

What's On

Couch slouch

AHS life boost for Gaga

Gooding Jr plays Simpson in 'American Crime Story'

LOS ANGELES, Oct 5, (Agencies): There aren't many crime stories in recent American history that are more well known than the 1994 O.J. Simpson case — but even though Cuba Gooding Jr is playing the former football star in FX's upcoming "American Crime Story," he said he isn't feeling the pressure quite yet.

"I probably will when it's all said and done for people to watch it, but when I'm in it, I'm in it," Gooding Jr. told Variety at the premiere of "American Horror Story: Hotel" Saturday night. "It's a character. You have to be the character and be confident. But yeah, reflecting on it, I will be hoping that the intent of what Ryan Murphy wanted to create in the story comes through. And I think it will, because no one pays attention to detail like this guy."

Gooding Jr. said it was executive producer Murphy, also known for "American Horror Story," "Scream Queens" and "Glee," who made him want to take on the big role, with the actor saying he wants to "work with real filmmakers again."

There's no shortage of material for Gooding Jr. to work with when studying the character, though. The actor said he's been preparing with a multitude of sources, but more crop up everyday.

"It's a minutia of watching tapes and reading interviews and watching video," he said of researching for the role. "Usually, when you prepare for a role, you can spend weeks or months and then when you do it, you're pretty much in it. But this is like, everyday, they're like, 'Oh, did a workout video.' ... Everyday there's something."

Though Gooding Jr. was in good spirits at the premiere, he acknowledges that the gravity of the role can get to him: "Some days it's dark, really dark," he admitted.

Still, he has quite the high-profile cast to back him up, including John Travolta as Robert Shapiro, Sarah Paulson as Marcia Clark, David Schwimmer as Robert Kardashian, Selma Blair as Kris Jenner, Connie Britton as Faye Resnick and more.

"It's like playing basketball with the Lakers," Gooding Jr said of his cast. "You got to have your best game because everyone around you is better than you. ... On this set, if you don't come with your A+ game, you're going to get blown over. You really will."

The 10-episode "American Crime Story: The People v. O.J. Simpson" will premiere in 2016 on FX.

Appearing in the new season of "American Horror Story" was a life boost for **Lady Gaga**.

The singer raved about her experience on "American Horror Story: Hotel" as she arrived for the star-studded premiere of the FX show on Saturday night.

With fiancé **Taylor Kinney** as her date, Lady Gaga said the experience of playing Countess Elizabeth, who runs the Hotel Cortez, made her feel alive. "It's been so fun," said Lady Gaga, who arrived fashionably late in a red gown with a thigh-high slit.

"Everybody on this cast has been really open and available to me in a very honest way, so I'm able to be myself in a way I feel like I haven't been in a really long time, so they are just making me feel so alive," Lady Gaga said.

She called the fifth installment of the Emmy-winning show a masterpiece and praised executive producer and co-creator **Ryan Murphy**.

"I'm just really happy to be a part of it. I like being a part of someone else's vision it's really exhilarating," she added.

Lady Gaga endeared herself to the cast. **Matt Bomer** said some of her fellow actors called her by her given first name (her real name is **Stefani Germanotta**).

"It's sort of takes the mythos and all the preconceptions of Lady Gaga out of the equation so we can just relate to each other like human beings and actors in a scene," explained Bomer. "She's so approachable that she totally just was there for us ... at by the time the cameras were rolling and we were in a scene together, we weren't thinking about the fact that you were doing a scene with Lady Gaga."

Denis O'Hare spilled juicy details about the super exclusive bash Lady Gaga threw for the cast, which includes regulars like **Angela Bassett**, **Sarah Paulson**, and **Kathy Bates**.

"She had a pool; she dyed it blood red," said O'Hare. "She had bathing suits for all of us. I jumped right in. I wore a woman's bathing suit at one point. She had a massive amount of food for us."

Health

Protracted conflict tied to rise in mental disorders in Gaza

Stigma stops girls seeking mental care

Research may overlook gender-specific harms, benefits

Women missing from HIV drug trials

LONDON, Oct 5, (Agencies): When Maha, a nine-year-old Palestinian girl living in Gaza, visited a doctor to seek treatment for mental health problems she was told not to come back or she would likely be stigmatised for life, ruining her marriage prospects.

Despite high levels of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), anxiety and depression in the Palestinian territory, mental health experts say families often avoid seeking help for their daughters for fear of wrecking the family reputation and the girl's chances of finding a husband.

"There is a general stigma and lack of awareness around mental health," said Bassam Abu Hamad, a public health consultant at Al Quds University in Gaza.

"People think mental health problems are something to do with the devil and supernatural forces. They think that people with such problems have lost their minds and are crazy."

Hamad says Maha's story highlights the worrying gaps in mental health services in Gaza, the cultural barriers girls face in accessing care and the urgent need for better training of general doctors.

Reputation

"In Maha's case, the doctor — a general practitioner — said that continuing to visit mental health services would affect her reputation and she would be stigmatised forever," Hamad said.

Maha was originally taken to the doctor primarily for epilepsy, which in Gaza is treated as a mental health issue.

Her condition deteriorated during last year's conflict in the territory after she had to run for her life when the family's home in Beit Hanoun was bombed.

Maha, now 13, became very withdrawn and suffered repeated nightmares. It was only when her mother took her back to a doctor for an injury that she was finally referred to a specialist.

There are no figures for the prevalence of mental health problems in Gaza, but the World Health Organization (WHO) estimates the proportion of people suffering mild or moderate disorders rises to 15-20 percent during a humanitarian emergency compared to 10 percent outside a crisis.

Some experts say up to a third of the population may be affected by mental disorders after exposure to violence, the death of loved ones and the loss of

NEW YORK, Oct 5, (RTRS): Although women make up roughly half of the world's HIV cases, they remain largely excluded from clinical trials testing drugs, vaccines and potential cures for the virus, a research review confirms.

In an analysis spanning several decades that included work done as recently as 2012, researchers found that women typically comprised about 11 percent of participants in trials investigating cures for HIV. Similarly, drug studies were only about 19 percent female and just 38 percent of vaccine trial subjects were women.

"Based on previous studies in other health areas, it wasn't surprising, but perhaps disappointing given that nearly half of those living with HIV are women," lead study author Dr Mirjam Curmo, who did the analysis while working as managing editor of the Journal of the International AIDS Society, said by email.

Research in areas such as heart disease, cancer and depression has also had historically low female participation, as have advanced human trials testing experimental drugs, Curmo and colleagues note in the Journal of Acquired Immune

homes, livelihoods and support networks.

WHO estimates the proportion of people with severe mental disorders including psychosis — which can cause hallucinations or delusions — rises to 3-4 percent during a crisis up from a baseline 2-3 percent.

Hamad said families are loath to seek mental health care services for sons as well as daughters, but the reluctance is more pronounced with a girl because of the potential impact on her reputation. "It's a patriarchal community so women are judged more harshly," he said.

Misconception

WHO mental health officer for Gaza, Dyaa Saymah, said part of the reason girls with mental health disorders face particular stigma is due to the misconception that mental problems are strong-

ly hereditary.

"People believe when a mother with a mental health illness gives birth she may pass this on to her baby. This is why they are afraid of getting married to a girl who has developed some sort of problem," Saymah said.

Beliefs that mental health problems are hereditary — although there can be genetic links they are only one factor — mean families in Gaza may even hide away a relative with a psychotic disorder like schizophrenia to protect their daughters' reputations.

Experts say the protracted conflict in Gaza has triggered acute levels of psychosocial distress, especially among children and adolescents who make up nearly half the territory's 1.8 million inhabitants.

Many are emotionally shattered after living through three wars in the past

seven years, the last one being the most devastating.

Fighting between Israel and Palestinian militant groups killed more than 2,100 Palestinians during a 50-day war and caused massive destruction to homes and schools in the small coastal strip.

The United Nations estimated that 373,000 children required specialised psychosocial support.

Day-to-day suffering has been compounded by a blockade — imposed by Israel in 2007 after Hamas won elections — which has exacerbated unemployment, poverty and levels of depression.

Hamad said it was often harder for girls in Gaza to deal with traumatic experiences than boys because of cultural factors including severe restrictions on their movement which leave them far more isolated.

TV highlights

Cinema

Cinema programme from Thursday 01/10/2015 to Wednesday 07/10/2015

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