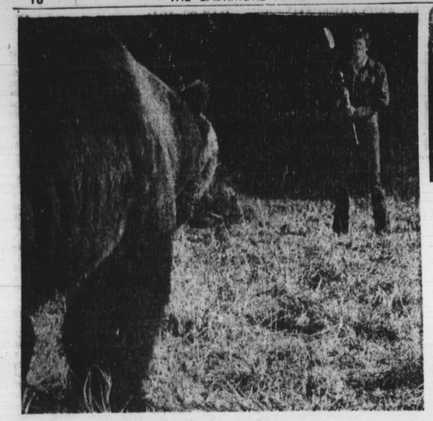

"Grizzly" pits beast against man now playing at area theatres. Variation of the "Jaws" theme.

Emmy Awards stinks!

By Ida Peters

Readers have complained by phone and in person about the Emmy Awards, where the Mary Tyler Moore Show captured four awards and she won honors as outstanding actress in a comedy series on the 28 Annual Emmy Awards Show this past Monday night.

* * *

"Rich Man, Poor Man" deserved what they got but readers say John Amos,Ester Rolle of "Good Time" should have been included as well as the stars of "The Jeffersons".

Everyone is giving us excuses but now can they continue to ignore Redd Foxx and Demond Wilson.

Everybody has a gripe but you can complain to me all you want. Here's a list of people you can write to and ask how come the Emmy Show didn't include your favorites and mine. Write:

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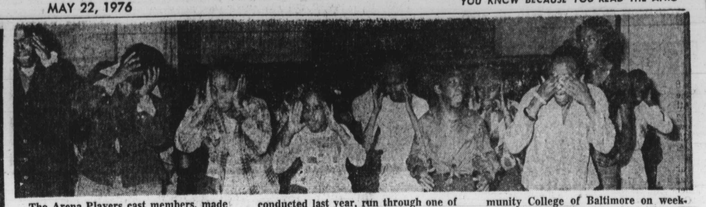

The Arena Players cast members, made up of students who took part in the summer and fall workshop programs conducted last year, run through one of the musical numbers in "The Playshop Showcase" being presented at the Community College of Baltimore on weekends from Friday, May 21st through Sunday, May 30th.

Arena Players to honor Blake, Long, Mosley

The Arena Players 11th Annual Awards Presentation Banquet will be held on Friday, June 4, 1976 at 7:00 P.M. at the Blue Crest North.

Each year The Arena Players present awards at their banquet to outstanding figures in the world of entertainment as well as in the area of civic and community leadership. The long list of past recipients includes Cab Calloway, the late Langston Hughes, Brock Peters, and Esther Rolle. This year, however, it is felt that they have the most distinguished Honorees to date.

Being given the civic award for his leadership in the cultural renaissance that is taking place in Baltimore is Mayor William Donald Schaefer, who has promised to show up and receive the award in person.

Also being honored is the talented, movie-actor on his way up the ladder of success to stardom, Roger Mosely. Mr. Mosely may be seen at present on local screens in "The River Niger", and starring in the title role of the Gordon Parks film "Leadbelly", a biographical account of the often gruesome life of guitarist-composer-troubadour Huddy Ledbetter.

Receiving an award for his loyal dedication and continual service to The Arena Players for some twenty years is George Barrick, a multi-talented person who is always there when you need him.

This year two special presentations are being made. For a lifetime of endeavor in the field of music and musical comedy, The Arena Players will be acknowledging the contribution of Baltimore's own Euble Blake.

Mr. Blake, who made his professional debut on July 4, 1901, has a list of accomplishments too long to mention here, but those who are familiar with his song "I'm Just Wild About Harry" will know what to expect if they attend this black-tie affair.

The other Baltimore "native son" being honored is Avon Long. Currently starring on Broadway in "Bubbling Brown Sugar", Mr. Long will be here to join in the festivities and add some of that "bubbly" to what is the most ambitious Awards Dinner in the history of The Arena Players.

George Kirby hosts 'Apollo' TV special

"Apollo," the first in a series of TV entertainment specials about New York's famous theatre located in Harlem will premiere Tues., May 25 at 9:00 p.m. on Channel 13.

Comedian-impression'st-singer-dancer George Kirby, who shares Apollo lore and legend with the viewers, is the host of the 90-minute special.

The program spotlights the all-time great Cab Calloway; Vivian Reed and the cast of "Bubbling Brown Sugar" doing three big production numbers from that Broadway musical recreating the Harlem of several decades ago; Stephanie Mills singing a pair of show-stopper from "The Wiz"; Harold Melvin and the Blue Notes with several of their current hits; the hand calpping gospel rhythms of The Mighty Clouds of Joy and the comedy of ventriloquist Willie Tyler and Lester.

Show time at the Apollo, on television, will bring a succession of acts as varied as the ones that have graced its stage since it opened. Nostalgia and contemporary excitement figure in the format. Dancers, comics and novelty turns will be included. Musically, "Apollo" presents rhythm and blues, jazz, gospel, rock, pop, soul and more in all shapes, sizes and sounds.

There are only a few theatres that have a special mystique, aura or significance in their very names. Certainly one of them is the Apollo on 125th Street in New York City's Harlem section. Ever since 1934, the Apollo has been the number one showcase for Black-oriented entertainers, and great performers have been discovered, nurtured, featured and starred there.

Horace Donnell conducts the orchestra on the television special, "Apollo." Stan Lathan directed "Apollo," Fred Dokes and William Easley were the producers, and Felicidad was the writer, produced by Dimensions Unlimited, Inc.

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BURT REYNOLDS is the Bait and Lola Is Biting!

Spinners plan Jackie Wilson benefit

Buddy Allen, manager of the Spinners who record on Atlantic Records, is meeting with Charles Gerson, owner of the famous Latin Casino in Cherry Hill, New Jersey, to discuss plans for a benefit performance to raise funds for the ailing Jackie Wilson. The Spinners in conjunction with Gerson are funding and sponsoring the show at the Latin Casino where Wilson was tragically stricken a little over a year ago.

The Spinners have taken an active interest in their friend's progress but have been forced to wait on doing a benefit until some of his (Wilson's) legal matters were settled. The court has now appointed Mr. Edward Adourian as legal guardian and executor of the estate, and all funds raised from the benefit will go directly to him.

The Spinners and Allen are presently seeking additional top caliber acts to complete the bill for the show which is projected for early October. Allen explains, "We want to allow enough time to organize the show and have big-name acts to guarantee the success of the benefit on Jackie's behalf.

Allen and his son Steve are coordinating the project from their offices in New York, in addition to overseeing a heavy schedule of appearances by the Spinners Sister Sledge and other artists.

The Young Senators have local promoters Ernie Donaldson and Rod Armstrong walking on air. The group has been signed by Epic Records. The Baltimore group includes Leroy Fleming, Wonell Jones, James Johnson, James Duggans, Calvin Charity, Frank Hooker and Charles Newton.

Claudia McNeil realizes dream as 'Sojourner'

"As an actor you don't often get to play the roles that you really would like. In fact, you have to take a lot of them just to pay the rent. But this is one role I've wanted to play for over 40 years."

That is Claudia McNeil talking about her role as Sojourner Truth in "The American Woman: Portraits of Courage," the 90-minute daytime special which aired on the ABC Television Network, this past Thursday.

In the drama-documentary, Miss McNeil portrayed the courageous former slave who, after gaining her freedom, traveled throughout the country during the mid-1800s preaching and speaking out against slavery and in support of women's voting rights.

"I've always been a history buff," explains Miss McNeil. "I first learned about Sojourner Truth as a teenager when Langston Hughes, one of my favorite writers, gave a lecture at my junior high school. Over the year's I've read and studied just about everthing written about her and I've always wanted to play her character, just like some actors have always wanted to play Hamlet."

When the opportunity finally came along, Miss McNeil, who was acclaimed for her performance in the role of Mama in both the Broadway and film productions of "A Raisin in the Sun," admits that she became a little nervous. "I had waited so long to do the role that I found myself a little frightened about doing the speeches. Sojourner was such a strong woman, a forceful speaker, but with such great warmth. She was always able to reach the people when she spoke, to touch them in some way. I wanted to be sure I conveyed that warmth as well as the strength."

Mabel McNeil has had a distinguished acting career since she made her professional debut, as a singer, in New York in 1935. After working extensively in nightclubs and radio, she made her Broadway debut in Arthur Miller's "The Crucible," in 1952, followed by "Tiger, Tiger Burning Bright," for which she won a Tony nomination. Carl Reiner's "Something Different," Langston Hughes' "Simply Heavenly", and James Baldwin's "The Amen Corner" at the Royal Lyceum Theatre in Edinburgh, for which she won a Best Actress Award. Her film credits include "The Last Angry Man" and "there Was a Crooked Man."

Her latest "adventure," as she call it, was a trip to Niagara Falls, N.Y. where she served as one of the judges of the Miss U.S.A. Beauty Pageant. She will soon begin rehearsals for her starring role in David Black's production of "The Last Minstrel Show," scheduled to open on Broadway in late summer.

Arts and Music

Ellis Larkins, jazz artist will be presented by the Herbert M. Frisby Historical Society at a Black Tie Concert and Champagne Reception, Sunday, June 13, 5 p.m. at Morgan.

Henderson are at Paint-Jim Nabors and Florence ers Mill Fair this week

George Bruce, well known in music circles in Baltimore and New York as a romantic singer is at Ramada Inn, Sunday, May 23 with Reppard Stones and Jimmy Wells.

The Handel Choir of Baltimore, under the direction of Darrold Hunt, will perform J. S. Bach's world-renowned masterpiece "The Passion of Our Lord According to St. Matthew," Sunday, May 23 with soloists, double chorus, double orchestra, and boys' choir, at Kraushaar Auditorium, Goucher College.

* * *

Part I will begin at 4:30 p.m., Part II at 8:30 p.m. There will be an interval of approximately two and a half hours for supper between Parts I and II. Those attending are encouraged to bring picnic suppers and dine on the campus grounds, or plan to enjoy one of many nearby restaurants in the Towson area.

Soloists are Georgine Resick, soprano; Nancy Kelso, alto; Francois Clemmons, tenor; Samuel Gordon, tenor; David Troup, baritone; John Yard, bass and the Boys' Choir of Grace and St. Peter's Church, Baltimore. A double orchestra will be composed of members of the Baltimore Symphony.

Holliman Music Studio students present music live, rhythmic, and with a Bicentennial theme at 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday, May 26, at the Broadway branch of the Enoch Pratt Free Library, Broadway and Orleans street.

The outdoor concert, co-sponsored by the library and the Broadway Village Tenant Council, will be held in the area between the high-rise apartment building and the Broadway branch. In case of rain, the program will be held in the library auditorium.

Admission to the event is free.

Ashford & Simpson... dynamite

By Frederick I. Douglass

Nickolas Ashford and Valerie Simpson, one of the most creative song writing teams on the contemporary music scene, put on a show that was dynamite to the more than 1,000 black kings and queens who trooped out to the Palace to the Monday Night Jam.

Ashford and Simpson, who are currently scoring big with their "Come As You Are" LP, have written scores of songs that have made other people famous.

Their track record of composing hits is totally incredible and includes golden groovies like "Let's Go Get Stoned" for Ray Charles; "Ain't No Mountain High Enough" and "Ain't Nothing Like the Real Thing" for Marvin Gaye and Tammi Terrell; and "Reach Out and Touch (Somebody's Hand)" and "Remember Me" for Diana Ross just to name a few of Ashford and Simpson's brilliant creations.

To tell the truth, Ashford and Simpson put on a spellbinding performance that nearly got to this writer. They were truly mind-boggling. I had been having a very difficult time getting into their "Come As You Are" album with the exception of the track "Somebody Told a Lie" and almost skipped going to the show.

Before going to the Palace, I sat down and listened to the album from cover to cover and the music started to seep into my brain as well as my bones.

While cruising out Route 40 to the Palace, I even found myself humming the melodies to jams like "Sell the House" and "It Came To Me." But I was still skeptical and thought that perhaps Ashford and Simpson would do better to keep writing songs for other people.

When my wife and I arrived at the Palace, Father's Children was just getting into their goodie bag and pulling out cooking jams by the Johnson Brothers and the Parliaments, doing a hellified job, at times sounding better than the actual recordings.

Father's Children also has some heavy original material that could bring them to nationwide attention if they should run across someone with big enough musical ears to appreciate the breadth and depth of the group's unique sound. Father's Children is really doing it big and bad these days.

Everybody was in a groovy mood when Ashford and Simpson came on stage. The Palace was packed to the rafters with beautiful black folks who had come to dig on some mean action. The roadies finished setting up the equipment and the lights were turned down low.

Ashford and Simpson took their places on the stage. Soon the Palace was filled with sounds that let you know that Ashford and Simpsin got their start in the church, but that they have also been exposed to all aspects of life and love. I have never seen a man and woman so much in touch with one another.

At times their performance and reactions to one another were so intense that one almost felt like a peeping tom spying on two passionate lovers locked together in a frenzied embrace. Ashford and Simpson are magnificent performers, capable of spellbinding an audience. They have so much energy and at times their performance gets so frenetic and fervid that it is almost like being at a revival. They used the whole stage, dancing with one another and at times going out into the audience.

Valerie is a foxy lady and the females in the Palace appeared to be very much aroused by Nick.

During the show, Ashford and Simpson crooned every cut from the "Come As You Are" album, driving the brothers and sisters into a heavy love bag by singing the kind of music that is painful to listen to if you are alone, but that you can enjoy to the max if you are with your main squeeze.

The best thing of the evening was a scorchingly sexy version of "Somebody Told a Lie" during which it seemed that Nick and Valerie were actually going to go all the way on stage in front of more than 1,000 people.

When the concert ended, lovers could be seen rushing to their cars and speeding down the highway. You can probably guess where they were going.

Mayor Schaefer inspects renovation to Arena Playhouse. 406 Orchard Street. From left Mayor W. D. Schaefer, Mrs. Camilla Sherrard, Mrs. Ethel Day, Mrs. Mabel Lowenie, Leroy Bennett, board members.

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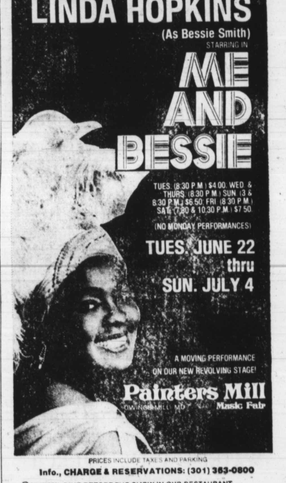

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