INSIDE ‘IDOL’

Under national spotlight, Anwar Robinson taps into his instincts

By Lacey Korevec

The pressure is on for Westminster Choir College (WCC) alumnus Anwar Robinson, who is now one of only 16 contestants competing for a record deal on Fox’s TV show American Idol.

America is watching every week as he performs at the risk of being voted off, but Robinson said he keeps his cool by “tapping into my performance instinct.”

“My main challenge has been letting go of what I feel are expectations from outer forces,” he said. “My biggest success is getting affirmation after trusting myself two weeks in a row. It’s a great feeling to know that my decisions worked out in my favor and that people appreciate what I’m doing.”

Robinson’s journey began when he first tried out for the show in Washington, D.C. He and his family were “ecstatic” when they were told he would move on to the next round, he said.

“It was nothing but me and my voice. No kind of barrier, no kind of background [music]. It was all me,” he said. “I had to make it count right then and there.”

Now that he is staying in a fancy hotel in Hollywood, Robinson said that he misses his job as a middle school music teacher but does not have any regrets.

“I miss the students. I miss seeing them. I miss singing with them and talking to them,” he said. “I could use a job like that. I wish I could do that for the rest of my life.”

“Timing is right I’ll use my gifts in the classroom.”

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Since then, Schulke said, security has gotten shot.”

“Three hours later, rifle marks still remained on the box. Outside, cars rode by during their five-o’clock commute as if nothing had happened. On the ground lay chips of broken pavement from the ricochet of a misfired bullet. But another of those bullets had hit its intended target President John F. Kennedy.

“Flip Schulke, a photographer for Life magazine, was able to capture the drama of this scene in his famous photo, “The Sniper’s Nest.” Schulke is acclaimed for his exclusive photographs of Fidel Castro and John F. Kennedy, and for his photo documentation of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and the U.S. civil rights movement. Thousands of these photos, in digital form, are going to be archived at Rider for educational purposes.

“Schulke had been with Kennedy in Florida the week before and was taking photographs at the University of Texas the day Kennedy was shot. He was the only photographer to capture the scene of Lee Harvey Oswald’s vantage point just hours after the assassination.

“It was noon at the University of Texas and in their cafeteria a guy who was at the next table over yells that President Kennedy’s been shot,” Schulke recalls. “Right away he said to me, let’s get on a jet and let’s go there.”

“Schulke was able to get inside the Texas School Book Depository from where the shot was fired using only his Life magazine credentials and a press pass he had from a previous assignment.

“Three hours after this, supposedly they’d already fingerprinted the whole place, which I didn’t believe they had,” said Schulke. “But thank God I didn’t touch anything because that’s all I would have needed.”

Schulke was able to photograph the box the rifle was placed upon, and the window overlooking JFK’s route. Life used the shot in its next issue but mistakenly wrote in the caption that the photo had been taken the next day.

“I was ready to kill them,” said Schulke. “I wrote a letter to the editor, and they published it of course, and they apologized. In the special [edition] they came out with just a few days later they used the same picture but corrected it.”

Schulke is still amazed that he was able to enter the building to take pictures of the scene so soon after the murder had occurred. He said there had been a lot of talk in the South about assassinating the president and he could not believe that the investigation was not better organized. Even the week before, when Schulke had been with the president in Florida, he was surprised that he had not been more thoroughly protected.

“When I was with him the week before in Tampa, we were just a car behind the convertible he was in,” he said. “[The other photographers] were like, ‘Look at the kid, sitting there all ready in case something happens. You know nothing is going to happen.’ And I said, ‘You don’t live in the South. There’s been all this talk about shooting him. I’m ready in case they shoot him.’”

Since then, Schulke said, security has increased immensely. He said that when we went to cover the first President Bush at Disney World, security checked the bags and equipment of all the photographers before they were allowed to even take out their cameras. He still feels that maybe if the security had been tighter around Kennedy, the outcome may have been different.

“That’s what I always thought. If someone was going to kill him it was going to be a photographer—you know, someone pretending to be a photographer,” said Schulke. “And of course that’s what happened with Reagan when he got shot.”

From a sniper’s view: shot seen around the world

By Ashley Gerigitan

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