What's Happening

by IDA Peters

FLASH! Center Stage was burned out by vandals Wednesday night. Showing of the play "Who Is Afraid of Virginia Wolf? will be held at the Baltimore Museum of Art with all shows beginning at 8:30 p.m. Seating will be on a first come first serve basies.

In Tuesday's AFRO we'll wind up 1973 for you but 1974 threatens to exhaust us . . . and we haven't gotten over Christmas and New Year's . . . in fact any time we're in bed and miss a Guardsmen's New Year's Party we must be half dead.

LAST WEEK

Going to visit the new Arena Playhouse on Orchard Street gives you a sense of pride to know that the Arena Players have been giving us splendid plays for 20 years and they have a splendid "Possible Dream" to build a new 200-seat auditorium and "right now."

Renovations have been started and instead of going up steep steps to the second floor, you go up a temporary ramp.

Current play "The Curious Savage" is excellent and I can say firmly, you will enjoy. Irvin Turner is Director; Fai Davis is Assistant Director.

Chums, Inc. will have benefit tought at 8:30 p.m.

ICE FOLLIES

Tuesday night the Ice Follies opened at the Civic Center and Atoy Wilson the first black ice skating star came to town.

Bob Elmer hosted the press and our photographer, cute Norma Spencer, got to sit next to him . . . and guess what? . . . He invited her backstage and invited her out for dinner. (the newspaper business)

(See . . . we do have fun in

Atoy recently competed in the Invitational Pro World Ice Skating Championships in Japan where he won sixth place and $2,000. Janet Lynn the star of Ice Follies won first place in the women's competition of $15,000. You can see him on Wide World of Sports on January 20th on TV.

In the current show, now on tour, at the Civic Center he skates to Bill Withers' "Ain't No Sunshine" in a green, lime, pink and blue costume. His second number is to Johnny Nash's "I Can See Clearly Now."

For our interview he wore a grey herringbone suit, black and white zigzag big knot tie, and white on white shirt with embossed squares. He wore a silver Indian bracelet he picked up in Phoenix, Arizona and two small rings which he does not wear to skate in because they pick up too much light.

Atoy tells us his name has been handed down in his family from father to son and goes back to family beginnings of Cherokee Indians in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

Born in Los Angeles, he attended Roosevelt High School (six blocks from his home) where at only seven years he became interested in Gymnastics.

At about this time his parents took him to an Ice show and he started ice skating lessons.

His teacher through his growing years was Mabel Fairbanks, one of the few black professional skaters . . . who was way ahead of her time as the world was not ready for a black woman skating star.

He says he is fortunate to have had good parents who sacrificed and encouraged him . . . as ice skating is an exceneive sport.

His dad is Senior Park Foreman in Department of Parks and Recreation in Los Angeles and his mother was very active in PTA work.

To get where he is today, Atoy learned his craft and competed and won skating titles in Los Angeles and in 1967, the Olympic Trials. He completed two years at Loyola College in Los Angeles.

MECHANIC

The Morris Mechanic Theatre opened the year, this week, with Anne Jackson and Eli Wallach in "The Waltz of the Toreadors."

The action of the play takes place in the study of General St. Pe (Eli Wallach) and in his so-called wife's (Anne Jackson) bedroom.

It really is the lament of a dirty old man who has passed his prime, is sick of his wife and is bored pinching the bottoms of school girls and impregnating his maids. It is sick and funny . . . an excellent production.

Anne Jackson is the invalid wife who also has her thing going on the side. She's funniest when she tells him, he can't have his freedom . . . "because you belong to me . . . and when I die, I'll lay beside you through eternity."

If you're tired of the dirty black and white movies . . . go see a cleaned up dirty white play . . . a statement on immorality or lack of morals of rich, white French people.

NEW BOOK

Special guest in our office this week was Dr. Phyllis Harrison-Ross, author of new book "The Black Child-A Parents' Guide."

She is the 36-year-old pediatrician and child psychiatrist, Director of the Community Mental Health Center at Metropolitan Hospital, N.Y.

This is the kind of book every parents needs who is trying to cope with raising a child in this complex world of the 70's.

The chapter on Crystal's Bad Hair and the one on Black Girl/White Boy are most outstanding and if you have a child or if you are a teacher, recommend you read and "think on these things."

We recently had a problem in our AFRO Magazine in the Dear Jan series. A black girl wanted to know what to do about her white boy friend. We got a two page letter saying we didn't know what we were talking about and our answers were unprofessional.

To the letter writer, we turned the problem over to Dr. Phyllis Harrison-Ross and she says we answered the problem correctly plus she says from your letter you seem to have some kind of hang-up.

TREASURE ISLAND

A live, on-stage production of "Treasure Island" a musical adventure will open at the Mechanic Theatre January 21 through January 26. This is part of the theatre for children to be run by Act 2, Baltimore Theatre Inc. to be masterminded by Jack Fructman and Howard Owen.

"BLADE"

This past Monday, we previewed the new movie "Blade" coming soon downtown. Today Friday, we had lunch with the stars Karen Machon and Ernest Pintoff.

It's the story of a senator running for national office whose daughter is killed and a black man is accused of the crime.

JIM KELLY

This past Tuesday, we previewed the new film "Black Belt Jones" starring Jim Kelly. We had lunch with him on Wednesday and he visited our home offices.

He said he is the greatest . . . and I can tell he is as all the pretty secretaries and gals in our office flocked to get his autographs. We'll give you our interview next week.

"FIVE ON BLACK HAND SIDE"

Wednesday night was AFRO night at JF theatres when we previewed "Five On The Black Hand Side" opening.

"VIRGINIA WOOLF?"

Edward Albee's "Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?" opened this week at Center Stage.

Director John Stix, you have done wonders with this play and the settings and lightings by Bennet Averyt are realistic and exciting. Do cut Act II a little because 8 to 11 makes for too long a day.

Gabrielle Strausun, James Pritchett, (you know him as Dr. Matt Powers on "The Doctors") Susan Sharkey and W. T. Martin put on such powerful performances . . . this play should turn out to be one of Center Stage's best.

"RAINBOW"

"The Rainbow Rainbeam Radio Roadshow" — subtitled "Heavenzapoopin" will be presented at The American Theater in L'Enfant Plaza in D.C. tonight through February 10.

With music and lyrics by James Rado, one of the writers of "Hair" and a book co-authored by Mr. Rado and his brother Ted, "RRRR" is being directed and staged by Joe Donovan and his costumes by Nancy Potts and sets by Richard Forrer.

The cast includes James Rado, Karen Bihari, Philip Casnoff, Murphy Cross, Bill Douglas, Pi Douglass, Herb Goldman, Maureen Moore, Burt Ossorio, Debbie Pearl, Lotsa Elia Reed, Maryann Robbins and Charles Weaver.

New Season will be appearing at The Apple of Eve, the restaurant and night club in Loews L'Enfant Plaza Hotel, nightly (Monday-Saturday) through January 26.

The group features female vocalist, Sandy Kimmel, and consists of Glenn Pearson on electric piano (he graduated from Peabody), Bill Wetmore — the lead male vocalist — on electric bass, Paul Goldstein on drums, and Dexter Domm on electric guitar.

COMING EVENTS

POPS CONCERTS

The first Saturday Pops Concert series of the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Music Director Sergio Comissiona, will feature the guitar giant Charlie Byrd, and his Trio, on Jan. 12, 8:15 p.m., Lyric Theatre.

For the January 26 concert the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra will welcome back Mr. Pops, Arthur Fiedler who was there over the Thanksgiving Holidays. This concert will be held at the Lyric Theatre. 8:15 p.m.

CULTURAL ARTS

The Cultural Arts Council of the Community College of Baltimore presents The Columbia Dance Theatre, Inc., in the Fine Arts Center, Saturday, January 12, 3 p.m.

John Taylor, lead dancer, is Associate Director of the Columbia Dance Theatre. Art Teacher at Severna Park Senior High School and Dance Instructor for the Model Cities Cultural Arts Program. Appearing with Taylor will be Betsy Dinkler.

CHILDREN'S THEATRE

The Children's Theatre Association will sponsor a course for teachers and youth-group leaders in Creative Dramatics. Classes will begin Thursday, February 7th and will meet on ten consecutive Thursday evenings, until April 11 th.

A scene from "The Rainbow Rainbeam Radio Roadshow" opening Saturday at Loew's L'Enfant Plaza American Theatre in D.C.

Dr. Phyllis Harrison Ross, author of "The Black Child—A Parent's Guide" visited the AFRO-AMERICAN home offices this past week. Left to right Win Willford, Edward Windsor Wright Corp., Dr. Ross, Miss Valerie Gilmor, her secretary and Mrs. Bea Wilson, AFRO Supervisor. They are watching page being made up for D.C. AFRO. Dr. Ross is a pediatrician and child psychiatrist and Director of the Community Mental Health Center at Meropolitan Hospital in New York. (AFRO staff photo by Norma Spencer)

SWEET SWEETBACK'S BAADASSSSS SONG

"IT'S THE BEST FILM THAT'S EVER BEEN MADE ABOUT BEING BLACK IN AMERICA!" —Jack & Pop News

"A TRULY 'BADASS' MOVIE!" —Soul

"SWEETBACK RUNS COOL!" —Rolling Stone

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Monumental Music Hall

Free At Last

This will be the day when all of God's children will be able to sing with new meaning "My country 'tis of thee, sweet land of liberty, of thee I sing. Land where my fathers died, land of the pilgrim's pride, from every mountainside let freedom ring."

And if America is to be a great nation this must become true. So let freedom ring from the prodigious hilltops of New Hampshire. Let freedom ring from the mighty mountains of New York. Let freedom ring from the heightening Alleghenies of Pennsylvania!

Let freedom ring from the snowcapped Rockies of Colorado!

Let freedom ring from the curvaceous peaks of California!

But not only that; let freedom ring from Stone Mountain of Georgia!

Let freedom ring from Lookout Mountain of Tennessee!

Let freedom ring from every hill and mole hill of Mississippi. From every mountainside, let freedom ring.

When we let freedom ring, when we let it ring from every village and every hamlet, from every state and every city, we will be able to speed up that day when all of God's children, black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics, will be able to join hands and sing in the words of the old Negro spiritual "Free at last! Free at last! thank God Almighty, we are free at last!"

C. EDWARD THOMAS

Taken from Dr. King's speech as song by the choruses for the second Baltimore Symphony Orchestra Friday Night Series featuring an All-American Night and a special tribute to the late Dr. Martin Luther King, Lyric Theatre, this past Friday night.

C. Edward Thomas' composition "I Have A Dream" was sung by these choruses: Douglass Senior High School, Patterson High School, Morgan State College, Goucher College and Johns Hopkins University with gorgeous singer Ethel Ennis presenting her own personal style commemorative to Dr. King. The concert was conducted by Elliott Galkin, professor and chairman of Music Department at Goucher.

Great buildings fall, monuments crumble, flowers die and streets detour; but a song will live forever in the hearts of man.

What greater tribute can one give to such an honor worthy man as Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Each voice ringing out the spirit of truth, hope, and love for someday we shall all be "Free At Last."

Comments

Dr. Roland N. Patterson, Superintendent of Baltimore Public Schools, "It was just magnificent. Mr. Thomas, we are very proud of this composition and the honor it does Dr. King."

William Brown, Channel 67, "It takes me back to my days with John F. Kennedy and Dr. King, fighting for Peace. Just beautiful."

Mrs. C. Edward Thomas, "He (her husband) has worked so hard, it a tribute to him as well as to Dr. King."

This writer feels that although the Lyric's acoustics were bad, C. Edward Thomas' "I Have A Dream" was a great composition for a great man.

by Connie E. Brown

Slams."

After nine years of professional life, Jim is a heavy dude with his game together. Fame and fortune has not made him forget the basic attitudes vital to living in this society.

"Dignity, like pride and honesty, Jim explained, "is a quality that others must see in a person. It's not something that one feels as an integral part of one's personality."

Composer C. Edward Thomas, music professor at Bethel College, Arden Hills, Minn., put the late Dr. Martin Luther King's famous "I Have A Dream" speech to music.

Motown's New Miracles, featuring William Griffin, formerly of Baltimore cut a new album, "Renaissance."

In their first appearance in Baltimore since they teamed up with Bill the Miracles performed to an audience of less than two hundred. Nevertheless, they were well received and put on a dynamite show.

OCTOBER

As Public Relations Assistant, got to meet a lot of people from the world over.

Served as hosters to three African journalists on tour of American newspapers with Crossroads Africa, a State Department exchange program based in New York.

Taking them to lunch was a real trip. Have you ever tried explaining the difference between bar-b-cue short ribs and spareribs?

The Playword Bus Theatre Company of Philadelphia, directed by Walter Mapp, presented James Weldon Johnson's play "God's Trombones."

Mapp's production took you back to the days when church was "church," a foot-stumping, joy-jumping good time.

Rare Earth, Funkadelic, Ohio Players and Leadhead drew a crowd of 11,700 at the Civic Center. Funkadelic stole the show with their weird attire and songs from their newest album "Cosmic Slop" and others from "The Funkadelic," "America Eats Its Young" and "Free Your Mind."

Sam Greenlee, author of "The Spook Who Sat By The Door" directed a movie of the same title.

Greenlee had a great deal of difficulty in getting the book published in 1969 and the same with the movie in 1973 because some people labeled them "blueprints for a revolution."

Bernie Casey, star of "Hit Man" and co-star of "Cleopatra Jones" returned as Maurice Stokes in the heart warming film "Maurie."

In talking to Casey, received the impression that he is not a very talkative person, nor is he boastful.

NOVEMBER

Sitting at my desk with too many things to do and no time to do them; decided to chuck the whole lot of them.

Just then the phone rang. Low and behold, it was Billy Preston rapping like he was talking to his best girl.

That was fine with me. He was scheduled to appear here the following weekend presenting songs from his newest album, "Everybody Likes Some Kind of Music."

The Baltimore Chapter of the NAACP presented "Save The Children" at a fund-raising benefit.

"Save The Children" was a celebration of life and hope for black people striving together for a common goal to save their children.

DECEMBER

Mary Lou Williams, pianist, composer, and arranger who wrote and arranged "The Big Bands during the Swing Era, is still performing today.

She has composed three Masses including musical basis for the highly acclaimed ballet of the same title by choreographer Alvin Ailey.

According to Mary Lou, "jazz is healing, for its the art of spiritual music."

Reception For Masekela

By Connie Brown

Never was there such a splendid sight as I beheld Hedzoleh Soundz as they entered the Cellar Door in D.C., this past Thursday night on their first stop of a nationwide tour promoting the release of their new album "Masekela: Introducing Hedzoleh Soundz."

The leader of the procession, wearing a hat of antelope horns, blowing a whistle, and operating two strange noise-makers led the group on stage.

Each member of this Ghanaian band, wearing the robes of tribal chiefs, was a wonder in his own right. All the garments and instruments were handmade in the high country of the Northeastern region of Ghana.

Performing the songs on their new album and other African jazz songs, Masekela and Hedzoleh Soundz were well received by the crowd that overflowed the Cellar Door.

Masekela, wearing the royal weave of Ghana said, "I've been waiting about four months for this set. If it continues to go well we will record a live album while on this tour."

Prior to this engagement, the members of Hedzoleh Soundz had never before experienced Northern Hemisphere weather.

Upon their arrival in Washington they had to go on a shopping trip for warm clothes.

They were also surprised to find the skins on their drums had tightened from the cold and had to be heated before playing.

From Washington, Masekela and Hedzoleh Soundz will be appearing in New York, Boston, Philadelphia, Chicago, Los Angeles, and San Francisco.

If these introductory concerts are successful, Masekela will be returning later this summer with a complete African show, including dancers and other African performers. The proposed name for this show featuring Hedzoleh Soundz is "African Madness."

Reception

The Ambassador of Ghana and Mrs. H. O. Amonoo gave a reception called "The African Train" in honor of the celebrated South African musician Masekela and the Hedzoleh Soundz of Ghana at the Kennedy Center this past Monday night.

For the gala occasion there were many representatives and visiting guests from Ghana, Nigeria, West Africa and South Africa.

Mayor Walter E. Washington of D.C., could not be present but sent his regards and best wishes.

Comments

Throughout Masekela's performance African shouts and cries of enjoyment could be heard from the audience. Many Americans who could not give these African cries came on strong with "right on", "yes," "beautiful" and a few "all right now."

Later talked to some of the guests and received the following comments:

Mrs. Amonoo said, "I felt like dancing the whole time. It was just great."

With his chest out proudly, Ambassador Amonoo said, "I love there songs. African music speaks the same language of all people and it was remarkable."

Paul Acquah, International Monetary Fund, "I saw Hugh a few years ago and he was lacking a lot of stuff, but this time he is really complete."

The Hon. Mr. Brobey, Information Councelor, Embassy of Ghana said, "This is the first time I've heard African music presented with such professionalism. It was wonderful."

Alfred Neal Jr., Department of State, who had just returned from Chad, Central Africa had this comment. "This has been my first opportunity to hear some real jazz from the continent again."

Faisal Huwani, manager and producer for Hedzoleh Soundz said, "This was a beautiful crowd and their response has made me feel very good. My only complaint is the structure of the ceiling of this hall; it's too high and you get funny vibrations."

Catching the first show on Thursday and the last on Monday gave me a bit of an advantage. Masekela and Hedzoleh Soundz were extraordinary at both performances.

Performing in this manner, Masekela and Hedzoleh Soundz had best be ready for their return tour for they will be in great demand.

Synoptic '73

September

The summer noon series of Jazz in Hopkins Plaza, featuring such greats as the Jimmy Heath Quintet, Al Rossi, Jimmy Wells and Count Basie, has come to a close.

Fall arrives bringing a variety of new adventures and talents.

The Baltimore Symphony adds to its family two new conductors: Andrew Schenck, assistant conductor, and Darrold Hunt, apprentice conductor.

James Brown introduced a new soulful group, the Variations. Was most impressed with them when they asked me to print the following message:

"Black people have not stopped getting better, for in using what you have, one development creates another. If you made it, reach out and help a brother."

Straight Ahead, a new local rock group cut their first record. "Straight Ahead;" the direction in which they wish to travel.

Stanley Turrentine, saxophonist, releases his new album, "Don M With Mister T" on which he treats his sax with tender, loving care.

That fine athlete and great actor Jim Brown came to Baltimore to promote his new picture, "The

Jim Kelly has Smashing Good Time!

The Pullman car sat on a siding in the railroad section of downtown Los Angeles.

It appeared to be empty and abandoned. Silence hung over the yard.

Suddenly, all hell broke loose. Men began smashing through the windows and falling helpless to the ground as broken glass flew in every direction. Inside, the explanation was simple: Jim Kelly was at it again.

For this sequence in "Black Belt Jones," a Weintraub-Heller Production for Warner Bros., the star of the action-adventure film, was taking on a mob of a dozen men, using his tremendous powers of karate.

Naturally, all these bodies flying out of the railroad car were expert stuntmen with plenty of experience at this sort of gymnastics. But in their roles as Mafia mobsters, they had cornered Kelly in the car and he had only one alternative. Take them on one by one.

"Altogether," recalls Kelly, "it took a full four days to film this one sequence. Every move in the fight was choreographed like a ballet. In this way, there were no injuries and director Robert Clouse got exactly what he wanted for the cameras.

"But I'll tell you," Jim continued, "doing this scene was more fun than a railroad car full of monkeys. We were all sorry when it was over. In other words, everyone had a smashing good time."

"Black Belt Jones" also stars Gloria Hendry and Scatman Crothers, with Fred Weintraub and Paul M. Heller producing from a screenplay by Oscar Williams.

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