Brock Peters, co-producer of "Five On Black Hand Side," arrives at AFRO Home Offices in long limousine driven by V.I.P. guide, Harrison Logan.

Welcome to AFRO is given by Mrs. Elizabeth Moss, Vice-President-Treasurer, who told him she had seen his work and was proud to meet him.

A visit to AFRO Composing Room finds him shaking hands with Rudolph Antone, foreman. Rear, Mrs. Ida Peters, Entertainment Editor. Forward, he visits Teletype-Computer Room to watch Mrs. Marjorie Barksdale, Freddie Williams and Mrs. Sylvia Upshur.

Fans getting autographs in the Editorial Department were Miss Alverta Moore, Mrs. Carolyn Tutman and Misses Carolyn Peay and Pamela Banks.

Brock Peters Producer-Actor Visits AFRO

Brock Peters, wearing a black suit, wine turtle-neck sweater and multi-color boots came to town last week for a press luncheon.

He's the actor-singer-writer and co-producer of the film with Michael Tolan of "Five On the Black Hand Side," now playing exclusively at the Met Theatre.

He came in from Philly where he competed 14 press interviews to tour the AFRO plant and have lunch with the local press. From here he goes to N.Y., Detroit, Boston, Cleveland, Los Angeles and Atlanta.

A comedy about a Middle Class family, "Five On the Black Hand Side," has been hailed for its originality as a breakthrough film that offers humor instead of crime, drugs and violence, the traditional subjects of black-oriented motion pictures

Clarice Taylor, Leonard Jackson, Virginia Capers, Glynn Turman and D'Urville Martin are starred, with Richard Williams, Sonny Jim, Ja'Net Dubois and Bonnie Banfield co-starred. Special guest star is Godfrey Cambridge who plays himself.

An authentic African wedding ceremony is one of the colorful highspots of this warm and humorous story of an urban family whose principal concerns are such basic contemporary problems as the generation gap, women's lib and ethnic consciousness. And as the film unfolds, it becomes apparent that you don't have to be black to have these problems.

Brock Peters' career has been a series of transoceanic and transcontinental moves, from Broadway to Hollywood to play Tom Robinson in the film of "To Kill a Mockingbird" and from Hollywood to London to co-star with Leslie Caron in "The L-Shaped Room." He returned to England almost immediately to co-star with Peter Sellers in "Heavens Above." He also co-starred with Rod Steiger as the smooth, evil racketeer, Rodriguez, in "The Pawnbroker."

In addition to the aforementioned films, Brock has starred and co-starred in "The Incident," "Soylent Green" with Charlton Heston and Edward G. Robinson; "The McMasters," "P.J." with George Peppard and "Black Girl."

In theatre, he has often played the title role in "Othello" and he cut a stunning swath across the nation as the star of the national tour of "The Great White Hope."

On Broadway, in 1972, starring in the Kurt-Weill-Maxwell Anderson musical drama, "Lost in the Stars," Brock gave what reviewer, after reviewer called — "The most moving performance on Broadway in a decade." For that performance he was nominated for the Antoinette Perry Award (the Tony) as the best actor in a musical.

Ely Landau (producer of "The Pawnbroker") was so moved by Brock's performance in "Lost in the Stars" that he decided to translate it to film through his unique American Film Theatre. This subscription series will play selected theatres next week.

Introducing: Jim Watkins

Best friend of John Wayne in "McQ"

Meet Jim Watkins!

If good looks, charm, charisma and talent add up to anything, it will take a computer to list a total on the potential of young Jim Watkins.

A relative newcomer to the Hollywood scene, the husky, free-swinging 28-year-old moved into the limelight as John Wayne's detective pal in "McQ," a Batjac and Levy-Gardner Production for Warner Bros. also starring Eddie Albert, Diana Muldaur and Al Lettieri.

Jim Watkins left Los Angeles Sunday on an 11-city, two-week tour in behalf of "McQ," a contemporary detective drama. He will meet with media representatives in New York, Chicago, Detroit, Philadelphia, Washington, D.C., Baltimore (Today, Friday), Cleveland, Atlanta, New Orleans, Houston and Dallas.

By far the most important tale in the young career of Watkins, "McQ" created a new level for him.

"After the initial apprehension wore off," Watkins grinned, "I watched Wayne and Albert everytime they did anything. And believe me I learned plenty even after a year of co-starring in the television series "The Magician," 30 TV commercials and four feature films. They showed what being a pro really means. This picture, and the major role I had in it, is the most important thing in my career so far."

His professional experience also includes four motion pictures including "Cool Breeze" and "Mack Gunn" as well as guest shots on major television series such as "Cannon," "The Bob Newhart Show" to his co-starring role as Jerry in the pilot in "The Magician."

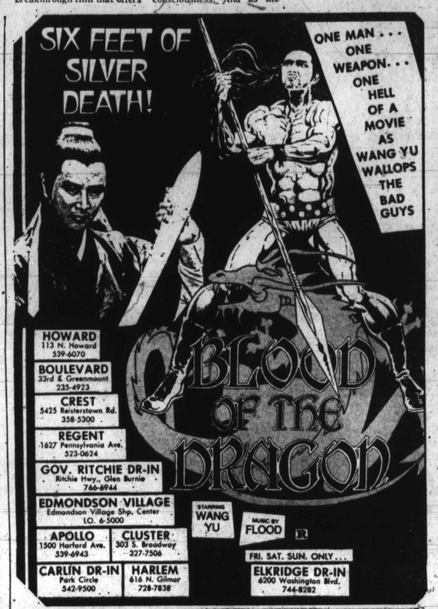
Win Jim Kelly Stickers

The first 50 persons writing us to tell us how much they like Jim Kelly in "Black Belt Jones" will win Jim Kelly stickers.

Some lucky letter writers will receive pix of Jim Kelly.

And nine (9) lucky letter writers will win a pair of Sidney's blushing pink pants properly emblazoned with the title of the film "Black Belt Jones."

Write your local AFRO or "Black Belt Jones" Contest, AFRO-AMERICAN Newspaper, 628 N. Eutaw St., Baltimore, Md. 21201. Don't call, write.



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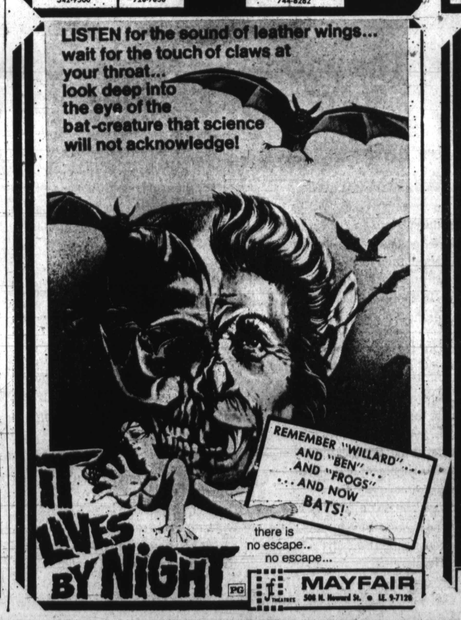


What's Happening

by Ida Peters

SHEILA WINS

The Playboy Club was packed last Friday night for the finals of the Baltimore Playboy Bunny of the Year contest.

Abe Applebaum and his PR man Allen Shecter invited this writer (eat your heart out guys) along with Jimmy Colimore, News-American; Johnny Walker, WFBR; Robert C. Allen III, WCAO and George Geipe, WMAR, to pick the winner on the basis of Appearance, Poise and Personality.

We all agreed on chocolate bunny No. 5, Sheila Ross, 36-25-36, 5' 9", 135 pounds. She has a beautiful singing voice. For the contest she wore a new shocking pink bunny suit and a long sleeve dusty rose chiffon evening dress with long rhinestone necklace.

She won a trip to Los Angeles as guest of Hugh Hefner to compete for national honors. She is not the first chocolate bunny to win from Baltimore. Four years ago Gina Bryan won the Baltimore title and went on to win the national title in Chicago. Two years ago, Beverly Marshall won the Baltimore title but missed out on the finals.

Last night (Thursday) we previewed the American Film Theatre's production of "Lost In the Stars" which stars Brock Peters, Melba Moore and Raymond St. Jacques.

Today (Friday) our AFRO guest will be Jim Watkins who is introduced in the film' "Mcq" starring John Wayne. Later Friday, we are guests of the Maryland Center for Public Broadcasting at the Baltimore Museum of Art to preview Channel 67's new show "The Critic's Place." The show will premiere on February 7.

Peggy Thompson, president of the Baltimore Urban Environment Chapter, wirtes to advise that the AFRO Clean Block Campaign has won their first Honor Roll Award. The Annual Awards Night Dinner will be held March 16th at Holiday Inn and will be presented by Henry Gibson, TV and movie personality, formerly of "Laugh-In."

This week-end the Baltimore Touring Co. will be presenting "Harmonic Motion" at the War Memorial Building at 8:30 p.m. The musical comedy will have cast members from Douglass, Dunbar, Towson, Morgan and CCB. Opening, Friday, benefits Fellowship of Sights

COMING UP

The Arena Players will present a double bill of satire and comedy at the New Arena Playhouse on Orchard Street, starting February 8. Both plays by Douglass Turner Ward. One tells the plight of two domestics whose employers are on the verge of divorce, thus cutting off their household luxuries. The other is about the uproarious emergencies that occur when a southern town is faced with the sudden disappearance of all black citizens.

Sheila Ross-Playboy Winner

GLADYS KNIGHT

True marriages, goes the saying, are made in heaven. Well, reflecting on the experience of rare and fine artists, like Gladys Knight and The Pips, it seems that true careers are made there, too. Today, singles by Gladys Knight and The Pips rise like champagne bubbles to the top of the charts. Since their recent signing with The Buddah Group, "Midnight Train To Georgia" was certified as a million-selling single and their first Buddah LP, "Imagination," followed suit as a gold album. Given the breathless raves that greet their live performances in the U.S. and in Europe, the future looks bright. You can catch them at the Civic Center this Sunday.

"PASSIN' THROUGH"

Act 2, Mechanic Theatre will present "Passin' Through," a program of folk ballads, blues and spirituals performed by professional artists, George Tipton and Lorice Stevens starting Thursdays, February 21. (See ad in this issue)

Miss Stevens and Tipton have been enchanting student audiences across the country for five years. They will sing selections from "Purlie," "Godspell," "Porgy and Bess," "Hair" and "Jesus Christ Superstar."

Miss Stevens received her BMD from Howard University and has toured the country with "Best of Broadway" shows and more recently in concert with William Warfield.

Tipton has appeared for two years in the Broadway show "Hair" and you heard him singing the title song in the film, "Cotton Comes To Harlem."

"RIVER NIGER"

Act 2 has booked "The River Niger" into the Mechanic Theatre for April 8-28. If you missed it in N.Y. or D.C., this might be your last chance.

"MANNIX"

H. B. Barnum III, 12-year-old son of the arranger-conductor, has been signed by producers Ivan Goff and Ben Roberts for a co-starring role in "A Question of Murder," episode of Paramount Television's "Mannix" series, starring Mike Connors.

In the teleplay by Jim Bateman and Arthur Weiss, Barnum will portray the youthful friend of a black prize-fighter on the skids who seeks Joe Mannix' aid when the boxer is mysteriously killed by a hit-and-run driver.

OVERS

Baltimorean Liz Dargen called to tell us she and her group, the Gospeletes have a new record out — "Everything Is Going To Be Alright" on ABC-Dunhill records. Told her about the AFRO's new record section coming out in April.

Wilhelmina Vaughn, the Edmondson High teacher, tells us her protege Angela Heard is thrilled with her more than $1,000 scholarship to U.S. International University, Center for Performing and Visual Arts in San Diego. She's one of 7 in the dance program and is soon to perform with a group in the San Diego Sports Arena. And . . . . she met and talked with Wilt Chamberlain on a plane trip from LA. to San Diego. Her greatest thrill was touring the Motown offices.

Reports have it that the production budget for "Three the Hard Way," starring Jim Brown, Fred Williamson and Jim Kelly, with Gordon Parks Jr. directing is in the neighborhood of $1,800,000 and that, Brother, is a neighborhood not many of the black flicks have been into.

The Lafayette Square center of the Enoch Pratt Free Library opened to the public last week. Located in the Lafayette Square multi-service center, 1510 Lafayette Avenue, the new library houses a collection of over 4,000 books, magazines and records and has a staff of three.

PARK SCHOOL SUMMER ARTS PROGRAM

Mrs. Vivian Washington and Norman Ross are actively engaged in recruiting students for the Park School Summer Arts Program.

The Summer Arts Program is planned to include a comprehensive six-week offering in theatre, music, film making and studio art. It will include credit academic elective courses in the history of theatre, music and art, film and photography; workshops in acting techniques, ensemble playing, film-making; production workshops evolving around three planned presentations; a musical, two one-act plays and an Experimental Arts Theatre Production (multi-Media).

Parents who have gifted children Grades 9-12 would be wise to investigate this program instead of the regular general camp. Parents who can't afford the more than $300 tuition should apply for scholarships.

You can get information and an interview next Sunday, February 10 from 2 to 4 p.m. at Douglas Memorial Community Church, Heritage United Church of Christ or Village Club, Village of Cross Keys.

"Rainbow, Rainbeam Roads how"

The integrated and talented cast of "The Rainbow Rainbeam Radio Roadshow" now playing at the American Theatre in L'Enfant Plaza in D.C. put on a terrific show . . . so take my word for it . . . take time and go see it through February 10.

Bill Henry Douglass has three roles . . . that of Tin Man, President's Son and Magician Protestor. He's only 22, the son of Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Douglass of D.C. and a direct descendant of Frederick Douglass (there are about 30 in the D.C. area).

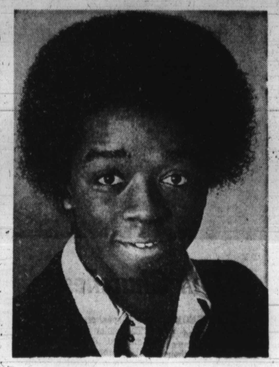
As the president's son, he dresses in a long yellow dress in the number "Ten Years Ago" in Act 1 & 1/2 and in the opening a Tin Man in "Hold Me, Huge Me, Squeeze Me."

Douglass got his dance training at Flo Blackwell's Dance Studio in NE and had private voice lessons. He has appeared in many off-Broadway productions, at the American Place Theatre, the Negro Ensemble Company and as lead singer with rock and blues bands in San Francisco and D.C. Through Antioch College he's worked at Corner Theatre and Theatre Upstairs.

He has been a regular assistant host on the Kirby Scott Show on WDCA-TV in D.C. Coming up you'll see him as a street corner gospel singer in Paramount's "The Education of Sonny Carson."

Among the performers appearing with him as a mother and a father, Jesus and Buddha, s Stripper, a Wizard and, of course, the Rainbeams, are Karen Bihari, Philip Casnoff, Murphy Cross, Pi Douglass, Herb Goldman, Maureen Moore, Burt Ossorio, Debbie Pearl, Jozella Reed, Maryann Robbins and Charles Weaver.

James Rado stars in the production as Billy Earth, a successor to the lead in "Hair," who returns to earth, from Rainbow Land — a free-thinker's heaven — to learn the reason why he died in Vietnam.



Bill Henry Douglass, direct descendant

Monumental Music Hall

by Connie E. Brown

ST. BARTHOLDMEW'S

The combined choirs of Charles Wesley Methodist Church and St. Paul's AME Zion Church, both of Centreville, Md., will present a program, "The Spiritual As It Emerged in Black American Culture," Sunday, Feb. 17, 4 p.m., at St. Bartholomew's Church, 4711 Edmondson Ave.

The Rev. James E. Cantler, rector of St. Bartholomew's, has heard these black musicians perform and called it "a deeply moving experience" which he has long dreamed of sharing with the Baltimore community. The public is invited without charge.

U OF MD.

At 8:15 p.m. on Monday evening, February 4, the University of Maryland Chorus will present performances of Faure's "Requiem" and the "Solemn Mass in Bb" of Joseph Haydn.

The concert, under the direction of Paul Traver, will feature members of the National Symphony Orchestra and soloists: Kathleen Hedlund, Louise McClelland, Kathy Reynolds, Gary Horton, James Gibbs and Benjamin Riddles.

Gladys Knight and the Pips with Richard Pryor at Civic Center

The performance, open to the public without admission charge, will be held in the new ballroom of the Student Union on the College Park Campus of the University of Maryland.

ST. JOHN AME

The Courtesy Club of St. John AME Church will be sponsoring A Soiree' Musicale featuring the Rev. Benjamin S. Foust, baritone and Mrs. Linda Poulson Hutchins, soprano, on Sunday, Feb. 3, 4 p.m., in the sanctuary of the church (810 N. Carrollton

The Maryland Ballet Company will present its Midwinter Dance Festival: "Apogee 74," on Friday, Feb. 1, 8 p.m., Kraushaar Auditorium, Goucher College.

Harlem Ballerina

Editor's Note: The Baltimore Chapter of Young Audiences will bring Arthur Mitchell's Dance Theatre of Harlem to Baltimore the week of February 19th for lecture-demonstrations in the public schools and a performance at the Lyric Theatre, February 22.

By Clarissa Chapman
AFRO Staff Writer

The Dance Theatre of Harlem, presently enlightening District students on the techniques of ballet in lecture-demonstrations at Ford's Theatre, is composed of 24 dancers, one of whom is a lovely Washington-born ballerina.

Virginia Johnson, 22, has been with the New York based company four of its five years and plans to remain with the company throughout her dance career.

"This dance theatre is the place to be for any young black dancer. It's a young company and a very exciting one.

"Everything is happening here," says the talented performer who has toured with the company to various college campuses and twice to Europe.

"When I graduated from high school, I wasn't sure about getting into a company. There were not many companies taking black dancers at that time, much less black female dancers," the tall, lithe ballerina asserts.

Dancing, apart from being one of the most challenging careers, is one of the most precarious careers.

There are many aspiring performers who make it, and possibly will not, have Virginia's opportunities. For this reason, Virginia strongly urges young people considering ballet to weight all of its merits and shortcomings.

TV NOTES

By Cynthia Stevenson

"When an American says he's starving, it's usually another way of saying 'let's eat,' " but for some 2 billion people in Latin America, Africa and Asia, hunger is a daily presence. For them, starvation is a grisly reality."

The fundamental relationship between the increasing world population and the world's food resources will be discussed on "Look Up and Live" Sunday, Feb. 3 at 10:30 a.m. CBS Network.

Willie Hutch

The 5th Dimension and Willie Hutch guest star on Soul Train, Sunday, Feb. 3 at 2:00 p.m. on Ch. 45.

The 5th Dimension, one of California's most versatile pop stars, stop in to entertain the Soul Train Gang. Rarely have five individually-talented entertainers worked so well together — dedicating themselves to making good music, while avoiding the inevitable personality conflicts that have caused so many other pop groups to dissolve. This is one of the qualities which has made the 5th Dimension so successful.

Remembered for their very popular recordings, "Up, Up and Away" and "Aquarius," the soulful five sing "Flash Back," "Wedding Bell Blues," "One Less Bell" and 'Black Patch."

Willie Hutch is a man of unparalleled achievements. He is a writer, producer, arranger and an extremely talented performer. Before coming to Motown two years ago, he wrote and produced hit records for Johnny Rivers, The 5th Dimension, Al Wilson and The Friends of Distinction, to name a few.

One of his greatest achievements was writing, arranging and producing the original soundtrack score for "The Mack."

He will perform his latest releases, "Tell Me Why Our Love's Turned Cold" and "Sunshine Lady."

Dr. Seuss' "Horton Hears a Who," the Peabody Award-winning animated special to be rebroadcast Monday, Feb. 4 at 8:30 p.m. on the CBS Television Network.

Karen Valentine, George Kirby, William Peter Blatty and members of the "Exorcist" cast headline the varied array of guests lined up for WBAL-TV's "Merv Griffin Show" the week of Feb. 4-8, weekdays at 3:30-5 p.m. on Ch. 11.

MOSES GUNN

Moses Gunn stars as Jebedish Nightlinger, ranch cook, teacher and surrogate father to seven boys who help a widow run a cattle ranch in the untamed New Mexico Territory of the 1870s, new ABC Television Network series, which premieres with the episode, "David Done It," on Wednesday, Feb. 6 at 8:00 p.m.

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