Lucille Armstrong ...'Mrs. Satch'

By Ida Peters

. . . Mrs. 'Satchmo'

Mrs. Lucille Armstrong, widow of the trail-blazing gaint of jazz, Louis 'Sitchmo' Armstrong who died in July, 1971, visited Baltimore this week for the Bicentennial Concert held in his honor at the Inner Harbor this past Wednesday.

An attractive, petite five-footer . . well maybe an inch more, Lucille Armstrong received the press in her Hilton Tower suite. She has merry eyes, a soft grey bush and a no-nonsense, let's get down to the interview personality . . . because I must watch my time to be present at the mayor's reception, "Baltimore's Best" and the concert.

She says that Louis' achievements, his importance as a musician are being honored reguarly at home in America and in different parts of the world. Louis was born July 4 just 76 years ago.

Since Louis' death in 1971, as the wealthy inheritor of Armstrong's fortune and 5,000 tapes, many of them with his own comments as well as his music, Lucille has been appearing at festivals, at tribute concerts and sessions throughout the world. She has even toured for the U.S. State Department, supported by U.S. Embassies, countries in Eastern Europe and France.

Asked her about the TV special that Ben Vereen did on Louis Armstrong's Chicago Days.

She says that Ben Vereen did a marvelous job but story-wise it was fact and fictional. They did not consult her and did not allow her to have any input.

She says after all she spent 31 years with Louis and she ought to know, some parts of the special did a disservice to his music.

She's still living in Corona, N.Y. "roaming around that great big house and enjoying every minute of it." Lucille and Louis bought the house in 1942 and she says, maybe. . .after I'm gone, it might be a turned into an Armstrong Museum.

Jazz fans, on the whole, are a faithful lot. She receives world-wide requests for pictures and spends a small fortune on postage because the rates keep on rising.

Louis kept a very orderly collection of the testimonials, keys to cities, plaques from magazines, and gold "Esky" statuettes from the years when Esquire ran its annuals polls.

Of particular value is the collection of tapes on which he worked during his last years in Long island in 1971.

Lucille Armstrong represents a direct and very personal link to the glorious past of Louis Armstrong that nobody wants to lose or forget.

Hopefully, her dream to make a movie, "The Louis Armstrong Story" will get off the ground.

"My life with Louis was exciting and fulfilling, a relationship worthy of all sacrifices, full of dedication and love. Pops was not a hard man to get along with. He was not demanding and did not have a temperament like some artist do, although he did have a temper, but, with it, a great sense of humor.

"If I could awaken one human being in each of the places visited bringing memories of Louis to the hope for the future of mankind and the world, I would be doing exactly what Louis always wanted to do.

"Together Louis and I were strong and creative, inspirational to each other. Now that I am alone, the spirit of him is always with me. I am not sad, my memories are beautiful, they stimulate me to carry on and share things with others.

"It is my hope that learning of Louis' life will be an inspiration to everyone. Where else but in America could a little black boy from New Orleans, whose grandmother was a slave, grow up to be one of the most beloved figures in the world?"

Rosalind Clark

". . . . A gutsy black songstress loaded with soul, savvy and style," describes Rosalind Clark, the hottest new female vocalist on the music scene.

An amazingly versatile this black beauty with enormous flashing eyes, long lithe curves and a 6000-watt smile," appeared last week at Painters Mill with the Paul Lynde Show.

Touted as "a young Lena Horne," Roz most recently appeared on The Merv Griffin Show where she was asked back immediately.

Rave reviews followed club dates at the Los Angeles and San Francisco Playboby Clubs. With release of her new hit single "Nightowl," produced by Linda Perry and Warner Bros. Records, a "Soul treatment of the James Taylor song from powerfully-voiced songstress" (Billboard) Roz is on her way to the top of the charts.

Roz played Painters Mill with Paul Lynde Show.

Her professional experience includes work with Bob Hope, Tom Jones, Englebert Humperdinck, Tennessee Ernie Ford, Bobby Darin, Bob Newhart, Kay Starr and Al Hirt.

Formally educated at Texas Southern University, Rosalind graduated with a B.A. degree in musical education. On to summer stock at the Sacramento Music Circus, followed by her debut on the vocal group scene with the Max Cooper Trio, Rosalind did solo work with The Kids of the Kingdom at Disneyland and eventually a tour with The Celebration which took her all over the world.

Also to her credit, the Los Angeles and infamous Acapulco production of "Hair." The veteran night-club performer was more than ready to take the big step on her own.

"Singing allows me to show people how I feel, it's a fabulous release for all I want to express," says Roz. "Being on stage is like a trance, I can't quite grasp or describe the feeling but I know it's good. It keeps me going back for more." Seeing good performers makes her hopeful and at peace, "like the feeling you get hearing a good sermon in church. My goal is to make people feel like that, feel good inside. To give to another human being."

Miss Clark hopes to be able to give and express herself in other mediums — movies, the Broadway stage.

The McKenzie report

By Vashti McKenzie

By Vashti McKenzie

When Bessie Smith died on a dark road in Mississippi in 1937 and was buried with no marker, there was no one to sing over her . . . No Jack Gee, no son and no relatives to speak of.

There were no Columbia Record executives whose bankrupt company her recording saved

Almost a half century later, Bessie Smith has Linda Hopkins.

This magnificent Tony Award winning star of the Broadway musical "Me and Bessie," which opened this week at Painters Mill for a two week run, not only sings over Bessie but sings Bessie better than Bessie herself.

The musical recreates the life of Bessie Smith, Empress of the Blues . . . recounts the tent days, when the black vaudeville shows used to travel all over the South, pitching a tent in an empty field and playing to full houses every night.

It recounts the up and down days when Bessie first broke into the business and it goes through those early recording days in NYC when Bessie broke into the big time and turning out those glass '78's, such as "Gimme A Pig Foot and a Bottle of Beer.

Linda Hopkins

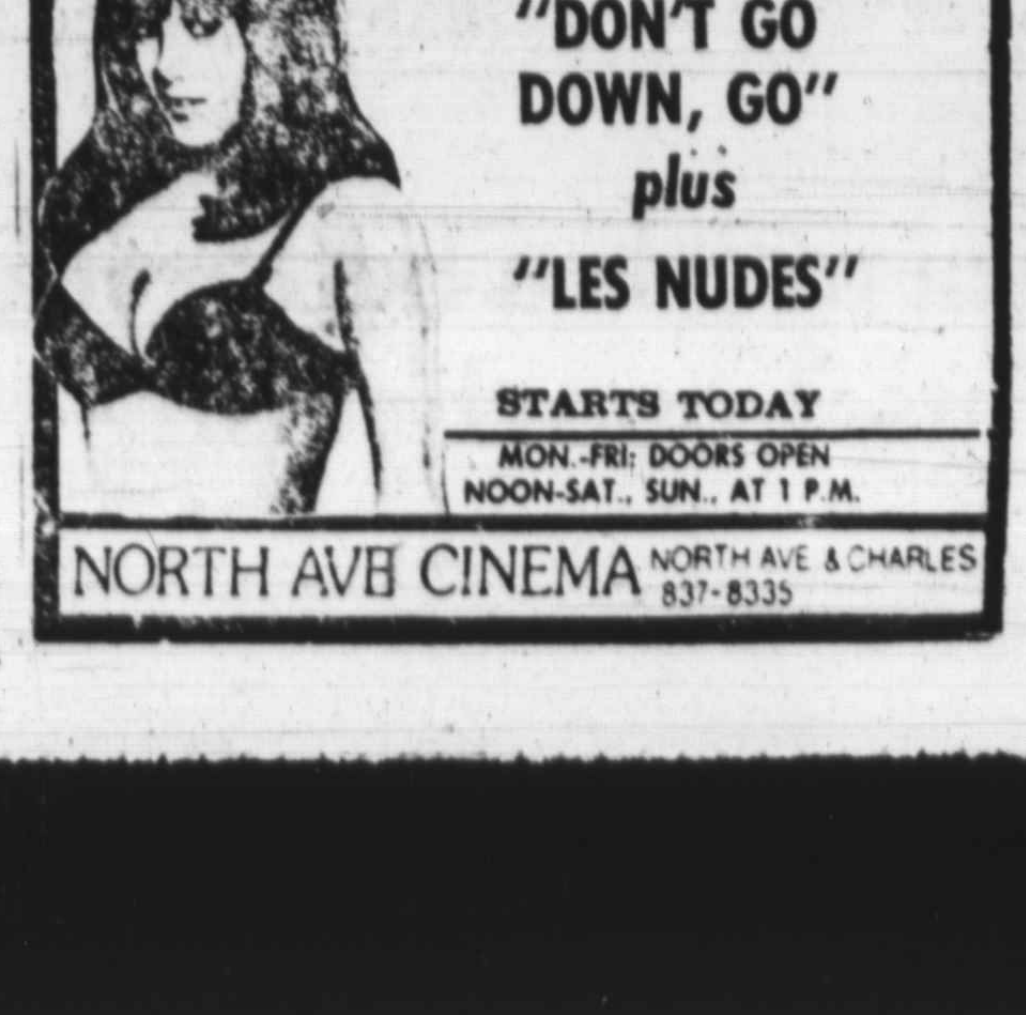
What makes this a truly unique musical is that Linda herself. She flavors her Bessie with a lot of gospel and a lot of soul. She bumps and shimmies with dancers Thomas Pollard and Jerri Dean.

Tom is a slithering, swivel-hipped young man much to the delight of all the young ladies in the audience and Jerri's bright sparkling face is only matched by her spirited low-down dancing. And, she does get low down.

"Me and Bessie" is an event, musical-tribute, and Linda.

Groups attending opening night included the Community College of Baltimore, Coppin Elementary, School No. 254, Claremont School, St. Paul United Methodist Church, Dimensions Social Club.

Other large groups who will be attending over the next two weeks include Baltimore Cossacks, S.A.T.'s Special, The Travelers Social Club, The Sportsmen's Lounge, The Sphinx Club, New Life Mission, Variety Club-Women Urban Services, Department of Juvenile Services, Eastern Terrace Community Center, Kwesters and the faculty of Belmont Eelmentary School.



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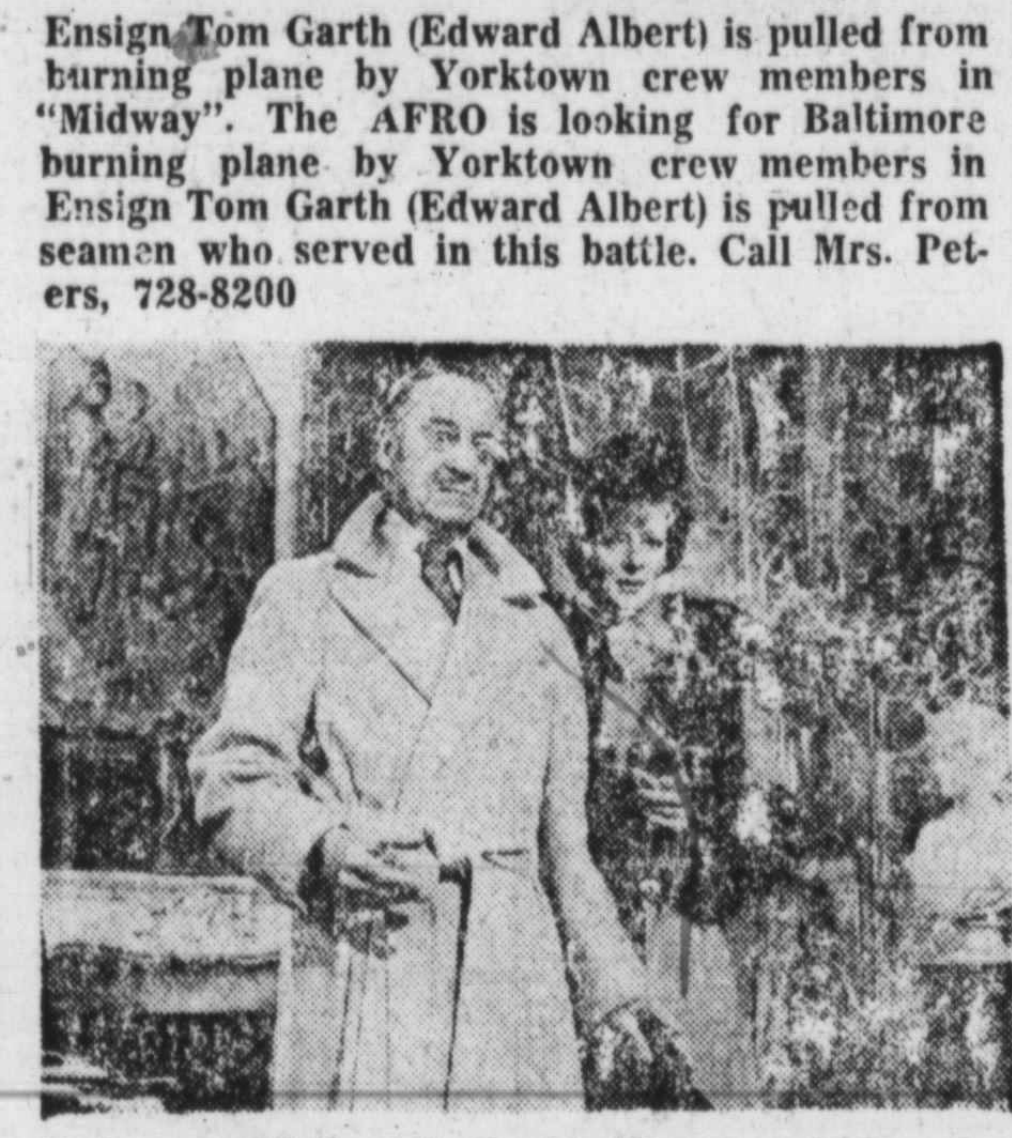
Ensign Tom Garth (Edward Albert) is pulled from burning plane by Yorktown crew members in "Midway". The AFRO is looking for Baltimore burning plane by Yorktown crew members in Ensign Tom Garth (Edward Albert) is pulled from seamen who served in this battle. Call Mrs. Peters, 728-8200



Suave, sophisticated David Niven and Maggie Smith register no surprise at the unexpected visitor in their room for the week-end at the English manor house of eccentric millionaire Truman Capote in "Murder By Death" at area theatres.

And now a word

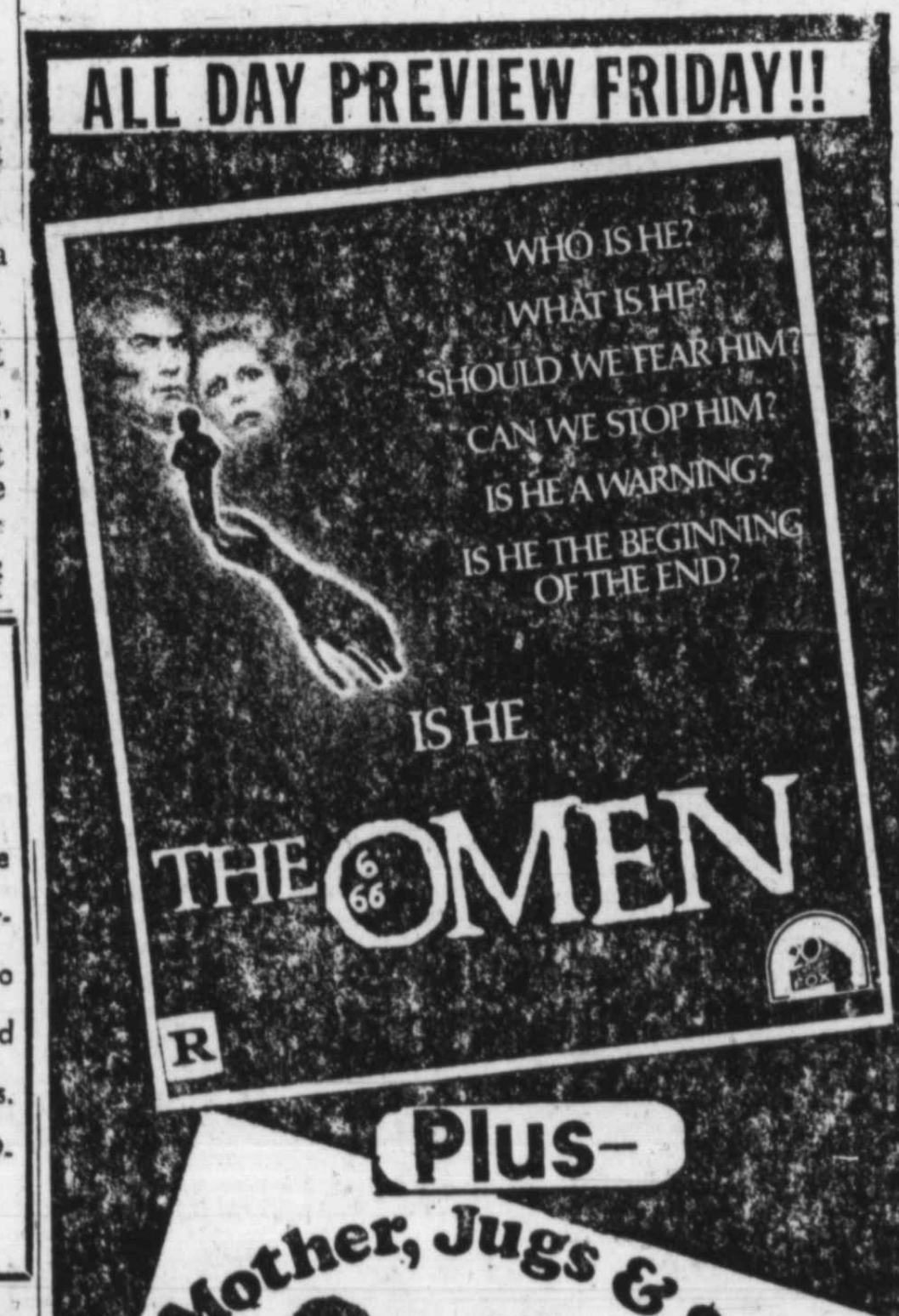
"The American Music Hall", a delightful evening of songs, dancing, burlesque sketches, a dog act and much more is now at the New Bolton Hill Dinner Theatre.

Las Amigas sponsors Arts In The Afternoon, Sunday, June 27 from 1 to 6 p.m. at McKeldin Center, Morgan State Universiyt. The free show features fashions, plants, dancing, poetry, food, music, arts and crafts with more than 50 artists participating.

The Underground, at Bush and Hamburg Sts., formerly The Checkerboard Lounge is having a Disco Party on July 20.

The National Read Company of Broadway's newest smash hit musical revue, "Bubbling Brown Sugar," will open at the Shubert Theatre in Chicago on June 22nd for a six week engagement. The musical, which celebrates some of the most famous people, places and musical night spots of Harlem from 1919-1940, has made Chicago its first stop. Other cities scheduled for the tour this year include: Cleveland, Boston, and Detroit with Los Angeles, San Francisco, Baltimore, Washington, Philadelphia, and St. Louis to follow next year.

KOKO LANE SOCIAL CLUB
is giving a cabaret at the Winchester Armory Saturday, June 26th, 10 P.M. to 2 A.M. Featuring Brut and Disco music. 3 Door prizes. For Information Call 669-0187. Tickets $7.00.



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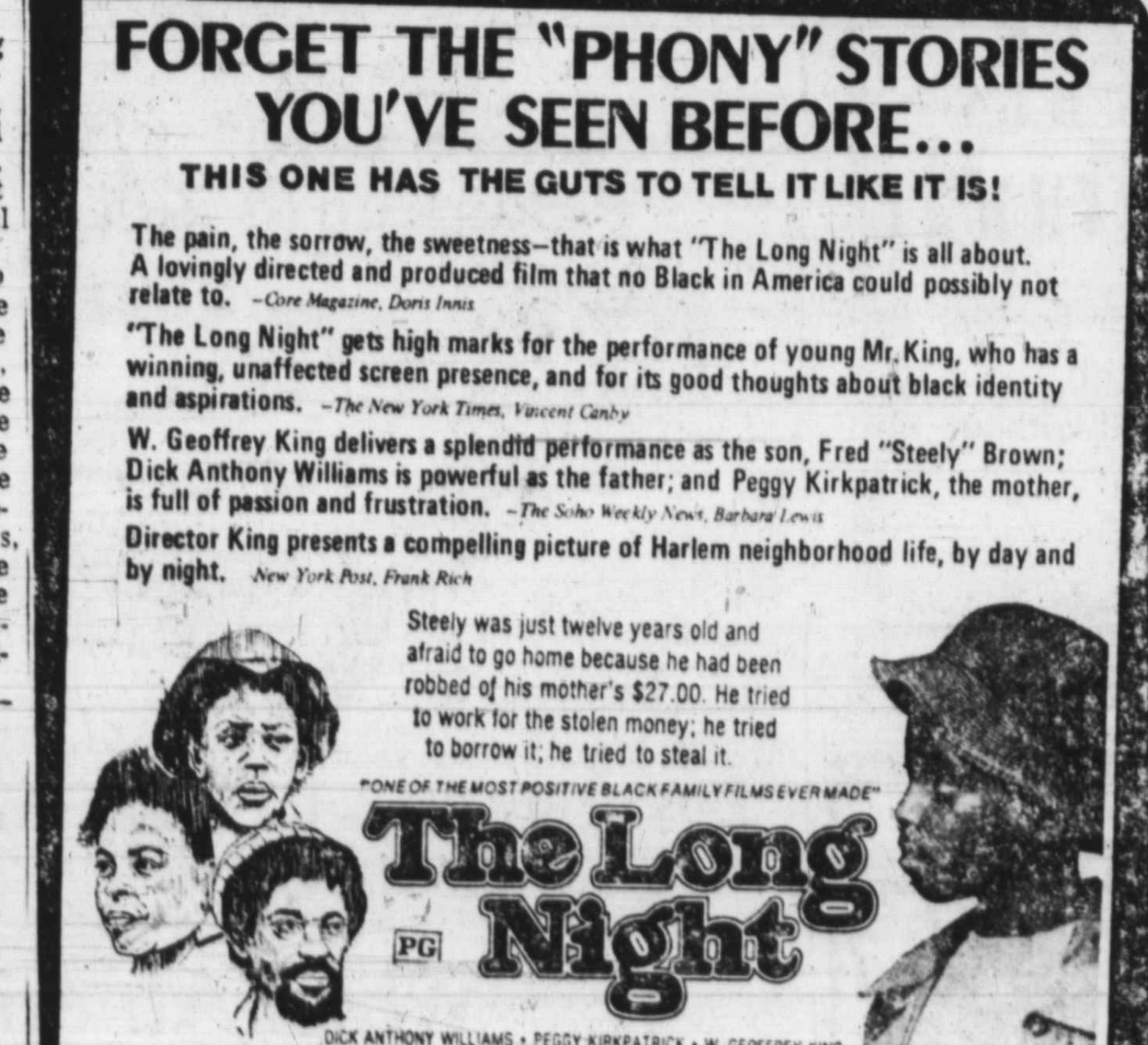

FORGET THE "PHONY" STORIES YOU'VE SEEN BEFORE...
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The pain, the sorrow, the sweetness—that is what "The Long Night" is all about. A lovingly directed and produced film that no Black in America could possibly not relate to. –Core Magazine, Doris Innis
"The Long Night" gets high marks for the performance of young Mr. King, who has a winning, unaffected screen presence, and for its good thoughts about black identity and aspirations. –The New York Times, Vincent Canby
W. Geoffrey King delivers a splendid performance as the son, Fred "Steely" Brown; Dick Anthony Williams is powerful as the father; and Peggy Kirkpatrick, the mother, is full of passion and frustration. –The Soho Weekly News, Barbara Lewis
Director King presents a compelling picture of Harlem neighborhood life, by day and by night. New York Post, Frank Rich
Steely was just twelve years old and afraid to go home because he had been robbed of his mother's $27.00. He tried to work for the stolen money; he tried to borrow it; he tried to steal it.
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Meet...

Dick Anthony Williams

By Ida Peters

If you saw that lean, good-looking black man with a sharp beard on "Starsky and Hutch"...in the TV episode "Kill Huggy Bear"...that was Dick Anthony Williams.

And...that was his wife Gloria Edwards in the same show. You saw her in J.E. Franklin's "Black Girl" which helped save the Morris Mechanic Theatre a year or so ago.

All this to say, I didn't know who Dick Anthony Williams was until I lunched with him at Danny's last week.

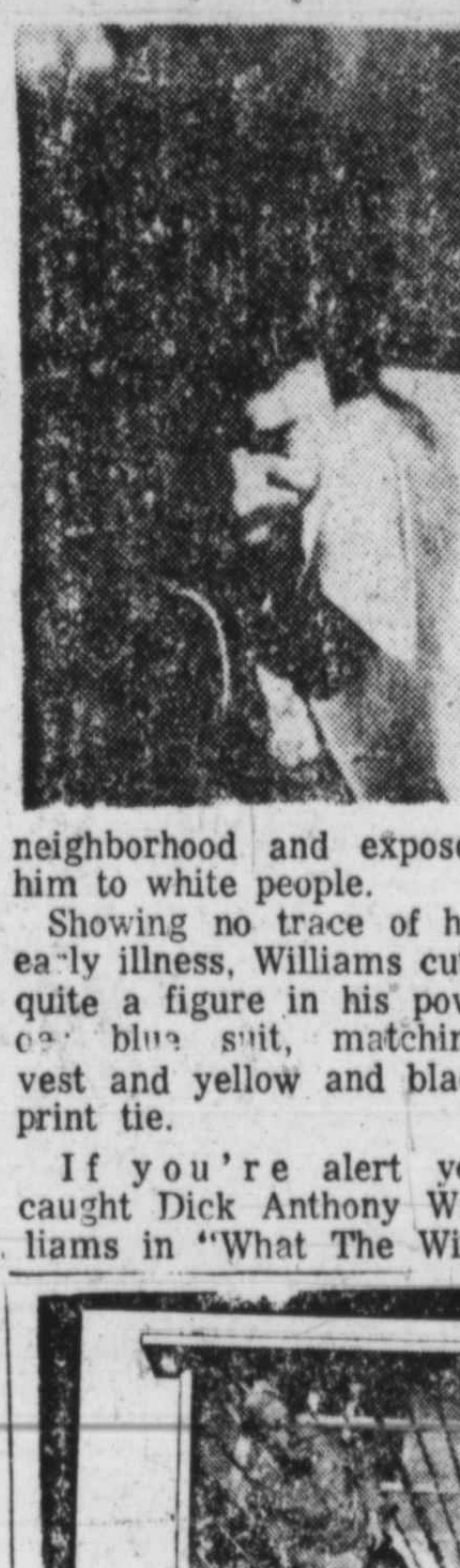
Over crab cakes with him and Woodie King Jr. found out Dick Anthony Williams has been enjoying a rich career on Broadway, off-Broadway, in television and films and is the star of the new black produced film "The Long Night" with Peggy Kirkpatrick and W. Geoffrey King now playing at area theatres.

"The Long Night" has no meaningless sex, violence or profanity and has a "G" rating, so you can send your kids.

It's filmed in Harlem and parts of New York City and tells the story of a critical day in the life of a 13-year-old and how he copes with his gang, The Comanche Raiders, and the struggle of his family to survive.

Dick Anthony Williams is a Chicago native and has a double name because of Equity regulations. He threatened to put an X after his name.

He was born with a veil over his face and contracted polio at an early age. He attended Spaulding School on the West Side...He says it got him away from the gangs in his neighborhood and exposed him to white people.



Showing no trace of his early illness, Williams cuts quite a figure in his powder blue suit, matching vest and yellow and black print tie.

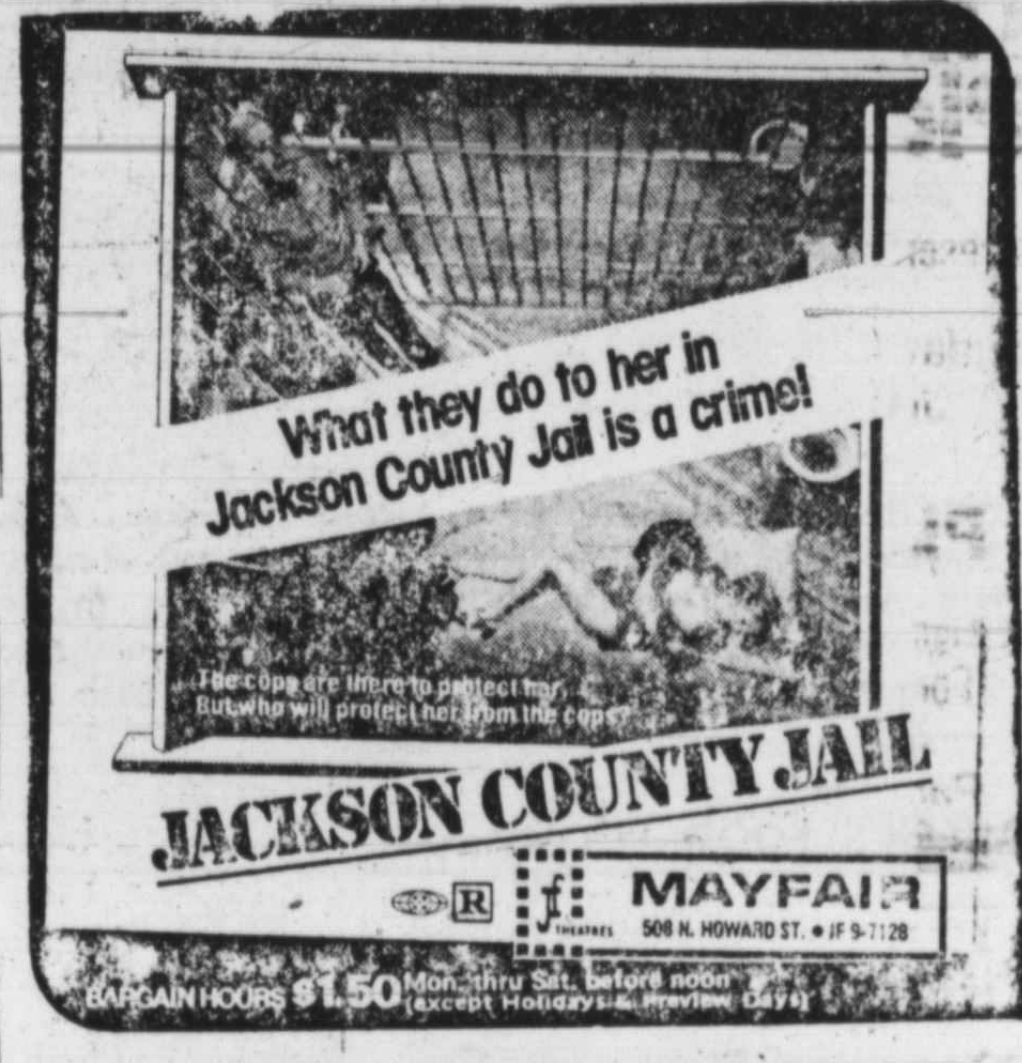
If you're alert you caught Dick Anthony Williams in "What The Wine Sellers Buy" and "Ainh't Supposed to Die a Natural Death".

In films you have seen him in "The Anderson Tapes", "Five On The Black Hand Side", "The Mack", "Slaughter's Big Rip Off" and "Up Tight".

Woodie King Jr. and St. Clair Bourne are the producers of "The Long Night".

King is the dean of black producers and has scored with such successes as "What The Wine Sellers Buy" and "Black Girl". An editor, as well as, free lance writer he has also served as consultant for the Rockefeller Foundation.

St. Clair Bourne is founder and president of Chamba Productions has produced and directed several films including "Let The Church Say Amen". He is a former producer and director for Black Journal.



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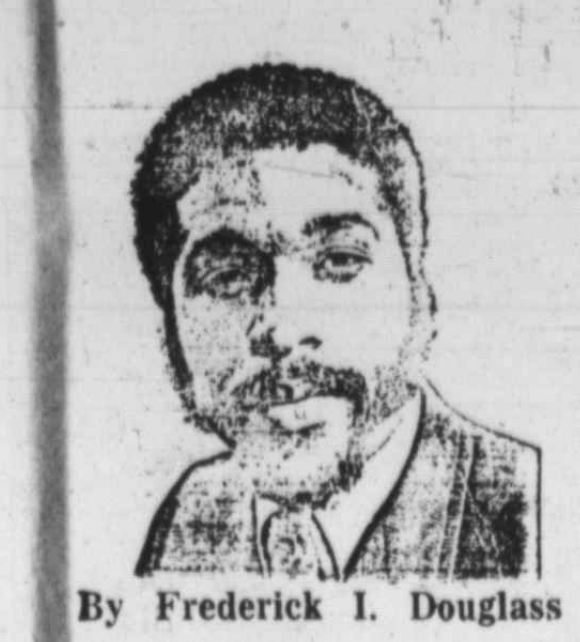

By Frederick I. Douglass

Norman Connors, the killer drummer whose recent album "You Are My Starship" and single with the same title have been taking the country by storm, was serving it to the people at the Palace on Monday Night.

The occasion was the Monday Night Jam, a heavy scene wherein the brothers and sisters get down and party hearty. Connors was flying high on the starship trip and dishing out goodies from past albums like "Slewfoot" and Saturday Night Special." Sharing the stage with Connors was Father's Children, a B-More group that can do it all and will be recording very soon—like next week according to band members.

I had an opportunity to rap about the show with a very down to earth brother named Lewis Bennett. A graduate of North Carolina Central University, Lewis has been in B-More for about a year and has established a reputaiton as a bon vivant, man about town, and life of the party as well as being a scholar. Lewis is also very knowledgeable about contemporary music and was kind enough to share his views on the show with me. It's always good to get someone else's opinions, and I though I would share some of brother Bennett's views with the readers of the AFRO, the paper that tells it all just like it happened.

Discussing the performance of Father's Children Lewis stated "I thought that the group was really official and out of sight. I was really impressed with their version of the Bluenotes tune 'Wake Up Everybody' and some of the songs they did from the Earth, Wind and Fire bag. But I was even more empressed by some of the original material the group did. I hope they get their recording thing together because I would be first in line at the record store. To tell the truth, I think the crowd was much more in tune with the performance of Father's Children than with Norman Connors. I know the group received louder applause and really deserved it. Don't get me wrong, Norman Connors was really heavy, but Father's Children just has something special, something that is going to make them big stars."

The conversation switched to Norman Connors and Lewis asserted "I got to the first set a little late, so I don't know if Connors did "Saturday Night Special," but I did hear the brother do a dynamite drum solo on Herbie Hancock's tune "Maiden Voyage" which was really ready. I've been listening to Norman Connors for a long time, especially during the years that he was playing in Pharoah Sanders group. . .The brother has always had his program together and is really a heavy jazz musician. In some ways I haven't completed adjusted to his switch to a more Rock type bag, but more I listen to what he is now trying to do, the better I understand his new groove."

Continuing to rap about the show, Bennett state "A lot of people in B-More must dig Connors because every table in the place is full and there are people hanging off the walls. Of course, they didn't turn out the house after the first show, but there are still a lot of people here.

That impressed me most about both shows was the singing of Phyllis Hyman who really wailed the lyrics to "You Are My Starship" which really showed how good a voice the lady has. But she really knocked me cold when she went into her rap about all people being as one and comprised of sheer energy when she was singing "The Creator Has a Master Plan" which was made famous by Pharoah Sanders and Leon Thomas. If Norman Connors and Phyllis Hyman hang together, they will have a winning combination in the future."

Norman Connors

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Members of the popular singing and dancing artists The Jackson Family (which started out as The Jackson 5 and grew) will star in a half-hour, musical-variety summer series, "The Jacksons," to be broadcast (8:00-8:30 pm, ET) on the CBS Television Network. From left to right, are Marlon, Jackie, Michael, Randy and Tito. Popular show is blacked out in B-more.

Carmen Balthrop, who recently starred in Scott Joplin's "Treemonisha" is soloist with the Baltimore Symphony's at the opening night concert at the Merriweather Post Pavilion in Columbia June 25.

Oprah Winfrey will become co-anchor of Channel 13's 7:00 p.m. Eyewitness News, effective Monday, July 19. Ms. Winfrey gained extensive experience with electronic news gathering equipment during her two-and-one half years as anchorwoman with WTVF-TV, Nashville, Tennessee.

Enoch Pratt

Mon., June 28

Light Street Branch: Puzzles and games, 1 - 4 p.m.

Central Library: Films—"The Baggs," "The Roc Brid and the Rescue," "The Ski Wheelers," and "The Astronoughts," 2 p.m.

Fells Point Center: Film—"The Salvage Gang," 3 p.m. and 7 p.m.

Tues., June 29

Brooklyn Branch: Seed planting, 1 p.m.

Fells Point Center: Puzzles and games, 1 - 4 p.m.

Fort Worthington Center: Films — "The Case of the Elevator Duck," "The Live Ghost," and "Watch Out for My Plant," 2 p.m.

Light Street Branch: Films —"The Magician" and "Time Flies," 2 p.m.

Morrell Park Center: Films — "The Owl and the Lemming," 3 p.m.

"Ashram" and "Mathew Manning: A Study of a Psychic," films at the Central Pratt Library, 2 p.m.

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TV Notes

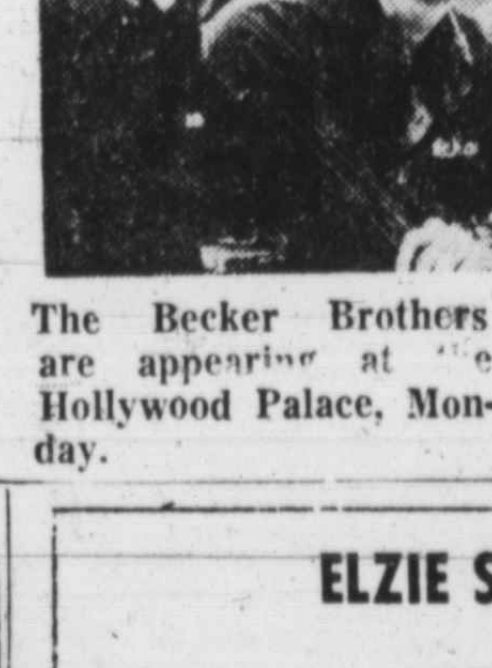
Labelle is featured on "Good Times at the Apollo Theatre," TV show Saturday night.

"Consumer Survival Kit" offers money-saving information to the two out of five Americans living in rented housing Tuesday, June 29 at 8:30 p.m. on stations of the Maryland Center for Public Broadcasting — channels 22, 28, 31, and 67.

The program examines some common lease clauses that may not be legally binding, the rights of tenants to withhold rent, and tenant rights to receive a refund on security deposits.

* * * "Good Times" at the Apollo are provided by a lineup of top entertainers on the second 90-minute "Apollo" special to be televised Saturday, June 26 at 8:30 p.m. on Channel 13.

On the bill from the Harlem showcase are, in the order of their appearance: George Kirby, host; The copasetics, LaBelle, Ashford and Simpson, The Barrett Sisters, Taj Mahal, The Drifters and special guest Cab Calloway. The range is from nostalgic to contemporary.



The Becker Brothers are appearing at the Hollywood Palace, Monday.

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* July 26 — Jimmy McGriff
* Aug 2nd — Mongo Santamaria
* Aug. 9th — Maynard Ferguson Big Band
* Aug. 16th — Tony William, Plus New York Mary
* Aug. 23 — Duke Ellington's Band Plus Joe Williams
* Aug. 30 — The President Dizzy Gillespie
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