

# LIONSGATE



Written and directed by Tyler Perry

## Preliminary Production Notes

Rating: PG-13 (for thematic material, drug and sexual content, some violence and language)  
Run time: 95 mins.

## **THE CAST**

**Gabrielle Union** / Julia

**Idris Elba** / Monty

**Lou Gossett, Jr.** / Willie

**Tasha Smith** / Jennifer

**Gary Sturgis** / Joseph

**Tracee Ellis Ross** / Cynthia

**Malinda Williams** / Maya

**Terri J. Vaughn** / Brenda

**Cassie Davis** / Rita

**Sierra McClain** / Sierra

**China Anne McClain** / China Anne

**Lauryn McClain** / Lauryn

**THE FILMMAKERS**

Written and Directed by / **Tyler Perry**

Produced by / **Tyler Perry**

Produced by / **Reuben Cannon**

Executive Producer / **Michael Paseornek**

Co-Producers / **Roger M. Bobb**  
/ **D. Scott Lumpkin**

Director of Photography / **Toyomichi Kurita**

Production Designer / **Ina Mayhew**

Edited by / **Maysie Hoy, A.C.E.**

Costume Designer / **Keith G. Lewis**

Music by / **Brian McKnight**

Music Supervisor / **Joel C. High**

Casting by / **Kim Williams (LA)**  
/ **Shay Griffin (Atlanta)**

## **SYNOPSIS**

A romantic drama about family, community and love against the odds, TYLER PERRY'S DADDY'S LITTLE GIRLS stars Gabrielle Union (RUNNING WITH SCISSORS, BAD BOYS II, DELIVER US FROM EVA) and Idris Elba (HBO's "The Wire," THE GOSPEL, SOMETIMES IN APRIL) in writer/director Tyler Perry's follow-up to his number one box office hits DIARY OF A MAD BLACK WOMAN and MADEA'S FAMILY REUNION.

A single father, Monty (Elba) is a garage mechanic who lives in a poor neighborhood and struggles to make ends meet as he raises his three young daughters on his own. But when the courts award custody of his daughters to his corrupt, drug-dealing ex-wife Jennifer (Tasha Smith), Monty desperately tries to win them back, enlisting the help of Julia (Union), a beautiful -- and hard-nosed -- attorney he meets during his short stint as a chauffeur. While Monty and the Ivy-League-educated Julia couldn't be less alike, an unexpected romance blossoms...and it soon begins to feel like true love. But in order for their relationship to survive, the couple must reconcile their two very different worlds -- and overcome the forces that threaten to tear Monty's family apart.

TYLER PERRY'S DADDY'S LITTLE GIRLS is written and directed by Tyler Perry, and also stars Tasha Smith, Gary Sturgis, Tracee Ellis Ross, and Academy Award®-winner Lou Gossett, Jr. The supporting cast includes Malinda Williams, Terri J. Vaughn, Cassie Davis, Juanita Jennings, and LaVan Davis. TYLER PERRY'S DADDY'S LITTLE GIRLS is produced by Tyler Perry and Reuben Cannon (DIARY OF A MAD BLACK WOMAN, MADEA'S FAMILY REUNION).

## **ABOUT THE PRODUCTION**

With TYLER PERRY'S DADDY'S LITTLE GIRLS, his third feature and second outing as director, Tyler Perry delivers his most ambitious work to date. The film tackles the subject of fatherhood in black America via the story of Monty (Idris Elba), a garage mechanic fighting to regain custody of his three young daughters. A man of limited financial means but unshakeable integrity, Monty takes on his malicious ex-wife and her violent, drug dealer boyfriend in order to secure the best future for the children he loves. Infusing the film with his characteristic blend of high drama, antic comedy, deep spirituality and rousing songs, Perry creates a heartfelt homage to fathers -- and a welcome reminder that paternal commitment is alive and well in African-American communities.

Since making his feature debut as a writer, producer and actor in 2005's DIARY OF A MAD BLACK WOMAN, Perry has maintained a breakneck creative pace. He wrote, directed, produced and starred in the follow-up to DIARY, MADEA'S FAMILY REUNION; toured and performed in over 300 stage shows across the country; wrote his first book, the #1 bestseller *"Don't Make a Black Woman Take Off Her Earrings: Madea's Uninhibited Commentaries on Life and Love"*; and created the syndicated television sitcom "House of Payne."

For his third feature, Perry challenged himself to do something different. While his first two films were based on his plays, DADDY'S LITTLE GIRLS was written directly for the screen. It is also the first of his films not to feature his popular characters Madea and Uncle Joe, whom he also portrays. Perry notes that this approach allowed him to delve deeply into his writing. "I just wanted to write and take my time," he comments. "As a filmmaker, I've tried to tell stories that people can relate to. With DADDY'S LITTLE GIRLS, I wanted to tell a story about a man who takes care of his children. It's about the triumph of one man's heart."

In part, DADDY'S LITTLE GIRLS is Perry's answer to media's largely negative portrayals of African-American men as fathers. He describes the character he created, Monty, as "just a regular guy who grew up and lives the 'hood. Not unlike many black men, Monty didn't know his father and he barely knew his mom. But with children and age, he decides to walk the straight and narrow so as to not fall into the stereotype but to be the best man that he can be."

Perry's producing partner Reuben Cannon believes viewers will welcome Perry's fresh perspective. "Tyler Perry is so in touch with the hunger among audiences, especially black audiences, for stories other than the one's we've seen," the producer comments. "The story of a father who is devoted to his children, supports his children and has a dream for his children is something we rarely see. We've seen some African-American father/son relationships with BOYZ N THE HOOD and to some degree in a movie I produced called GET ON THE BUS. But I can't recall seeing a film about a father with his daughters in a long time."

DADDY'S LITTLE GIRLS is also about the search for love. It traces the romance that gradually develops between Monty and Julia (Gabrielle), a workaholic attorney whom he briefly chauffeurs and who subsequently represents him in his custody battle. Here, too, Perry drew

inspiration from real life. “Julia is very loosely based on a friend of mine who is extremely successful but is having trouble finding a man,” the filmmaker explains. “I wrote about what I felt was universal for working women and men who are looking for love. Julia works very hard, is very successful, very proud and very strong. As fantastic as Julia’s professional life might be, she also wants love. But she’s having some issues finding a decent man because her standards are so high.”

Working-class Monty is an unlikely romantic prospect for the Ivy League-educated Julia and their relationship gets off to a rocky start. As a novice chauffeur, Monty makes some mistakes that aggravate his client, who demands, and is accustomed to receiving, seamless service. But their initial frostiness thaws as they get to know each other while working on Monty’s case. “You have two African-Americans who fall in love in spite of their cultural and economic differences,” says Cannon. He notes that over the course of the film, the cultural divide as Julia rediscovers African American Atlanta. “Julia’s world and the world she deals with are very white and she really has removed herself from Atlanta’s African-American culture. It takes Monty to bring her back home, and then she falls back into it very easily.”

Community is another major theme in the film, which is set in Atlanta’s historic Auburn district, once the South’s most prosperous and entrepreneurial African-American community and the birthplace of Dr. Martin Luther King. Linking the neighborhood’s past to its present is Monty’s boss, garage owner Willie (Louis Gossett, Jr.). “Willie is the moral voice of the community,” Perry comments. “He has been in the neighborhood for sixty-seven years, and he has seen it change. He remembers the 50s and 60s, when black people owned businesses along Auburn Avenue. Looking at the drug dealers who have come in and taken over makes him sad and disappointed.”

Among those drug dealers are Monty’s ex-wife Jennifer (Tasha Smith) and her ruthless boyfriend Joe (Gary Sturgis). When Monty and Willie decide to stand up to the criminal couple and their brethren, they are defending not only Monty’s children, but an entire community. And their neighbors ultimately take to the streets to reclaim what is theirs. “It takes one person to start the fight, and then if the rest of the community gets into it, it will be amazing,” Perry reasons. “I saw a television report about a woman who chased all the drug dealers out of her neighborhood and the entire community got behind her. I wanted to speak to what would happen if our community decided to take back not only our homes and our block, but our children, and drive out the bad elements from the neighborhood.”

DADDY’S LITTLE GIRLS displays Perry signature affinity for mixing genres as it shifts between drama and comedy, romance and religion. It’s an approach that is rarely attempted in mainstream moviemaking, but one that Perry has finessed time and again, first in his phenomenally successful stage plays and then in DIARY OF A MAD BLACK WOMAN and MADEA’S FAMILY REUNION. Says Cannon, “Tyler breaks the rules. He’ll do a comedy/drama/romance *and* spiritual film all in one because that more closely resembles real life.”

Actress Gabrielle Union vividly recalls her first encounter with Perry’s work: watching DIARY OF A MAD BLACK WOMAN on an airplane. “I was just bawling, completely oblivious to

everything around me. And the stewardess asks, ‘Ma'am, are you okay?’ And I go, ‘It's just so sad!’ That’s when I knew I had to work with Tyler.”

Not long after, Union found herself on another flight, seated next to Perry’s agent, Charles King. “I said to him, ‘When can I work with your golden boy? I'd like to hitch my wagon to your rising star.’ Those were pretty much my exact words,” the actress reports. “About a month and a half later, I get a call from Charles: ‘Tyler's written this script for you.’ I read it and said, ‘Let's go.’ Tyler has a knack for finding the kinds of stories we see every day, but that Hollywood hasn’t exploited yet. He takes stories that we are all familiar with -- as community members, as family members, as coworkers -- and brings them to life. And he does it beautifully.”

Perry affirms that he has long admired Union’s work and the versatility she has shown in both comedies like *DELIVER US FROM EVA* and *BRING IT ON* and dramas like *SOMETHING THE LORD MADE*. He found it easy to imagine the actress playing the Ivy League graduate Julia. “I saw Gabrielle’s face and smile as I was writing,” he remembers. “Her sophistication and grace is something I knew everyone could relate to.”

Union thinks that Julia’s long romantic dry spell and comical blind dates will resonate with many working women. “Julia is a professional who hasn't made a lot of time in her life for love,” Union says. “When you get to your 30s and you’re still single, the thing that comes up, especially among black women professionals, is ‘are you going to have to step outside of your comfort zone?’”

Monty, is certainly outside of Julia’s socioeconomic comfort zone. In casting this critical role, the filmmakers were seeking an actor with the magnetism of a romantic lead, who would also emanate a father’s nurturing warmth, dedication and strength. The search quickly led to Idris Elba, the British actor who won wide acclaim, not to mention an ardent female fanbase, when he portrayed Stringer Bell in the award-winning HBO series “*The Wire*.” Remarks producer Cannon, “Idris is an exciting actor and his craft is exceptional. I think a leading man must possess three things: physical appeal, a sense of danger and a sense of humor. Idris has all that, and charm in abundance.”

From their first filmed audition, it was clear that Union and Elba would make a potent onscreen couple. Upon viewing the tape, Perry recalls, “I had to ask, ‘Do they know each other??’ And Reuben says, ‘No, they just met that day.’ The chemistry was instant. It was amazing, electric.”

*DADDY’S LITTLE GIRLS* is, ultimately, the story of a father’s love for his children. Elba, himself the father of a young daughter, responded strongly to the film’s depiction of a working-class black father. “We are bombarded with images of black men that don’t look after their kids,” he comments. “But this movie turns that whole theory on its head. Monty has three girls who live with their mother's mother. But he sees his kids, he raises his kids. When their grandma dies, Monty has to raise them himself. But something happens and the kids are sent back to their natural mother. I wanted to tell the story of this man’s struggle to get his children back. Monty has a lot of layers that we don’t often see in film characters, black or white.”

The ensemble cast of DADDY'S LITTLE GIRLS reflects Perry's flair for pairing newcomers with award-winning legends. DIARY OF A MAD BLACK WOMAN featured Academy Award®-nominee and Emmy winner Cicely Tyson in her first screen performance in 10 years; Tyson returned for MADEA'S FAMILY REUNION, and was joined by the revered author/actress/filmmaker Dr. Maya Angelou. DADDY'S LITTLE GIRLS co-stars Academy Award®-winner Louis Gossett, Jr. as garage owner Willie. "In every film I want to bring in some of the legends to work with the up-and-coming faces. I want to pay homage to where we came from and respect the actors that paved the way for the rest of us," declares Perry. "It was an honor to have Lou Gossett on the set. He is a man of such class and grace, and he taught me so much just working with him."

Gossett was impressed by the relationship Perry drew between Willie and his employee, Monty. Their deep bond reminds the actor of a father and son, and speaks to the film's generational themes. "There's something going on between the lines in their relationship, which I like a lot," Gossett reflects. "It is symbolic of what people of my generation have to do in the 'hood today, which is take personal responsibility for these younger generations so they can learn from that example and continue it."

Actress Tasha Smith was cast as Monty's ex-wife Jennifer, who exposes her daughters to her drug-dealing lifestyle with boyfriend Joe. Smith relished the opportunity to play a full-fledged villain, but was also careful to root Jennifer's loathsome behavior in emotional reality. "Jennifer was in love with Monty, and I think it was one of those deep down, soulful kind of loves," Smith comments. "But it didn't work out, and resentment, anger, bitterness developed out of her hurt. So Jennifer is just going to make Monty's life hell – he's going to have to suffer as bad as she can make him suffer."

A Method actor, Smith stayed in character at all times, including her sidebars with director Perry. "This was my first time ever working with a Method actor. I didn't understand that they go into their character's space and stay there," Perry says. "I'm giving notes and Tasha's being the character – the Baby Mama from Hell. And I'm thinking 'what the hell?' The first moment Jennifer shows up, you just hate her. Tasha did a great job."

Jennifer's boyfriend Joe is played by Perry's boyhood friend, Gary Sturgis, who was also featured in DIARY OF A MAD BLACK WOMAN. Producer Cannon praises the bravura nastiness Smith and Sturgis brought to their portrayals of the drug dealing couple. "They're like Mr. and Mrs. Lucifer," the producer chuckles. "Tasha may be playing the most wicked onscreen mother since MOMMIE DEAREST, and Gary is every bit her equal."

Monty's daughters are portrayed by real-life sisters Sierra, China Anne and Lauryn McClain. Perry and Cannon got to know the McClain family while they were casting Perry's television sitcom, "House of Payne." "We were in the process of casting a little girl for that show and we were very fortunate to come across China McClain," Perry recalls. "She was amazing. You could see that she really understood what was happening in a scene -- you just had to watch her face. Then we found out that she had two sisters, Sierra and Lauryn, who were just as talented."

DADDY'S LITTLE GIRLS is the first feature film to shoot on the soundstages of Perry's newly-constructed Tyler Perry Studios (TPS) in Atlanta. "It was great for me to be in my own space," Perry affirmed. The film also shot extensively in different locales in the city, including Auburn Avenue and the Georgia Aquarium. Perry's connection to the city is deep; he came to Atlanta from New Orleans with absolutely nothing. "Atlanta for me was the Promised Land," the filmmaker declares.

An emotional high point of the film arrives when Monty and Willie lead a grass-roots uprising to rid their neighborhood of drug dealers like Jennifer and Joe. The sequence was filmed in the Auburn district and local residents were asked to participate. "We had hundreds of extras right off Auburn Avenue, where the late Martin Luther King, Jr. raised his family," notes Cannon. "It was very important that we make the community in which this scene takes place -- the Wheat Street Baptist Church and the Wheat Street Housing Area -- participants in their own portrayal."

Several of Perry's previous behind-the-camera collaborators joined him for DADDY'S LITTLE GIRLS; in addition to Cannon, they include director of photography Toyomichi Kurita, who shot MADEA'S FAMILY REUNION, production designer Ina Mayhew and co-producer Roger Bobb, both of whom worked on MADEA'S FAMILY REUNION and DIARY OF A MAD BLACK WOMAN. By all accounts, Perry's set was welcoming, collaborative and orderly. Comments Union, "You can't ask for a better director. Tyler's very actor-friendly, and he hires people that he feels are capable of creating. Everyone comes prepared, and it's two takes and out."

"Tyler Perry is a genius," Elba enthuses. "He understands his audience like no one else. Writer/directors can be very sensitive about what actors do, but he gave us free rein. 'Go ahead and make Monty your own,' he told me."

Perry knew he could rely on his cast to help him tell the story of DADDY'S LITTLE GIRLS. "I trust Gabrielle and Idris. I trust Tasha and Gary and the McClains. And I revere Mr. Gossett."

Gossett returns the compliment. "Tyler knows exactly what he wants," the actor comments. "He trusts his artists, his camera. It's like a Clint Eastwood film: Clint sends a script to the production office and by the time he gets there, everything's ready. Tyler has created a wonderful family, and I'm happy to have joined them."

## **ABOUT THE CAST**

### **GABRIELLE UNION (Julia)**

One of today's hottest stars, Gabrielle Union, continues to shine.

Gabrielle can currently be seen in "Running With Scissors," starring Annette Bening, Gwyneth Paltrow, Joseph Fiennes, and Alec Baldwin. Gabrielle plays 'Dorothy,' Annette Bening's lover. Based on Augusten Burroughs' autobiography, the film is written and directed by Ryan Murphy.

Gabrielle recently finished filming "Perfect Christmas" alongside Terrence Howard and Queen Latifah.

Last summer, Gabrielle starred as 'Alice Kramden' opposite Cedric the Entertainer in Paramount's "The Honeymooners." Gabrielle was also seen in HBO's award-winning "Something the Lord Made" with Alan Rickman, Kyra Sedgwick, and Mos Def, and opposite Jamie Foxx in "Breakin' All the Rules."

Additional film roles include Columbia Pictures' "Bad Boys II" opposite Martin Lawrence and Will Smith, Focus Feature's "Deliver Us From Eva" alongside LL Cool J, Warner Brothers' "Cradle to the Grave" opposite Jet Li and hip-hop artist DMX, Sony's "The Brothers," Universal's hit "Bring It On" opposite Kirsten Dunst, Warner Brothers' "Welcome to Collinwood" with George Clooney and Sam Rockwell, and "Abandon" opposite Benjamin Bratt and Katie Holmes, "Two Can Play That Game," "Love & Basketball," "Ten Things I Hate About You," "Neo Ned," and "She's All That."

Gabrielle was most recently seen on ABC's "Night Stalker." She made her television debut on the UPN hit comedy "Moesha," and then went on to guest-star in hit television shows such as "ER," "Dave's World," and "The Steve Harvey Show." Shortly thereafter, Gabrielle became a recurring role on two WB hit shows, "Sister, Sister," and "7<sup>th</sup> Heaven." Gabrielle stirred things up when she guest starred as a love interest to both Matt LeBlanc and David Schwimmer on NBC's "Friends." Gabrielle marked the first African-American love interest on the series. In addition, she joined the cast of Steven Bochco's CBS drama "City of Angels," for one season.

Gabrielle resides in Los Angeles.

### **IDRIS ELBA (Monty)**

Best known as the calculating de facto leader of a Baltimore drug empire in HBO's critically acclaimed original series "The Wire," British import Idris Elba is quickly making his mark as an actor to watch in Hollywood.

Having starred in the critically acclaimed HBO Original Film “Sometimes In April” and Columbia/Tri-Star Pictures’ “The Gospel,” for director Rob Hardy, Elba will next be seen opposite Hillary Swank in the Warner Bros. thriller “The Reaping.”

At 19, Elba landed the lead part in “Coming Home”, an original play written by Oscar Watson performed on at London’s Red Lion Pub Theater. Gaining rave reviews for his performance.

By the age of 24, Elba was a mainstay on British television; starring in some of the BBC’s best rated shows “Dangerfield,” “Bramwell” and “Ultraviolet.” His work in European film found him opposite the legendary Catherine Deneuve in “Belle Maman.” In spite of the steady success that Elba was having he began to feel constricted by the breadth of roles that he was getting in the UK, and felt that there were more abundant opportunities to explore in America.

In 2000 “Ultra Violet,” was purchased by Fox Television to be adapted for the United States. Although the pilot was not put on the fall calendar, it offered Elba the big break into the American marketplace that he was looking for. In New York, he starred in Sir Peter Hall’s off-Broadway production of “Troilus and Cressida,” considered one of Shakespeare’s more complicated plays. Elba received rave reviews for his portrayal of ‘Achilles.’ Shortly thereafter he landed a part on Dick Wolf’s acclaimed television series “Law and Order.”

Thanks to the levels of his work on stage and in various guest spots on television series, Elba’s name quickly rose to the top of many casting director’s list. Alexis Vogel, who was responsible for casting HBO’s award winning series “OZ,” was looking for actors for yet another HBO series set in Baltimore. Sensing that he would be perfect for the gritty new series, she set up a meeting with the show’s creator David Simon.

Elba scored, landing the role of ‘Stringer Bell,’ the lieutenant of a Baltimore drug empire on “The Wire.” As the right hand and brains behind the operations of the imprisoned drug lord, Elba’s portrayal of the complex but deadly ‘Stringer Bell,’ quickly became one of the series’ most compelling characters.

Hoping for the same success on the feature side in 2005, Elba made his leading role debut in the HBO Original Film “Sometimes In April,” by critically acclaimed director Raoul Peck. Set during the Rwandan genocide of 1994, Elba portrayal of ‘Augustan,’ a Hutu soldier who trying to save his Tutsi wife and family during the mass killings, received rave reviews.

Idris Elba is always striving to see how deep he can go with a character, being more attracted to roles that aren’t specifically written for his ‘type’ and that challenge the psychology of the human experience. He aspires to be an “everyman” actor, one who can play any type of role, like his acting heroes, Andre Braugher, Robert DeNiro, Glenn Close, John Malkovich and Ben Kingsley. From the looks of it, Idris Elba is more than up to the challenge.

### **LOUIS GOSSETT, JR. (Willie)**

Born May 27 1936 in Brooklyn, Lou has a flair for projecting quiet authority and has scored well personally in a string of diverse and challenging roles.

The aspiring actor caught a break at his first Broadway audition for "Take A Giant Step" (1953), where, beating out 400 other candidates, the then 16-year-old landed the lead. After attending NYU on a basketball scholarship, Lou was drafted by the New York Knicks but instead continued to nurture his burgeoning acting career.

His acting career soon flourished and his work in the stage and film versions of the groundbreaking drama about African-American family life in Lorraine Hansberry's "A Raisin in the Sun" (1961) proved a watershed. This led to numerous appearances on network series in the 1960s and 70s culminating in 1977, when he picked up an Emmy for his eloquent portrayal of Fiddler in the landmark ABC miniseries "Roots".

Meanwhile, his big screen reputation grew with critically acclaimed work in such comedies as "The Landlord" (1970) "The Skin Game" (1971) with James Garner, "Travels with My Aunt" (1972) and the film adaptation of the Tony Award-winning drama "The River Niger" (1975). A riveting performance as a drug-dealing cut-throat stalking Nick Nolte and Jacqueline Bisset in "The Deep" (1977) catapulted him to wider popularity, but the tough by-the-book drill sergeant in "An Officer and a Gentleman" (1982) won him a Best Supporting Oscar that consolidated his place in the Hollywood hierarchy.

Following his Oscar, he made numerous big screen and television appearances, being singled out for his work as Egyptian president Anwar Sadat in "Sadat" (1983), the sci-fi adventure "Enemy Mine" (1985) where his lizard-like makeup won kudos, and in the action adventure series "Iron Eagle" (1985, 1986, 1992, 1995) which introduced him to a whole new generation of moviegoers.

Still going strong, Lou's trendsetting bald head and imposing six-foot-four physique served him well in "Diggtown" (1991) where he played a down-and-out boxer, a heroic headmaster in "Toy Soldiers" (1991). Lou's well thought out and nuanced performances also managed to give credibility to socially themed projects such as "To Dance with Olivia" (1997), and the critically acclaimed "Jasper, Texas" (2003)

Currently, he'll be featured in the forthcoming release of Tyler Perry's film entitled "Daddy's Little Girl" as well as the independent feature "All In" co-starring Michael Madsen and Dominique Swain.

The recipient of every known acting accolade, including multiple Golden Globes, Emmy's, and People's Choice Awards, Lou's performance has connected him with his fans on a global scale. Organizations such as the NAACP, CARE, and the United States Armed Forces have used his likeness to add validity and integrity to their causes.

Currently, Lou is developing the Eracism Foundation. A non profit entity aimed toward educating the youth and reconnecting the generations with the aim of eradicating racism off our planet.

## **JENNIFER SMITH (Tasha)**

At first glance, there is no denying Tasha Smith is a statuesque beauty with a captivating presence. On and off the screen she seems to naturally command attention. This winter, she stars in Tyler Perry's "DADDY'S LITTLE GIRLS" (Lions Gate), opposite Gabrielle Union and Idris Elba, scheduled for release on February 14. Tasha portrays Jennifer, the corrupt, vindictive ex-wife of Elba's character, Monty. This breakthrough role is genuinely special to Tasha, as she can personally relate to her character's "hustler" mentality, even though it is the antithesis of who she is in real life. Her outstanding performance is destined to garner positive reactions from audiences and critics around the country.

Tasha has played a wide range of roles in such feature films as "ATL" (Warner Brothers) with T.I. and Mykelti Williamson, "THE GOOD MOTHER" (Sony/Screen Gems) with Angie Harmon and Joel Gretsch, and "THE WHOLE TEN YARDS" (Warner Brothers) with Bruce Willis and Matthew Perry. She has also starred in the independent films, "MILES FROM HOME" with Meagan Good and Ty Hodges, and "PLAYA'S BALL," with Allen Payne and Elise Neal.

Tasha is well-known for her critically-acclaimed portrayal of the drug-addicted Ronnie Boyce in HBO's Emmy Award-winning mini-series, "THE CORNER," directed by Charles S. Dutton. She has guest starred on such popular television shows as "NIP/TUCK," "AMERICA'S NEXT TOP MODEL," "GIRLFRIENDS," "WITHOUT A TRACE," and "STRONG MEDICINE," among others. Smith has also served as the executive producer and host of her own talk show pilot for the Oxygen Network, "TASHA VISION," guest hosted the late night show, "LATER WITH GREG KINNEAR," and recently appeared as a field correspondent on "THE TYRA BANKS SHOW."

In addition to her stellar acting career, Tasha is an award-winning stand-up comedian, sought-after motivational speaker and renowned acting instructor. A native of Camden, New Jersey, Tasha was raised by a single mother and has an identical twin sister and a younger sister. In her spare time, she enjoys cooking, working out, rollerblading, traveling and playing cards with friends. She resides in Los Angeles, California.

## **GARY STURGIS (Joseph)**

Born Gary Anthony Sturgis and AKA "Illuminati", in New Orleans, Louisiana, the man was destined for success. At an early age, he decided to pursue music through the encouragement of his parents. After playing piccolo and leading the woodwind section of the school band for a couple of years, he decided to try out for Drum Major. He began leading the band, and has been a leader ever since.

In high school Sturgis began working in theatre as an actor and it was on stage, he found his true calling. Gary Sturgis found work on film projects as they came to town. He appeared in BLAZE,

THE BIG EASY and a few made for DVD releases before uprooting and moving to Los Angeles. Pursuing acting full tilt, he was cast on hit shows like THE DISTRICT, NYPD BLUE, MALCOLM & EDDIE and the now defunct ABC soap PORT CHARLES. He did various television commercials including the "Get The Dew" campaign with Busta Rhymes for MOUNTAIN DEW. Not stopping there, his good looks garnered him an on-camera and print campaign for DODGE NEON.

As talented as he was on screen, his biggest success came from his raspy baritone voice when he began doing voice promotion for the now defunct UPN. He has been heard across the nation promoting shows like MOESHA, HALF & HALF, GIRLFRIENDS, THE PARKERS and ALL OF US to name a few. The voice of gold was used to promote hit feature films like THE OTHERS, TORQUE, BONES, THE BROTHERS, THE WOOD, BLUE STREAK and the Britanny Spears movie, CROSSROADS. Currently, you can hear Gary's voice promoting the 2007 NBA Basketball Season for TNT Networks.

He is the voice of many TV and radio commercials as well. Taking his talent to a broader audience, he even began voicing animated features and shows including the Phantom Virus in the Scooby Doo feature film, SCOOBY DOO AND THE CYBERCHASE and he moved on to voice the shadow villain, EBON on the Kids WB cartoon STATIC SHOCK. As if that's not enough, Gary also voices video game characters in such hits as TRUE CRIME NEW YORK CITY, and the trivia game, SHOUT ABOUT MUSIC.

Though his career as a VO Talent was impressive, Gary longed to be back on the big screen and was cast as the pivotal villain, Jamison, in the box office smash, Tyler Perry's Diary of A Mad Black Woman. His performance landed him yet another bad guy role in Lion's Gate's PRIDE, in which Gary co-stars opposite Terrence Howard. When filming wrapped on that project, he was immediately cast by Perry in his directorial debut, TYLER PERRY'S DADDY'S LITTLE GIRLS, opposite Idris Elba and Gabrielle Union, as local drug dealer, Joe Woods.

Gary, also a screenwriter, has also completed several feature-length scripts ranging from comedy to drama, and is currently shopping his properties for major distribution.

### **TRACEE ELLIS ROSS (Cynthia)**

Charming, classy, versatile and beautiful are just a few of the characteristics which define Tracee Ellis Ross and make her one of the hottest chameleons in the entertainment industry today. Ross stars on the hit sitcom, Girlfriends, which is in its seventh season on the new network, the CW. In addition, Girlfriends can be seen in syndication throughout the US and the world. Ross' portrayal of Joan Clayton, an ambitious lawyer-turned-restaurant-owner in her early 30s adventuring through life and romance, has earned her five NAACP Image Award nominations for Outstanding Lead Actress in a Comedy Series, one BET Comedy Award win and two nominations for Outstanding Lead Actress in a Comedy Series, a Women's Image Network (WIN) Award nomination for Best Comedy Series -- Actress and two PRISM Award nominations for Outstanding Performance in a Comedy series.

Next year, will be a big year for Ross as she just completed two movies. In February, she will be seen in Daddy's Little Girls, opposite Gabrielle Union and Idris Elba for Lion's Gate Films. Then she will make a dramatic turn in HBO's Life Support opposite Queen Latifah and real-life brother, Evan Ross. Latifah and Jamie Foxx serve as producers on the project due out in March. Covering a wide range of characters, Ross' big screen debut was a leading role in the feature film Far Harbor opposite Marcia Gay Harden and Jennifer Connelly. Ross also appeared in the comedy Hanging Up, in which she played Meg Ryan's distracted assistant. She completed production on the independent film ISeeYou.com where she co-starred opposite Beau Bridges and Hector Elizondo which is due in theaters later this year.

Ross began her television career as the host of her own television show, Lifetime's "The Dish," for which she was named a "Face to Watch" by the Los Angeles Times. She has written, produced and performed in segments for cable shows, appeared as a series regular on MTV's sketch comedy The Lyricist Lounge Show and guest starred or co-hosted various other television shows including Funky Flubs for UPN. She made history by co-hosting the 2004 NAACP Image Awards which marked the first year a woman has hosted the program. Consequently, the show received its highest ratings to date. During the recent November sweeps, she hosted the "Patti Labelle 45th Anniversary Special" and the "3rd annual VIBE Awards" which drew the largest audiences to the network on a Tuesday than ever before.

Ross' theatrical experience includes a leading role in The Vagina Monologues where she debuted at the Canon Theater in Los Angeles and moved with the production to San Francisco. She also appeared in Blackout at the Egyptian Theater in Los Angeles.

After graduating from Brown University, Ross began a career in fashion working as a model with some of the most highly regarded photographers in the fashion industry including Herb Ritts, Peter Lindberg, Francesco Scavullo and Mario Testino. She has graced the pages of top fashion and consumer magazines and appeared in advertising campaigns for The Gap, Donna Karan Collection, DKNY and Paul Mitchell. Ross traveled the world as a fashion editor for Mirabella and New York Magazine and continues to pursue her interest in fashion by serving as a contributing editor for Distinction magazine.

Named by Essence magazine as an "It" woman, Ross is described as a "trend setter with signature style" and is consistently noted in Harper's Bazaar, Women's Wear Daily and W as being one of the "Best Dressed Women." She was also named one of America's "Leading Ladies," along with Susan Sarandon and Michelle Pfeiffer, on the American Elite 1000 List for 2000, which acknowledges women who are gracefully redefining the rules for success. She appeared with her mother on the cover of Essence magazine's "Mothers & Daughters" 10th Anniversary issue. She currently appears on the cover of VIBE Vixen which marks the first time an actress has appeared on the cover of the magazine.

In her spare time, Ross tries to pursue avenues she is not only passionate about, but expand her depth as an individual as well. She was honored by the Los Angeles Urban League as "Volunteer of the Year" for 2004 and made a cameo in the Kanye West video The New Workout Plan where she introduced the world to one of her unique characters 'Fifi LeBeouff.' She also appears in Kanye's latest video Touch the Sky. She also was the hostess for the National Public

Forum at the Freedom Awards ceremony. The event was held at the historic National Civil Rights Museum and drew an audience of 10,000 people in Memphis, Tennessee. Ross hosted a program which honored Oprah Winfrey, Paul Rusesabagina, Ruby Dee and Ossie Davis, posthumously.

A New Yorker at heart, Ross currently lives in Los Angeles.

### **MALINDA WILLIAMS (Maya)**

Malinda Williams, an esteemed Hollywood sweetheart, can currently be seen gracing the silver screen in the Outkast film, "Idlewild" (Universal). "Idlewild" is Malinda's first starring role in a major musical production. In this period piece, also starring Big Boi and Andre 3000, Malinda portrays Zora, the wife of "Rooster" (Big Boi).

Malinda recently starred on the television drama "Windfall"(NBC), where she portrayed Kimberly George, a 22 year-old single mother whose luck found her winning the \$386 Million dollar lottery and left her life in the trailer park behind.

If you ask this talented actress some of her career goals, she will tell you, "I just want to portray African-American women accurately, because that is all I represent; not necessarily positively or negatively, just correctly."

If this beautiful actress's face seems familiar, it may be because she spent five years portraying Tracey "Bird" Van Adams, a beauty salon owner and struggling entrepreneur on Showtime's ground-breaking, history making series "Soul Food." Malinda has worked consistently in a business where many careers are short-lived. Her versatile talents and distinctive beauty have led her to a list of admirable credits.

In 2003 and 2004 she earned an *NAACP Image Award* nomination for "Outstanding Actress in a Drama Series", and in 2002, 2003 and 2004 the series received the *NAACP Image Award* for "Outstanding Drama Series" with yet another nomination in 2004.

Malinda's leading role film credits include: The Wood (MTV /Paramount), High School High (Tri-Star), and An Invited Guest which won the Best of Show at the 1999 Acapulco Black Film Festival and the Audience Award at the 1999 Urban World Festival in New York. She also starred in Dancing in September (HBO). Other film credits include: Sunset Park (Columbia/Tri-Star) and A Thin Line Between Love and Hate (New Line). Malinda's guest starring television credits include: CBS's The District, Law and Order: SVU and ABC's NYPD Blue.

Having the ability to portray characters ranging from a sophisticated beauty salon owner, to a mentally challenged teenager, has branded Malinda Williams one of Hollywood's most well-respected actresses.

## **TERRI J. VAUGHN (Brenda)**

Terri J. Vaughn has entertained us on television for eight seasons as a series regular. First, she stole America's heart with her lovable portrayal of *Lovita Alizay Jenkins* on the WB's "The Steve Harvey Show," Vaughn confesses, "I loved playing a character that grew up in the 'hood and who worked hard to be positive because it was very close to my own life." After that, Vaughn made her way to UPN's "All of Us." With her fun, energetic and wise portrayal of *Jonelle Abrams*, she once again brought life and laughter to the small screen. But, before Vaughn ever had her first audition, she was growing up in a housing project in Hunter's Point in San Francisco. Today, this woman is hell-bent on creating positive, inspirational experiences for other young women growing up in the projects. Out of her desire to give back to her community, Vaughn started Take Wings Foundation. "*We motivate, uplift and inspire young girls (13-18 yrs.) from economically distressed communities in the San Francisco Bay area to be positive, productive and successful.*" "*It's truly amazing to watch them soar.*"

From her first professional job in a 20-city tour of "Tellin' it Like it Tiz" to her first sitcom role on the hit show "Living Single," to a memorable turn as a single mother wrongly accused of abusing her child on "ER," this San Francisco native has proven herself to be a talent to be reckoned with. Vaughn has been honored with three Image Awards for Outstanding Supporting Actress for her work on "The Steve Harvey Show," and received a nomination for a 2005 BET Comedy Award for her work on "All of Us." But this multi-faceted thespian doesn't stop there; she was also nominated for Outstanding Supporting Actress in a Drama Series for her work on "Soul Food," as *Eva Holly*, a lesbian, who shocked Showtime viewers by passionately kissing Byrd (Malinda Williams), during her multi-episode guest arc on the groundbreaking series.

Vaughn's current projects also include the family dramedy, "Dirty Laundry," which is making the rounds and creating a strong buzz through the Independent Film Festivals. In it Vaughn stars opposite Rockmond Dunbar, Loretta Devine and Jenifer Lewis. "Dirty" just recently won the ABFF Blockbuster Audience Award for Best Feature, while Loretta Devine won the Best Actor Award. In the film Vaughn portrays Jackie, a small town girl with a big heart and big dreams. She struggles to keep the peace in her whacky and troubled family, while raising a daughter. The film's producer comments, "Screening audiences from across the country have been cheering Terri's portrayal of Jackie on and loving her."

Always smiling, unless she's crying tears of happiness, she's a girl from humble beginnings who tells everyone to "take wings." Vaughn's infectious positive energy and altruistic spirit has enabled her to soar right out of the projects and into the world of Hollywood. Terri J. Vaughn is certainly flying high.

## **SIERRA, LAURYN AND CHINA ANNE McCLAIN (Sierra, Lauryn and China)**

Sierra, Lauryn and China Anne McClain are a trio of young sisters and entertainers who have a genuine love for acting, singing and dancing. These talented young girls have grown up watching Disney movies and musical classics such as *The Wiz*, *Willie Wonka and the Chocolate Factory* and *Annie*. Their first interest in entertainment began when they accompanied

their father, Michael McClain, to the recording studio where he worked as a music producer, vocalist, songwriter and sound engineer. They discovered a common bond through their love of music. After these determined sisters began to write songs and choreograph dance routines, they named their group, *3mcclaingirls*. Their father, Michael began to produce their music and the dynamic threesome launched their official website, *3mcclaingirls.com*, in 2005.

In 2004, China Anne, the youngest sister, landed the role of *Alexis* in the film, "*The Gospel*" directed by Rob Hardy. China Anne (8) and her two sisters, Sierra (12) and Lauryn (10), all appear in the film and their passion for acting blossomed.

In December 2005, Reuben Cannon and Shay Griffin cast China Anne in Tyler Perry's television series, "*House of Payne*". While on the set, China Anne introduced her sisters Sierra and Lauryn to producer Reuben Cannon and the girls performed a song for him. This fateful night would lead to the 'opportunity of a lifetime' when the three sisters were offered roles in Tyler Perry's third film, "*Daddy's Little Girls*". Their brother, Gabriel McClain (5), also appears in the film as the son of *Christopher* played by Brian J. White.

Their mother, Shontell McClain became a sitcom writer on the Tyler Perry staff. Since then, the McClain Sisters are comprising ideas for television and film projects, as well as children's books. Sierra, Lauryn and China Anne are all honor students and still appear in stage plays at their schools. Sierra has performed in numerous school productions and became a finalist in a countywide writing contest in 2003. Lauryn also acts in school plays, has received multiple citizenship awards and has artwork on display at her school's art show. China Anne enjoys painting elaborate works of art and writing in her journal. She recently landed the role of *Margaret* in "*A Dennis the Menace Christmas*" directed by Ron Oliver. The McClain Sisters hope to travel the world someday performing together and they plan to do more films and television projects.

## ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS

### **TYLER PERRY (Writer, Director, Producer)**

Tyler Perry – writer, producer, director, and actor extraordinaire – went from the poverty-stricken streets of New Orleans to a multimillion-dollar mansion outside Atlanta. But the real story is that of his journey from homelessness to bliss.

Perry's rags-to-riches tale is astonishing and inspirational. His younger days were troubled, and he suffered from endless abuse growing up. The dejection and rejection caused Perry to do some soul-searching as an adult. In 1992, in an effort to find catharsis for his own childhood pain, and inspired by Oprah Winfrey to put it down on paper, he wrote a series of letters to himself. Those letters would be transformed into his first hit musical, *I Know I've Been Changed*. Perry's humble spirit and his faith in God kept him focused. He believed that God was calling him to share his story with as many people as possible so that he might help others. Perry learned real forgiveness, deep down inside—a forgiveness that leads to success in the soul. He chose the stage life as a vehicle, and this new life has been a learning process, full of hard work. But now Perry has reached out to millions across the country and in doing so has tremendously altered how people perceive and attend urban theater.

In 2005, Tyler Perry took the nation by storm when the movie he wrote, produced, and starred in, *Diary of a Mad Black Woman*, opened #1 at the box office. In its first week on sale, the DVD sold nearly 2.5 million copies. At the same time, Perry was starring nightly across the country in a sold-out stage show he'd also written, produced and scored—*Madea Goes to Jail*—even as another one of his productions, *Meet the Browns*, was touring nationally. Together, the two productions sold out more than 500 shows in theaters from coast to coast. Every week in 2005, 35,000 people saw a Tyler Perry production.

Since making his film debut with *Diary of a Mad Black Woman*, Tyler Perry has become a multimedia phenomenon with a roster of hugely successful film, stage, television, and book projects. Perry's first two films both debuted at number one at the North American box office and the combined sales of his nine DVDs have sold over 11 million units. Perry's first book, *Don't Make a Black Woman Take Off Her Earrings: Madea's Uninhibited Commentaries on Life and Love* debuted at #1 on the New York Times' hardcover nonfiction bestseller list and remained in the Top 10 for eight weeks. Most recently he created and produced 10 episodes of the first-run syndicated comedy series, *House of Payne*, which premiered in select markets earlier this year to excellent numbers.

The first 100 episodes of *House of Payne*, Perry's first-run syndicated comedy series will begin debuting nationally on TBS in the fall of 2007.

## **ROGER BOBB (Co-Producer)**

Roger Bobb's career in film began as an Assistant Director. Over the last 10 years, he has been the producer or assistant director on over 40 feature films and television shows.

Bobb's collaboration with Tyler Perry began as an assistant director on Tyler's first film *Diary Of A Mad Black Woman*. Bobb co-produced *Madea's Family Reunion* and is the Supervising Producer of the new ground breaking Tyler Perry television sitcom "House of Payne" starring Allen Payne as well as Tyler's new television pilot "Meet The Browns". Roger also produced the independent film "Preaching To The Choir" starring Patti Labelle and Tichina Arnold which was recently nominated for an 2006 NAACP Image Award for Best Independent Film.

Bobb is the only two time winner of the Best Film Award at the American Black Film Festival and was the youngest African-American First AD member of the Director's Guild of America. Bobb was recently named by *The Network Journal Magazine* as one of the top 40 executives under 40. Born in London and raised in Brooklyn, Bobb's film career began in 1995 when he was accepted into the Director's Guild of America's prestigious Assistant Director Trainee program. Under this program Roger was fortunate to work on projects from notable directors as Woody Allen, Mike Nichols and James Mangold.

Upon completing the program, Roger worked within the New York independent film community as an assistant director and quickly rose to become a producer. His many credits include "The Believer" "NYPD Blue," "New York Undercover," "Copland," "Witness to the Mob," and "State Property 2". Bobb attended Brooklyn College and the School Of Visual Arts.

## **MAYSIE HOY (Editor)**

**Maysie Hoy** was born in Vancouver, Canada, where she received her theater training. At the urging of her acting teacher, she went to a performance of *The Experimental Wing*, a branch of *The San Francisco Committee*, an improvisational troupe, and there she became inspired by their spontaneity. That summer she went to San Francisco and studied with "The Wing" and "The Committee" when she returned "The Good Will Store" an improvisational theater company was formed with Ms. Hoy as the artistic director. For the next two years, with the aid of several government grants her company performed and taught Viola Spolin's theater games in schools and correctional institutes. During this time she was cast in Robert Altman's "McCabe and Mrs. Miller."

After disbanding the "The Good Will Store" she moved to Los Angeles and for the next eight years she worked and appeared in Robert Altman's critically acclaimed films, "California Split, Nashville, Three Women and A Wedding."

It was on Altman's "Buffalo Bill and the Indians", that she donned several production hats starting with research, wardrobe, working on the set and eventually with the film editors. During this time she was also an assistant film editor on several Alan Rudolph films, "Welcome to L.A. and Remember My Name".

Her editing credits include, “Daddy’s Little Girls”, “Broken Bridges,” ”Time Bomb,” ” The Celestine Prophecy – The Movie,” “Smile”, “Chasing Papi”, “Christmas In The Clouds”, “The Warden”, “Freedom Song”, “Crazy In Alabama”, “Life Tastes Good”, “What Dreams May Come”(shared credit), “lovejones”, “Freeway”, “Smoke”, “The Joy Luck Club”, and “The Player”(co-editor).

Ms. Hoy is an alumna of the American Film Institute’s Directing Women’s Workshop. She is on the Board of Directors in the Motion Picture Editor’s Guild and is a member of ACE. She has been featured with thirty accomplished craftswomen in a book called “Great Women in Films.”

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