

TLC Doing a Reality Series

Written by GzaGenius ID395
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R.I.P. Lisa "Left Eye" Lopes

UPN has teamed with the remaining members of TLC, Tionne "T-Boz" Watkins and Rozonda "Chilli" Thomas, for a reality series aimed at resurrecting the famous 1990s trio that was struck by tragedy in 2002 when member Lisa "Left Eye" Lopes died in a car crash; according to Reuters.

The network has given the go-ahead to eight episodes of the project, titled "R U the Girl With T-Boz & Chilli," which has been in the works for several months.

Watkins and Thomas will put a group of aspiring female performers through weeks of rigorous challenges, narrowing the field to a winner who will join them for a concert and a recording session.

"We want to find someone with the right chemistry and magic to work with us," Watkins and Thomas said. "We have been blessed with great success, and this is a chance for our fans to join us as we give someone a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to fulfill their dream."

Casting for the series is expected to begin shortly. It hasn't been decided if "R U the Girl" will premiere in midseason or the summer.

"It's a very emotional story," UPN entertainment president Dawn Ostroff said. "I think our viewers, which are the 18- to 34-year-old group, have a very strong connection to TLC. T-Boz and Chilli's emotional journey over the past two years, since Left Eye died, has been very public. Trying to get past that and (take the next step) has been on their minds, and doing it in a public way, including their audience and their very devoted fans (in the process), made so much sense to us."

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Meanwhile, top reality producer Mark Burnett is working with UPN's sister network, CBS, on a similar project that features aspiring musicians competing for the chance to become the new lead singer of Australian rock band INXS. Original frontman Michael Hutchence died in 1997. Announced in June, the CBS series is slated to launch in the summer.

The two projects, which were developed at the same time, will have different sensibilities and will appeal to different audiences, Ostroff said.

"(The INXS) show is much more geared toward the rock "n" roll world," Ostroff said. "I think T-Boz and Chilli's story will appeal to our audience, women 18-34 in particular; I think they are very relatable to our young viewers."

Four-time Grammy-winning TLC, formed in Atlanta in 1991, was one of the biggest-selling female R&B groups of all time with 33 million albums sold worldwide.

During their tumultuous decade of existence, marked by intragroup squabbles, high-profile romances, arson, rehab and bankruptcy, the group had nine top 10 singles on the Billboard Top 100, five of which hit No. 1, and two No. 1 albums on the Billboard 200.