

behrroll5@aol.com

# Halle Berry says her career and attitude couldn't be better

by Barry Koltnow  
The Orange County Register

Halle Berry's jaw dropped. "What did you say?" she asked with a stunned look. I repeated the question. "Could I see it?" "Could you see what?" she asked, shifting her body so that a few more inches separated her from the strange man sitting next to her. "Could I see your arm?" "Oh, my arm?" she said, a smile crossing her face. "I thought you were talking about this." She pointed to her breasts. "I've seen those before," I said, thinking back to a topless scene in the movie "Swordfish" and a nude scene in "Monster's Ball," the film that brought her a well-deserved Best Actress Oscar. "Not up close you haven't." OK, she had me there. But the brief, playful exchange in a penthouse suite at the L'Ermitage hotel in Beverly Hills demonstrated how relaxed and confident the 37-year-old actress is feeling these days, even in the midst of a media storm over the meltdown of her nearly three-year marriage to singer Eric Benet, reportedly over his infidelity. A few years ago, she admits, she might not have been able to handle the very public breakup, particularly in the middle of a marketing campaign to promote her new movie, the supernatural thriller "Gothika," which opens Friday. "My personal life has always preceded me, so I'm getting used to it," she said. "I ride it out for a week or two and then it's over." The reason the actress is better equipped to handle the media obsession with her personal life (before this doomed relationship, she had a media-scrutinized marriage to baseball player David Justice) is because of a new approach she's taken to her life.

"I used to believe that if my career was going great, then I was not entitled to a great personal life. Well, I've stopped thinking that way. I believe I can have it all. Heck, I deserve it all." In "Gothika," Berry stars as Dr. Miranda Grey, a criminal psychologist working in the psychiatric ward of a women's prison. She awakens one day to find herself incarcerated in the same prison, charged with a brutal murder and haunted by ghosts. Halfway through filming the movie, she broke her arm in a scene with co-star Robert Downey Jr., bringing the film to a screeching halt for four weeks. Upon her return, she worked for six weeks with a camouflaged cast on her right arm. In fact, producer Joel Silver said there never was any discussion of scrapping "Gothika," and he added that Berry's accident was a blessing in disguise. "We started the movie in such a rush that we were grateful for the four-week break to give Mathieu (French director Mathieu Kassovitz) more time to prepare for the second half of the movie." Downey has apologized to Berry for grabbing her arm hard enough to cause the injury. He is still contrite but, with the passage of time, is able to discuss the incident with some humor. "I'm always willing to accept blame for anything that happens within 50 miles of me, but in this case, I felt so glad that I was sober when it happened, (because when I'm not) everything on Earth would be my fault." Berry is a native of Cleveland, and her parents separated when she was 4. In high school, she was a cheerleader and prom queen and later was first runner-up in the Miss USA pageant. Three years of modeling in Chicago led to a role on the forgettable TV series "Living Dolls," and then to her first movie role as an addict in Spike Lee's "Jungle Fever."



PHOTO BY ZAP2IT.COM  
Halle Berry waves to photographers at the premiere of her film "Gothika."

Her movie career languished until her breakthrough role as the late Dorothy Dandridge in an HBO movie about the singer. Berry won an Emmy and Golden Globe for the portrayal. "I remember winning the Golden Globe and thinking that this was the epitome of life. I had a marriage. I had a daughter." (She adopted Benet's daughter, India.) "I had these awards. I had paid homage to my hero (Dandridge). I was thinking that my life was too good to be true. I said that so many times, it turned out that it really was too good to be true."

"Right after that, I had the accident that flattened me." For the record, the actress was cited for leaving the scene of an accident in February 2000 on the Sunset Strip. She said at the time that she hit her head in the accident and has no memory of speeding away from the scene. She was fined \$13,500 and ordered to serve 200 hours of community service. It proved to be a wake-up call for the actress, who said she changed everything in her life after that, including how she thought. "I really believe you manifest what you think, and I was thinking all wrong before the accident," she explained. "Since then, I've started thinking that life is good and that I deserve all the good things that are happening to me. I no longer believe that something bad has to happen to me after something good happens. I tell myself that every single day." With the exception of her failed marriage, the rethinking seems to be working. Her career has never been hotter. She quickly has ascended to the level of superstar, and her film schedule is booked for years to come. She is six weeks into filming "Catwoman," which will be released in July. There is talk of a spin-off of her Jinx character from the James Bond movie "Die Another Day." There is a good chance she will be back as Storm if a second sequel to "X-Men" is made, and there are several dramatic roles in smaller films ready to go. "She's a great talent, and she's finally getting her due," Silver said. "It's all happening for her, and it all started with the Oscar. An Oscar never hurts a career." Berry shrugs when asked if this is her time. "I'm not sure what that means. I know it feels like a good time for me. I'm happy, if that's what you mean by this being my time."

# Blink-182 re-invents itself

review by Scott Soltis  
assistant managing editor

Fans that have become accustomed to Blink-182's trademark pop-punk style should strongly consider buying a song or two off of iTunes before purchasing their entire untitled CD. While hints of the style that made Blink so popular over the past few years are seen throughout the album, the overall sound is very different. This CD has more influence of Tom DeLonge (guitar/vocals) and Travis Barker's (drums) side project Boxcar Racer. The sound is much deeper with only a few very catchy songs. Also, the use of electric drums and more extensive mixing gives more variation to the sounds of the album. The songs are a mix of punk



PHOTO BY ROLLINGSTONE.COM  
Blink 182's new album "Untitled" was released Tuesday.

and emo. One song even features vocals by Robert Smith of The Cure.

The lyrics have also marked a major shift for Blink. The song "I Miss You" contains the lines "Hello there, the angel from my nightmare/The shadow in the background of the morgue/The unsuspecting victim of darkness in the valley." This is a major difference from happy, upbeat tunes like "First Date" and "The Rock Show" from the band's last album "Take Off Your Pants and Jacket." Just so you don't think Blink has turned into goth punk like AFL, there are some woman angst-ridden songs like "Obvious." "I know you f\*\*\*\*d him again/Can you comfort yourself with a sense of revenge/Are you leaving me here with the taste of the end," is a great example of the "pissed off at women" style that attracts many punk fans. This is not Blink's best album, but it is a good one to buy. Both loyal Blink fans and former fans disgruntled with the "poppy" sound of the last album should enjoy the album. "Obvious", "Stockholm Syndrome," and "Easy Target" are

three of the best songs on the album. "I Miss You," "I'm Lost Without You," and "Violence" are three pleasantly different surprises for fans. The only song that the album would be better off without is "The Fallen Syndrome." Overall this album is a nice change of pace from the average punk CD, and a good step musically for Blink-182. I give it two metal signs up.



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