

Is Ohio Destined for Black Literary Explosion?



Young Cleveland author ready to open her own publishing house

For real, for real, there are some big literary things happening in Cleveland. It was recently reported that the Ohio-based leader of the urban literature renaissance, Triple Crown Publications, has made history once again as Borders and Waldenbooks will unveil exclusive TCP bookshelves in 350 stores next month.

Come on. Let's think about it. Cleveland is the home of Karamu House. It's where great authors such as Langston Hughes and Charles Chestnutt roamed. Nobel Laureate Toni Morrison is from Lorain, Pulitzer Prize-winning poet Rita Dove is from the Canton area, award-winning author J. Everett Pruitt is a Tarblooder and the renowned Nikki Giovanni is from Cincinnati.

Need I say more? ... but I will :) I have asked the question time and time again: Are there any young Black writers in Cleveland?

And, come to find out, the answer is, YES! I'm telling you, they are coming out the woodwork. Last week, I discovered that a person I've known for several years has 13 unsolicited manuscripts.

Within the last two years, local authors Vanessa Collier, Marcel Dorsey, Stella, F. Jamey

Mixson and others have been featured in either Showtime or CP2. So, I can argue that Ohio is a hot seat for literary talent and is poised for a literary explosion, especially if we start to aggressively promote and support our literary artists, starting with Karamel Brown, whose novel "Gotta Be Destiny" is set to debut later this month.

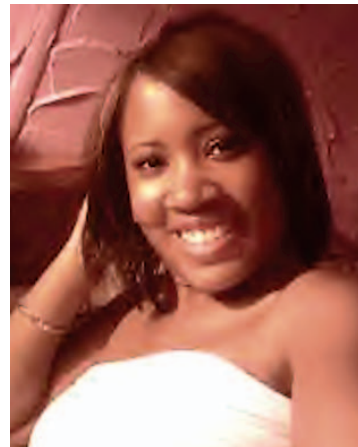
Brown graduated from Shaw High School in 1998 and attended Ashland University. As a child, she wanted to grow up and become news anchorwoman; instead, she has worked as a producer for a local television station for the last three years.

However, she's always been a writer. She explained that her very first story was published when she was in the fifth grade and, although it's tattered, she still has it.

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She decided to use a pen name after considering the monikers of Zane and other authors. She also thinks that it



Karamel Brown, author of "Gotta Be Destiny"

would be a great way to stand out as well as spark some interest.

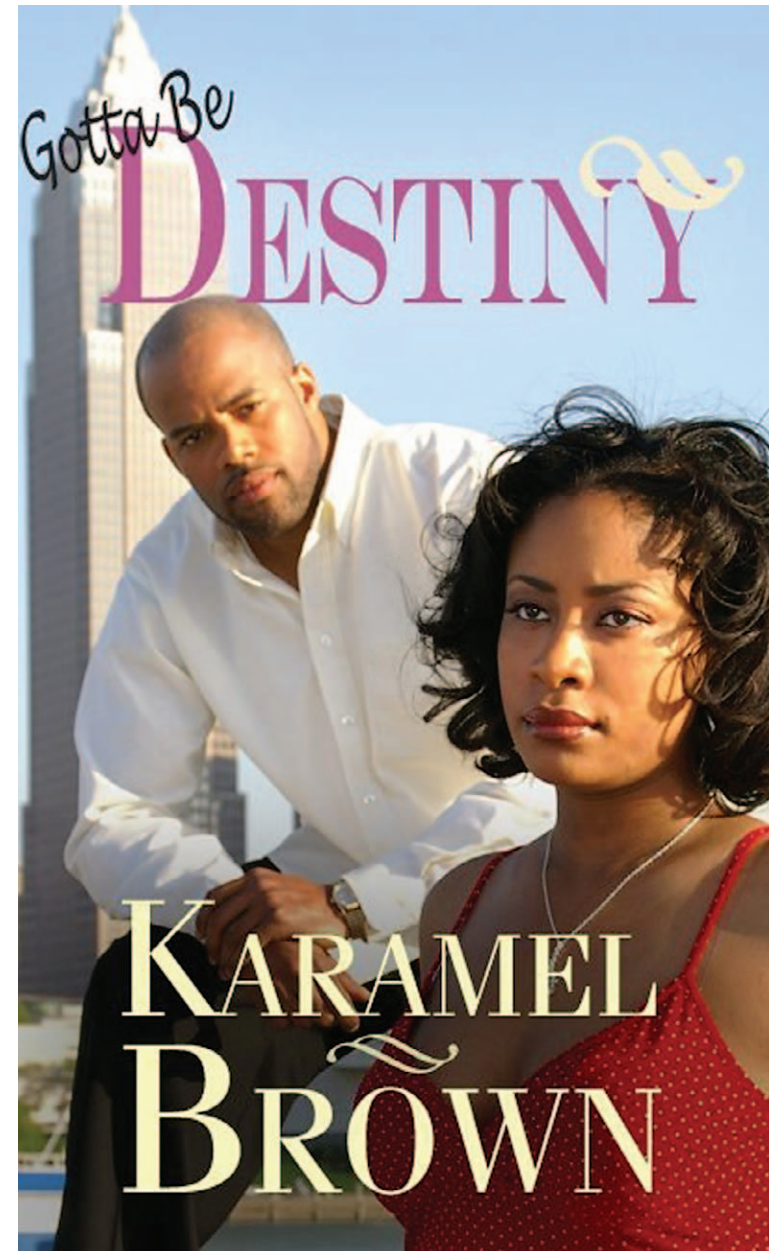
But, this isn't Karamel Brown's first attempt at writing fiction. She completed another novel and submitted it to a lot of agents back in 2006. However, she received rejections.

"I saw where I made mistakes," she said.

She started writing "Gotta Be Destiny" last August and team up with an editor who helped her understand how to craft a story. Suffice it to say, she finished it this past March.

"That book started out as a paragraph," Brown said.

She went on to explain that "Gotta Be Destiny" is about a 20-something woman who is a news



producer.

With a best friend, quirky parents and her man, Destiny (the main character) appears as if she's well put together until she discovers her fiancée has another woman.

And, you can tell by the book cover that it's set in Cleveland.

Karamel Brown considers her writing to be chick-lit, as opposed to anything else and has several other stories in the works while some of her favorite authors are Kayla Paran, Carl Weber, Eric Jerome Dickey and Marisa Monte.

At the same time, Karamel Brown is looking to be more than an author.

With the help of her business partner, Tamu Thomas, they started Karamel Kisses Publications

and will be accepting submission within the next eight to 10 months.

Contact The Inkwell at rcrowder@call-post.com or (216) 791-7600, ext. 253.

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