



'Madea's Family Reunion' premiere warms up cold Los Angeles night

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Lady Knights state champs once again

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FROST ILLUSTRATED®

Vol. 38
Issue 10

March 8

March 14
2006

Frost Illustrated®
3121 S. Calhoun St.

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'Mike Majik' Boyd brings sweetness back to soul music in tribute to American soldiers

Courtesy of Phat Sound Promotions

Years ago, singer Arthur Conley scored big extolling the virtues and beauty of "Sweet Soul Music." He started off asking, "Do you like good music?"

If, like Conley, you like sweet, soulful music, take time to give a listen to Michael "Mike Majik" Boyd.

A veteran actor who's been in number of movies and television shows (Did we mention he's also a relative of famous baseball player "Oil Can" Boyd?), Boyd represents a real breath of fresh air in today's world. Though modern in theme and sound, his work harkens back to a time when there was a sweetness and purity in soul music. While others sing and rap about murder, infidelity and the worst hedonistic tendencies, Boyd reminds us that real love, unity, hard work, prayer, honesty and patriotism are still valued by some people in the community.

Boyd's music is well-executed, but simple enough in tone and sentiment for anyone to grab on first listen. His songwriting is light and airy, favoring the type of melodies and rhythms that make you want to sing when you want to be happy. It's the kind of music that sounds good hearing a pro like Boyd sing, or hearing a group of smiling youngsters sing at school—whole-some and hopeful.

"American Soldier Thank You (For all the things you do),"

Boyd's latest release, is a prime example of the kind of heartfelt sweetness missing from too much of today's music. It's a song in praise of the service members of the U.S. military have given. Reminiscent in musical tone of something the late great Sam Cooke might have done (largely thanks to Boyd's beautiful, Cooke-like voice and delivery), the bouncy, hope filled song is devoid of overt political sentiments and zeroes in on honoring those out in the field. Interestingly, it never makes mention of the ongoing

conflicts in Iraq or Afghanistan, and perhaps that's the point. Boyd gives folks an opportunity to support those who fight to defend the country on the basis of devotion to a cause—not government policy.

"We, the American public, owe America's fighting forces much more than a few welcome home celebrations and parades," explained Boyd in an interview last year. "We need to respect the soldiers on the level that they respect us. If members of the Armed Forces are willing to lay [their lives] down for us, we

should be willing to stand in every way for each one of them and their families. Not matter what our politics, or how we feel about war, as Americans we should honor and appreciate our men and women in the armed forces and let them know that their sacrifices are not going unnoticed."

According to reports, the song already is getting airplay, primarily in the nation's southern regions and is scheduled to be played at select U.S. Army events during the summer. Plans are in motion to

have Boyd perform it at a major fundraiser at Ray Stadium in Meridian, Miss., for victims of Hurricane Katrina, again in the summer. And, he's doing more than talking. Proceeds from the sales of "American Soldier Thank You (for all the things you do)" have been donated directly to the Bob Hope USO for distribution among folks in need in the Armed Forces.

Lest some folks still think Boyd is being opportunistic and just (See "Mike Majik" on page 18)

'Mike Majik'

(Continued from page 9)

playing on public sentiments about today's war debate just to make a fast buck, take a look back at some of his other work, particularly his 1999 release, "I Stand for You." Standing together as a community and nation and brotherhood are the central themes of the seven-song collection. On the opening title track, Boyd reminds us that all of us are God's children and deserve the same freedoms and opportunities. And, he explains a too often overlooked truth: Until we fix our inside—and that includes the inside of our own nation—we can't expect the external world to be better. It's an appeal for everyone in the nation to "join hands" and stand for each other. It that would happen, "what a beautiful place this would be."

One song, "Melting Pot," is an appeal for people to stop the hate and live life as a melting pot in which all people are welcome and valued. "It hurts so bad to live this way," explains Boyd, adding that it's God's plan that we all live together in peace.

Boyd continues those themes of unity, love, peace and divine guidance on "Does Anybody Know (Love is the Answer)" and "What Color is Love." Don't get the wrong idea, however. Boyd doesn't shy away from the problems of racial discord we suffer in this

country. What he does do, however, is remind us that we as individuals and a nation can change for the better as he explains on "I See the Light." Of course, he explains, that light could be faith or the "end of the end of the human race." It's our choice, but it's clear Boyd believes we can make it to a better world here on earth—"salvation for the human race."

"Will You Listen," is a beautiful slow number that continues the theme of the need for brotherhood. There's plenty of powerful social criticism in this one:

"What would say to the man in the moon/when you can't even speak to your brother in this room/Drugs are everywhere/politicians are lying they don't care..."

Again, Boyd points out what's wrong, but doesn't give up on hope for a better tomorrow. We just have to listen, wise up and chose a better path.

The CD ends with the upbeat lightly island-flavored "Time to Play (The Working Man's Anthem."

It's nice to know there are still some people to remind us that, despite problems, life need not be constant drudgery. What the world needs now—particularly and world in need of more "sweet soul music"—is more folks like Michael "Mike Majik" Boyd. Check him out at his website at www.singboy.com.



AMERICAN SOLDIER THANK YOU - CLIMBS THE CHARTS TO # 1