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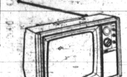

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'Africans' presents new theater fare

By PAUL EVANS

Usual attractions at the Morris Mechanic Theatre here in Baltimore since its opening in 1966 have devoted to the type of Western world culture which would be more appealing to the majority of theatre-goers who patronize the Charles Center located business and arts complex.

Remarked one of the patrons who was present at the recent opening of "Les Ballets Africains," at the Mechanic, "This is just not a usual theatre performance for the Baltimore-type of crowds. It was revealing."

What was revealing about "Les Ballets Africains: Ensemble Artistique et Culturel de la Republique de Guinee" was that it was a distinct and innovative type of genre presented to an audience which is usually given to hearing Western (meaning American and European) actors performing to familiar theatrical numbers with a recognizable plot and structure.

* * *

The revealing feature of the performance was the structure and the plot were not immediately recognizable and that made it all the more enticing and exciting to watch as the narrative revealed itself without a spoken word.

Hailing from a lengthy engagement on Broadway, the troupe filled with sparkling, vivid colors, scenery, instruments and costumery drew rave after rave from the mixed audience.

In the words of Ahmed Sekou Toure, president of the Republic of Guinea, as to the role of the troupe: "Their function is to acquaint the rest of the world with our cultural values and our artistic riches. The troupe must, in its way, convey and present Africa, and make her known and appreciated."

"The ballets performed by the National Troupe are not chosen for their educative or politically inspiring qualities, since they are intended for performance before people who already enjoy relatively stable, political, social and economic conditions, with which we must absolutely not interfere.

* * *

"These ballets are chosen for their ability to represent Africa and the life of her peoples in an artistic fashion.

"The role of the National Troupe is to induce real understanding by presenting a just variation. It is their job, therefore, to present our way of life, our preoccupations, our thoughts, our realities," as expressed by President Toure.

The Cultural Ballet is often considered the roving Ambassador of the Guinean nation whose mission is to encourage understanding of Africa with a view to creating the most favorable conditions for a healthy and fruitful cooperation between Africa and the rest of the world."

* * *

Guinea has the good fortune to possess a rich folklore, a popular art that is not only rich but extremely diversified.

President Toure suggests that the folklore is in accord with the actual life of the people and enables the troupe to renew and enrich its repertoire without ever falling into stereotypes of fixed themes.

The themes portrayed by the "Les Ballets Africains" present African Life in a broader context; the lives of the fishermen, the harvests, the struggles of the people against occupation, their efforts to raise themselves up out their misery — all of these are intertwined with the history of the African nations, her mores, and her people.

The troupe brought on to the Majestic stage consisted of artisans, weavers, carvers, dancers and magicians and players of unimaginable instruments; all of the stage of the Mechanic artisans, weavers, unimaginable instruments, carvers, dancers and magicians; all which brought a reality of past and present Africa whose vision has been denied to too many Americans as stated recently by Sierra Leonean Ambassador to the United States John Akar, at Morgan State College.

* * *

The Mechanic audience was treated to an authenticity of African life which is hardly done justice by the media and the many "narrations" of Africa seen in cinemas and on television.

"Les Ballets Africains" probably convinced many blacks and whites from an historical and anthropological point of view that as a civilization and as a society that African values, belles-letters (literature regarded as a fine art) need not be called "inferior" to Western American and European traditions, simply because of their difference.

With the advent of vast research of African studies and humanities, new standards of critique must be presented. Aesthetic value judgement of non-Western culture and life is still in a process of reorientation and reclassification.

The performance permitted Western-type audiences to view without the use of a veil to distort the view, the true life and of the African continent, and the horrors and anguish of the colonial oppression, and what the colonized peoples desired to fight for in terms of "creative progress."

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PUTT IT THERE — Host Flip Wilson tries to impress Bing Crosby with his golfing prowess, when Bing visits "The Flip Wilson Show," Thursday night in color on NBC.

Bing meets 'Geraldine' on 'Flip Wilson Show'

The Supremes, comedian David Steinberg and special guest Bing Crosby will visit Flip Wilson on NBC's colorcast of "The Flip Wilson Show" Thursday.

David Steinberg and Flip will play a pair of young fathers in a sketch which shows them at three different stages — at the maternity hospital, at a little league game, and at high school graduation. Steinberg will also offer a monologue about a teen-ager's romantic aspirations.

The Supremes will sing a medley of "Breakdown," "Stoned Love" and "We've Only Just Begun," and will appear with Flip in a sketch about Freddie Johnson, Swinging Lover (Flip) and his Christmas shopping.

Bing and Flip will sing a Western medley of tunes which earned Crosby a platinum record for having sold 300 million copies.

Crosby will play a conventioneering plumber out for a night on the town and encountering Bunny Geraldine Jones (portrayed by Flip) at the Cottontail Club.

Randolph resigns as election clerk

By MAX JOHNSON

Lloyal Randolph, prominent businessman and veteran Democratic leader, has resigned as chief clerk of the Baltimore Supervisors of Elections, effective today (Friday).

A returning member of the 4th District's House of Delegates contingent, he leaves to devote full time to his General Assembly duties and his business enterprise.

The Randolph resignation means the Supervisors of Elections Office is now without black representation in its top ranks for the first time in over 12 years.

There are no blacks on the three-man board.

W. Marshall Jones Jr., Republican East Baltimore mortician who had served on the board for several years, was reappointed by Gov. Marvin Mandel last year.

But his Senate confirmation was blocked by a disagreement between the 4th District's two black senators and a 2nd District senator.

Mr. Randolph has long been the only other black salaried employee in any capacity of authority.

He served, during his tenyear tenure, as acting chief clerk under the Agnew Reministration, assistant chief clerk under the Agnew Republican regime, and moved up to the top spot of chief clerk when Gov. Mandel took office.

No successor in the black community was publicly being mentioned as this was being written Thursday evening.

Mr. Randolph, however, is one of the founders and a member of the board of directors of the powerful young Metro-Democrats Inc. organization, headed by Henry G. Parks Jr. close associate of the well known William Adams, business magnate.

Gov. Mandel looks with distinct favor on this political club, and he and Mr. Randolph have been close friends for years.

It must be assumed, then, that the Metro-Democrats will have a successor to recommend to the governor, and he will listen agreeably.

There is little need for haste at this time with such an appointment, for actual preparation for the fall elections is months away.

King marchers trek to D.C.

Thousands of civil rights activists are expected to march to the Capitol Jan. 15 bearing thousands of petitions, asking Congress to make Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday a legal holiday.

Mrs. Coretta King, the civil rights leader's widow, is scheduled to lead the march which will follow an 1130 New Jersey Ave., NW. ice at Bible Way Church, 1130 New Jersey Ave. N.W.

The Rev. Ralph David Abernathy, who succeeded Dr. King as head of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, will address the procession.

Mrs. Willie J. Hardy, cochairman of the Washington King Holiday Committee, is urging residents to join the march and is asking the city to give employees the day off.

The petitions, signed by millions of names, will be loaded onto a mule train for the march, she said.

"We will peacefully but forcefully demand that this country's greatest man, a black man, be recognized and honored in the same tradition as many lesser white men," she stated.

Congress will not be in session for the march unless President Nixon summons it sooner than scheduled. Nevertheless,

TV-11 to televise Super Bowl game

The Baltimore Colts and Dallas Cowboys will battle for the world's professional football championship in the Super Bowl at Miami on January 17, and the game will be televised live and in color, exclusively beginning at 2 p.m. on TV 11.

Handling the announcing chores for the January 17 classic will be NBC's Curt Growdy, Kyle Rote and Bill Enis.

TV 11's Sunday Afternoon Show," normally seen 12-2 p.m., will be televised from 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. so WBAL-TV can carry NBC's pre-game program from 1:30 p.m.

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Experts discuss violence on TV-2

The background and future of violence in American society will be explored on "Legacy of Violence," Tuesday, January 12, at 10 p.m. on WMAR-TV, Channel 2.

The hour-long color film documentary will feature commentary by many nationally-known figures, including former Supreme Court Justice Earl Warren, NBC news commentator David Brinkley, John W. Gardner, Dr. Milton S. Eisenhower, Dr. Henry Steele Commager, former United States Attorney General Ramsey Clark, and Quinn Tamm, Executive Director of the International Association of Chiefs of Police.

Although a great deal of emphasis has been placed on recent violence in the United States, it is not generally known that the entire history of America has been marked by racial and religious rioting, anti-war protests, labor unrest, and anarchist political agitation.

* * *

"Legacy of Violence" is an attempt to place today's turmoil in its proper perspective by showing how few periods of American history have been without violence.

In order to properly illustrate much of this bloody American background, "Legacy of Violence" includes original pictures drawn for the editors of Frank Leslie's Illustrated Magazine and Harper's Weekly, two influential and colorful periodicals of the late 19th century.

Additional historical material has been drawn from the National Archives in Washington to support the comments of the speakers, all of whom were filmed during the Johns Hopkins University "Symposium on Violence" of November-December, 1970.

Soviet Lit Taught at UMBC

Readings in translation of the major works by two contemporary Russian authors will be included in a Winter Session course at the University of Maryland Baltimore County.

The Nobel Prize winners, M. Sholokhov and A. Solzhenitsyn, will be studied in the light of modern literary criticism.

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VA Pensioners Must Report

RALEIGH, N.C. — North Carolinians will be able to purchase personalized license plates on a year-round basis starting in January, the Department of Motor Vehicles has announced.

For a $10 fee in addition to the normal cost of license plates, motorists can display their initials or any word or combination of letters and numbers up to six characters.

Mrs. Hardy said she expects some congressmen to be there to receive the petitions.

Rep. John Conyers, D-Mich. and several other congressmen have organized a new national drive for a holiday honoring Dr. King.

Mayor Walter E. Washington and City Councilman Gilbert Hahn Jr. have given their support to the project. The city has agreed to grant leave to its employees and hold special observances.

Dr. King Nobel Prize for Peace winner, was assassinated in April, 1968.

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WMAR-TV-2
5:30: TV 11 News: 5:30 Sports.
6:00: (C)—Dragnet and Dobie Gillis.
6:30: NBC Nightly News with Frank Reynolds.
7:00: CBS News with Walter Cronkite.
7:15: Newswatch (C)
7:30: CBS News with John Hart
7:45: Newswatch (C)
7:50: NBC News with John Hart
8:00: Captain Kangaroo
9:00: Romper Room
9:40: Dialing for Dollars
10:30: Beverly Hillbillies
11:00: To Tell The Truth
11:30: Lucy Show (C)
12:00: Where the Heart Is
12:25: Newswatch
12:30: Search For Tomorrow
1:00: The Woman's Angle: Sylvia Scott
1:30: As the World Turns
2:00: Another World
2:30: Hidden Valley
3:00: The Guiding Light
3:30: The Secret Storm
4:00: The Flintstones: "The Happy Household"
4:30: Big Valley: "Long Ride Home"
5:30: Dragnet
6:00: Newsnight
6:30: CBS Evening News with Walter Cronkite
7:00: Nor Crosby, Perry Andrews Reporter, Newswatch Sports: Jack Dempsey
7:30: Beverly Hillbillies (C)
8:00: Bill Cosby (C) Dilemma: "Hit Man"
8:30: Ron Howard, Rue McClanahan, Bob Crane, Ann Morgan Guilbert, Ann Morgan Guilbert, Ann Morgan Guilbert