Stevie Wonder honored for 'Fight for Sight' aid

NEW YORK — Stevie Wonder, Motown's blind singing star, was honored by the Fight for Sight, Monday night, when he received the show business Inspiration Award for 1969 for his "compelling achievements in the world of entertainment."

Wonder was cited by newspaper columnist Earl Wilson, who is chairman of "Lights On" the annual All-Star variety benefit show which will be staged by Fight for Sight at Philharmonic Hall, April 12.

The presentation was made on the Merv Griffin Show.

During his recent New York engagement at the Apollo Theatre, Stevie made a personal appearance at the Fight for Sight eye clinic at the Columbia Presbyterian Hospital, which examines and treats thousands of underprivileged youngsters with eye problems, without regard to race or religion.

* * *

Fight for Sight, Inc., founded in 1946, awards research grants to medical colleges and hospitals throughout the world for the conquest of blinding eye diseases. The organization is dedicated to the restoration and preservation of sight through research and treatment.

The Fight for Sight program was given its initial impetus and encouragement by the world of show business.

Such personalities as Bob Hope, Sammy Davis Jr., Danny Kaye, among many others, have provided leadership and assistance over the years.

Although born blind, Stevie developed his musical talent in early childhood, studying music by Braille. He progressed so rapidly that he received his first professional recording contract when he was 12 years old.

He was signed then by Berry Gory Jr., president of Motown Records Corporation, under whose management he has risen to become one of today's most popular recording and concert artists.

Stevie's current hit on Motown records is "Yesterday, Yeter-me, Yesterday," which he wrote. This follows closely on the heels of "My Cherie Amour," also written by Stevie.

STEVIE WONDER

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Judge rejects testimony by ex-attorney general

By TONY FULLER

CHICAGO (UPI) — U.S. District Court Judge Julius J. Hoffman Wednesday refused to let former Atty. General Ramsey G. Clark testify before the jury hearing riot conspiracy charges against seven antiwar demonstration leaders.

Hoffman listened to defense questioning of Clark with the jury out of the courtroom and then ruled that Clark, who heaeded the Justice Department during the 1968 Democratic National Convention, "could not testify to anything material and relevant in this case."

The Government asked the court to bar Clark from testifying before the jury on the grounds that the defense only wanted to "make a spectacle" of the former attorney general's appearance.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Richard Schutz successfully argued that letting Clark testify would "prejudice . . . extremely" the prosecution's case.

Chief Defense Attorney William M. Kunstler objected that the court's action was "grossly unconstitutional" and that the government and judge were "screening" the defense's witnesses.

Questioning Clark under protest with the jury absent, Kunstler took the former attorney general through dealings he had with then President Johnson just before the convention.

Pot smoking rated 30% among GI's

WASHINGTON (UPI) — An army medical officer who served in Vietnam estaimtes that up to 30 per cent ofthe U.S. GI's there have used marijuana — a figure far higher than official ones.

Col. John J. Kovaric, who served as commander of a large evacuation hospital with the larrgest psychiatric team in Vietnam, made his estimate in a letter to the editor opposing any easing of restricion on marijuana. Ington Evening Star, was reprinted Tuesday in the Congressional Record. In it he said that 20 to 30 per cent of the American soldiers in Vietnam have used marijuana at least once.

He did not offer a breakdown between habitual users and those who smoked marijuana infrequently. Even so, his estimate was far above official Pentagon estimates that just five out of every 1,000 men there have tried marijuana at least once.

* * *

In his letter, Kovaric said that at least one soldier has murdered his friends while "under the influence of marijuana and doing his own thing." He did not elaborate.

Rep. William E. Minshall, R-Ohio, who has introduced his own legislation concerning marijuana, praised Kovaric's comments Wednesday as "to the point" and urged they be heeded.

Minshall has pending a bill which would force disclosure of annual reports on marijuana in the same manner as government studies on the health hazards of cigarette smoking.

He also would be in a position on the house floor to offer an amendment to block reduction of penalties for marijuana usage as proposed in a Senate drug bill.

"Colonel Kovaric's comments are to the point and I urgethose who would let down the bars on the sale and use of marijuana to give his first-hand experience their very thoughtful consideration," Minshall

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Mrs. Williams returns 'home'

MONROE, N.C. — Mrs. Robert F. Williams, "the first lady of black liberation," returned to the scene of her husand's most outstanding triumhs and defeats recently, accompanied by her two grown sons.

Monroe was not without its personal victories for Mrs. Williams. During the height of the liberation struggle nine years ago before she and her husband were obliged to flee, she founded the Crusaders Association for Relief and Enlightenment.

That organization is still in existence and is establishing a legal defense fund to be used both for Williams and for others.

Mrs. Williams, Mabel as she is known to Monroeans, told the Crusaders that she had no desire to return to this city to live. There were too many unpleasant memories she said.

* * *

She added however, that if her husband were ordered to return, she would return with him and continue the work ended when they left.

After she finished speaking to the Crusaders, they took her on a tour of their neighborhood center, her former home. The center is designed as a monument to the work the Williamses started.

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MARC COPAGE AND ART LINKLETTER
No Uncle Sam in his pockets

'Julia' youngster holds own with Linkletter

HOLLYWOOD — One of this city's most talented youngsters, 8-year-old Marc Copage of NBC-TV's "Julia" series, will be Art and Jack Linkletter's special guest on their new "Life with Linkletter" series, Wednesday afternoon.

Young Marc has been performing since he was only a few months old. "Then," he told Art, "I didn't get much work for awhile. Guess you could say I was in retirement — at age five."

* * *

"How much money do you make, Marc?" Link asked.

"I don't know. But I do know I get an allowance."

"Did you know your agent takes ten percent of your income?" Linkletter queried.

"Ten per cent! You're kidding!"

"And," added Link, "Uncle Sam has his hand in your pocket, too."

At that, Marc turned his pockets inside out. "No Uncle Sam in my pocket now," replied the youngster who continued to top Art Linkletter's adlibs for the balance of the show.

The previous day, Linkletter was visited by former pro football flanker Bernie Casey, who retired to become an artist-poet.

"You played your last game for the Rams in 1968, Bernie," Jack said to the star football pass receiver. "This is your first year out of the game. Do you miss it?"

"Not one bit," replied Casey. "I never look back. My life now is art . . . poetry . . . acting. With my art work being most important."

Casey, who earned a Master's Degree in Fine Art, read from his new book, "Look At The People."

HOLLYWOOD BEAT:

Movie stars join hands in aiding Watts project

By BILL LANE

HOLLYWOOD — The big success of the benefit performance of "The Great White Hope" at the Ahmanson Theatre here for the Watts project of the Inner City Cultural Center was very much due to the work done in the promotion by movie stars:

Working in the project were Marge and Gower Champion, Nancy Wilson, Leonard Nimoy, Greg Morris, Bob Goulet and wife Carol Lawrence, Diahann Carroll, Leslie Caron and Polly Bergen, just to name a few.

Manager Marc Gordon, husband of Florence LaRue of the 5th Dimension, was a happy guy the other night watching one of his prized pieces of talent, Thelma Houston, letting it all come out on the Ed Sullivan show.

* * *

For its last show, before the place undergoes remodeling, the famous Cocoanut Grove will present Little Richard. He'll open Feb. 3, for two weeks. . . . And Dionne Warwick will show up on the Glen Campbell Goodtime Hour Sunday night, Feb. 22.

The next day (Feb. 23) in New York, Ray Charles will join a host of other show folk, on invitation of Roy Wilkins, in a "Silhouettes In Courage" tribute in Madison Square Garden, honoring Duke Ellington. . . . The show is to be on national television.

Cinema Center Films has completed filming of "Three Lives For Mississippi," the story of the three brave young people who lost their lives working for other peoples' freedom in hiladelphia, Miss.

Despite his two most recent flops, there are some people who still believe in the genius of Oscar Brown, Jr. RCA is one believer. . . . It's joining several other backers in producing Oscar's next play, "Time Fer Joy," which is slated for opening January 26, off-Broadway, at the New Theatre. . . . Oscar and Jean Pace will be in it. . . . A musical, the show will be an original-cast issue by RCA.

* * *

Leslie Uggams' spouse, Grahame Pratt, looking for a NYC theatre to present "Mommy, What Color Is Love?"

Godfrey Cambridge is mulling an offer to replace the veteran landsman Sam Lavene in "Three Men On a Horse" on Broadway. . . . It won't be new for Godfrey, if he accepts. . . . He played the role five years ago.

"Peter and The Wolf" never knew it could get the expert narrating treatment cooked up for it by Greg Morris to deliver at the Pasadena Symphony Orchestra's annual youth concert.

Insurance needed Jimi Hendrix, forced to cancel a show last Sept. in Boston because of sudden illness, had to pay the City of Boston $12,924.93 for "preparation" expenses.

* * *

Publicity reports have it that Diana Ross has been dating Bob Ellis, a publicist NOT with Miss Ross' publicity firm — quite unlike pal Mary Wilson, who was dating Bob Jones, who IS a publicist with The Supremes' agency.

With a casuals shop in Beverly Hills, a Richards Shoes store in the Crenshaw district of L.A. comic Stu Gilliam is all set to go national, and possibly public, selling stock in his projected shoe-store chain with the next one slated to open in his hometown of Detroit, where he got started as a ventriloquist on Chuck Stanley's Happy Hour Show — as did Danny Thomas.

Lou Rawls has opened a travel bureau in Sherman Oaks.

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