By Kayloni Wyatt

The Color Purple entices audience members

The Award winning Broadway play, The Color Purple, The Musical about Love, graced the GPAC stage on Jan. 27 to a sold out audience.

The play is based on the timeless Pulitzer Prize winning novel by Alice Walker and the film by Steven Spielberg.

“The Broadway production of The Color Purple is extraordinary and astonishing when it comes down to lyrics, choreography, and plot. First, the Church Ladies keeps the audience informed with their soulful lyrics at the beginning of several scenes,” UNCP graduate Tamara White Chambers said.

The audience sat at the edge of the seats as they anticipated the next musical number. Women cheered when the male dancers danced provocatively on stage. Eyes stayed glued at the entire play as the actors performed each scene.

The play follows the story of Celia Harris, a young woman who struggles throughout her life with trying to provide for herself in a small Southern town during the early 1900s. Harris goes through the hardships of being married to an abusive man whom she calls Pa. He has her do all the household chores in their home and he rapes her. She eventually has two children, who later on vanish and she thinks they were murdered. But, she runs into a young woman who bears resemblance to one of her children.

The play continues to follow Harris as she tries to find a way out of the abusive world she’s grown accustomed to.

“I like the way the play aligned itself up with the book when it reveals the in-teresting relationship with the two but not exactly substan-tiates it. It was a delightful rendition of the novel,” Chambers said.

The Broadway musical is produced by Phoenix Entertainment and is penned by Stephen Kane and Michael McFadden. Gary Griffin is the director. The music and lyrics are composed by Grammy Award winners Brenda Russel, Alice Willis and Stephen Bray. The choreography is by Donald Byrd. It was nominated for Best Musical Show Album at the 2007 Grammy’s and 11 Tony Awards in 2007.

By Alexis Prine

Music fest celebrates Native music, art

On Jan. 20 several Native American artists joined at GPAC for a night of music, fun and celebration at the 2011 River People Music and Culture Fest. Headlining for the event was the national Native American artist Jana Mashonee Dark Water Rising and Purra Fe Trio.

According to Tasha Oxendine, director of Marketing at GPAC, approximately 1,300 people packed into GPAC to listen to the Native music and feast their eyes on the art displayed throughout the night. Mashonee is a seven time NAMMY (Native American Music Awards) award winner, with his such as “A Change is Gonna Come,” “Carousel,” and “The Enlightened Time.”

Also appearing on stage was Cody Blackbird and The Deer Clan Singers.

Lakota John and his sister Layla Locklear also performed. John is a 13-year-old blues singer who just released his first album.

Locklear is a freshman at UNCP and currently majors in Environment Science and American Indian Studies.

Amidst all of the singing and dancing, local Willie Lowery was honored with the River People Festival Cultural Treasure Award for his life-long involvement with Native American music, education and being a role model for the local Lumbee Indian youth.

He was also the founding Director of Creative Arts for the Center of Arts in Pembroke. The Lumbee Tribe proclaimed Jan. 21 to be Willie Lowery Day. There was a collection of Native American artwork on display in GPAC on Jan. 21 by a local artist, Jessica Clark. Her artwork is currently still on display in the lobby of GPAC.