'Big Blue Marble' films series in Africa

"Africa is a mind-blowing experience," says Henry (Hank) Fownes, producer of the award-winning "Big Blue Marble" children's television series, presented as a public service by International Telephone and Telegraph Corporation.

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"You'll see what I mean in the fall when we screen the four episodes that focus on Africa," promises Mr. Fownes.

Show-goers may remember Mr. Fownes as producer of "Joe Egg" and "Ballets Africains" on Broadway. His television credits include such specials as "Spoon River Anthology" and the "Alan King" and "Victor Borge" shows.

Third Visit to Africa

This June, "Big Blue Marble" film crews visited Africa for the third time. They have filmed episodes in nine countries in the past two years.

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In three weeks this June, a crew filmed Ye Ye dancers in Dahomey, acrobats on the Ivory Coast, wrestlers in Senegal (where wrestling is as popular as baseball is in the United States) and a native Nigerian folk-rock band. Earlier African visits included Tunisia, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya and Egypt.

First Impression

"My first impression of Africa," says Mr. Fownes, "is that it is so rich in material to be filmed that it is almost indescribable."

Mr. Fownes is often asked about African youngsters. They are not as affluent as youngsters in other parts of the world, but they are happy kids, he observes.

"These youngsters are more into physical activities than the arts," says Mr. Fownes. Then quickly he explains that most African youngsters do not have the access to the arts that other youngsters have.

But there are exceptions, he points out. And one will be seen in the Nigerian episode, which involves a Nigerian artist and musician, Chief Twin-Seven Seven.

"The chief," notes Mr. Fownes, "has dedicated his life to promoting Nigerian art and music, and almost everyone in his compound is an artist. The chief's art and music derive from Yoruba tradition and myth."

Also featured in the Nigerian piece is Sesan Jimoh, a 12-year-old musician, who accompanies other drummers during a folk-rock concert.

Ancient Dance

In the more physical pursuits, Mr. Fownes cites inhabitants of the Ivory Coast who do the "Dance of Knives" dating back hundreds of years.

Says Mr. Fownes: "Most of us would call it acrobatics rather than dance."

As part of the dance, he explains, the father "juggles" the children. It takes personal discipline and timing to perform this "dance."

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Interestingly, one must be an orphan to become a "juggler." Mr. Fownes explains that being an orphan is tied to the legend which surrounds the dance.

When costumed for the dance, the girls are not permitted to speak or show their teeth (they cannot laugh). This, he explains, is so that they become infused with the spirit of the dance and will submerge their personalities until it is over.

Ye Ye Dancers

In Dahomey, the harvesting is celebrated with the New Year's feast of "Fete du Janvier."

The setting is the village of Katagon, where villagers hive gathered to be entertained by the Ye Ye dancers.

Suddenly three girls begin dancing. They are soon joined by three boys on stilts and wearing masks.

The boys cannot remove their masks during the dance, for fear of bad luck.

The Africans in the episode belong to the tribe, or ethnic group, known as "Goun," and the language they speak is "Goun" although French is Dahomey's official language.

"The dancers' balance, their maneuvers and motion are a sight to behold," comments Mr. Fownes.

Senegalese Wrestlers

Senegal's most popular, most highly organized sport, is "la lutte," a type ward. Mr. Fownes explains la lutte is more than a sport.

"It's a kind of Sunday festival and town meeting all rolled into one."

He points out that few Senegalese do not follow the wrestling matches from Sunday to Sunday at Dakar's huge sports arena.

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AFRO bridal register

MRS. ANTHONY ROBERTS
(former Miss Denise Montgomery)
Photo by Broadway Studios

Roberts-Montgomery

Miss Denise Montgomery became the wife of Anthony Roberts in a recent double ring ceremony at the Ames Memorial Church with reception activities following at the St. Martin's Hall.

Best man was Herman Sharps along with Rodney Montgomery, usher. Deborah Ann Roberts, maid of honor and bridesmaid Donnie Johnson.

Ringbearer was Anthony Montgomery and Donna Campbell, flowergirl.

The bride is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Montgomery and the bridegroom is the son of Mr. and Mrs. William T. Smith.

Cooley - Studivant

In recent ceremonies at the Shiloh C.C. Church, Miss Karen A. Studivant repeated wedding vows with Allen S. Cooley.

The bride is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. John A. Studivant while the bridegroom is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Edward Cooley.

MRS. JOHN O. BROOKS
(former Miss Gloria Y. Todd)
Photo by Broadway Studios

Bridal attendants were: Bonita Abraham, maid of honor; Shavon Jacobs, Beverly Studivant, Sarah Stevens, Brenda Cooley, Cynthia Studivant and Saundra Studivant.

Best man was Tony Olivis along with ushers, Edward Cooley Jr., Fred Cooley, Gregory Stewart, Ricky Williams, Wayne Anderson, Randolph Chester.

Flower girls were Monique West and Tia Cooley while ringbearer was Shaun Cooley.

Reception was hosted at the LaFontaine Bleu followed by honeymooning in Virginia Beach.

Brooks -Todd

Mr. and Mrs. William Todd announced the marriage of their daughter Miss Gloria Yvonne Todd to John Otis Brooks. The couple was wed recently in services at the Mt. Hebron Church by the Rev. J. C. Griffin and Bishop Jose L. Linares.

MRS. ALLEN COOLEY
(former Miss Karen A. Studivant)
Photo by Leon Perskie

Marriage Licenses

ULLA-JACKSON — Stephen L. 26, 3902 Fernhill; Barbara J. 29, 7 Sprigg.
LANSEY-PEARLETTE — Edgard G. 27, 5801 Cherrywood; Anderson, C. 28, 1049 Brantley.
VALLEJO-MOODY — Carols R. 23, 817 Clinwood; Ruby, 21.
SIEMEK-BINICK — Stanley L. 24, 2437 Foster; Marlene D. 22, 2927 Dillon.
HERRING-GRIFFIN — Reginald H. 20, 2732 W. Longwood; Denise, 23, 3915 Liberty
JONES-MITCHELL — Leo C. 26, 346 Gold; Phyllis, 23, 432 Lanvale.
REED-CONTOIS — Arden 27, 13 E. Read; Anita C. 26.
ELLIOTT-ROBINETTE — Michael E. 23, 2806 Garley; Eleanor A. 19, 340 E. North.
CALLOWAY-CARTER — Samuel M. 23, 3817 Ridgewood; Elizabeth M. 18.
WILLIAM-WONSON — Charles L. 25, 1551 E. Ensor; Eunice M. 26, 4812 Palmer.
ROGERS-ALLEN — David, 32 624 Main; Angelie D. 22, 113 Allendale.
BRIGHTFUL-SMITH — Herschal O. 22, 826 Whitmore; Paulette S. 22.
YOUNG-HOLDEN — Joseph L. 34, 5022 Chalgrove Rose M. 23, 700 N. Denison.
HARPER-SCHLERETT — Robert W. 32, 3029 Huron; Sharon J, 25, 401 S. Gilmor.
MITCHELL-ZANG — Thomas M. 20, 311 Cathedal; Debra M. 18.
LEWIS-CHATMON — Andre J. 20, 410 Athol; Gaye A. 18, 871 Bethune.
HARRIS-SPEAKS — Ashley H. 31, 1908 Eutaw; Ronona R. 26, 2908 W. Coldspring.
BAILEY-RAGIN — Michael P. 31, 3741 Marmon; Judy L. 34.
GARDNER — MOWERY — James W. 18, 1123 Wicomico; Phyllis B. 16, 22 E. Hamburg.
MARSHALL-JONES — Cornelius 22, 2445 E. Barclay; Jernita V. 20, 1614 E. Oliver.

Food clips

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ESSKAY Quarter Pork Loin B-I CHOPS BONE & CAPING lb. 1.69
ESSKAY Franks SKINLESS ALL VARIETIES lb. 1.19
ESSKAY SILVER LABEL Sliced Bacon 32-OZ. PKG. 1.59
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