

Sammy Davis, Jr. and Michael Jackson as frequent and enthusiastic customers.

How? As any great chef will tell you—its not just about the food. It's not just about the presentation. It's about the entire package.

HARLEM RESTAURANT SERVES ITS LAST FRIED CHICKEN BRUNCH

(By Karen Matthews)

NEW YORK.—A soul food restaurant that survived rioting and looting could not survive gentrification.

Copeland's held its last brunch Sunday, closing for good after 50 years and bringing an end to one of the greatest restaurant runs in Harlem history.

"It's a sad occasion," diner Gloria Jackson said. "You feel like a celebrity when you come here. They always cater to your every need."

Owner Calvin Copeland, who opened the place on 145th Street with \$850 in savings and saw it overcome hard times such as the riots of 1964, said the neighborhood's changing demographics no longer made it viable.

In recent years, middle-class black and white families have bought Harlem's handsome brownstones and fixed them up. They just didn't crave his savory fried chicken anymore.

"The transformation snuck up on me like a tornado," he said.

Copeland's denouncement brought out many elected officials including the dean of Harlem politicians, House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Charles Rangel. They all paid tribute to Copeland.

Rangel and others heaped praise on Copeland as high as their plates were piled with chicken, cornbread, potato salad and collard greens.

"You are more to us than a restaurateur," Rangel said. "You're a legend. You're hope. And you're inspiration."

The Rev. Calvin Butts, the influential pastor of the Abyssinian Baptist Church, thanked Copeland, 82, for his dedication and hard work and prayed "that this will be a new day for him, a day of relaxation and enjoyment for the rest of his years."

Proclamations were presented from Congress, from Gov. Eliot Spitzer, from the City Council and from the state Senate and Assembly.

"It's an institution," said Deputy Mayor Dennis Walcott, a 30-year patron of Copeland's. "It's important to come out and say thank you and let Mr. Copeland know that we appreciate all he's done for the community."

As Copeland thanked his customers Sunday, he left the door open for a Copeland's rebirth or for starting another restaurant somewhere else.

"With what you've showed me and how you feel about me, I think there's another chapter," he said. "Going home with no place to go and no purpose, I don't think that could work for me."

[From the New York Times, July 23, 2007]

HARLEM MAINSTAY SURVIVED RIOTS, BUT FALLS TO RENEWAL

(By Fernanda Santos)

Calvin Copeland was there when rioters burned and looted stores in 1964, when crack cocaine and AIDS tore families apart, when brownstones were for sale for \$50,000 and few outsiders dared move in. He endured fire and financial ruin, yet each time he picked up the pieces and prospered, as bold and resilient as the neighborhood around him.

If he could be the master of his fate, he would live out his days in Harlem. Mr. Copeland, 82, said yesterday, serving soul food from the restaurant he has owned for almost five decades, Copeland's, a relic of the past anchored in a place fast in transition.

Gentrification has pushed away many of the black families who used to patronize his business. "The white people who took their place don't like or don't care for the food I cook," he said. "The transformation snuck up on me like a tornado."

After falling behind on rent and bills a year ago, Mr. Copeland tried to hold on to his business, investing more than \$250,000 of his savings, he said. Finally, in May, he acquiesced to defeat.

Copeland's, at 547 West 145th Street, between Broadway and Amsterdam Avenue, where Harlem is known as Hamilton Heights, will hold its last gospel brunch at 1 p.m. on Sunday and then close its doors for good.

"I just can't do it anymore," Mr. Copeland said.

With its smoke-mirrored walls, L-shaped marble bar and carpet the color of honey, Copeland's is at once cozy and de mode, a place where men in polyester suits and women in hats dine alongside European tourists who come to Harlem to experience American black culture.

Yesterday, Fred Staton, 92, a saxophonist with the Harlem Blues and Jazz Band, which plays on Sundays at the restaurant, stopped by to wish Mr. Copeland well. A tour group from the Netherlands had brunch there. Others, however, walked out after learning that the restaurant was not offering its usual Sunday gospel choir. (Mr. Copeland said he was too busy preparing for the final brunch to schedule entertainment.)

"The food here is delicious, and it's so sad to hear they'll be gone," said Martha Marsh, who has lived in Harlem for 40 years and said she regularly eats at Copeland's.

"She's picky," added her husband, John Henry. "If she says she enjoys it, it's because the food is really good."

Mr. Copeland started the business in 1958 as a catering service, one of Harlem's first, in a modest storefront on Broadway north of 148th Street. He had but one worker, Gertrude Clark, who still works for him. Mr. Copeland, who is black, baked and decorated cakes; Ms. Clark, who is white and grew up on a farm in upstate New York, did whatever else was needed, which often included preparing Southern fare.

"I had never eaten collard greens in my life, and there I was making fried chicken and souse meat," said Ms. Clark, 73. She is now Copeland's banquet manager.

Mr. Copeland eventually rented the store next door, opened up a hole in the wall, expanded the kitchen and started serving breakfast and lunch, cafeteria style. It was similar to the one in operation today next to the restaurant on 145th Street, which opened for business in 1980.

In 1981, the restaurant burned to the ground and the insurance company went bankrupt before it reimbursed Mr. Copeland for the losses.

"I lost everything, except for the liquor," he said with a chuckle. "We had it in a separate room with concrete walls, and I guess the fire couldn't get through."

At the time, banks were not prone to lending money to restaurant owners, especially if the restaurant was in a place as volatile as Harlem, which had had two riots prior to the one in 1964, incited by the fatal shooting of a black teenage boy by a white police officer. But Mr. Copeland had many friends, and one of them helped get him approved for a small loan. The rest of the money came from Ms. Clark, who mortgaged an upstate property to help her boss.

"If that thing didn't go, she would have lost her property, she would have lost her job, she would have lost everything of value she had," Mr. Copeland said. "She had a lot of faith in me, and I delivered."

Copeland's became a destination for black families from as far as Philadelphia. Black

entertainers and other notables would stop by when in town. Desmond Tutu, the retired Anglican archbishop, ate there once, and so did Muhammad Ali and the comedian Richard Pryor, who threw money in the air when he left the restaurant so as to distract the crowd that had surrounded him. Mr. Copeland said. Natalie Cole is a regular. Michael Jackson came by once, but did not come in; one of the waiters took a plate of food to his vehicle, which was parked outside.

"I never paid attention to this stuff," Mr. Copeland said. "I was too busy cooking."

#### TRIBUTE TO COLONEL HOWARD CLARK

HON. PAUL W. HODES

OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, August 1, 2007

Mr. HODES. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the dedicated military service of retired Colonel Howard Clark, of Enfield, New Hampshire. Colonel Clark served his country honorably in the U.S. Army for thirty years, including two courageous tours of duty in Vietnam. He was awarded the Purple Heart for his bravery overseas, and continued his distinguished career in the military, including assignments at the Pentagon and as a Brigade Commander at Fort Benning, Georgia. His career was recognized with the award of the Legion of Merit for sustained superior performance.

Colonel and Mrs. Howard Clark are also celebrating their 50th Wedding Anniversary this summer. Together, Colonel and Mrs. Clark have served as a model of commitment, sacrifice, and selfless service to our country. It is a privilege to represent these two distinguished individuals in the United States Congress.

#### HONORING THE LIFE OF LOS ANGELES POLICE OFFICER DAVID RODRIGUEZ

HON. BRAD SHERMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, August 1, 2007

Mr. SHERMAN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and public service of Los Angeles City Police Officer David Rodriguez of the San Fernando Valley, whose achievements merit our recognition.

After graduating with honors from Van Nuys High School, he entered California State University Northridge, where he received a bachelor of arts in political science. During college he held several jobs, including an internship in my district office.

I was honored when I had the opportunity to recommend David for the Los Angeles Police Department Academy. I was proud when in 2003 he entered and graduated. David earned a reputation as an aggressive but by-the-book patrol officer and was recently promoted to the anti-gang unit. At 6 feet 2 and weighing 270 lbs he was a gentle and dedicated family man who took care of his ailing mother.

On July 29th, while on duty, Police Officer Rodriguez died during an automobile accident

when his patrol car skidded off the Ventura Freeway.

Words cannot express the sense of sadness we have for his family. David Rodriguez was a model first responder, whose bravery in death merits our admiration and respect.

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

### HON. WAYNE T. GILCHREST

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, August 1, 2007*

Mr. GILCHREST. Madam Speaker, please let the record show that had I been present for rollcall vote No. 763, I would have voted "aye."

#### CELEBRATING THE NEW YORK LATINO FILM FESTIVAL

### HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, August 1, 2007*

Mr. RANGEL. Madam Speaker, today I rise to congratulate one of my constituents, Calixto Chinchilla, on the completion of what has quickly become a New York film tradition: the New York International Latino Film Festival.

This past Sunday, Chinchilla and a group of dedicated volunteers and sponsors closed out another fantastic 5 days of film screenings and panels for the eighth straight year. Chinchilla, then a young marketing executive, founded the festival in 1999 to showcase the talent of the growing Hispanic community, at home and abroad.

Its crazy to think that despite's New York's immense Latino talent, there has never been a consistent side-by-side display of Spanish-language and English language films from all of Latin America and the U.S. But there wasn't. So he pulled together an event that looked to shatter stereotypes that society had about Latinos with films that came from all over the Hispanic Diaspora and that challenged notions that both mainstream society and the Latino community had when it came to race, ethnicity and class. He sought to do this in an environment where Hollywood could meet independent cinema, so that fresh faces could be brought to the stage and longtime community voices could be heard.

The journey has not been perfect, yet Chinchilla, current co-Executive Director Elizabeth Gardner and enthusiastic mix of veterans and newbie volunteers always seem to pull it off bigger and better each time around. Although many of the films are shown downtown, Chinchilla has made a habit of bringing the festival to other parts of the city during and after the summer festival. The only local festival to feature a night exclusively dedicated to Dominicans, NYILFF this year will also treat my constituents in Washington Heights with a family day filled with games, activities and movies for children.

I submit into the record two articles from the New York Daily News that provide a little more information about this year's showcase. It's just another example of the great body of artistic talent that has called and will continue to call Northern Manhattan home.

[From the New York Daily News, July 25, 2007]

#### PICTURES OF LATINO LIFE (By Roberto Dominguez)

It took a few years for aspiring director Bruno Irizarry to get around to making a movie about the trouble many Latino actors have finding quality, nonstereotypical roles.

But Irizarry didn't hesitate when it came to submitting his feature-length film, "Shut Up and Do It!," to the one festival he knew would appreciate it.

The comedy is among the 80 or so features, shorts and documentaries at the New York International Latino Film Festival, now in its eighth year of showcasing new movies by or about Hispanics.

The festival was founded in 1999 by Calixto Chinchilla, at the time a Warner Bros. marketing employee, who felt the need to counteract the dearth of Latino themes and characters in mainstream movies.

"Shut Up and Do It!" is about a down-on-his-luck Latino actor compelled to make his own movie—and cast himself in it—because of a lack of good parts.

"To have my first film accepted into the festival has been a totally amazing experience," says Irizarry, 40, who directed the film together with Veronica Caicedo and also cast himself in a leading role—as a struggling actor.

"Most of the stuff in the movie has really happened to me as an actor trying to make it in New York," adds Irizarry.

"Like the characters, I was fed up and tired of casting directors seeing me for roles like 'Garbage Man No. 1.' But being in this festival has allowed me to start off my directing career with a bang, because it's so well-established."

That wasn't always the case. The first year's festival screened just a handful of movies at a community center in midtown that Chinchilla rented for a couple of nights.

It has since expanded into the largest event of its kind, with movies from both established and emerging filmmakers from across the U.S., Latin America and Spain. They're presented in several Manhattan locations, along with panel discussions, free outdoor screenings of classic movies (like "West Side Story") and themed evenings like Dominican Night—with the backing of corporate sponsors eager to tap into the buying power of the U.S. Latino market.

As the number of submissions from around the world has grown into the hundreds, so has the festival's reputation and prestige.

Director Alfredo De Villa, whose first feature, the low-budget drama "Washington Heights," was a festival darling five years ago, has seen his career grow as a result.

All three of his films have been screened at the fest over the years, and De Villa has gone on to work with several name actors, including Dominic Chianese of "The Sopranos" and Heather Graham, who star in De Villa's drama "Adrift in Manhattan."

"It's definitely like coming home," says De Villa of the festival. "As long as they'll have me, I'll keep bringing them movies."

In recent years, the festival has also become a springboard for bigger-budget projects—"El Cantante," produced by Jennifer Lopez and starring Marc Anthony as troubled salsa singer Hector Lavoe, is premiering at this year's fest before it hits theaters in August.

But according to Chinchilla, the true measure of the festival has been giving locals like Sonia Gonzalez the chance to display their work.

"They've always been very supportive of Latinos, but now it's become a really visible showcase for first-time filmmakers," says Gonzalez, whose documentary on New York

stickball, "Bragging Rights," premieres today.

"To have a feature [at the festival]," she adds, "makes you feel like a celebrity."

[From the New York Daily News, July 11, 2007]

#### CITY'S LATINO FILM FEST IS BACK: BETTER, STRONGER, FEISTIER (By Lewis Beale)

Talent-driven. That's the word on the eighth annual New York International Latino Film Festival, running for six days from July 24 to July 29 at venues around the city.

"This year is all about growth," says festival Executive Director Calixto Chinchilla. "Filmmakers are doing stronger stories. It's really about new talent; we have a lot of first-time filmmakers, and the stories are amazing."

Chinchilla points, for example, to "The Startup," in which some friends from Queens decide to move to Manhattan and eventually turn their Harlem brownstone into a youth hostel.

Describing the film as "like 'Swingers,'" Chinchilla notes how it shows that local Latino filmmakers "are raising the money, doing it by any means, and doing it well."

And it's not just New Yorkers who are an emerging film force. This year, the festival ([nylatinooffilm.com](http://nylatinooffilm.com)) is showcasing movies from Puerto Rico, which is experiencing a cinematic rebirth.

"Puerto Rico has recently begun to offer tax incentives to anyone who shoots on the island," Chinchilla says, "so you are getting stronger filmmakers who are getting the kind of support they've never had before. Puerto Rico is really committed to its cinema now."

But wait. There's more. Much, much more among the 80 films, including full-length features, shorts and documentaries.

Premieres include "El Cantante," the highly anticipated Jennifer López-Marc Anthony bio of salsa singer Héctor Lavoe; "El Muerto," a film Chinchilla describes as "like 'The Crow,'" a comic book adaptation done well, and "Trade," a film about international sex traffickers and featuring Kevin Kline.

"Trade," says Chinchilla, is "real, raw, sad and was written by [José Rivera], the guy who wrote 'The Motorcycle Diaries.' It's not for everybody, but it's a powerful piece and doesn't pull any punches."

Chinchilla, who also co-founded the festival, is particularly proud of this year's edition because of the way it has expanded to include more than just theatrical presentations.

"This year is more event-driven," he says. "There are more activities. There are outdoor screenings. It's become more than just a sit-down-in-a-theater thing. This was not in the original plan, but we've grown with the community."

So those who want to watch the Sharks and the Jets go at it again can see "West Side Story" at a free outdoor screening at Riverbank State Park on Saturday the 28th.

Panel discussions range from subjects dealing with women in film to how to pitch a film project to top producers and directors.

A free family day sponsored by the Cartoon Network features games and outdoor 'toon screenings. Dominican night will highlight the premiere of "Yuniol," a film from the island nation about two young men from wildly different social classes who interact in interesting ways.

And there are numerous documentaries, shorts, a "Rewind" section with screenings of "Carlito's Way" and "Crossover Dreams," plus feature films from Mexico, Chile, Cuba