'Purlie' has lost its sharpness

By Claudette Newson

I assume a musical comedy must make some modernizations in order to remain fresh and keep its audience appeal.

But it is unfortunate that none of the modernization of "Purlie" have prevented its male star from seeming like the character the audience should be mourning.

In fact, the speech changes, according to my memory of past performances, has so changed the original biting humor of Ossie Davis that much of the satirical punch has been knocked out of this once razor sharp comedy.

None of the rearranging has helped Robert Guillaume in his portrayal of Purlie, the "new fangled preacherman" who masterminds and eventually succeeds in ending the dynasty of an old white supremacist.

* * *

He is still moving about the stage with as much enthusiasm as Ol' Cap'n, who dies standing up after learning Big Bethel has been deeded to Purlie by his own white-blooded son.

Guillaume's only saving point is that he must in life be the son of a southern preacherman and thereby acquired the knack of adequately delivering his lines.

Patti Jo as Lutibelle received the same warm and friendly reception from the audience that she has always received in nine months on Broadway and two years with the road company.

But not even her charm combined with that of Norma Donaldson's "Missy" could reclaim the play's former luster.

Several in the audience, veterans of other performances, noted that Barry Smith was above adequate in the role of Gitlow but still a far cry from his predecessor, television's "George Jefferson."

* * *

All in all, the audience laughed and applauded in the right spaces. And there was about the usual number of confused whites and bemused blacks.

However, at the end of the performance, when a few stout hearty patrons attempted a standing ovation, there were no takers.

Purlie will be at the National Theatre in Washington until June 29.

TV Notes

Don Kishner's Rock Concert presentation includes:

Hot Tuna—"Hit Single No. 1," "Serpent Of Dreams," "Police Dog Blues," "I See The Light"

R.E.O. Speedwagon—"Down By The Dam," "Son Of A Poor Man," "Lost In A Dream,"

"Do Your Best"

B.T. Express—"Do It Till You're Satisfied," "That's What I Want From You," "Express"

Abba—"Waterloo"

* * *

Cher is joined by guest stars The Pointer Sisters, comedienne Teri Garr, and special guest star Freddie Prinze of "Chico and the Man," on a rebroadcast of "Cher" Sunday, June 15.

* * *

A rich kid with more dollars than sense buys a ghetto building which he plans to convert into his own pleasure dome until the neighborhood residents remind him of a few firm facts on the city's mean streets in "The Landlord," the television premiere of a modern comedy of changing times, on June 14.

Beau Bridges stars as the well-intended but overprivileged young man who learns that his search for personal expression is more laughable than laudable when he tries to evict the building's tenants, played by Pearl Bailey, Diana Sands and Louis Gossett. Lee Grant is starred as the boy's socially prominent and prominently scatterbrained mother.

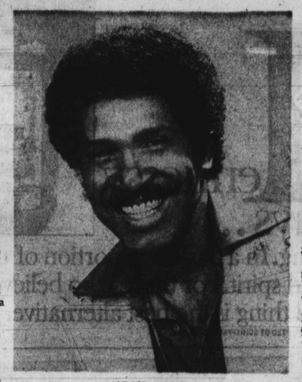
* * *

Singer-actress Kelly Garrett, Ernestine Jackson, who is currently starring in the Broadway musical "Raisin," and The Tokens, pop recording trio of singers, have been signed as premiere week guests on "Musical Chairs," new musical-variety show within a game format which debuts Monday, June 16.

The series, hosted by singer-actor Adam Wade, will be seen weekdays. Two special guest stars and a singing group will be featured each week on the program.

* * *

Monday, June 16 (S.W.A.T.(—"Pressure Cooker". After thwarting a market heist involving hostages, preventing an attempted suicide and launching an investigation into a kidnapping, Hondo is ordered to play "host" to a beautiful, anti-police writer who plans to spend several days on the job with the team.



ADAM WADE

Enoch Pratt

Thursday, June 19

"The Fabulous Harlem Globetrotters," "Riot on Ice," and "Oliver the Eighth," films at the Pratt Library's Clifton Center, 3:30 p.m.

"The Little Princess," film at the Pratt Library's Waverly Branch; 3:30 p.m. and 7 p.m.

"The Autobiography of Miss Jane Pittman," film at the Pratt Library's Northwood Branch, 7 p.m. (Repeat showing on Friday, June 20, at 2 p.m.)

EVENTS FOR CHILDREN

June 21)

Tuesday, June 17

Clifton Center: Films — "Caps for Sale," "Alphabet," "Arrow to the Sun," "Clever Village," and "Beaver Valley," 3:30 p.m.

... All that JAZZ

By BOB MATTHEWS

Call it nostalgia, call it old hat, call it what you will, but watching two old pros at work is one of the most delightful experiences on the jazz scene.

Speaking about the Left Bank Jazz Society's concert last Sunday where Barney Kessel and Herb Ellis were featured.

Both are guitarist, both play similar styles, both are superb soloists, and both share a common evolvement in the jazz world.

For example, during the days of jazz at the Philharmonic, both Ellis and Kessel took part in some of the sessions.

At varying times both have been a part of Oscar Peterson groups.

Last Sunday, it was a pleasure to hear guitars played without the over-amplification and wah-wah pedal effects used by modern day guitarists.

In its stead Kessel and Ellis poured forth straight forward jazz with imaginative fingering and lightening quick runs.

Perhaps one of the reasons for the sheer delight of the audience was the music selected.

Most of the tunes were familiar, for example, the soulful "Yesterday's" wherein all the accompanying musicians left the stage for a Barney Kessel solo.

Or a "When Your Lover Has Gone" solo by Herb Ellis. The duo combined on "Tangerine" playing it in the style of Les Paul and Mary Ford from years ago.

They even brought back the Boogie-Woogie sound with the one guitarist playing the stride piano segments then alternating.

As has been reported many times a good drummer has the ability to propel a group; Bertell Knox, kicking drums with the Ellis and Kessel was the supreme catalyst.

Knox, is quite familiar to LBJS's audiences, he played the first concert at the Madison Club years ago. He served a stint with Charlie Byrd, so is thoroughly engrained in the tasteful restrained drumming needed in a "quiet music" setting.

Steve Novasel, was bassist. Was told by some knowledgeable jazz fans present that Steve is a Baltimorean and was once married to Roberta Flack.

A good indication of artist's merit is the reaction of the audience.

It was quite noticeable that the solo guitar stints by Kessel and Ellis brought the rapt attention of the assemblage. As was the case when listeners are "tasting," there is usually traffic, crowd noise, etc. Such was not the case last Sunday.

When the music was quiet, the audience was quiet, when the music was rousing, the audience was enthusiastic. In fact, at the conclusion of the concert, the standing ovation the group received resulted in an encore number from the gleeful fans.

All in all this was one of the better concerts in the current series. On a scale of ten, I would rate it at 9.

Next week, June 15, Sonny Fortune Quintet will be on tap. For your planning purposes, the line up for the next few weeks include: June 22nd, Stan Getz Quartet; June 29th, Freddy Hubard Quintet;

July 6th, Carlos Garnet and the Universal Black Force; July 13th, Horace Silver Quintet.

Incidentally, at the Carlos Garnet concert, one of the intermission features will be a wedding.

Yes, a wedding, a real life wedding, between Clifford Jordan, tenor sax man with the Garnet group and Saundra Lee Williams of Baltimore.

I wonder if the wedding march will be played in jazz, maybe it should be a Blues.

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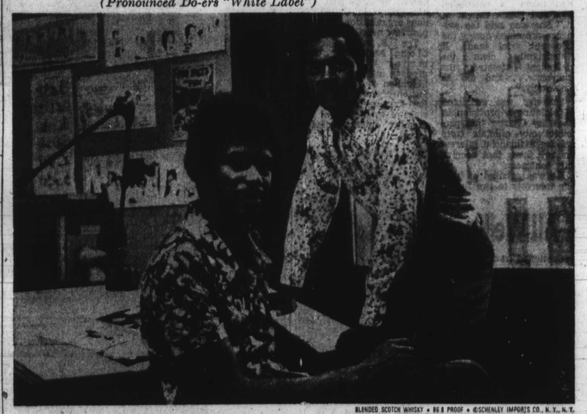

BLENDED SCOTCH WHISKY • 86 8 PROOF • ©SCHENLEY IMPORTS CO., N.Y., N.Y.

LOUIS SLAUGHTER and EDWARD CARR

HOME: Kansas City, Missouri

OCCUPATION: Writer/Artist team

LAST ACCOMPLISHMENT: Created a highly successful comic strip which is drawn and distributed completely by Blacks.

QUOTE: "We use our comic strip to point out the problems faced by poor people in the ghetto ... and to make people laugh at themselves rather than at others."

PROFILE: Carr (25) is gregarious, people-oriented—likes to play drums and sing. Slaughter (32) is an introvert, preferring the solitude of fishing or reading.

Together, they're a highly imaginative, inventive team. They know "what's going down" in the ghetto, and they want to influence what they see.

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Dewar's never varies.

Some of Baltimoreans who were guests of Vashti McKenzie, Public Relations, Shady Grove were Travis Winkey, Stan McKenzie, AFRO circulation manager; Pat Hayes, Ellis Young, Mickey Cromer and Charles Butler, (rear). In front, Elaine Young, Alicia Santana, Sheila Green Sheila Evans, Betty Bee, and Dennis Bates.

Travis Winkey greets Mrs. Ethel Kennedy and Singer Andy Williams at reception after Shady Grove concert.

Blossom Horowitz, left, Elaine Young, and Ken Gaston, director of press relations of Painters Mill at Shady Grove.

What's Happening

By Ida Peters

The Andy Williams Show opening night at Shady Grove, this past Monday, wasthe occasion for us attending the very posh show and also the cocktail party given by the owners of Music Fair Enterprises, Lee Guber and Shelly Gross afterwards in the Gold Room of the Washingtonian Hotel.

The guest list handed out to society reporters included the 40 members of the party of Mrs. Robert F. Kennedy (See pictures this page).

I recognized such people as Roger Mudd, Sander Vanocur, the Rev. Father Gilber Hartke, of Catholic University.

Also Dave and Elaine Robinson of the Washington Redskins and Mrs. Denise Murphy from Columbia. Also Bernard and Jewell Coleman, (International Consultant) and the Harold Porters (Dr. Blanche Bourne).

In our party were Ivy and Sherlock Grinage, he V.P. at Kronheim Co.; Mrs. Medford Reynolds, the Arthritis Foundation...(they're sponsoring "Gypsy" with Angela Lansbury at Painters Mill)...plus Mrs. Ada Weaver, retired school principal.

Our hardest job was finding Shady Grove which is just outside Rockville, Md. It's a pleasant drive. You take Rte 29 to Rte 495 to Rte 270 and you're there under 40 minutes.

Angela Lansbury in "Gypsy" is at Painters Mill this week. Starting June 17th at Shady Grove.

VISITORS in our office this week Mrs. Irene A. Knight, dietician, J. K. Kennedy Medical Center in Monrovia, Liberia. She has been in the states on a training program for AID for six months. Her hostesses were Mrs. Wahseola (Sugar) Cain and Mrs. Sarah Plummer formerly of the Kennedy Hospital, Liberia.

RON FERGUSON is tre nwe account executive for Holiday Inns Downtown. Don't let this looks fool you. He's one of us and recounted how he and his family were longtime AFRO Newsies.

GIL SCOTT-HERON, will appear at Ed Murphy's Supper Club in Washington, D.C. where he will be recording a live album. Gil will appear there on Thursday, June 19 through Sunday, June 22. The live album will be recorded Friday, Saturday, and Sunday.

* * *

THE ZELMA COLE BROWN - School of the Dance will present a dance recital "Focus Test" Saturday, June 21 at 8 p.m. at Greenspring Junior High School. As an unusual extra added attraction, the parents of the children will also perform on the program.

* * *

THE 38th Legislative District - State Central Committee...Delegate Larry Young will crown Miss Central 38th at a cocktail sip at the Lafayette Palace, Sunday, June 29th.

* * *

THE MUNICIPAL CONCERT BAND under the direction of Dr. Leigh Martinet will begin its daily series of 18 outdoor summer band concerts on Tuesday, June 17, at the Dell-Charles and 29th Streets, 8 to 10 p.m.

This series of programs which culminates in the first Festival of Music at the Stadium July 10, will encompass all musical categories, and has been geared to popular tastes. The Broadway show music of Gershwin will be played, as well as selections from the most successful Broadway shows in recent years, "Fiddler on the Roof" and "West Side Story".

Guest soloist for this week of programs will be Gwndolyn Skeens, lyric colorature soprano. A graduate of Concord College and Marshall University, Huntington, West Virginia, Mrs. Skeens moved to Baltimore in 1967 and has been teaching vocal music in the Baltimore County School System for the past nine years. Her vocal experiences include roles in musical comedy as well as opera and oratorio. She performed the role of Gilda in "Rigoletto" under the direction of Boris Goldovsky's Opera Workshop. She has been a soloist with the Wheeling Symphony, Wheeling, West Virginia, the Charleston Light Opera Guild, Charleston, West Virginia, and the Pittsburgh Chamber Orchestra. Mrs. Skeens has been a soloist at Mount Vernon Place Methodist Church, with the Bach Society and presently sings at the Second Presbyterian Church. She has written four original musicals as well as numerous songs, including an original musical version of the classic story, "The Prince and the Pauper" and most recently a rock musical version of "Aladdin's Magical Lamp."

Mr. and Mrs. Sherlock Grinage and AFRO's Ida Peters at Andy Williams reception.

Butterfly McQueen, 64, who won fame as the maid in "Gone With The Wind" and recently starred in "Amazing Grace" recently won a degree from City College of N.Y.

The popular "Sing Along" of old and current favorites will be led by Marvin Clark.

The program will be repeated from 8-10 p.m.:

Wednesday, June 18-Reisterstown Road Plaza, 6500 Block Reisterstown Road

Thursday, June 19-Mt. Vernon Place

Friday, June 20 -Village of Cross Keys, 5100 Falls Road

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For The Record

'Dolemite'...blacker than most flicks

By Frederick I. Douglass

"Dolemite" is blacker than most movies about black people. Why? Because it was written, produced, directed and financially backed by blacks. That's what capitalism is all about...getting out front and making your money turn over to bake more bread for you and your family...making money work for you.

Rudy Ray Moore has been hustling all his life. He's made a lot of bread telling dirt jokes on records and in night clubs. Now he's using the money he made from his salacious rap to become part of the biggest and dirtiest joke of all...the system.

"Dolemite" is gritty, feisty, funky and raunchy. It's a movie that deals with street people and everyday people...junkies, prostitutes, winos, thugs, hustlers, pimps and other people who live on the fringe of society. Going to see "Dolemite" is like observing what goes down on the corner of Liberty Heights and Garrison for a couple of hours. Everybody passes through the scene lowbrows to the nobrows, from the highbrows to the "Dolemite" explores the social fabric of how the people living at the fringe of society become involved with crooked cops and politicians and others who benefit financially from vice, gambling and drug running.

The cast of characters in "Dolemite" can be seen on the streets of B-More if you look hard enough. Dolemite, played by Rudy Ray Moore, is a night club owner and pimp who is framed on a drug charge by one of his competitors. He is given an opportunity to beat his sentence by helping the FBI to combat crime in the area surrounding the nightclub which now has been taken over by his competitor. Dolemite succeeds in breaking up the crime in the area and in the process exorcises several sleazy characters who control the rackets in the city. They include high ranking white politicians and members of the police department as well as the thugs and hustlers who operate in the battle line.

Other interesting characters include the storefront preacher who is actually fronting a gun running operation to further his militant schemes. The preacher is also revealed as a lecher and a con man. Dolemite's trusted advisor and confidante, Queen Bee, is played by Lady Reed of party record fame. She keeps Dolemite's shop in order while he is in prison and trains his street girls in the martial arts in preparation for taking Dolemite's nitteclub back. The street girls are portrayed as women who have the same problems, jealousies and dreams that other women have. It's their profession that's different.

I had an opportunity to talk with Rudy Ray Moore at an affair given for him at the B-More Hilton. He stated "during my career I've done a lot of travelling and working in all kinds of nightclubs...I've met a lot of club owners and the people who work and hang out in these places...I've met a lot of hustlers and pimps as well as streetwalkers, junkies and winos...While these people may not be like the 9-to-5er's they also have lives to live and a code of behavior for getting along with one another...sometimes the so-called "straight people" get involved in the scene for profit...they also have to know how to take care of themselves because it's rough out there in the night life...these are the people I know most about, the people that I have put in my movie."

JUN