Impact 'Happy Men'

By Ida Peters

Four beautiful brothers came home to Baltimore last week on a wave of success after a week-long series of private receptions held in Chicago, Detroit, New York and Philadelphia.

They are young men with dreams and their dreams have come true. They are now an Atlantic-Atco recording group called Impact with a hot new album "Impact" and a fast rising single "Happy Man."

In the photo montage, Sam Beasley, Atlantic rep for the Baltimore-Washington area joins three of the group on a tour of the AFRO plant as did Samuel Boyd their assistant business manager.

In upper right, Damon Otis Harris, leader of Impact and Charles Timmons are feted by Ahmet Ertegun, board chairman of Atlantic Records. Lower AFRO boardroom by Dr. Moses Newson, Executive Editor of the AFRO-AMERICAN Newspapers.

In lower left, John Quintin Simms, Donald Tilghman and Charles Timmons show Atlantic's Billboard Impact ad to City Editor Elizabeth Oliver and Pam Widgeon, court reporter joined by Beasly and Boyd.

In upper right, the group poses with members of the Teletype Department staff. From left Paul Goodman, Frederick Williams, Mrs. Sylvia Upshur seated. Standing, Mrs. Elinor Washington.

This reporter can attest that Impact was one of the nicest and most enthusiastic groups we have ever taken on tour of the AFRO. The group was amazed after touring major cities to find so many AFRO employees exercising so many different kinds of printing and writing skills. They did not know that their home-town newspaper was a chain published for four major cities, Baltimore, Washington, Richmond, Newark and utilized so many different kinds of computer equipment.

The AFRO hasn't shown this much enthusiasm since the visit of the President of Liberia, and the late President's wife Eleanor Roosevelt. The presidential candidates Brown and Carter visited but they didn't raise the type of excitment as Impact did with employees.

FORMER VANDALS

The group started out about 1968 as the Formations and played around the Edmondson Village and Walbrook Junction areas for a year.

Then they formed the Vandals with Ed Prince, William Jenkins, James Hobson, Nathaniel Johnson and Ellsworth Jackson.

As the Vandals they played everywhere. Mother Lode's, Blue Gardenia, Scene, Carousel, Embassy Ballroom.

Then Damon Otis Harris went off and became a working component of the Temptations. Last year, after leaving The Temps, they got back together, got a new name The Impact and signed with Atlantic.

Their album cover gives special thanks to God and the late Otis R. Harris Sr. and Damon's mother Lillie Mae Harris, now living in California.

John Quinton Simms, second tenor, baritone and lead is a graduate of Edmondson where he studied drafting. His hobbies are music and art. He's the son of Mrs. Hilda McClendon.

Donald Tilghman, baritone and bass is the son of Mrs. Ermya Tilghman and a graduate of Carver. His hobbies are sports, pool and discos. He likes to write beautiful poetry.

Charles Timmons, first tenor, second tenor and baritone lead is the son of Mrs. Katherine Scott. He graduated from Poly and has art, music and sports for hobbies.

Damon Otis Harris, the first tenor and lead who welded the group together for harmony and togetherness is a graduate of Forest Park.

For their first multi city junket Impact was accompanied by Barbara Jean Harris and Primus Robinson of Atlantic, along with President Alan Rubens, Vice President-General Manager Bruce Greenberg, and Artist Relations Director Lei Lott, all of WMOT.

After visiting the national headquarters of Johnson Publications (**Ebony, Jet, Black Stars**, etc) in Chicago, Impact was introduced to local music folk (including WVON's Rodney Jones) by WEA Branch Manager Irv Rothblatt.

The next day in Detroit, Impact taped a segment of the local TV show, "The Scene," then meet JOB's Al Perkins and many others at their reception that evening.

In New York City the next day, following interviews with **Black Stars**, and England's **Record Mirror** and **Sounds**, Impact was met by more than 400 people at the Georgian Suite, including Teddy Pendergrass, Marlena Williams, Carl Stokes, and WMOT producer-composer-arranger Bobby Eli. Eli, along with Billy Paul, Eddie Kendricks, Norman Connors, and a huge contingent of family and friends welcomed Impact to Philadelphia the next day, where their part was MC'd by WDAS Station Manager PD Butterball.

The promotional tour ended back in New York on Friday, where Impact taped WNEW-TV's "Black News."

* * *

Neil Phillips, St. Albans, N.Y. undertaker, took his own discotheque (three trunk loads) when the fellas had their Memorial Day weekend trip to Santa Dominico where he entertained the guests and the hotel employes and other guests with "soul" sounds that were really exciting to all. Two planeloads made the trip.

What's Happening

How I got Carol Channings Diamond Award

By Ida Peters

It all started last week when the New Mechanic Theatre sent out genuine sailor hats as an invitation to a press party for Carol Channing and Broadway producer Alexander Cohen, to be held on board The Nobska . . . that's the new floating restaurant opposite the McCormick Building at the foot of Light St.

So, joined the TV crews, reporters, editors, columnists and Mayor William Donald Schaefer on the upper deck of the Nobska.

Was greeted by Hope Quakenbush, Peter Lawrence and Alexander Cohen then relaxed in the cooling breezes of the Chesapeake while thinking" what is so rare as a day in June." The waiters passed heaping trays of shrimp and crab balls and giant sized glasses of champagne.

The press release said that we were there because Carol Channing, the original "Dolly" of "Hello Dolly" . . . "Diamonds Are A Girl's Best Friend" star would be opening at the Mechanic in a new British comedy "The Bed Before Yesterday."

Carol will play a widow, who, in her middle age, discovers sex. The play, currently running in London, was written by Ben Travers who has two successful comedies on the London stage at this time, "Plunder" and "Banana Ridge."

When we arrived on the Nobska, Carol Channing was doing one-on-one interviews with various TV personalities. Then she dis appeared with Hal Gardner.

Then came our turn and all of a sudden the table expanded with Carol's husband, Charles Lowe, Mary Clayburne from WWIN and R. P. Harris.

Was able to get a question in now and then. The first was what was the worst thing that ever happened to her in Baltimore and the best. Last year, she played "Loreli" at Shady Grove. She's been to Painters Mill at least three times and the old Mechanic at least twice — and the old Ford's.

Carol Channing is a gracious lady of the theatre. She was wearing her blond hair in the new Olympic cut, a red blouse, blue and white blazer and white skirt.

She remembers playing Painters Mill in a wheel chair where the "audiences were just so sweet." Once, when she was premiereing "Show Girl" she was hit by a virus, Pneumonia, actually and she stayed atthe old Southern Hotel.

Actually she said if you could live through the old Mechanic Theater you can live through anything. We said amen to that because the whole city is depending on the Mechanic to put Baltimore back on the theatre map.

Next, we all got a good laugh when I asked if she ever gave her age. She replied, "I'm a Christian scientist . . . it's against my religion. I'm not supposed to tell my age." All of which evolved from a question on the age of the character she'll play in he. new comedy.

All this time Carol Channing was sitting with her hands in her lap. Knowing that the song "Diamonds Are A Girl's Best Friend" made her famous asked her if I could see her rings.

Surprise! She whipped her hands up full of diamonds, whipped one off and presented me one . . . for being a nosy interviewer, I guess.

All of us received what she called her Diamond Awards and she told us that earlier she had presented one to Mayor W. D. Schaefer.

Seems that Carol is famous for giving her Diamond Awards to famous people.

The same diomond she presented to me, she gave to Mrs. John Kennedy for "Making America Chic;" to Mrs. Lyndon Johnson for "Making America Beautiful" and to Mrs. Richard Nixon.

As to Mrs. Nixon—When Carol was invited to the White House, she asked "are you sure you want me to come?" Mrs. Nixon said yes, so Carol gave her the "Diamond Award" for "Making Friends From Africa to China."

The next thing Carol knew, President Nixon's CIA Hote List was released and her name was way up on top in the C's. She says the President must have had the ring appraised.

As we ended the interview Carol Channing says she never gains weight when she's working and she's usually working. She has plenty of allergies . . . she's allergic to sprays, insecticide, fruit and she carries her own water.

Well "break a leg" Carol . . . which means good luck. Baltimore needs you and your new play "The Bed Before Yesterday."

And now a word . . .

Freda Payne opened at the Playboy Club to a full house and will be playing to almost standing room audiences this week-end. A check at the Playboy got the response that business is terrific.

* * *

Freda is performing songs from her latest ABC album "Out Of Payne Comes Love." Her numbers include "What About Today," the Jacques Brel number "Carousel." She gives a heart-warming rendition of "Fellings" . . . goes down memory lane with "Band of Gold" followed **by a** disco medley "**That's the** Way I Like It," "**Same** Old Song," "**Babyface**" and "Could It Be **Magic**."

"**The** Betty Carter Concert" featuring Betty Carter, Jimmy McG[illegible] and Nat Adderly are at Constitution Hall in D.C., Sat., June 19.

* * *

Damita Jo helped the Sphinx x Club celebrate its 30th anniversary this past Monday. Charley Tilghman is holding a year-long celebration with guest artists, a Mardi Gras, picnics etc.

* * *

Ben Sidran has a new album for Aristo Records 'Free In America." He's coming to the Hollywood Palace June 29-30. He has written a doctoral thesis "Black Talk" . . . "How the music of black America created a radical alternative to the values of Western literary tradition." David Ruffin is at the Palace this weekend.

Arts and Music

Noel Coward's sophisticated comedy "Blithe Spirit" will be presented by the Cultural Arts Repertory Theatre Company June 17 and 18 at 8:00 p.m. at Dunbar High School auditorium.

This new repertory theatre company is part of the dynamic Cultural Arts Project headed by Norman Ross. Cultural Arts is an Urban Services Agency offering training in the arts to Baltimore City residents.

* * *

Walters Art Gallery will conduct the last in a series of lecture tours of the gallery's current exhibition, "Maryland Heritage: European Art at the Time of the Revolution," (through June 20) at noon Tuesday (June 15) in the special exhibition galleries on the first level of the Centre Street building.

Noted jazz dance artists Liz Williamson, Gus Giordano and Lea Darwin will join the Paul Sanasardo Company in residence this summer at The American University's Academy for the Performing Arts.

Williamson will be at the academy June 20-July 3 teaching intermediate and advanced jazz classes. She currently heads the dance department at the Dalton School in New York City and has taught at numerous dance teacher conventions, conferences and master classes (including the North Carolina School of the Arts.

The 1976 Summer Session of the Peabody Conservatory of Music will offer workshops in piano and workshops in music education. One-week courses will be in session Mondays through Fridays and each will offer two graduate credits.

From June 14 through June 17, a Piano Master Class designed for teachers and performers at the advanced level will be offered at the conservatory, 1 East Mount Vernon Place.

The James Blake Woodwind and Jazz Quartet will perform classical and jazz works, including **The Joseph Douglas Unaccompanied Clarinet Concerto** and **Blue Centennial**, both composed by James Blake. The concert as part of Mid-Town Music will begin at noon on the Inner Harbor's West Shore on Monday, June 14.

"**Baltimore in the Revolutionary Generation**," the Peale Museum has published full size reproductions of three rare historical maps of the city. The set of three includes the **Military Map of Baltimore** of 1781, the A. P. Folie 1792 **Plan of the Town of Baltimore** and the Warner and Hanna 1804 **Improved plan of Baltimore**. Originals of these three maps are impossible to obtain. The set is available at the Peale Museum for $7.50.

Steve Carter, author of the hit "Eden," (now moved from the Negro Ensemble Company's St. Mark's Theatre, to a theatre of its own, the Theatre De Lys, for an extended run), is founder and director of the Playwrights' Workshop of the NEC and its "season-within-a-season program which encourages young authors.

Down . . . and dirty

AFRO readers are invited to contribute to this column. Write Down and Dirty, AFRO, 628 N. Eutaw St. or call 728-8200 and ask for Public Relations.

The Oldtown Mall renovation cost the city $459,000 while the Federal Government spent $2.1 million. At the same time it's costing the city $590,000 to renovate and correct the interior of the Mechanic Theatre.

* * *

By the time a child gets to the 6th grade he should be able to read a bleach bottle unless bleach bottles have changed recently. This is ridiculous.

Baltimore school officials tested seven 11th graders and 24 seventh graders in the city. All Junior Highs in the city failed to meet a goal of 80 per cent on a survival reading skills testing ability to read directions on medicine bottles, finding reference data, reading contracts, and leases, newspapers and correctly filling out such forms as job applications.

Only one high school scored over 80 per cent. Poly with 93.4 per cent. Forest Park got 71.2 per cent; Northern, 75.2 per cent.

Maybe the test should have included the backs of record albums, movie ads and TV listings.

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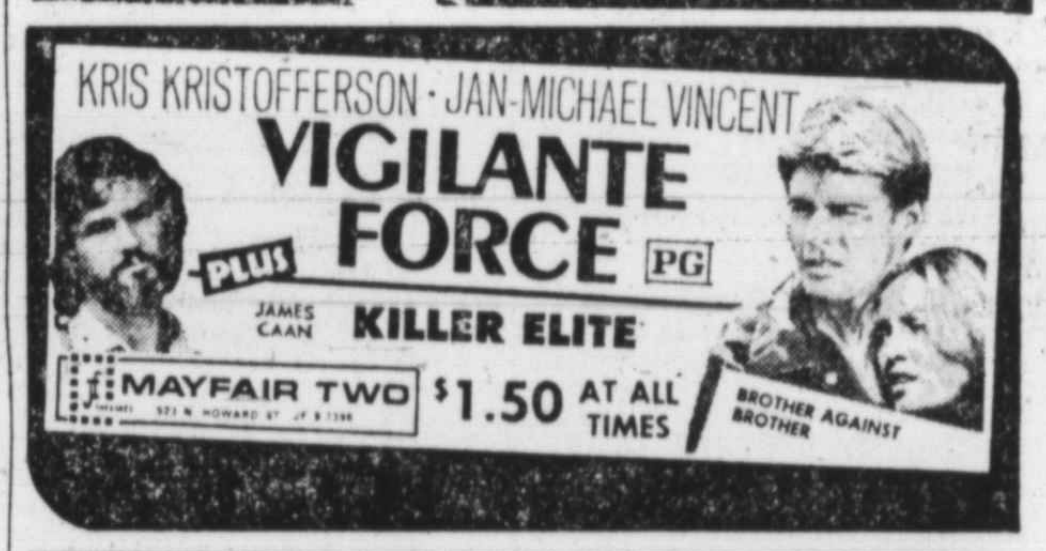
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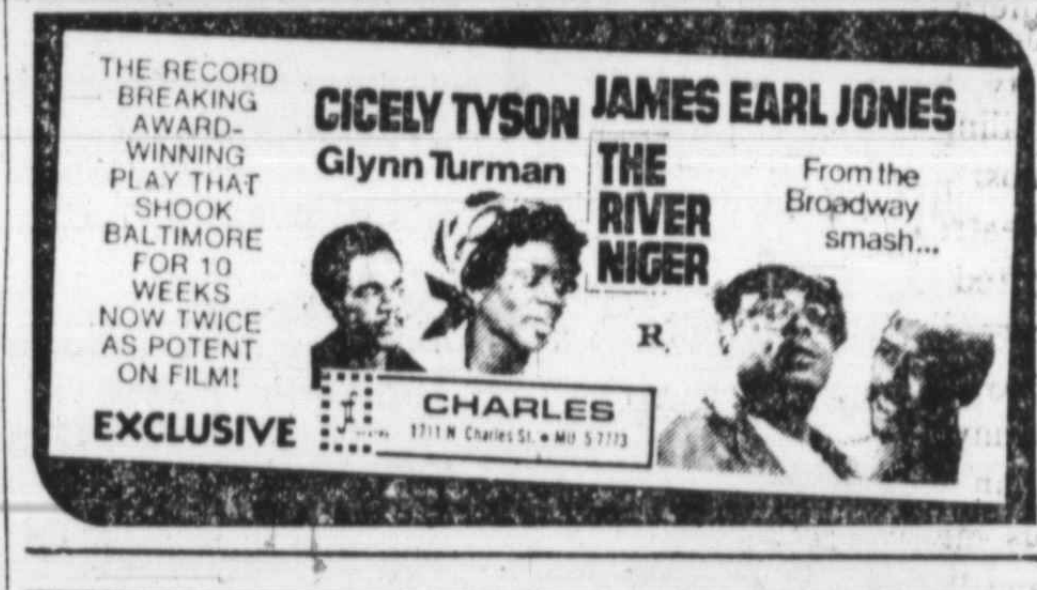
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THE EXORCIST AND Black Christmas

TNT Film Festival, or The New Theatre being held at the University of Maryland. Baltimore County at Catonsville. Left, Janice Carroll is a volunteer and a sophomore at UMBC. Center, overall view of the campus stage. Right, Los Topos, a Chicano group from California presents a satirical comedy skit about problems in a Methodone clinic. Groups are in attendance from all over the world. Outstanding are the Free Southern Theatre founded by Gilbert Moses and John O'Neal in Mississippi and Louisiana and The Family from Chicago.

On Stage

TNT at UMBC

By Harriette Lane . . .

Monday marked the opening of The New Theatre Festival (TNT) at UMBA (University of Maryland Baltimore County) which runs through June 7th.

Over 1600 people milled around campus from noon till 10 p.m., observing the latest development in alternatives theatre. The festival offers the 33 participating theatre groups from colleges all over the country a chance to exchange new ideas and explores different techniques in experimental theatre with other actors and actresses.

The weather for Monday was warm and sunny, a perfect setting for outdoor performances. The Royal Canadian Aerial Theatre performed on a grassy hill near the Fine Arts Building in the open air.

Nearby, a huge tent provided cooling shade for everyone. People munched corn-on-the-cob, fried chicken, and hamburgers while listening to music and songs by Meredith Monk.

Los Topes, a Chicano theatre group from California also performed outdoors. They presented a satirical revue of comedy sketches using politics, drugs, and sex as subjects for social comment.

While some enjoyed the festival outdoors for free, performances indoors required tickets. A ticket for an individual performance is $3.00. It's much better to buy a pass for $7.00 and see at least four indoors shows for the whole day.

Devoteees of theatre should try to see as many indoor performances as possible while attending TNT. The depth and intensity of these presentations offer the best opportunity to observe the concept of experimental theatre first-hand.

Chi-Kanji, a new 3-woman company in residence at the Baltimore Theatre Project, presented a provocative example of this concept. The theme of their presentation focused on the erectic fantasies of women, as revealed through a working interaction with themselves as actresses and people.

They approached this unique theme by appealing to your sense of sexual morality, and performing in complete silence for 45 minutes. The result was a tense fixation to the action on stage.

The Flying Dust Company, of Antioch College explored the alternative concept in a trip between fantasy and reality. Four actors and actresses portrayed the schizeid existence of one man in Mark Dunau's script "Of A Silence In the Sun." The players used the entire room as a set, allowing spectators to sit anywhere the floor, a step or a platform.

The emniation of the stage is another example of the "new" theatre that seeks expression through alternatives rather than traditional approachs.

If you are interested in attending the New Theater Festival at UMBA, you still have Friday and Saturday to catch other performances both days from noon to 10 p.m.

Here is the schedule for the weekend:

Friday: 1:00 - Solaris (Outdoors)
2:00 - The Family (Ensemble troupe of former inmates presently touring U.S.)
4:00 - Spider-Woman
6:00 - Orange Coast (Ampitheatre)
8:00 - Dream Theatre
10:00 - Michigan State
11:00 - Krishnan (East Hill).

Saturday: 1:00 - Solaris
2:00 - Vicinal
4:00 - Drawing Legion
6:00 - Meridith Monk
8:00 - Kraken
10:00 - Bard
11:00 - Eric Bently.

Space, technical equipment, staff and small facilitative grants were provided by UMBC, the Theatre Project, the National Endowment for the Arts, the Maryland Arts Council, The Polish Ministry of Culture, Center Stage, the Peg Sanvoort Foundation, and the U.S. Center of the International Theatre Institute.

Enoch Pratt

"**The Emperor Jones**," the 1933 screen version of the Eugene O'Neill play adapted by DuBose Heyward and starring Paul Robeson, will be shown at 6:30 p.m. on Mon., June 14, at the Pratt Library's Keyworth Ave. center, 2610 Keyworth Ave.

Greeted with divided reaction when it had its premiere showing at the Rivoli Theatre in New York City, the film broke a prevailing color barrier in most major U.S. movie theatres and launched the gifted Robeson on a screen career. His brilliant portrayal of Brutus Jones, the canny and arrogant Pullman porter who plays his misfortune into the dictatorship of an island kingdom, was hailed as one of the most fascinating portraits in modern American drama. Admission is free.

EVENTS FOR CHILDREN

(Week of June 13-190

Mon., June 14

Northwood Branch: Film — "Pippi Longstocking," 3 p.m.

Tues., June 15

Morrell Park Center: Film — "The Astronoughts," 3 p.m.

Wed., June 16

Forest Park Branch: Films —"Popeye the Sailor Meets Sinbad the Sailor," "Man, Monsters and Mysteries" and "African Musicians," 3:30 p.m.

Kirk Avenue Center: Films — "The Happy Prince," "Cattle Ranch" "A Night at the Pet Shop," 3:30 p.m.

Thurs., June 17 . . .

— "The Stowaway," 'The Great Chase," "Riot on Ice" and "The Swineherd," 3:30 p.m.

Pennsylvania Avenue Branch: Films — "Dr. Seuss on the Loose" and "The Lorax," 3:30 p.m.

Mail Bag

Dear AFRO:

In your magazine History Series on the Rev. John Jasper you quoted the scripture Joshua, 20, verses 12-13. I looked it up and you are wrong.

Ann Smith

Thanks. The AFRO regrets the error. It should have read Joshua 10th verse.

Mail Bag

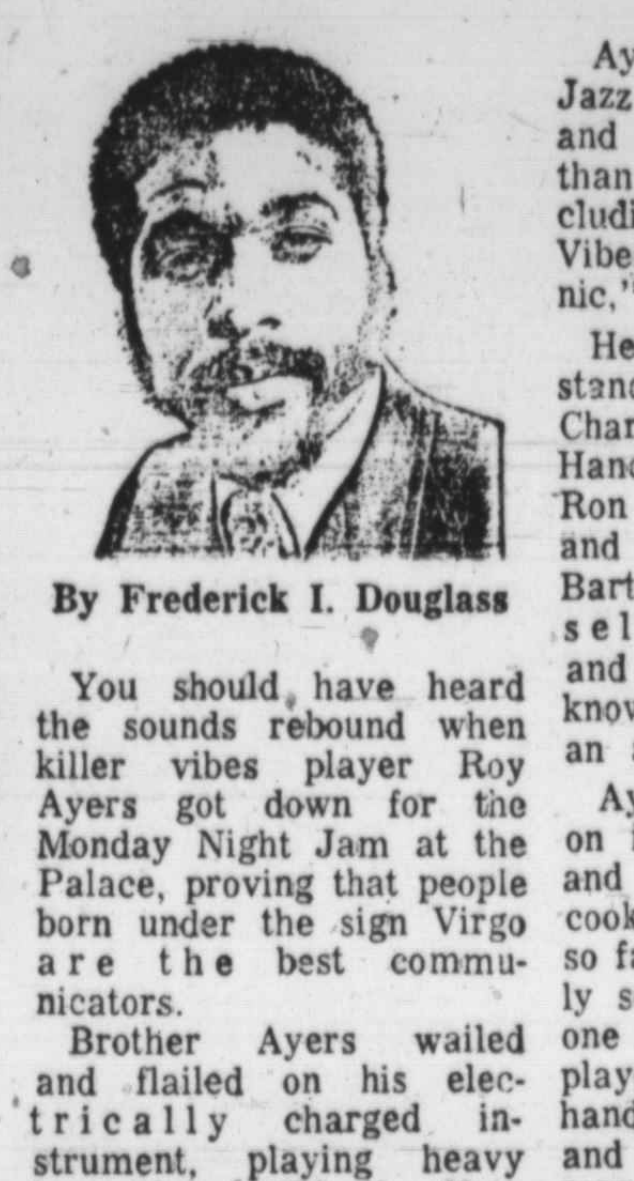
Dear AFRO:

I've been buying the AFRO for two years and my mother has been buying it all her life. Every Friday I buy four AFRO's, two for my neighbors and two for myself. The only reason I buy so many is, like most girls, my age we love that fine old Frederick Douglass. After his article on "Love To Love Baby." I bought an extra copy to take to bed with me. Now, I know this may sound silly to you, but to me it's a serious thing. Is he married? Does he want a fan club? If I could get to meet him I would buy four papers a week, (smile) We love to read what he writes. Because it's the hippest thing I read.

Janice Wilson
Morgan State University

Dear Janice: Fred is very much married. Yes, he would welcome a fan club.

Roy Ayers . . . Virgo vibes



By Frederick I. Douglass

You should have heard the sounds rebound when killer vibes player Roy Ayers got down for the Monday Night Jam at the Palace, proving that people born under the sign Virgo are the best communicators.

Brother Ayers wailed and flailed on his electrically charged instrument, playing heavy jams from "Mystic Voyage," his latest LP, as well as from "A Tear To A Smile," another of the many mean albums Ayers has recorded.

Chikas, the crooning sister who used to sing with slick Man's Theory, was grooving right along with Ayers, adding a new dimension to his group with her spectacular vocal acrobatics. Sharing the bill with brother Ayers was Lifestyle, a dynamic band from B-More.

Lifestyle kicked off the show by playing a great variety of romping, stomping jams including "Always There" from the Ronnie Laws goodie bag and "Love Hangover" which is Diana Ross's current smash hit. Lifestyle, a really tight group, is a prime example of the serious musical talent that abounds in B-More. The group laid down its unique mixture of Jazz and Rock, getting the audience on the right vibration for the vibes playing of Roy Ayers.

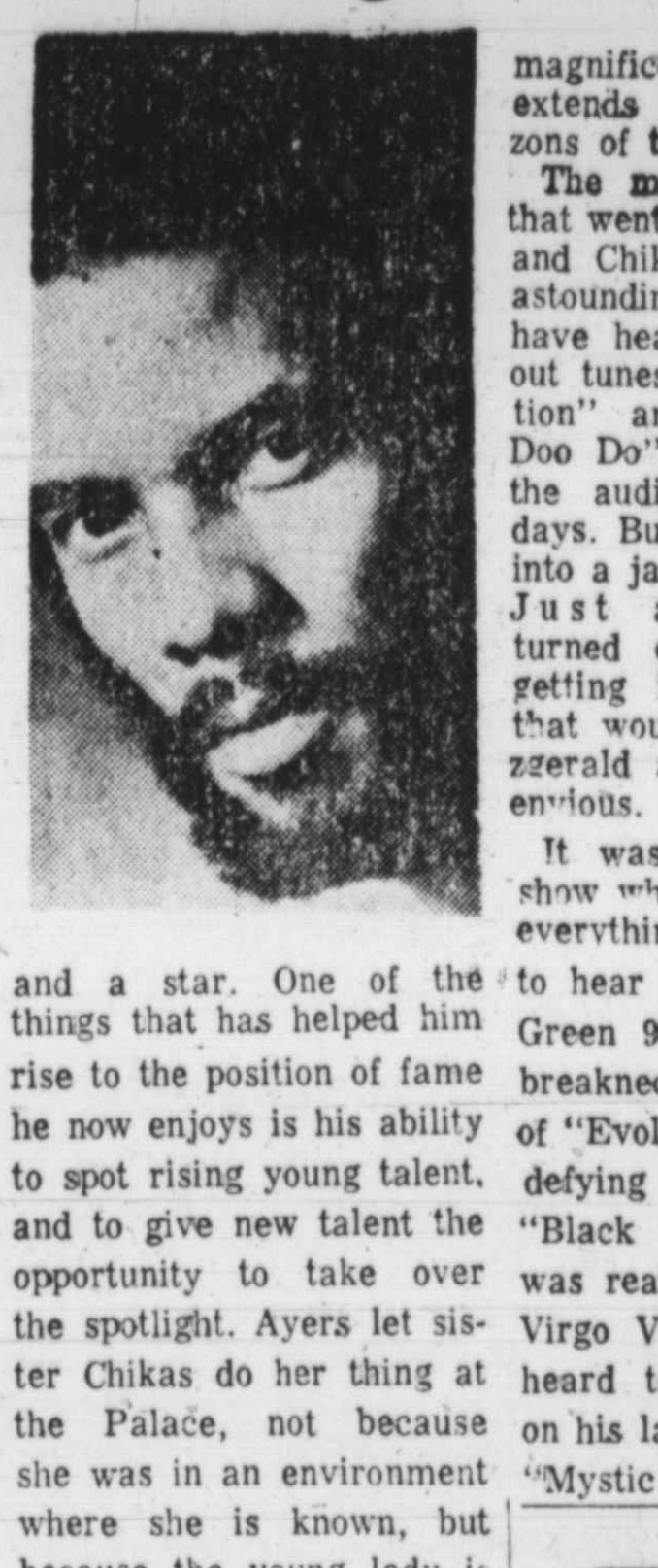
Rockin' Robin, the popular d.j. and emcee for the night, came on stage and announced Roy Ayers and his group Ubiquity. Ayers immediately began to jam, pounding unmercifully upon his instrument. It was only the first show and I soon began to wonder how the brother would be able to do two shows at such a high energy level. But he did and hot into an even heavier groove during the second show.

Ayers has been on the Jazz scene for many moons and has recorded more than a score of albums including jams like "Virgo Vibes," "Stoned Soul Picnic," and "Virgo Red."

He has worked with outstanding musicians like Charles Tolliver, Herbie Hancock, Joe Henderson, Ron Carter, Hubert Laws and B-More's own Gary Bartz. Ayers is primarily a self-taught vibraharpist and a self made man who knows what do to please an audience.

Ayers had the audience on its collective feet time and time again as he cooked up a storm, playing so fast that one could hardly see his hands. Ayers is one of the fastest vibes player on the scene, his hands float like butterflies and sting like bees in the manner of pugilist Muhammad Ali. But speed is merely one fact of Roy's talent. His technique is flawless and he never plays a wrong note or overstates his case. He does not overburden the listener with excess notes just to prove how fast he is. Every note he plays has a purpose, to blow the minds of the listeners that are fortunate enough to be in the range of hearing.

Dig, this brothers and sisters—it is an acknowledged fact that Roy Ayers is truly a master musician and a star. One of the things that has helped him rise to the position of fame he now enjoys is his ability to spot rising young talent, and to give new talent the opportunity to take over the spotlight. Ayers let sister Chikas do her thing at the Palace, not because she was in an environment where she is known, but because the young lady is magnificently talented and extends the musical horizons of the group.



The musical interchange that went on between Ayers and Chikas was absolutely astounding. You should have heard the sister belt out tunes like "Funky Motion" and the "Spirit of Doo Do" which really had the audience tripping for days. But when Chikas got into a jam entitled "Life is Just a Moment" she turned out the house by getting into a skat thing that would make Ella Fitzgerald and Sarah Vaughn envious.

It was an out of sight show wherein Ayers played everything that you wanted to hear including "Brother Green 9th Disco King," a breakneck tempoed version of "Evolution," and a death defying rampage on the "Black Five." Roy Ayers was really killing on those Virgo Vibes which can be heard to great advantage on his latest album entitled "Mystic Voyage."

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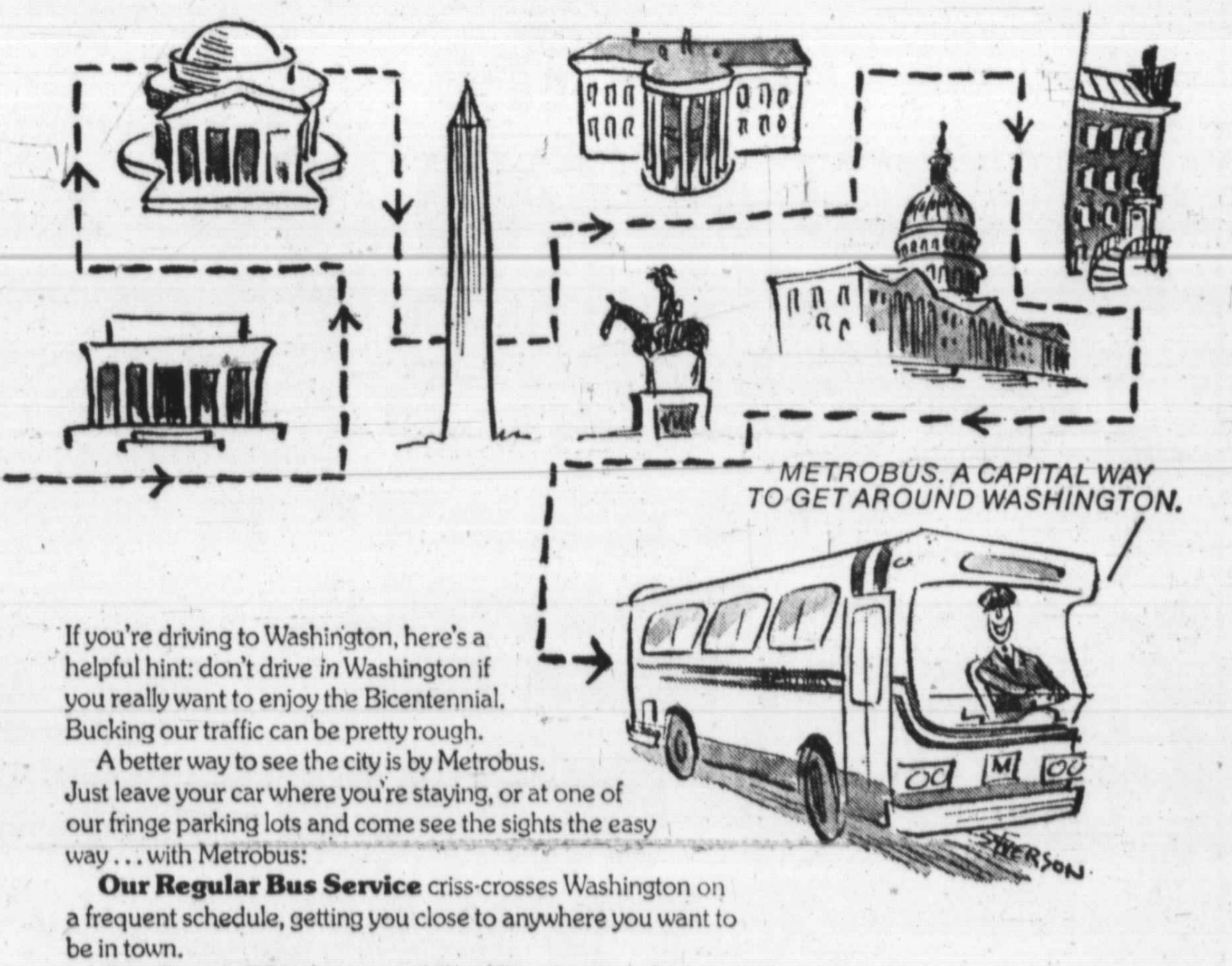
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