What's Happening

By Ida Peters

This column seldom goes out on a limb. But in this case, we're making a prediction. When the curtain came down on "Bubbling Brown Sugar" opening night at the National Theatre in D.C. we said to our party, "this will be the next Broadway hit."

All of us in the party agreed. Most of us had come to cheer Baltimorean Avon Long and after the show went backstage to praise him. This show has superb singing, vibrant dancing and glorious music.

In our party, Glenn Tarter a classmate of Avon's and his Gwen, Sherlock and Ivy Grinage and Vanessa and Lloyd Johnson and Verniece Reynolds.

Since then met James Myers who says that Junky Wood and many others including Gussie Mercer were also classmates.

Miss Nellie Buchanan Day at the National Theatre in D.C. will be Friday, August 22 at 8 p.m. At this time, Avon Long, the star of the show will dedicate it to Miss Buchanan who taught him Latin and started him on the road to show business through the Douglass High School Dramatic Club, The Mask and Wig Club.

All you long time classmates of Avon and all you Mask and Wiggers ... plan to be there. You can believe that Miss Buchanan is thrilled and you can call her at 542-7939.

At press time, the NATRA Convention is just getting underway at the Hilton Hotel downtown. 20th Century Records hosted the convention on Wednesday night. Atlantic Records hosted on Thursday night and CBS Records hosts tonight Friday.

All the big brass from CBS will be in town says Win Wilford, Manager of Press Information along with Minnie Riperton, John Lucien and Anthony White.

The big brass will include LaBaron Taylor, vice-president Special Markets, CBS; Richard Scott, Director of Administration CBS; Richard Mack, Director of Promotion.

Also Walter Yetnikoff, President, CBS Records Group; Irvin Segelstein, President, Columbia Records; Bruce Lundvall, Vice-President-General Manager — Columbia Records; Ron Alexenburg, Vice-President-General Manager Epic Records; Jack Craigo, Vice-President Columbia Record Sales and Jim Tyrrell, Vice-President Epic Record Sales.

The Bureau of Music will feature Baltimore's Big Band conducted by Gene Walker in War Memorial Plaza, Sunday, August 17, 7 to 9 p.m. This outdoor performance not only will feature the Big Band sound popularized by Count Basie and Stan Kenton, but also will offer modern jazz and selections of contemporary music with a rock beat by composers like Thad Jones and Mel Lewis.

* * *

On Sunday, August 17, from noon until 5 P.M., inner Harbor visitors will be entertained and delighted by yet another Sunny Sunday.

Highlighting this week's special activities will be an afternoon to "Paint-Your-Own-Bicentennial Poster." Everyone is welcome and urged to participate. The Baltimore Museum of Art will provide all the necessary paints, brushes and paper. The posters will be judged and the winners will be displayed in the museum's Downtown Gallery.

The Manhattan Transfer spoofs a double wedding with an unusual twist on "The Mannhattan Transfer," starring Tim Hauser, Laurel Masse, Alan Paul and Janis Siegel, with guest star David Brenner, on **Sunday, Aug. 17** (7:30-8:30 PM, ET) on the CBS Television Network.

* * *

On Wednesday, August 20, the On Stage Downtown concert series will present the Salute to Baltimore Musicians at 8 P.M. in Hopkins Plaza.

From the backs of trucks, through parades, from colleges to country clubs and back again, come three distinct sounds from three outstanding Baltimore bands.

JACKSON 5 COMING

AFRO talks to Randy, Michael, Janet

By Ida Peters

Papa Joe Jackson called from California this week with members of the Jackson 5 Revue standing by to tell us they'll be bringing "all their love" to Baltimore next week at Painters Mill starting August 18.

To give you some idea how young people react in our office to a Jackson 5 call, our teeny-bopper summer intern Ginger Lottier got knocked out just switching the call to this office.

Yes, to her breathless inquiry, talked with Randy, Michael and Janet Jackson.

Heading the sparkling revue will of course be Jackie, Tito, Jermaine, Marlon and Michael. Joining them will be sisters Latoya, Maureen and Janet along with Randy, on the bongo drums.

Randy is 13, in the 8th grade. His best subject is history, and he's "looking forward to doing this show."

Michael who is now "big, cute and charming" at 16 is in the 12th grade, and he would like "to go on to college, if I have time. But, whatever happens, happens."

Told Janet the last to talk, I loved her Mae West routine. She said, I don't say "Come up and see me" ... I say ... "Come here lover boy." She's all of 9 and in the 4th grade.

Papa Jackson says when they come to Baltimore they'll hold an informal press party after the first show on the 18th

Then on Tuesday, the 19th, the Jackson 5 will take on the disc jocks from WLPL and WSID in a benefit charity soft-ball game for the Kennedy Institute for Mentally and Physically Handicapped Children.

The game will be held 1 p.m. at Franklin Senior High on Reisterstown Road and the Beltway. The game is free, but donations for the institute will be solicited.

On Wednesday, the 20th, the Jackson 5 Revue will visit the Kennedy Institute and visit with the children ... giving out posters and albums.

When the Jackson 5 Las Vegas Revue hits Baltimore, expect to hear "Little Bit Of You," "I'll Be There," "I Am Love" and "Dancing Machine" ... along with the other oldies and the newies.

Deadly cockroaches from bowels of earth in 'Bug'

The master of shock is at it again. William Castle's production of "Bug," a science fiction tale of terror, is now playing at area theatres.

Castle, who has scared the devil out of the world with such horror classics as "Rosemary's Baby," now brings to the screen "Bug," a frightening suspense thriller about a college entomology scientist, played by Bradford Dillman, and his frantic efforts to control a bizarre and deadly breed of foot-long, carbon-eating, incendiary cockroaches that are unleashed from the bowels of the earth following an earth tremor.

Filmed in Panavision and Technicolor, the flick is based on "The Hephaestus Plague" by Thomas Page.

Emmy Award - winner Joanna Miles (for the television version of Tennessee Williams' "The Glass Menagerie" which starred Katherine Hepburn) stars as Dillman's wife. "Bug" co-stars Richard Gilliland, Jamie Smith Jackson, Alan Fudge, Jesse Vint and Patty McCormack, the latter remembered as a child star for her chilling performance as the murderess in "The Bad Seed."

In "Bug" a deadly force has risen from deep within the earth, indestructible fire roaches, thousands of them swarming black and eyeless from a chasm opened in California by an earthquake. As old as the dinosaurs and intelligent as the primates, they feed upon carbon, creating their dinners instantly by burning cars, houses, people, animals, whatever is in their path, with a flame that spurts from their exhaust.

Moving by an ingenious method and shrugging off all attempts to destroy them, the bugs threaten to ignite the entire city of Riverside, California, before moving on to take over the rest of the country.

The principal cockroach actors playing title roles in "Bug" are laboratory-grown cockroaches trained for their screen chores by an entomology scientist at the University of California at Riverside.

William Castle, who produced "Bug," is, of course, no newcomer to the screen. Famed as Hollywood's "Sultan of Shock," he is approaching his 40th year as a master maker of macabre shockers and "Bug" is his 106th film. Castle is also an innovative promoter for his films, creating attention-grabbing gimmicks to create maximum interest for the release of his films.

His long list of credits include such chillers as "Macabre," "The Tingler," "The House on Haunted Hill," "13 Ghosts," "Mr. Sardonicus," "Homicidal," "Straight-Jacket," "The Night Walker," "I Saw What You Did!" and "Let's Kill Uncle."

Tamara as Cleopatra opens here next week

A striking young woman of classic contours and superior dimensions, Tamara Dobson became a motion picture star as a tall, tough and terrific force for good in the title role of "Cleopatra Jones."

That picture, and Tamara's character, were so successful that Warner Bros. quickly signed her for a return engagement in "Cleopatra Jones and the Casino of Gold," an exotic adventure in the underworld of Hong Kong.

The picture was filmed there on location under the direction of Chuck Bail, with Bill Tennant producing. Also starred are Stelia Stevens, who is blonde and plays the Dragon Lady; Tanny, a 100-pound Chinese girl with a 1,000-pound karate kick and Albert Popwell and Caro Kenyatta.

Tamara Dobson, whose finely chiseled face appears to have come from ancient Egypt, is six feet two inches tall. She was born in Baltimore into a warm and loving family in which black pride was the theme that gave Tamara the confidence to succeed at anything she set out to do.

"So I went to college — the Baltimore Institute of Art — and got my degree in fashion illustration, but I decided I didn't want to use it right away."

She went on to qualify for a license to practice beauty culture and also obtained a beauty shop owner's license. Still searching for something more satisfying, Tamara decided to go to New York because "people were always telling me, 'You ought to be a model.'" She proved the validity of the friendly advice by doing just that.

Tamara easily moved into the ranks of New York's top models, in spite of her exceptional height. "I towered over girls who were 5-7 and 5-8," she says, "so I mostly worked alone." Her photos have appeared in such quality magazines as Vogue, Harper's, Ladies Home Journal, Ebony, Essence, Good Housekeeping and the late, lamented photo magazines, Life and Look.

She was earning top fees — $75 an hour, $500 a day — when she turned to acting. At the suggestion of Sidney Poitier she began attending classes conducted by the noted drama teacher, Paul Mann. Eventually, she was ready for small parts in "Come Back Charleston Blue" and "Fuzz."

She won the title role in "Cleopatra Jones" from among 2,500 hopeful actresses, and thereafter made her starring debut in that picture.

Now with "Cleopatra Jones and the Casino of Gold," Tamara is well on the way to becoming one of the most exotic and appealing actresses in the contemporary cinema.

Free Movies

Enoch Pratt
Events For Children
(Week of August 17-August 23)
Monday, August 18

Walbrook Branch: Mystery book hunt, 12:30 p.m.

Reisterstown Road Branch: Films — "Paddle to the Sea" and "The Golden Fish," 1 p.m.

Tuesday, August 19

Reisterstown Road Branch: Films — "Drummer Hoff," "Puss in Boots" and "Lickety-split Licorice," 10:30 a.m.

Brooklyn Branch: Filmstrips — "In the Fore" and "I Know An Old Lady," 11 a.m.

Light Street Branch: Film — "J.T.," 2 p.m.

Walbrook Branch, Puzzle making, 2 p.m.

Patterson Park Branch: Filmstrips — "Five Chinese Brothers" and "Where the Wild Things Are," 2:30 p.m.

Wednesday, August 20

Broadway Branch: Reading improvement class, 12:30 p.m.

Northwood Branch: Surprise film, 1 p.m.

Morrell Park Center: Film — "Famous Movie Monsters," 3 p.m.

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The McKenzie report

By Vashti McKenzie

Motown's wonderful deal

By Vashti McKenzie

Last week Stevie Wonder signed an agreement with Motown Records which called for guarantees to him over a seven year period of more than $13 million.

It is being said behind closed doors that Barry Gordy himself went to Wonder to keep him from defecting. It is also being said he did more than plead ... he begged him to stay actually ... because if he left Motown would be no more.

Stevie was a hairbreath away from signing multi-million dollar contract from Atlantic Records ... so I hear.

Stevie is taking a philosophical attitude about the historical deal. "Of course, I'm happy about it, but there is something perhaps more important involved," he is reported as saying.

"I'm staying at Motown because it is the only viable surviving black-owned company in the record industry.

"Motown represents hope and opportunity for new as well as established black performers. If it were not for Motown, many of us just wouldn't have had the shot we've had at success and fulfillment.

"In the record industry we've all seen many chances where the big companies eat up the little ones and I didn't want this to happen to Motown. I feel young black children should have something to look up to.

Incidentally, did you see the First Annual Rock Music Awards with Diana Ross and Elton John ...

A most unusual combination of beauty and the freak. Labelle, Patti Labelle, Nona Hendryk and Sarah Dash won a "Rockie" for their single "Lady Marmalade."

Stevie Wonder won a "Rockie" also and the Most Outstanding Rock Personality of the Year Ross and Elton John as hosts?

Times change and so do definitions. There was a time when rock was Chuck Berry and Fats Domino. White Rock or hillbilly music was Elvis Presley. Then along came Rhythm and Blues, stepchild of the blues (B.B. King, Billie Holiday). Acid rock was white until Jimi Hendrix integrated it and Soul whether soft or hard was black, until the Average White Band ... the blackest white band in America.

Now with the Annual Rock Awards, anything with a beat was nominated ... black, white and indifferent. Earth, Wind and Fire and Minnie Riperton at the other end of the scale.

Coming to Shady Grove this Friday (today) means Al Green and the Moments open at Shady Grove August 15 for what's going to prove to be a very interesting evening. They'll be there thru Sunday.

Ten contestants have signed up for the mean Al Green Contest. At noon Friday, Al Green will be making a personal appearance at the Hecht Co. in downtown Washington. Who knows, you might get a rose.

Roberta Flack and Donald Byrd and the Blackbyrds are at Carter Barron in D.C. this week-end.

Jim Brown in new film 'Take A Hard Ride'

JIM BROWN

Few actors can fill a screen with more authority and power than big Jim Brown, who became a motion picture star after earlier celebrity as one of the most famous football players in American history.

In the western, "Take a Hard Ride," his latest film, this quality of John Wayne-like bigness is more apparent than ever as he portrays the film's laconic loner-hero, Pike.

Pike has given Pike the task of carrying $86,000 from Abilene, to southern Mexico, a long hard ride during which he is pursued by men of avarice who hate Pike and are destroying him and obtaining the money. In undertaking the dangerous ride Pike is paying a debt of honor to his dead boss, Morgan, the man who years before gave him the means to lead a clean decent life.

Brown himself assesses the character: "He's a man who came up the hard way. Until Morgan took him in Pike had lived outside the law, probably out of pride and not wanting to bow down to the menial kinds of work open to him.

In that early life, as an outsider, he became physically strong, good with a gun, and now, determined to fulfill his promise to Morgan, he calls upon these resources of toughness and endurance to help him through. If Pike had never known what it was like to be hunted, he would not be the man to deal with the kind of situations which arise on the road to Sonora."

Jim Brown was born in Georgia and at the age of seven moved with his family to Long Island. At Manhasset High School, he excelled in sports, becoming in his senior year class president and a state football player. At Syracuse University he became an All American halfback in football and an All-American midfielder in Lacrosse.

In 1957 he joined the Cleveland Browns as a fullback and began an awesomely long line of records. He was an eight-time league leader in rushing and scoring the most touchdowns. In 1964 he won the Hickock Belt as a pro athlete of the year. In all, his football career spanned ten years and made him a living legend, and his motion picture career overlapped the final years of his sports career. In fact, he made two pictures while still a footballer, and did not quit football until he had a three-picture contract in his hands.

His films have included: "Rio Conchos," "The Dirty Dozen," "The Mercenaries," "Ice Station Zebra," "Riot," "Dark of the Sun," "The Split," "Tick, Tick, Tick," "100 Rifles," "El Condor," "The Grasshopper," "Slaughter," "Slaughter 2," "Black Gunn," "I Escaped From Devil's Island," "The Slams" and "Three the Hard Way."

Brown, a bachelor, lives in Los Angeles. Film work has taken him away from home for long periods, to England, Spain, Jamaica, Mexico and elsewhere, but he enjoys the life immensely. "It's just as disciplined as being a sports pro," he says. "You have to keep in shape, learn new techniques, be alert to public opinion, and if you do your work well the rewards are great."

Does he have a routine for keeping fit? "I use the Jim Brown theory and I can never explain it apart from saying that keeping fit is a matter of caring. There was a boxer called Archie Moore who could lose weight at will but could never explain how he did it. The Jim Brown theory is geared to me. It's not rigid about diet or exercise and I do all the things I need to do wherever I am. I can't offer it to anyone else."

"Take A Hard Ride" stars Jim Brown, Lee Van Cleef, Fred Williamson, Catherine Spaak, Jim Kelly, Barry Sullivan and Dana Andrews.

... and all that jazz

By Bob Matthews

Arrived a trifle late for the Sunday concert of the Left Bank Jazz Society, and as I hit the step to the Famous Ballroom, it sounded as tho' a party was in progress.

When I reached the top of the stairs ... there was. The place was just simply rocking and with good cause.

On the bandstand was Brother Jack McDuff and the Sextette making his first concert appearance in LBJS series.

Usually, organ combos consist of drums and sax, but this was distinctly different. The line-up had four saxes, guitar and drums along with McDuff on organ.

Rather an odd assortment ... but it worked, and worked well. Every tune played was arranged and obviously rehearsed. The section work was airtight.

Such tunes as "Mack The Knife," "Midnight Sun," and "C-Jam Blues" benefited greatly by the treatment accorded them.

Most of the arrangements were by Willie Smith (no not the one that played with Lumsdeford) who as a soloist demonstrated what circular breathing was all about.

On one occasion, he sustained a note for at least two minutes.

Others in the group were Commander Bill Cody on tenor sax; David Young, tenor sax; Joe Lovano, baritone sax; Eric Johnson, guitar; and Joe Dukes, drums.

Have to say a word about Dukes, who turned out to be one of the flashiest drummers around today. He totally captivated the crowd, each time he took a solo, and the bits of schtick he put on, including tossing away his drum sticks and walking off stage, put the audience in a frenzy.

There was no doubt about the fact that Jack McDuff came to play. LBJS officials tell me he arrived at 2 p.m. for the 5 p.m. concert. Not only that, he played encore after encore. The concert didn't end until nearly 10 p.m.

Haven't hear of any Haven't heard of any albums made by McDuff with this current group, but if and are issued ... they will be a gas.

Spinners have audience moaning, rocking and rolling

The Spinners had Painters Mill Music Fair this past Monday night jumping like the old Royal Theatre on a Saturday night.

From the time that Major Harris came on with "Love Won't Let Me Wait" to open the show, the predominately female audience just gently bounced and moaned.

By the time The Main Ingredient came on with "Everybody Plays the Fool" and "If You Want It You Got To Take It," the audience was bouncing higher and higher.

And when the Spinners, in their purple velvet jackets and white pants hit the stage, the audience was ripe and ready.

The Spinners took over from the boys ... and showed they were seasoned and polished men. When they said "put your hands together," the ladies put their hands together and gave them their hearts.

Of course, I was bouncing too. In front of me, the large AFROs bounced steadily from side to side ... so my bounce had to go in opposite directions in order to see the stage.

One widely enthusiastic lady in blue couldn't sit still. She stood in her seat for the entire Spinners act. The people behind her tried to get her to sit. She would for a moment, but bounced right back. At the end of the show, she bounced to the top of the aisle and stood for a moment.

As the Spinners went into their final number ... "Mighty Love," the entire audience became one with the stage.

The Spinners went into the audience to hug and kiss fans ... the lady in blue shot down the aisle and grabbed Pervis Jackson in a bear hug ... and as he said later ... "almost scared me to death."

You better believe that there are a lot of lovely girls and women in B-More wanting a "Mighty Love." It's a good thing that Painters Mill is solidly built. When 1,800 really got and felt that feeling in the old Royal Theatre, the walls and balcony would literally sway.

The Spinners were Henry Fambrough, baritone lead singer; Billy Henderson, tenor lead singer; Pervis Jackson, bass lead singer; Bobby Smith, tenor lead singer and Philippe Wynne, tenor lead singer.

The talented singers not only sang soul sensitive ballads, grooving songs and their popular hit records like "Fork In the Road," "Games People Play," "One Of A Kind Love Affair," "Could It Be We've Fallen In Love."

They had lively fast paced dance routines and were a distinct hit with their impersonations of famous personalities such as The Ink Spots, Elvis Presley and The Supremes.

I thought that the Gladys Knight and the Pips Show at Painters Mill was tops. This is to report that the Spinners topped that show.

Backstage, Pervis Jackson says that he thought that Painters Mill had a revolving stage. So after opening night, they will move around more and setlike differently so they can hit all sides of the audience.

He said that Baltimore's audience was an unusually warm one, not like audiences in other cities. He was not afraid, because the audience just seemed to want to touch the Spinners. Not like some cities when the fans tear clothes, rip off rings and medallions and try to stick hands in their pockets.

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