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Bodyguard to famous in local film

By Courtney Towson SPECIAL TO THE TELEGRAM & GAZETTE

WORCESTER— Maurice Lavell may not yet be a full-fledged celebrity, but his clientele are.

Under the name Maurice “Big Moe” Brighthaupt, Mr. Lavell served as bodyguard for Missy Elliot, DMX and, most recently and notably, Anna Nicole Smith.

Mr. Lavell, who stayed at the Hilton Garden Inn Hotel while in the city for a fundraiser last night, was the bodyguard of Ms. Smith on the day of her death. He administered CPR but, as the world now knows, was unable to resuscitate her.

“It’s still hard for me,” he said last night. “I wish I didn’t have this celebrity status from her death.”

Mr. Lavell was in the city to raise money for a short film to be shot this summer in Worcester.

The film, “Third Date,” was written by Worcester native Tom Henrickson and will be produced by Kristen Lucas of Worcester-based Goldilocks Productions.

At Union Station last night, more than 200 friends, family and well-wishers showed up to support Mr. Henrickson’s project through a silent auction of such items as a part in the movie, an autographed photograph of Trot Nixon, and a weeklong stay in Laconia, N.H.

Mr. Lavell became associated with the production through Ms. Lucas.

In 1992, shortly after Mr. Lavell graduated from Northeastern University, the two worked together on a student film, “B-Boyz” in which Mr. Lavell played the title character. Mr. Lavell has also had bit parts in “Striptease” and “Miami Vice.”

In “Third Date,” Mr. Lavell is slated to play a friend of the main character who sets up the scenarios for the storyline, a man who can’t seem to get past the third date.

“People only see me as the big, tough guy,” he said. “This is not a big, tough-guy role.”

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Mr. Henrickson's full-length script, which garnered interest from Nancy Tenenbaum Films and Happy Madison Productions but was unable to secure funding, has been condensed to create the short.

"Instead of handing out a script," said Mr. Henrickson, "we'll just hand out the DVD."



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