loan applications Trident did receive from applicants in majority-minority neighborhoods, most of the applicants were white.

Citing violations of the Equal Credit Opportunity Act, the Consumer Financial Protection Act, and the Fair Housing Act, the government's investigation uncovered a wide range of problematic conduct by Trident. Representative examples of that behavior

include:

Trident's loan officers, assistants, and other employees received and distributed e-mails containing racial slurs and racist content. In addition to using racist tropes and terms, communications sent on work e-mails included pejorative content specifically related to real estate properties' locations and appraisals. The racist content also targeted the people living in majority-minority neighborhoods;

Of Trident's 53 different offices across the Philadelphia MSA, 51 were in majority-white neighborhoods. The other two offices were in neighborhoods with minority groups representing roughly half of the population; and

A series of Trident's direct mail marketing campaigns between 2015 through 2018 depicted only white models and employees and only in majority-white neighbor-

Continued on page 11

## Children's Protective Services employee fired for allegedly encouraging 14-year-old girl to prostitute

Philadelphiaobserver.com

An employee of Child Protective Services (CPS) has been fired after allegedly advising a 14-year-old girl to be a prostitute.

Keisha Bazley, the young girl's mother, told FOX 26 Houston that her daughter was running away from home and having problems at school, prompting her to call family services.

Bazley said her daughter told her the CPS worker had been telling her to do "these things," and she decided to film her.

"My daughter told me that the worker had been telling her she should do these things, so she said she decided to video her," Bazley said.

The attorney for the family, Mike



Schneider, said that the CPS worker almost threatened the young girl that her needs wouldn't be met if she didn't do what she was told.

"And giving her an incentive to do so, and almost a threat of not having her needs being met," Schneider said. "If she didn't do what this woman very explicitly told her to do."

Bazley reiterated that if she were to have said or suggested to her daughter what the CPS worker did, she wouldn't have custody of her children.

"If me, the parent, was to do something like this to my child, I would be bashed," Bazley said. "I would be called a horrible parent. I would lose my kids."

## Yaqub Salik Talib turns himself in – accused of fatally shooting youth football coach

(CNN)

The suspect in a shooting that killed a 43-year-old coach during a weekend youth football game outside Dallas turned himself in Monday, police said.

Yaqub Salik Talib, 39, the brother of former NFL star and Super Bowl winner Aqib Talib, pulled out a gun after the opposing teams' coaching staffs had a disagreement over officiating during the game in Lancaster, police said. Michael Hickmon, a grandfather

and father of three from Lancaster, was killed.

"The altercation became physical, leading to the suspect pulling out a firearm and shooting Mr. Hickmon multiple times," the Lancaster Police Department said in a statement. "After the shooting, the suspect fled the scene in an unidentified vehicle, taking the firearm with him."

Authorities issued a warrant accusing Yaqub Talib of murder, a first-degree felony. The incident remains under investigation, police said.



## Officer's son, 12, accidentally shoots mom dead: A cautionary tale

Philadelphiaobserver.com

A 12-year-old boy in Alabama unintentionally discharged a firearm, fatally injuring his mother, according to WVTM 13 News. The Jefferson County Sheriff's Office said the boy tried to cover up the incident but eventually came forward with the truth that it was him who fired the shot. Experts say both parents and legislators could have prevented this tragedy.

The JCSO's initial press release stated they arrived



at a residence in Forestdale Saturday after receiving a 911 call for help. Deputies found Ayobiyi Abeni Cook, 29, deceased at the scene. There seemed to be no forced entry into the home but the boy told authorities a man was seen fleeing from the residence before the call was made. However, their investigation revealed this was a fabricated story.

According to Birmingham Real-Time News, Cook was the wife of a Birmingham police officer. He'd been working when the incident occurred.

More on the case from the Jefferson County Sheriff's Office:

After investigation, Sheriff's Detectives were able to determine that the victim's 12 year old son unintentionally discharged a firearm striking his mother causing her death. The child originally fabricated a story that detectives determined was not possible.

The child eventually gave a true account of what happened. Evidence on the scene supports that the shooting was unintentional and the offense will be addressed through the Family Court system. The family has been cooperative throughout the process and the child will remain with them. This offense is a tragedy for the Cook family and the entire community.





Sometimes the person who helps you finish high school hasn't even started preschool.

If you're thinking of finishing your high school diploma, you have more support than you realize. Find free adult education classes near you by texting FINISH to 97779 or by visiting **FinishYourDiploma.org**.



Message: FINISH. Apply. Reply STOP to opt out. No purchase necessary. Terms and Privacy: [adCouncil.org/About-Us/Privacy-Policy](http://adCouncil.org/About-Us/Privacy-Policy)



# Editorial - Opinion

## Bill Russell was a champion and hero



By Jesse Jackson

-When Bill Russell passed away this weekend at the age of 88, America lost not only a champion but a hero, a star who lit the way for others to follow.

Bill Russell supported Muhammad Ali when he resisted the draft on religious grounds. He stood with me as we opened PUSH in Chicago in 1971. Russell followed in the footsteps of baseball's Jackie Robinson, whom he admired and emulated.

Russell was, without a doubt, not just one of the greatest basketball players of all time, but surely the greatest champion of team sports generally. He transformed the game of basketball as much with his intelligence as with his phenomenal athletic skills. Although a California high school star in Oakland, California, he received only one college offer – from the University of San Francisco, a small Jesuit school. He proceeded to lead them to a stunning 55 straight victories and two national championships. He then helped the U.S. team win an Olympic gold medal in the 1956 Olympic Games.

Drafted by the St. Louis Hawks, he was traded immediately to the Boston Celtics. In a 13-year career,

he led the Celtics to 11 national championships, and was named an NBA All-Star 12 times, and Most Valuable Player five times. He succeeded the legendary Red Auerbach as the Celtics coach, becoming the first Black coach of an American professional athletic team. He silenced the legions of doubters by winning two NBA titles as a player-coach.

Russell excelled not in individual statistics but in making his team better. He made defense – blocked shots, steals, defensive rebounds – his forte, his outlet passes triggering the Celtics lethal fast break. Boston unveiled a statue of Russell in its City Hall Plaza in 2013 (Russell agreed to allow it only in exchange for an official pledge to fund a program to mentor youth). The inscription is testament to his philosophy: "The most important measure of how good a game I'd played was how much better I'd made my teammates play." Russell averaged a stunning 22 rebounds a game over the course of his career, but individual statistics didn't impress him. "I determined early in my career," he said, "the most important statistic in basketball is the final score."

That understanding of what is important made him not simply a champion but a hero. People raise champions on their shoulders. A hero raises people on his or her shoulders. Russell was a leader, using his stature to lift others, even at great risk to himself.

He was born in Monroe, Louisiana, in 1934 into the violence of the apartheid South (between 1888 and 1936 there were 4,673 lynchings in the South — 389 in Louisiana, 10 in the years around Russell's birth from 1933 to 1935). When he was 9, his family moved to Oakland,

California, where he grew up living in public housing. He led the Celtics in an era when Boston was torn apart by racial hatred.

The fans that cheered Russell



President Barack Obama awards Russell with the presidential medal of freedom in 2011. The medal is the nation's highest civilian award.

on the basketball court didn't want him to live in their neighborhood. In the 1960s, vandals broke into his house in the Boston suburbs, scrawling venom on the wall, leaving feces in his bed. Russell once called Boston a "flea market of racism," but he was not intimidated.

As a young star in 1958, he challenged the NBA for using a quota system to limit the number of Black players on each team. He marched with Dr. Martin Luther King Jr to protest segregation and joined him for the famous 1963 March on Washington. When Medgar Evers was assassinated in Jackson, Mississippi, Russell agreed to run a youth basketball camp in the city, bringing white and Black children together. Ignoring death threats,

he went through with the plan. When a restaurant in the South refused to serve the Black players on the Celtics, Russell refused to play in the game.

As NBA Commissioner Adam Silver summarized in a statement: "At the height of his athletic career, Bill advocated vigorously for civil rights and social justice, a legacy he passed down to generations of NBA players who followed in his footsteps. Through the taunts, threats and unthinkable adversity, Bill rose above it all and remained true to his belief that everyone deserves to be treated with dignity."

Russell was a favorite of those who played with and against him. He was known for his biting wit and famed for his iconic laugh –

a high-pitched cackle that could lift a room. When the greatest big men of basketball – Shaquille O'Neal, Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, David Robinson, Alonzo Mourning – gathered to honor him, he pointed his finger at each one, and, in a stage whisper, told them "I would kick your a\_\_." The room exploded in laughter and joy, for a man who led on and off the court, a champion and a hero. He will be missed.

When champions win, people put them on their shoulders.

Bill was a hero, people rode his shoulders. He used his voice on and off the court. He is an example for athletes of this generation of the strengths they can have on and off the court.

## Rising prices, low incomes bedevil Sierra Leoneans and their politicians

From page 12

unrest.

"We have a few Sierra Leoneans who live in the diaspora who have threatened to unleash terror in Sierra Leone," he said, in an apparent reference to an anti-government commentator, Adebayor, living in the Netherlands who had called for protests this week.

"Wednesday was the tipping point of something that had been brewing for months," said Alhaji U. N'jai, a professor of environmental science at the University of Sierra Leone's Fourah Bay College. "That brought together groups that are completely different, but they were unified by economic difficulties."

Amnesty International weighed in on the reports of

more than a hundred of people arrested. "The authorities must ensure that bystanders and those who were protesting peacefully are not arbitrarily arrested simply for having participated in the demonstrations.

"When policing assemblies, security forces have an obligation to minimize harm and injury, preserve human life and exercise restraint in the use of force.

"Amnesty is also concerned that authorities cut off the internet sporadically between Aug. 10 and 11. Access to the internet, social media, instant messaging apps and other digital technologies are important tools expanding the ability of people to protest both online and offline, enabling people to gain access to information, distribute details about an upcoming protest, organize, and

enable virtual engagement in a wide variety of ways.

"Therefore, disruption of internet access is a violation of the right to freedom of expression and access to information protected by international human rights law and can have a dire impact on the right to freedom of peaceful assembly.- Michèle Eken, researcher at Amnesty International's West and Central Africa office

### Subscribe Philadelphia Observer

405 Lexington Avenue, 26th Floor, New York, NY 10174.

[philadelphiaobserver.com](http://philadelphiaobserver.com)



# Westwood Gallery announces the Danny Simmons Exhibition

**W**estwood Gallery announces the exclusive world-wide representation of artist Danny Simmons Exhibition curated by James Cavello, September 10 to November 12, 2022

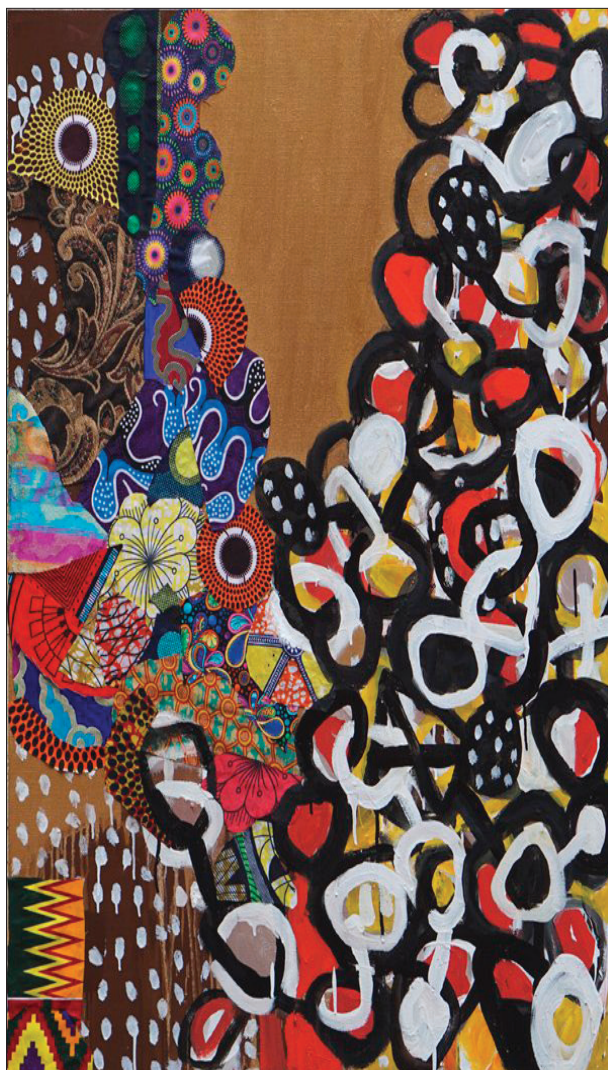
For over four decades, Danny Simmons (b. 1953, NYC) has created paintings, works on paper, and assemblage informed by the spirit imbued in indigenous and African cultures. As the founder of the artistic movement Neo-African Abstract Expressionism, Simmons reclaims traditional African motifs used in modernism through his use of dots, textiles, and tribal markings.

"Part of my visual cues that I did get inspiration from is the art of Africa or indigenous arts all around. Long before I used any of the fabric, I would note the patterns. This includes textiles from Ghana and body paintings from Africa and other parts of the world."

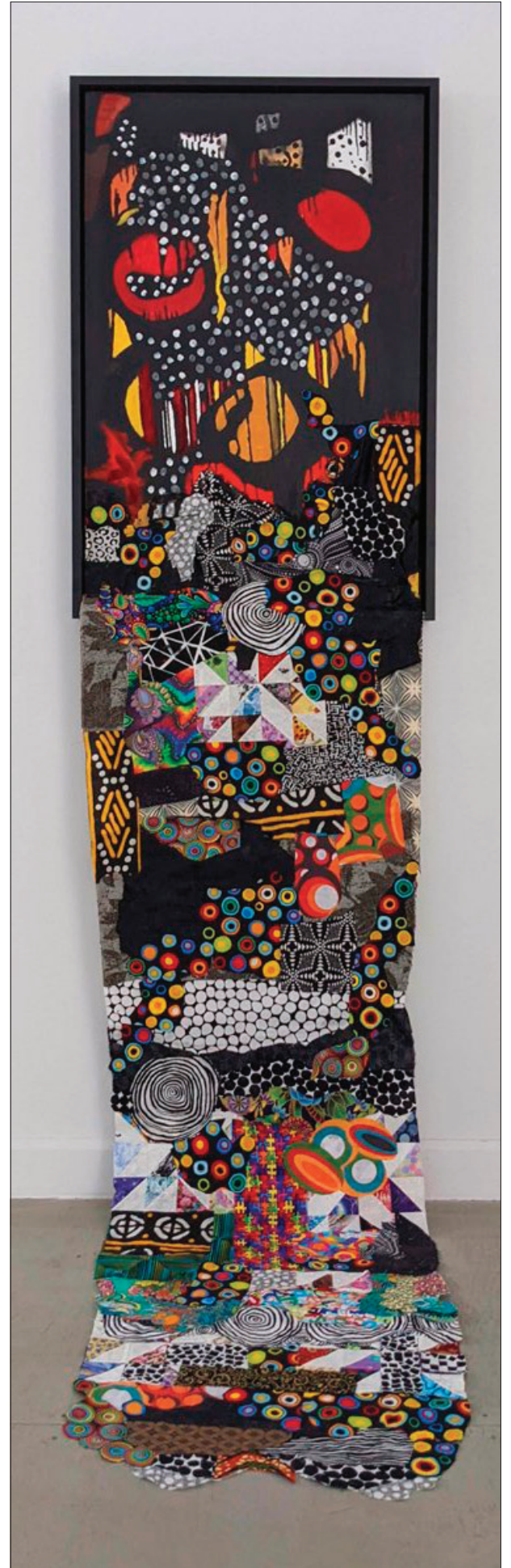


Danny Simmons first solo exhibition with the gallery will open September 2022.

"I think art is a connector... so I'm conscious of that when I'm creating artwork. I see all of this as being tied together. Spirituality is very important because that's the major way we connect with each other, through conversations."



"I've always loved body painting and the way dots are used in this, that, and the other. For me, the dot retains the necessary feeling of indigenous and African cultures, the aboriginal beginnings of art and also leads me into more modern painting... I look at the dot as being a point of spiritual focus."



In addition to being an artist, Simmons is also a poet, author, curator, philanthropist, co-creator of Def Poetry Jam, co-founder of Rush Philanthropic, and noted collector of contemporary art and African sculpture.

His artworks have been exhibited nationally and internationally and collected by major institutions and private collectors. Selected museum exhibitions include the Houston Museum of African American Culture, Ghana National Museum, Parish Gallery, Washington D.C., Noel Gallery, Charlotte, North Carolina, among others. His artworks are in museum and institutional collections such as the Brooklyn Museum, Montclair Art Museum, Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Art, The Smithsonian, US State Department (Suriname), Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, and other collections.



# On the scene

## Academy Award honoree Tyler Perry debuts 'A Jazzman's Blues' at MVA AFF

By Audrey J. Bernard

After their successful first collaboration in "A Fall from Grace," Tyler Perry and Netflix continue their partnership with another ambitious feature film "A Jazzman's Blues." The movie is a pet project of Perry and was the first screenplay he ever wrote 26 years ago. After trying to make it for two decades, he finally found the perfect partners in Netflix to produce. The Academy Award winner wrote, directed and produced his current classic "A Jazzman's Blues."

Perry has opened up several times about the film in the past and most recently commented on this partnership with Netflix: "I have waited a quarter of a century to tell this story, and now is the perfect time and Netflix is the perfect partner. That is my labor of love; the one that I want to do more than anything."

On Saturday, August 6, 2022 at 8 p.m. at the Martha's Vineyard African American Film Festival (MVA AFF)'s 20th season celebrating two decades of Black excellence in filmmaking and visual artistry in beachfront festival Perry participated in a Clips & Conversation moderated by Variety's Angelique Jackson.

"Each year we are beyond thrilled to have support from industry partners with content from and a dedication to creators of color," Floyd and Stephanie Rance, the founders of the festival, expressed. "It is our mission to amplify these storytellers in a meaningful and safeguarded way. We have done this for 20 years and will continue to do so."

This year, Perry previewed his highly anticipated film "A Jazzman's Blues" at the festival, with a series of clips and a conversation presentation conducted by



Academy Award winner Tyler Perry (Photo by Getty Images)



Scene from A Jazzman's Blues

Variety's Angelique Jackson.

Perry wrote, directed, and produced the passion project which uncovers a story of forbidden love, deceit and a secret that has been held for 40 years. The film shot primarily at Tyler Perry Studios in Atlanta and is set to be released via the film's production and streaming partner, Netflix, September 23, 2022. "I have waited a quarter of a century to tell

this story," Tyler said, "and now is the perfect time and Netflix is the perfect partner."

Following the conclusion of filming, Perry took to social media to talk about what the project meant for him: "About 26 years ago, I was struggling and not sure if I would be able to break into the entertainment business. I had managed to sneak into (cause I was broke) a play called Seven



On Saturday, August 6, 2022 at the Martha's Vineyard African American Film Festival, Tyler Perry participated in a Clips & Conversation moderated by Variety's Angelique Jackson



Scene from A Jazzman's Blues



Joshua Boone and Solea Pfeiffer star in A Jazzman's Blues



Tyler Perry with Principals of MVA AFF Floyd Rance and Stephanie T. Rance with Variety's Angelique Jackson at A Jazzman's Blues reception

Guitars, and I got a chance to speak with the great August Wilson at an after-party. I didn't know how he would receive me because the kind of plays I was doing weren't Broadway, but he was so kind, encouraging, and inspiring that I went home and wrote my very first screenplay. I called it 'A Jazzman's Blues'."

Newcomers Joshua Boone (Wheels, Premature) and Solea Pfeiffer (The Good Fight, Curb Your Enthusiasm) are cast in the lead roles. Both are experienced in theater work and singing, with Pfeiffer performing as Elza Hamilton in the acclaimed musical Hamilton's US Tour.

Perry recalls his task to find lead actors. "Unfortunately with this film, I went to a bunch of up-and-coming young artists who were getting a lot of attention and I asked them about doing the role. They read the script, they loved the script, but I think there was a reservation or hesitation about working with me in particular on this film, because I guess they didn't know how it would turn out." But Perry boasts,

"Too bad, so sad for them," and despite people turning him down for this opportunity, the cast that includes actors Joshua Boone and Solea Pfeiffer surpassed his artistic vision.

SYNOPSIS: A sweeping tale of forbidden love, "A Jazzman's Blues" unspools forty years of secrets and lies soundtracked by juke joint blues in the deep South.

CAST: The film stars Joshua Boone and Solea Pfeiffer as star-crossed lovers Bayou and Leanne alongside an ensemble cast that includes Amirah Vann, Austin Scott, Milauna Jemai Jackson, Brent Antonello, Brad Benedict, Kario Marcel, Lana Young and Ryan Eggold.

CREDITS: "The Jazzman's Blues" was written, directed and produced by Academy Award honoree Tyler Perry. The film features an original song performed by Ruth B., songs arranged and produced by multi-Grammy winner & two-time Academy Award nominee Terence Blanchard, music by Aaron Zigman and choreography by Debbie Allen. (All photos courtesy Netflix)



# Premiere

## Meet Gucci North America Changemakers Impact Fund & Scholarship Program winners

By Audrey J. Bernard

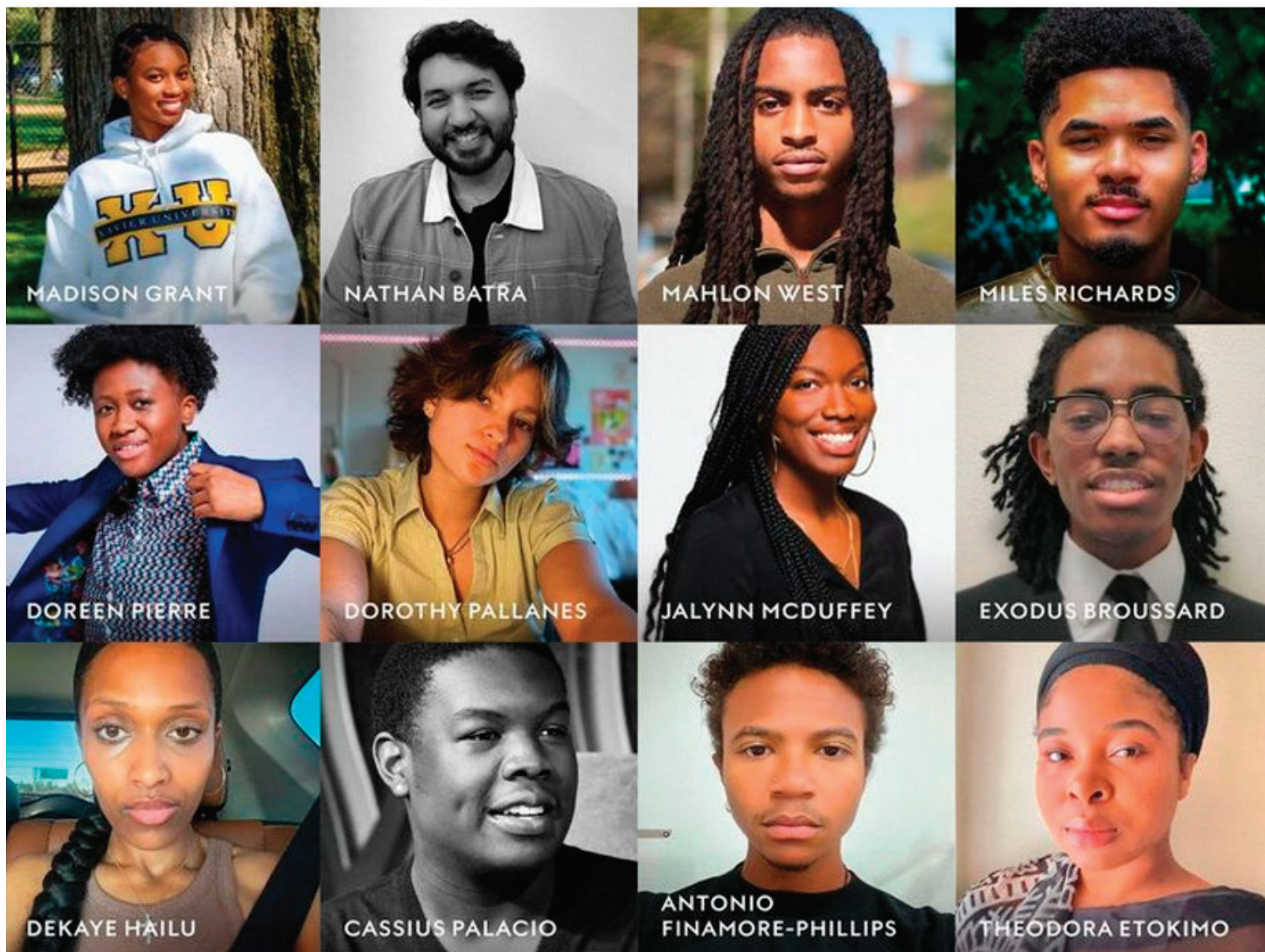
**G**ucci North America Changemakers is a social impact initiative established in March 2019 focused on increasing inclusion and diversity within the fashion industry and across communities and cities. In addition, the program awards scholarships of up to \$20,000 dollars and provides mentorship and virtual internship opportunities through Gucci America. Focus cities include Atlanta, Chicago, Detroit, Houston, Los Angeles, Miami, New Orleans, New York, Philadelphia, San Francisco, Toronto, and Washington DC

On Friday, August 12, 2022, Gucci announced the third round of recipients for its Gucci North America Changemakers Impact Fund and Scholars Program. More than 200 organizations and 400 students applied to the program with 12 non-profits and 12 students awarded with funding.

To date, Gucci has awarded over 50 students with almost \$1 million dollars in scholarships as well as over 40 non-profit organizations with almost \$2 million dollars in grants. The Changemakers community continues to grow, offering students the opportunity to pursue their unique path within the design and fashion industries and allowing non-profit organizations to make grassroots impact within their communities.

Antoine Phillips, Vice President of Brand and Culture Engagement at Gucci America reflected, "It has been an honor leading Gucci Changemakers North America as we continue to set the industry standard for impactful and creative community focused initiatives. These talented young people and non-profit organizations inspire the Gucci community every single day to dream bigger than ever before. Through this work, we are focused not only on amplifying their stories of impact, but inspiring lasting change through the power of arts and culture."

Following the open call for applications at Crenshaw High School in November 2021, Gucci worked diligently with the North America Changemakers Council and outside experts to review all application to select the grantees and scholars. Gucci focuses funding within 12 focus cities across North America including Atlanta, Chicago, Detroit, Houston, Los Angeles, Miami, New Orleans, New York, Philadelphia, San Francisco,



Toronto, and Washington D.C. Gucci North America Changemakers is pleased to present this year's recipients.

The 12 awarded non-profit recipients will receive a grant for \$50,000 for a one-year funding cycle and will be used to create new programs or scale existing initiatives. The newest cohort of Gucci Changemakers Impact Fund grantees represent the inspiring work of organizations led by diverse non-profit leaders working across the fields of social, cultural, and economic issues impacting communities across North America. Their focus areas include performing arts training for diverse young people, inclusive public art to inspire social change, economic mobility programs, support for crisis-impacted Indigenous communities, and professional development for HBCU graduates.

Gucci Changemakers North America Gucci North America Impact Fund awards Impact Grants to support community organiza-

tions: The list of the 12 selected grantees is as follows: Living Walls, Atlanta, GA; Free Root Operation, Chicago, IL; Mosaic Youth Theatre of Detroit, Detroit, MI; Young Audiences Arts for Learning, Houston, TX; Institute of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, CA; Miami Homes for All, Miami, FL; 826 New Orleans, New Orleans, LA; GatherFor, New York, NY; BlackStar Film Festival, Philadelphia, PA; Seventh Generation Fund for Indigenous Peoples, San Francisco, CA; UforChange, Toronto, ON, Canada; and HBCU 20X20, Washington D.C. In addition, the selected grantees will have the opportunity to engage in volunteer activities with Gucci employees, Town Hall conversations with Gucci leadership, and additional programming with Gucci's North America Brand and Culture Engagement team.

Gucci North America Scholarship: The 12 scholarship recipients come from diverse backgrounds and are pursuing various careers within fashion and design at

undergraduate colleges and universities. They will each receive an academic scholarship for up to \$20,000 in addition to mentorship and virtual internship opportunities through Gucci America. The 12 talented and deserving recipients of this year's 2022 Gucci North America Changemakers Scholarship program: Antonio Finamore-Phillips, Otis College; Cassius Palacio, University of Southern California; Dekaye Hailu, University of California, Los Angeles; Doreen Pierre, Parsons School of Design; Dorothy Pallanes, Drexel University; Exodus Broussard, Loyola Marymount University; Jalynn McDuffey, Florida A&M University; Madison Grant, Xavier University of Louisiana; Mahlon West, Howard University; Miles Richards, College of Creative Studies; Nathan Batra, The Savannah College of Art and Design; and Theodora Etokimo, Toronto Metropolitan University.

In addition, Gucci Changemakers will provide the third year of

scholarship funding to the 2019 Gucci Changemakers X CFDA Scholar By Design Awardees: Ajai Kasim, Parsons School of Design; and Kaya Ugorji, Fashion Institute of Technology.

As part of the Changemakers Program, Gucci offers mentorship opportunities. This year, all awardees will have the opportunity to participate in the Gucci Program for Scholars, a 6-week long virtual summer program that helps to educate students on the various career paths available within the fashion industry. The program includes fashion industry education, engagement with all departments across Gucci North America, Gucci corporate mentor assignment and skill building workshops. For more information about the Gucci Changemakers Initiatives applications and eligibility requirements, please visit <http://changemakersus-scholarshipprogram.gucci.com> or call 1-877- 482-2430 Become a Gucci Changemaker!

## Subscribe Philadelphia Observer

405 Lexington Avenue, 26th Floor, New York, NY 10174.  
[philadelphiaobserver.com](http://philadelphiaobserver.com)



# Streaming

## Jo Koy brings the house down on Netflix



Jo Koy and cast in "Easter Sunday"

By Dwight Brown

He's the talk of Netflix. Streaming audiences watch Filipino Comedian Jo Koy bring the house down as he headlines shows in L.A., Hawaii and the Philippines. This edgy, urban comic loves his Asian culture and now he's sharing that joy in movie theaters. In *Easter Sunday*, Screenwriters Ken Cheng and Kate Angelo keep Koy in familiar territory. He plays Joe Valencia, a successful comic being egged on by his trifling Hollywood agent (Jay Chandrasekhar, *Super Troops*) to do a demeaning Filipino accent so he can land a career-changing role in a TV pilot. Valencia pushes back and has other battles to fight. He and his sullen teenage son (Bran-

don Wardell) attend his family's Easter Sunday dinner in Daly City, in Northern California, and that's when the real conflict begins.

Jo's pushy mom Susan (Lydia Gaston) makes a big spread—food galore. She also fights with her very competitive sister Teresa (Tia Carrere, *True Lies*), which cause family friction. Also, Jo loaned his deadbeat cousin Eugene (Eugene Cordero, *Kong: Skull Island*) money to invest in a food truck, then Eugene went into business with a menacing gangster who he now owes thousands of dollars. Hey, if it's family, it's drama!

The similarities between Koy and Valencia are so glaring it's hard to discern when he's acting. He even does standup at a funer-

al. It almost feels like this project was designed to introduce Koy to movie audiences, up his popularity and earn him a shot at a television series. If he heads in TV land's direction, he can use the "George Lopez" and "Black-ish" shows as road maps. Those successful, culture-centric comedy series, which featured comics who invited TV fans into their homes, are iconic.

Actor/Director Jay Chandrasekhar has two jobs. It's a double duty he performed in films like *Super Troopers* and *Club Dread*. He directs this movie like he's filming an SNL skit. The camerawork is immobile, not fluid (Joe Collins). He goes from setup to setup in a way that is far more suited for TV than film. And, the production design

(Michael Joy), set decoration (Penney A. Chalmers, Andrea Mae Fenton), costumes (Lea Butler, Patricia J. Henderson) and editing (Steven Sprung) all scream "sitcom."

The entire production seems unextraordinary, until Joe Valencia goes home and introduces viewers to his extended family and lively Filipino life. Mom, aunt, cousins and the long list of supporting characters grow on you. The food envy between the sisters, the cousins who worship the comedian's fame, the teen girl (Eva Noblezada) who befriends his son and the ex-girlfriend Vanessa (Tiffany Haddish) who is now a very profane policewoman ... all these subplots become increasingly amusing and charming.

It's like you're the guest who came to a dinner and family members misbehaved on purpose. By the time the clan sheds their rancor, pulls it together and belts out the karaoke classic "I Got a Feeling," by Black Eyed Peas, you're completely immersed. Warm emotions come over you and last until the film ends. Think *Soul Food*, *This Christmas* and the crazy *A Madea Christmas*.

Jo Koy's vibrant spirit leaves a lasting impression. As the comic ambassador for Filipino culture, he's ready for new showcases and this serviceable film is living proof. Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ylix42aJPg> Visit NNPA News Wire Film Critic Dwight Brown at [DwightBrownInk.com](http://DwightBrownInk.com).

## Lamont Dozier 81, Motown hit-maker passes

By Greg Evans

Lamont Dozier, who along with his songwriting and producing partners Brian and Eddie Holland was a pioneer and driving force of Detroit's "Motown Sound" of the 60s and '70s, died in Arizona. He was 81. His death was announced on Instagram by his son Lamont Dozier Jr. No cause or additional details were given, with Lamont Jr. writing only, "Rest in Heavenly Peace, Dad!"

The Holland-Dozier-Holland team was the force behind such Motown hits as "Heatwave" by Martha and The Vandellas; numerous hits by The Supremes, including chart-toppers "Where Did Our Love Go" and "Baby Love" and scores of songs by The Four Tops "Baby, I Need Your

Loving," "I Can't Help Myself [Sugar Pie, Honey Bunch]," The Isley Brothers "This Old Heart of Mine" and Marvin Gaye "Can I Get A Witness?!"

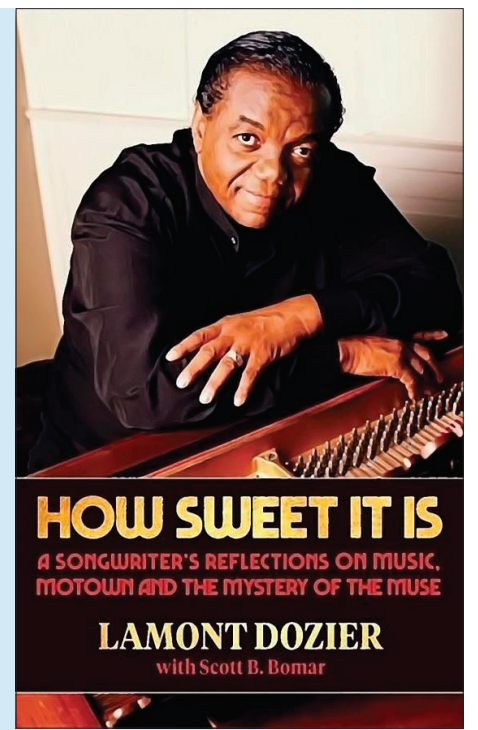
While Dozier and Brian Holland tended to focus on musical arrangement and production, Eddie Holland handled lyrics. After Motown, Dozier founded and owned Invictus Records and Hot Wax Records, producing hits for Freda Payne, The Honey Cone and Chairmen of the Board. A Detroit native, Dozier joined Motown in 1962, as did the Holland Brothers, and would co-write and produce 14 U.S. No. 1 hits, with four No. 1s in the UK.

The trio left Motown in '68 to form their own Invictus and Hot Wax labels. Around that time, Dozier began to sing and perform himself, and though he had

some minor success on the charts, he never attained the performing status of the musicians and singers he had helped create.

For TV, Dozier wrote and sang the second theme song of the ABC sitcom *That's My Mama*. In the '80s, he returned to hit-making with his collaboration with Phil Collins, co-writing the Golden Globe-winning song "Two Hearts" that was featured in the movie *Buster*.

British Singer Alison Moyet had a hit in '84 with Dozier's "Invisible," and in '87 Dozier wrote the song "Without You," sung by Peabo Bryson and Regina Belle, for the Bill Cosby film *Leonard Part 6*. Holland-Dozier-Holland were inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1990. Complete information on survivors was not immediately available.



Lamont Dozier



## Five Georgia officers placed on leave after one is caught using N-word

Philadelphiaobserver.com

Five West Point officers in Georgia went to a suspect's house intending to serve a warrant. All five are on paid administrative leave after one of the officers allegedly used the N-word and threw homeowner Tomesha Madden's security camera into a patch of bushes, the Ledger-Enquirer reports.

Madden noted the officers were there to serve a warrant on her son, but no one was home at the time. She shared the footage Aug. 7 incident on Facebook and captioned it "West Point Police Department at its best. please listen & watch carefully!!" He took my camera off my porch & threw it in the bushes! Can someone explain to me why he would do this...?" The footage since then has gathered



nearly 37,000 views on Facebook and hundreds of shares.

The officer who is thought to have said the racial slur has since been identified as Donald Bramblett. Georgia's Bureau of Investigation is currently looking into the matter. Four officers who

accompanied Bramblett – Dylan Harmon, Zachary Heyboe, William Osteen, and Detective Elizabeth Wegienka were placed on paid leave after a meeting with Madden's attorney. The West Point Police department then released a statement.

## Viral video shows Spirit Airlines passenger violently attack employee

Philadelphiaobserver.com

A Spirit Airlines employee was caught on camera being attacked by a seemingly unruly passenger inside DFW International Airport on Thursday.

The violent confrontation apparently started over an issue with seating on a flight, Fox 4 News reports. Video shows the woman yelling homophobic slurs at the Black male staffer, and hitting him multiple times. Professional photographer Thomas Shannon was nearby when he heard the commotion and sprang into action to record the scene.

"I am at the Panda Express,

and we hear yelling, and I drop my food. And my instinct is to pull out the camera and start

recording," recalled Shannon, who shared his footage on social media



## Non-bank lender Trident Mortgage to pay over \$22M for redlining

From page 4

hoods.

"Companies that use their power to discriminate and rob individuals of opportunity based on the racial makeup of their neighborhoods is not only unacceptable, it is illegal," said Pennsylvania Attorney General Josh Shapiro. "Through our investigation, we allege that hard working Pennsylvanians were denied the chance at the American dream simply because of where they live, which unfortunately in America is inextricably tied to who they are."

To remedy these offenses

and other lending ills noted in the investigation, Trident, once approved by the federal court, would make multiple financial resources available to assist prospective mortgage applicants: \$18.4 million loan subsidy program that would operate in four offices in majority-minority neighborhoods, a \$4 million fine payable to CFPB's victim relief fund, and a \$2 million advertising fund to generate mortgage applications in redlined areas.

Although significant punitive actions can deter some financial institutions from violating fair lending laws, an even greater

concern underlies these recent developments. For several years, mortgage lending has shifted away from major banks and towards non-bank mortgage firms like Trident.

According to the most recent analysis of the annual report on the Home Mortgage Disclosure Act (HMDA) and analyzed by BankRate.com, only three of 2021's largest mortgage lenders by volume were banks. The largest bank lender last year was Wells Fargo whose 376,000 loans totaled \$141 billion. The other two banks appearing in the top 10 were JP Morgan Chase (\$112

billion) and Bank of America (\$84 billion).

By contrast, 2021's two top mortgage lenders by volume were Rocket Mortgage leading the list with \$340 billion loaned to finance 1.2 million originations and United Wholesale Mortgage's \$227 billion that financed 654,000 loans. Further, these totals represent lending increases above totals recorded the previous year.

"This has been the general trend since the financial crisis," said Greg McBride, Bankrate's chief financial analyst. "Banks have backed off of — but not

eliminated — originations. Non-banks more than filled the void as the market picked up, and the big banks often buy the servicing rights so they're in the game with less risk and cyclical on the origination side."

It would be naïve to shift fair lending and housing enforcement to a single financial category. Instead, it behooves consumers, regulators, and advocates to all be mindful of the many forms and sources of illegal discrimination. Banks, non-banks, and all lenders must be held accountable — whenever and wherever illegal lending occurs.

## 'Racialized' paramedics injected handcuffed woman with drugs like Elijah McClain, lawsuit claims



Philadelphiaobserver.com

The countless brave souls on the frontlines of America protesting a variety of social issues go through a lot in the field, from being pepper-sprayed by authorities to sometimes even being physically assaulted by them.

A woman who attended Game 5 of the 2022 NBA Finals says that her bold act of protesting the controversial overturning of Roe v. Wade at the game led to her being dragged out the arena, handcuffed and injected with a sedative against her will.

To hear Kareim McKnight tell it, which she did passionately in a recent press conference alongside her legal team. The paramedics at Chase Center that day on June 13

had no concern for her well-being when they stuck a needle in her arm. McKnight and friend Amanda Piasecki walked out on the court with a banner that read "Overturn Roe? Hell No!" Security reportedly proceeded to drag both women out the venue by their feet, later taken to an emergency vehicle while strapped to a gurney and threatened with sedation by a San Francisco Police sergeant.

"While I was on the ground, handcuffed in front of the emergency vehicle, one of the firefighters came with a needle towards me and I couldn't believe what I was seeing," McKnight said in her public statement, going on to add, "and I flinched and I said, 'No!' what if I'm allergic, you can't just inject me."

# Subscribe Philadelphia Observer

405 Lexington Avenue, 26th Floor, New York, NY 10174.

philadelphiaobserver.com



# International

## Kenya vote stalls over verification snafu

(GIN) –

What began as a quiet voting exercise with a low voter turnout has taken a worrying turn since polls were shut down several times after complaints by supporters of the main candidates.

At last count, with almost half of the results from Kenya's presidential election now confirmed, the two main candidates, William Ruto and Odinga Odinga, were running neck and neck.

By early Saturday afternoon, Odinga had 52.54 percent of the vote (2,288,315 votes), compared with 46.76 percent (2,036,795 votes) for Ruto in 29.92 percent of polling stations, according to official results released from Nairobi, where the Independent Electoral Commission (IEBC) is collecting, counting and verifying results.

The two men—who represent the two biggest political dynasties in Kenya—were fierce rivals in the 2017 election, but made up the following year at a highly publicized event dubbed The Handshake.

Final results are due to be announced by August 16, as required by law. If neither of the two front-runners receives more than 50 percent of the vote, Kenya will have its first presidential run-off.

The electoral commission head has admitted that announcing the result of Tuesday's election has been too slow.

There has led to a sense of anxiety in the country as disputed elections in the past have led to violence or the whole process being cancelled.

"Of course we want our son to get into state house, but I am tired of the politics," Susan Leguyam, a vegetable vendor in Eldoret who support Mr Ruto, told the BBC.

"It's been three years or so of campaigns. We've had no business. Right now, no-one is going out, they are just glued to their TVs and radio waiting to hear who will become president." (The electoral commission) should just get this over with so we can move on with our lives," she said.

With the dark shadow of the American voting experience in mind, several prominent leaders and organizations have been calling for patience and urging Kenyans to maintain peace.

Catholic Archbishop Anthony Muheria has said whoever will be declared a winner should "accept victory with respect and humility."

"If aggrieved, receive the disappointment or lack of victory with grace... pursue redress through the judicial process. There are no losers in this process, a successful democratic process is a win for all of us," he said.

"Unsuccessful candidates must not be treated as losers, but as Kenyans who have done their part in expanding the democratic space."

Still, social media platforms are already buzzing with false claims of politicians losing their seats only for them later to be announced as winners.

Influential bloggers and politicians in Kenya help political parties bypass mainstream media channels and connect directly with potential supporters. Election observers and monitoring groups have expressed concern at the scale of the false and misleading information being spread.

One attempt at misleading voters appeared on election day itself, suggesting that votes had already been tallied in an overseas polling station in Sydney, Australia and that Mr Odinga had received the most votes.

Variations of this message, presumably designed to energize supporters to get out and vote, circulated on WhatsApp, Twitter and Facebook.

However, it was all made up. There were no Kenyan diaspora polling stations in Australia.

Whichever way it goes, Kenya seems likely to dodge a bullet—namely the riot that occurred in 2007 when candidate Odinga charged he had been cheated of victory.

In post-election violence that followed, 1,200 people died and about 600,000 fled their homes.



## Much needed humanitarian food grain departs for Ethiopia, Somalia and Kenya, lifting blockade

(GIN) –

A U.N.-chartered vessel has been loaded with humanitarian food grain for Africa, in a first step toward releasing much needed food aid that had been trapped in the Ukraine.

The vessel will carry 23,000 tons of grain for Ethiopia, Somalia and Kenya as part of a U.N.-backed plan to move the grain trapped by Russia's war on Ukraine and help relieve a global food crisis.

The three East African nations had been enduring the worst drought in in four decades.

The sub-region was also affected by three exceptionally wet seasons, bringing widespread floods, displacement, and a locust outbreak that was the worst in 25 years in Ethiopia and Somalia, and in 75 years in Kenya.

This exceptional series of consecutive drought and flood shocks has had a devastating impact on agriculture, rangelands, and water resources, leading to a sharp decrease in food availability and food access due to food production shortages, increases in staple food and water prices, and erosion of livelihoods, which in turn are driving an upsurge in food insecurity and malnutrition.

"The wheat grain will go to the World Food Program's operations in Ethiopia," U.N. spokesperson Stephane Dujarric told the Voice of America.

It's the first food delivery to Africa under a plan brokered by the UN and Turkey in late July to unblock grain trapped by Russia's war on Ukraine and bring relief to millions worldwide.

After being loaded with wheat, the ship MV Brave Commander will travel to Djibouti, where the grain will be unloaded and sent to Ethiopia, according to the United Nations.

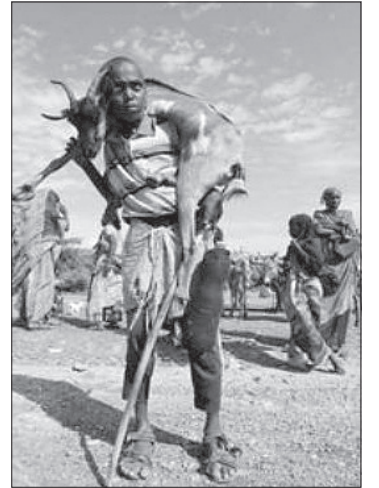
About 20 million tons of grain had been unable to leave Ukraine since Russia's February invasion of the country. Ukraine hopes to increase its maritime exports to more than 3 million tons of grain and other agriculture products per month in the near future.

Meanwhile, two more ships left from Ukraine's Black Sea ports Saturday, said Turkey's defense ministry. So far, 16 cargo vessels have left the county under the U.N.-brokered agreement.

Ukraine's infrastructure ministry said Saturday that 16 ships carrying 450,000 tons of agriculture products had departed from Ukrainian sea ports since early August under the deal, which ensured safe passage for the vessels.

Across the region, at least 19.4 million people are affected by the drought that began in October 2020. At least 18.6 million people across Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia are living with acute food insecurity and rising malnutrition. They could number 20 million by September.

Call it by what it is – a national disaster, wrote the Addis Standard, a local paper in Ethiopia. At least 7 million livestock—which families rely upon for sustenance and livelihoods—have died across the region since October 2020. Consequently, children have less access to the milk they need. Across the three countries, malnutrition rates



are rising: more than 7.1 million children are acutely malnourished, including about 2 million who are severely acutely malnourished, according to UNICEF.

More than 11.6 million people cannot access enough safe water for drinking, cooking, and cleaning. Many watering holes have dried up or become unsafe, heightening the risk of water-borne diseases and increasing the risk of infections. Water shortages are worsened by the heat, which is forecast to continue until September 2022.

Somalia, water prices have increased up to 72 per cent since November 2021. Women and girls walk farther to access water—often up to double or triple the distances they would have to walk during a regular dry season—exposing them to dehydration and violence. Water shortages are leading to poorer hygiene in health facilities and schools.

## Rising prices, low incomes bedevil Sierra Leoneans and their politicians

(GIN) –

Americans aren't alone in turning purple over the skyrocketing costs for housing, food, medical care and fuel for the car.

Last month in Sierra Leone, women street vendors gathered peacefully to protest the soaring cost of living. This week, the number swelled to the hundreds as many more protestors turned out, clashing with police and demanding the president's resignation over the government's perceived failure to address the rising prices.

At least 27 people died in the anti-government protests, police and other sources were reported to say, sharply raising the death toll from the previous day's clashes.

Protesters demonstrated again on Friday in Freetown, the capital city, but this time were met with police firing live ammunition at the crowds, according to videos shared on social media. The extent



of injuries was unknown.

Protestors were heard chanting "Bio must go", referring to President Julius Maada Bio, who is currently in the United Kingdom on a private visit.

Sierra Leone is well known for its vast endowment in minerals which include conflict or war diamonds, rutile, bauxite, gold, iron ore, limonite, platinum, chromite, coltan, tantalite, columbite, and zircon, as well as promising petroleum potential.

Yet the West Africa nation, bordered by Guinea, Liberia, and on the west by the Atlantic Ocean,

is one of the world's poorest countries and has been for over 40 years. Nearly 30 percent of the population suffers from chronic hunger, according to the World Food Program, and more than half its population lives below the poverty line.

Sierra Leone serves as an illustration for the risks faced by African countries also rich in mineral resources.

Meanwhile, in a recent interview with the BBC, President Julius Bio blamed outside forces for the

Continued on page 6



## The long-awaited grand opening of the Jackie Robinson Museum

By Menra Mapfumo

As was covered previously, pictorially in the New York Beacon, we now offer an editorial perspective of the museum's grand opening

On July 27 in New York, NY, after years of anticipation and fundraising, the Founder of the Jackie Robinson Foundation and the wife of Jackie Robinson, Mrs. Rachel Robinson opened The Jackie Robinson Museum.

The museum will educate visitors by showcasing the life, legacy, and accomplishments of Jackie and Rachel Robinson, and not just their role in transforming America's pastime, but their social justice activism. The Jackie Robinson Museum is the only Civil Rights museum in New York City.

At 100 years old, Mrs. Robinson herself was there to cut the ribbon herself in front of a crowd of several hundred which included her two remaining children, Sharon and David Robinson, and many of her grandchildren.

Jackie Robinson Foundation CEO Della Britton described what she wants young people to get out of the museum: "We want them to become knowledgeable about Jackie Robinson and Rachel Robinson and their legacy. We want them to be inspired by that. We want them to learn from the challenges Jackie had, from strategies he had for how to create change. Primarily, interested in equal opportunity, interested in economic empowerment. He spent his entire life working to close the achievement gap to get a level playing field. So, we want them to learn the story and then we want them to be inspired to continue the work, and to create a society that is more just."

Former Attorney General Eric Holder shared how Jackie Robinson inspired him as he grew up: "Jackie Robinson was a hero of mine... Jackie Robinson was the

key to my interest in the Brooklyn Dodgers. The first team to integrate. You could not be a young Black man in New York without rooting for the Dodgers. To see this museum, it is the culmination of recognition that I think he deserved. I think this is not only a testament to the past, it is also a call to people to be engaged in the future in the way that Jackie and Rachel want."

New York City Mayor Eric Adams expressed how he felt about the impact Jackie Robinson had on his life: "Just the belief that because something seems impossible, it is possible. We cannot always find the safest pathway. He just inspired me... I was the first Black Borough President and I am the second Black mayor. Going through the challenges of breaking down those barriers, I just think so many of us can look at his story... Other people think it is not possible or doable, but he did it. It is also about partnership. You cannot get away from his love affair with his wonderful wife and even as he transitioned, she continued. That is why this museum is open. That is why the [Jackie Robinson Foundation] is doing well."

Major League Baseball Players Association Executive Director Tony Clark and Vice President

of the MLB Players Alliance C.C. Sabathia gave their opinions on what needs to be done to get more African Americans back on the playing field, and as managers and owners.

Clark said, "There is a long answer and a lot of moving pieces to that... As it relates to ownership, as it relates to management, those are decisions that ownership and management are going to have to make... We are hopeful that at some point in time the light will indeed come on and the folks that are making decisions on that side of the equation will appreciate the value of a more diverse ownership group and a more diverse management group..."

Sabathia said, "That is a big issue... That is [The Players Alliance's] big mission, to get kids back playing. When I was playing, I thought the kids were not playing baseball, but that is not true. Kids are playing baseball at a high clip, especially in our community. We just got to give them more opportunities."

Sabathia shined a light on Major League Baseball's development programs like the Hank Aaron Invitational and Elite Development Invitational. Sabathia mentioned some of the players drafted this year that came up through those programs.



He said, "It is just about making [the programs] bigger and expanding and doing a better job of identifying those kids that want to play baseball."

New York Yankees General Manager Brian Cashman articulated what the opening of the museum meant to him: "The Yankees were there for the beginning and we have stepped up. [Former Yankees Owner George Steinbrenner] had a great relationship with Rachel Robinson... It means everything. First of all, I did not grow up a Yankee fan. I grew up a Dodger fan so I know the history of Jackie Robinson, the impact he had not only on the game of baseball, but on the world, especially here in America. He was a game changer. We celebrate his life, his impact, and obviously a lot more work to be done. He is a pillar of hope and strength for so many. To remind us of where we were, but also where we need to keep going. It is a pleasure to be here for the opening. It is my trade deadline, but when it is Jackie Robinson you stop everything and come."

Director Spike Lee, and renowned journalist, biographer and the author of the text on the very walls of the Jackie Robinson Museum, Howard Bryant opined on what most impressed them about the museum and what the opening meant to them.

Lee said, "... This is something that the queen Rachel Robinson

wanted for her husband and herself. This is a place where this should be one of the top museums. Not just in New York City. Not just in Washington D.C., but the United States of America. You cannot underestimate the significance, the importance, of Jackie Robinson... April 14, 1947, is a delineation... the day Jackie Robinson broke the color barrier and it is one of the greatest days in the history of this country. That is what it means."

Bryant said, "It means more than I can say... The thing that means most to me is that Rachel is here to see it. To be able to see a vision come through. She's wanted this for more than 20 years and to be able to see it with your own two eyes, it brings you to tears. It is really special. To me, what I am really impressed about is the dedication of seeing a project through because this was hard to get done. We always say things like 'Do not talk about it, be about it.' The number of people who were committed to make this happen, it tells you how important this is and it tells you how when you are really committed to something worthwhile see it through. You fight for it. You make sure that everybody else around you builds you up. This is a testament to... Jackie's commitment, Rachel's commitment, to the commitment of everybody who wanted to see this happen and now it is here."



## The 'Origins Of Charlottesville's Monument' documentary, a shining light on forgotten history

Philadelphiaobserver.com

A new PBS documentary explores the origin story of Charlottesville's confederate monuments. Produced by The Memory Project, a program of the University of Virginia's Democracy Initiative, "Unveiling: The Origins of Charlottesville's Monuments" offers a nuanced conversation about the city's confederate monuments.

Running a little under 30 minutes, the documentary explores the period between 1902 and 1924 and features commentary from key figures in the movement

to place this period in its proper context. "Unveiling: The Origins of Charlottesville's Monuments" features a mixture of images and newspaper clips interspersed through the conversation providing a broader context for the white supremacist narrative enveloping Charlottesville in the early 1900s.

Andrea Douglas, executive director of the Jefferson School African American Culture Center, recounted the decimation of a diverse community to make way for the Stonewall Jackson statue and surrounding park.

"What had been a Black and mixed race neighborhood, be-

comes a park that is anchored by a confederate statue," Douglas said. "The discussion that begins to ensue about McKee Row is very similar to a discussion that will be used to displace Black people in this community on more than one occasion."

These statues became a personification for the rise of the New South becoming a rallying point for a new iteration of the Klu Klux Klan and other groups like the Anglo Saxon Club. Those who decry monument removal often never address the historical context for the placements, often without any concern for local Black communi-



ties only one generation removed from slavery.

Led by Associate Professor of Religious Studies Jalane Schmidt, The Memory Project seeks to provide an objective examination of the past to provide a public accounting for the Charlottesville community and a path forward.

"It is not just simply about

statues but is a way that we are also constructing the ideology of whiteness, and that ideology also includes, just like any other ideology, includes ritual and includes pageantry and includes public demonstration of the rightness and goodness of all of that space as well," Schmidt said during the documentar



# Classified

## ATTORNEY

Lung Cancer? And Age 60+? You And Your Family May Be Entitled To Significant Cash Award. No Risk. No Money Out Of Pocket. For Information Call 877-225-4813

## AUCTIONS

NYS SURPLUS REAL PROPERTY PUBLIC AUCTION: 11/8/19, 335 Nashopa Road, Mamakating, NY, 3,767sf colonial, 3.26acs, 5BR, 3.5baths, fin-bsmt, MINBID \$249,000; Open House: 11:00am-1:00pm, 10/15,10/23,11/1; ogs.ny.gov/NYSStore 518-474-2195

## AUTO DONATIONS

Donate your car to Wheels For Wishes, benefiting Make-A-Wish. We offer free towing and your donation is 100% tax deductible. Call (917) 336-1254

## FINANCE

Denied Social Security Disability? Appeal! If you're 50+, filed SSD and denied, our attorneys can help! Win or Pay Nothing! Strong, recent work history needed. 866-

979-0096 [Steppacher Law Offices LLC Principal Office: 224 Adams Ave Scranton PA 18503]

## HEALTH

A PLACE FOR MOM has helped over a million families find senior living. Our trusted, local advisors help find solutions to your unique needs at no cost to you. Call 855-977-3677

SAVE ON YOUR NEXT PRESCRIPTION! World Health Link. Price Match Guarantee! Prescriptions Required. CIPA Certified. Over 1500 medications available. CALL Today For A Free Price Quote. 1-866-569-7986 Call Now!

VIAGRA & CIALIS! 60 pills for \$99. 100 pills for \$150. FREE shipping. Money back guaranteed! 1-855-579-8907

## HOME IMPROVEMENT

BATHROOM RENOVATIONS. EASY, ONE DAY updates! We specialize in safe bathing. Grab bars, no slip flooring & seated showers. Call for a free in-home consultation: 888-657-9488.

## MISCELLANEOUS

COMPUTER ISSUES? FREE DIAGNOSIS by GEEKS ON SITE! Virus Removal, Data Recovery! 24/7 EMERGENCY SERVICE, In-home repair/On-line solutions . \$20 OFF ANY SERVICE! 844-892-3990

## TV INTERNET PHONE

DISH TV \$59.99 For 190 Channels + \$14.95 High Speed Internet. Free Installation, Smart HD DVR Included, Free Voice Remote. Some restrictions apply. 1-888-609-9405

Get DIRECTV! ONLY \$35/month! 155 Channels & 1000s of Shows/Movies On Demand (w/ SELECT All Included Package.) PLUS Stream on Up to FIVE Screens Simultaneously at No Additional Cost. Call DIRECTV 1-888-534-6918

Spectrum Triple Play! TV, Internet & Voice for \$99.97/mo. Fastest Internet. 100 MB per second speed. Free Primetime on Demand. Unlimited Voice. NO CONTRACTS. Call 1-855-977-7198 or visit <http://tripleplaytoday.com/press>



Discover the world's best walk-in bathtub from *American Standard*

5 Reasons American Standard Walk-in Tubs are Your Best Choice

- 1 Backed by American Standard's 140 years of experience
- 2 Ultra low entry for easy entering and exiting
- 3 Patented Quick Drain® fast water removal system
- 4 Lifetime Warranty on the bath AND installation, INCLUDING labor backed by American Standard
- 5 44 Hydrotherapy jets for an invigorating massage

**\$1,500 SAVINGS**

Includes FREE American Standard Right Height Toilet Limited Time Offer! Call Today!

**888-609-0248**

Receive a free American Standard Cadet toilet with full installation of a Liberation Walk-In Bath, Liberation Shower, or Deluxe Shower. Offer valid only while supplies last. Limit one per household. Must be first time purchaser. See [www.walkintubs.americanstandard-us.com](http://www.walkintubs.americanstandard-us.com) for other restrictions and for licensing, warranty, and company information. ©2022 American Standard, Inc. All rights reserved. NYS Lic. #2022748-DCA. Safety Tubs Co. LLC does not sell in Nassau NY, Westchester NY, Putnam NY, Rockland NY.



**Donate A Boat or Car Today!**

Boat Angel

**"2-Night Free Vacation!"**

**800-700-BOAT** (2628)

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

sponsored by boat angel outreach centers STOP CRIMES AGAINST CHILDREN



**Saving a Life EVERY 11 MINUTES**

*I'm never alone*

Life Alert® is always here for me even when away from home.

One touch of a button sends help fast, 24/7.

Help at Home

Life Alert®

with GPS! Help On-the-Go

**FREE! FIRST AID KIT WHEN YOU ORDER!**

Batteries Never Need Charging.

For a FREE brochure call:

**1-800-404-9776**



**DENTAL Insurance**

Physicians Mutual Insurance Company

A less expensive way to help get the dental care you deserve!

CALL NOW! 1-855-225-1434

- ✓ Get help paying dental bills and keep more money in your pocket
- ✓ This is real dental insurance – NOT just a discount plan
- ✓ You can get coverage before your next checkup

Don't wait! Call now and we'll rush you a FREE Information Kit with all the details.

FREE Information Kit

Here's the information you requested on Dental Insurance

Your Name Here

1-855-225-1434

Visit us online at [www.dental50plus.com/nypress](http://www.dental50plus.com/nypress)

Insurance Policy P15ONY 6129 MB17-NM003Ec



UNCF  
A mind is a terrible thing to waste®

**IT'S NEVER TOO EARLY TO INVEST IN A GOOD THING.**

Introducing Better Futures™—a whole new kind of investment with a greater return than money. When you invest, it helps kids go to college. Because a mind is a terrible thing to waste but a wonderful thing to invest in.™ Invest in Better Futures at [UNCF.ORG/INVEST](http://UNCF.ORG/INVEST)

## Subscribe Philadelphia Observer

405 Lexington Avenue, 26th Floor, New York, NY 10174.

[philadelphiaobserver.com](http://philadelphiaobserver.com)



# Interview

## Grace Garland is 'sure' about her lyrics

By Debbie Burke  
Guest Scribe

Singer/Actress Grace Garland has that knack, lyrics that hit in the gut and a beat reminiscent of the great dance music of disc, with soul and swing. There's so much history here to unravel as Garland's discography is deeply rhythmic and singably melodic while reaching us where we live.

Garland was nominated for the Broadway World Cabaret Awards for another song "New York Attitude," in 2020 and that same year, it won Best Rock Song in the Clouzine International Music Awards (Clouzine also conferred the Best Indie Song on her "Lovers Never Lie"). She's won silver for "I'll Cry Later" and bronze for "Tits and Toes" (probably one of the funniest songs of the past few years).

"Got to Be Sure" features Pianist Evgeny Lebedev with a release date of August 24, 2022. "Got to Be Sure" was a song that was hidden in my library, that came to light during the downtime we had during the pandemic! I was thrilled with the discovery. Plus the lyrical message never goes out of style! The sound of the full band, with the background singers, is a definite joy to my heart! I had become used to working with a duo/trio

'which I love' and forgotten how wonderful that sound is to the ear and soul too.

"I love the unique originality of it. The feeling that one cannot truly describe the genre, like a 'musical mutt'... pure fun and carefree vocals, and a nice groove. Evgeny Lebedev is one of the best at his craft! He 'gets me' as a singer/producer there is no struggle, just cool vibes. He enhances my project/song with his talent as a jazz pianist extraordinaire," said Garland.

"Not just a brilliant singer and cabaret host at Brooklyn's Cafe Anyway, she sings flawlessly in Russian and has recorded a boatload of songs with the Grace Garland Band in Russia. Try the stunning "Million Alykh Roz/The Autumn Leaves" on YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QhzZnhFcJIM>. Visit <https://gracegarland.com> and check out her first interview on this blog," says Burke during one-on-one chat-fest.

### More About Ms. Garland

Best Indie Song (Fall 2019) CLOUZINE International Music Award for Jazz CD "Lovers Never Lie (LIVE)" on Grace Garland-LADY G!-2019 Global Music Award-Silver Medal-AL BUM (Grace Garland-LADY G! 2018 Global Music

## Grace Garland

## Got To Be Sure!



Grace Garland

Award-BRONZE Medal for creativity/originality-"Tits and Toes," 2017 Global Music Award Winner-Silver Medal-Female Vocalist

for "I'll Cry Later," 2018 Global Music Award-Silver Medal-lyrics/songwriter for "Before You Fall Asleep." Grace is also a Record-

ing Academy voting member, BMI Recording artist/songwriter SAG-AFTRA AEA Actress/Voice-overTalent

## Charlie Wilson reclaims #1 spot as Billboard's top male artist

Posted By Don Thomas

Charlie Wilson's "No Stoppin' Us," featuring, Babyface, Johnny Gill, and K-Ci Hailey is #1 on Billboard's Adult R&B Airplay chart, making Wilson Billboard's Top Adult Male R&B Artists with the most No. 1's ever on the chart. "No Stoppin' Us" additionally makes history as Billboard's first song ever with 4 credited artists to reach No. 1 on the chart. This accomplishment also gives K-Ci Hailey his first No. 1 song as a solo artist. All 4 artists are managed under P Music Group who is promoting the record, which was released via the Parandise imprint, giving the label its first No. 1 song and P Music Group its eighth No. 1.

"I had to do a double take seeing our song on top with Bruno Mars, Beyonce, and Lizzo. Despite the odds there really is no stoppin' us O.G.s. The last song with four or more credited acts to come close was Kirk Franklin's "Lean on Me," featuring Mary J. Blige, Bono, R. Kelly, Crystal Lewis and The Family, which reached No. 2 in 1999," recalls Wilson.

Michael Paran, president/CEO of Parandise/P Music Group shared with Billboard, "The greatest satisfaction is that for the first time I've released and promoted a record with four of my clients at the same time. Having these legends



(L-R) K-Ci Hailey, Babyface, Charlie Wilson and Johnny Gill (Photo: P Music Group)

together and capture a No. 1 is a historic moment for us." "No Stoppin' Us" interpolates McFadden and

Whitehead's "Ain't No Stoppin' Us Now," which reached No. 1 on the Hot R&B/Hip Hop Songs chart in

1979. "No Stoppin' Us," marks Wilson's 11th song on this chart's top 20, Babyface's 10th hit, Gill's 5th

and Hailey's 2nd. Charlie Wilson is slated to receive a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame in 2023.



# Ahhhhhhh. That “be your own boss” feeling. Join the Cricket Authorized Retailer Network!



## Why Join?

### **Location, Location, Location:**

- We have 4,800+ stores.
- 98% of them are independently owned and operated by Authorized Retailers.

### **Development and Expansion:**

- Cricket Wireless is one of the fastest-growing prepaid wireless companies.
- We now have over 9 million subscribers, which is double our subscriber base from 2014.

Cricket is looking for exclusive authorized retailers across the nation who want to be part of an extraordinary team. With nationwide coverage, unlimited talk & text, various data options, an exceptional lineup of smartphones, and no annual contract, we pride ourselves on providing a simple, delightful customer experience—and you can, too.

If you think you have the drive to be part of our amazing Cricket Authorized Retailer Team, contact us today!

**Take the next step by contacting us at:**  
[becomeacricketdealer@cricketwireless.com](mailto:becomeacricketdealer@cricketwireless.com)

Smile, You're on

**cricket**  
wireless