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Life imitating art for barber

For 15 years, Bobby E. Goins has been known in the Vauxhall community as the owner of the barbershop, Bobby's Cut Above. As he makes his debut into the film industry, cut is no longer just what he does to his customers' hair - it's also what he yells on the sets of his upcoming movies.

Although his first film, 2007's "Humenetomy," which captures a power struggle among the parts of the body, did not fare very well in terms of sales, Goins enjoyed creating the film so much that he decided to put together his latest completed work, "The Barbershop Chronicles."

The film is based on events from his experiences as the owner of a barbershop.

"[In the barbershop] I've heard so many stories over the years of different people . . . so I started writing these things down," Goins said.

The 90-minute film focuses on four men, their barber and the relationships formed in the shop. Conversations on life and women take place along with the occasional confrontation and, of course, lots of laughter.

Other movies, such as Spike Lee's 1983 film "Joe's Bed-Stuy Barbershop: We Cut Heads" and Tim Story's 2002 movie "Barbershop" demonstrate the significance of barbershops in urban communities, but Goins believes these films did not put enough emphasis on barber-customer interaction, which he tried to accent in his film.

The film was shot on a low budget, but audiences may see faces they recognize. The Pittsburgh Steelers' Darnell Stapleton, who was once a customer at Bobby's Cut Above, and Carl Clemons from HBO's "The Wire" both make appearances in "The Barbershop Chronicles."

Goins is working on a number of projects to be

released between 2010 and 2011. He expects "The Prairie Boys," a crime drama about a group of young men who cause trouble after finding a large sum of counterfeit money, will be his best film yet. He is also working on other movies, including "Shelter," "Trakks" and "Drew and the Dilla Hopper," an animated comedy.

In addition to his roles as a filmmaker and a barber, Goins aims to be a mentor to younger people in his community.

"It's a duty, not just a privilege, as an older person to tell a younger person what he may be doing wrong and how to correct that," Goins said.

He went on to say he believes he may even have saved a few lives by advising customers against doing something regrettable.

Goins sees a great future for himself in the film industry and hopes to one day own a Vauxhall-based production company so he can help other independent filmmakers.

"[A lot of people] forget where they came from . . . They'll just leave you in the cold. Me - I'm not going to do that," Goins said, emphasizing a responsibility to provide opportunities to others.

He advises budding filmmakers to keep trying, even when success seems unlikely.

"You've got to have rhino skin," he said. He also stressed the importance of persistence and faith in God.

When prompted to choose between shaping hair and making films, Goins chose the director's chair over cutting shears without hesitation. Though trimming hair is his first love and, at times, his inspiration, he said filmmaking is simply more exciting.

For information on upcoming films by Bobby E. Goins, visit www.bcutproductions.com