'Spook' . . . blueprint for revolution

By Ida Peters

You still have time to catch Sam Greenlee's "The Spook Who Sat By The Door" at the Met Theatre this week. And . . . what you ought to do is buy his absorbing book from which the movie was made.

It is absolutely chilling. When I interviewed Sam Greenlee . . . on two occasions, he said his book and film did not advocate revolution of black people but if this country is ever to change some kind of revolution . . . either political or spiritual would have to take place.

Read the book first, then see the movie. Greenlee in the book creates a character Dan Freeman played by Lawrence Cook who considers himself superior to the black bourgeoisie, most white people including generals, his boss, the dogooders, college professors, the heads of the large service agencies etc.

He joins the CIA training program acting like a handkerchief head, field hand and quietly masters everything the CIA can teach him about guns, ammunition, Math, Judo . . . you name it he learned it.

After graduation, he starts out running the Zerox machine at headquarters and finally ends up as the confident token black sitting at the door, being called on to show VIP's through the building.

What is chilling throughout the book and maybe the movie is Greenlee's indictment of the black middle class . . . as people who spend too much time or family, sororities, fraternities and who knows who.

He also indicts the poverty and Urban Service agencies of Chicago for spending too much money on top heavy salaries and not doing any work.

He organizes the street gangs in Chicago patiently having street workers infiltrate the gangs while he takes the leaders to his high class pad teaching them black history, manners, food, Math, munitions, public relations disguise and also everything he learned in the CIA.

He indicts the public schools of Chicago for turning the bright minds of the teen gangs off while he turns himself into a father figure and reclaims these guys into a nation wide undercover army in major cities in the U.S. to wage war on police and the power struggle.

What is more chilling about the book and movie is that it turns black people against black people, the haves against the have nots.

No wonder Greenlee was harassed by the CIA when the book and movie first came out. It was too hot for United Artists to handle and they dropped it.

White people reading the book and the movie must have shuddered and made a mental note to drop some of the Great Society programs ... because you will note that black people have quietly been relieved of running their own poverty programs and most of the programs are now under mayors of cities who remember the riots of the '60's.

The surprise ending of the book is where his straight college girl friend, who married a wealthy doctor turns him in to the police when she realizes the undercover riots will ruin her and her family.

Greenlee says his book and movie is fiction not fact ... but at the same time, it makes you wonder.

"Spook" is a blueprint for revolution but will some leader of the future take it literally.

For those of you trying to get tickets for Labelle at Painters Mill Music Fair, the concert is sold out.

Check out "Leadbelly" at the Charles Theatre on a triple bill with Diana Ross in "Lady Sings the Blues" and "Mahogany."

Sylvester Campbell in a scene from Tchaikovsky's "The Nutcracker," which the Maryland Ballet will perform at the Lyric Theatre. One-hour highlights for school children will be presented on Dec. 16 and 17. There will be six full-length performances on Dec. 26, 28 and 30. Information on the student performances and group discounts may be obtained by calling 366-5800.

Morgan Choir Xmas concert

The Morgan State University Choir, under the direction of Nathan Carter, will be presented in its annual Christmas Concert on Sun., Dec. 12, at 8:15 p.m. in Murphy Auditorium on the South Campus. Admission is free and the public is invited to attend.

The choir, which has gained an international reputation through its Columbia Recordings, travels abroad and throughout the United States, will be performing a unique Christmas program - opening with the now popular setting of the "Gloria" of the mass by Antonio Vivaldi and a second part consisting entirely of Christmas music as written by black composers.

The Book of the Month Club Classic Records Division was so impressed with the reputation of the Morgan Choir, and particularly its offerings in the field of black music, the club invited the Morgan Choir to join five other select University choirs from across the nation (Smith, Amherst, St. Olaf, University of Texas, nd Brigham Young) in a Xmas album to be released in the fall of 1977.

The three album set will feature each choir on one-half of an L.P. "Christmas Music by Black American Composer" slated for December 12 at Morgan includes music scheduled for the Book of The Month Club recording and features a new work written for the ocassion by the distinguished American Composer, George Walker, as well as compositions by important composers of this era and the past.

Particular attention will be given to two compositions by Baltimoreans Thomas Kerr, Jr., recently resigned from Howard University's Department of Music, and well known throughout musical circles for his great contributions in the fields of composition and performance.

The choir will be assisted in the Vivaldi Gloria by a chamber orchestra from the Baltimore Symphony with student Soprano Soloists, Lovitha Whittington and Tanya Lanham and Mezzo Soprano Soloist Betty Malkus, voice instructor at the University.

Top R&B Albums

1 **Songs In The Key Of Live** — Stevie Wonder
2 **Spirit** — Earth, Wind and Fire
3 **Car Wash** — Original Soundtrack
4 **The Clones Of Dr. Funkenstien** — Parliament
5 **Hot On The Tracks** — Commodores
6 **Flowers** — Emotions
7 **Message In The Music** — O'Jays
8 **Love To The World** — LTD
9 **This Is Niecy** — Deniece Williams

More...more

The Bay College Family holds their annual Christmas party on Monday, Dec. 20 from 3 to 6 p.m. in the Board Room and Library at the college, Howard and Centre Streets.

* * *

For those affected by the Christmas season with a melancholy - rather than happy - mood, WWL Radio's Elane Stein will discuss the discuss the "whys and hows" of these holiday blues in an upcoming four-part series with her guest, Dr. Sue Robinson, Assistant Professor of Psychology at the College of Notre Dame. The interviews will air at 12:30 and 1:30 p.m. Monday, December 13 and Tuesday, December 14 over Radio 11.

* * *

The Edwin Booth Theater opens Bill Manhoff's "The Owl and the Pussycat" in Bel Air. Directed by R. Michael Hogan, this comedy will run Dec. 11-12, and December 15-19. Curtaines are 8:00 p.m. Wednesdays, Thursday and Sundays and 8:30 p.m. on Friday and Saturdays.

The Baltimore Folk Music Society will present folk singer Mike Seeger, in concert, Fri. Dec. 17, at 8:30 p.m., at Lovely Lane United Methodist Chruch, 2200 St. Paul Street.

Sir Walter Jackson and his "Feelings" are at the Casino, Mon. Dec. 13 for one-night only with First Class.

'Monkey Hustle'

American International Pictures' fast-paced comedy, "Monkey Hustle," goes into national release on Christmas eve, Dec. 24.

A light-hearted look at a different facet of ghetto life, the film stars Yaphet Kotto, Rudy Ray Moore, Rosalind Cash and Kirk Calloway.

Filled with vignettes of life in the teeming inner-city, the story concerns itself with the fight of the area's residents against the proposed encroachment of a freeway and their successful attempts to thwart the bureaucracy.

The main opponents of the freeway are the street hustlers, who realize that the destruction of the buildings and the subsequent exodus of the residents will leave them without a turf — or victims.

* * *

The screen version of Leroi Jones' disturbing, controversial play, "Dutchman," will be shown at 6 p.m. on Wed., Dec., 15 at the Pratt library's Lafayette Square center, 1510 W. Lafayette.

The theme is racial conflict and the medium allegory. How the viewer responds to the film will depend on how sensitive and sympathetic he is to the agonies of discrimination in our society. Shirley Knight and Al Freeman, Jr. are brilliant in the leading roles. Admission to the screening is free

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Wanda Tomlin, Dwight Smith and Debbie Mason with Olufunmilayo at Dunbar tonight, Friday.

Olu to dance at Dunbar

The Cultural Arts Project is presenting Olufunmilayo and Company at the Dunbar High School Auditorium on Friday, Dec. 10, at 8:00 p.m.

Olu and her company have won a number of awards and was called by the Ambassador from Nigeria, at the end of one of her performances, "The best company I've seen since I left home."

Olumfunmilayo, which translated from the African to mean: "God gives me joy," has performed throughout the United States, bringing her interpretation of traditional African Dance to Oklahoma City and new York and Washington and Boston and closer to the hearts of Marylanders in Annapolis and Cambridge and Carslisle, Pa.

The Cultural Arts Project, under the Urban Services Agency, is providing the performance free to the public. For more information call 27 -4646.

(Photo by Arnetta Lottier)

Carol Channing is simply 'smashing' as the rich middle-aged wife who suddenly discovers 'sex' in "The Bed Before Yesterday" now playing at the Mechanic Theatre.

Arts and Music

The Arena Players presenting Maxwell Anderson's "The Bad Seed" will have a matinee this Sunday at 2:30 p.m.

The play stars Misty Hall, June Dashiell, Verna Day, Sam Wilson, Vaceuntess Payne, Mary West Miller and Harvey Denmark.

* * *

"What Happened To Christmas", a family show using both hand and rod puppetry to illustrate a child's search for Santa Claus and the spirit of Christmas is at the Vagabond Theatre, 808 S. Broadway in Fells Point, Sat and Sun. Dec. 11 - 12 at 1 p.m and 3 p.m.

* * *

Lillian Hellman's 'The Autumn Garden" will replace "A Streetcar Name Desire" and "Watch on the Rhine", previously scheduled to play in repertoire at Arena Stage M.D.C. this season.

Ms. Hellman's taut, compassionate, 1951 drama of crumbling middle- life relationships will play Jan. 27 to March 6th in the Arena. The two plays originally scheduled for that time slot are being deferred until next season.

* * *

A multi media exhibition of works by Maryland Institute, College of Art students is on display at the Decker Gallery December 7 through Dec. 21. Over 80 works chosen by an student jury represent all majors at the Maryland Institute.

The Decker Gallery is located in the Mount Royal Station at Mount Royal and Cathedral St.

* * *

Jazz clarinetist Benny Goodman "The King of Swing," will play a royal visit to the Lyric Theatre on Sat., Dec. 18, to perform with the Baltimore Symphony under Maestro Sergiu Commissiona.

The first half of this Pops concert—traditionally devoted to light classical; orchestra pieces—will also be noteworthy on account of the world premiere performance of Eric Knight's "Pops Symphony" — a work commissioned by the Baltimore Symphony at the request of Mr. Comissiona. Mr. Goodman will join the Orchestra as soloist in Malcom Arnold's "Clarinet Concerto No.2." The concert will open with Johann Strauss's Overture to "Die Fledermaus" and begins at 8:15 p.m.

* * *

"Presents With Presence", affordable art for holiday giving will be featured at Fells Points Gallery. Charles LeBoutillier. Framed small paintings, drawings, prints, ceramics, fibers, jewelry, stained glass and hand crafted ornaments by Oletha Devane, Peg Swartout, Margaret Stidham, Rita Moseley, Charles LeBoutillier, Mary Biron, Bernadine Lucas, Gary O'Neill, Jane Reifler, Sharon Gamble, Saul Farber, Quentin Moseley, Sami Lais and others will be included in the feature show.

Velvet Fire visited the AFRO office recently to play their new record on "Stop and Check Your Fire" Above from left Ron Carson, president of Happy Fox Records and produeer Janus Records; Rod Armstrong, manager; David Lee, first tenor; Sharon Lee, vocalist; Sam Whitner, baritone; Earl Nathaniel King and Ernie Donaldson, manager.

. . . and all that jazz

By Bob Matthews

The audiences at the Left Bank Jazz Society concerts have repeatedly brought out the best in visiting artists.

Invariably, the appreciation and understanding of the LBJS jazz buffs sparks a performance way above and beyond the usual.

Routine solos become inspired; it has become commonplace for musicians to "catch a groove" as Woody Shaw put it, and soar.

It happened again last week.

Ahmad Jamal was the artist, and he is no stranger to Left Bank, this being his third appearance in the last two seasons.

As you may or may not know, Ahmad is a perfectionist.

In his contract with LBJS, the society was committed to provide a Rhodes electric piano.

So they did—rented one for 300.

In addition, the society provided a Yamaha concert grand acoustic piano.

Quite enough, this Japanese-made instrument strongly rivals the better-known Steinway or Baldwin in sound quality.

Ahmad was so impressed with the piano, that after the first intermission, he informed LBJS that he would not be needing the electric piano.

And so it was removed—and it was not missed, as Jamal attacked that Yamaha with a vengeance and wring pure, solid all-encompassing jazz from it.

By the time he launched into "Poinciana," and then went back to back with his other best-known favorite, "But Not For Me," the audience was limp.

Jamal has a penchant for show tunes.

His repertoire during the set included such items as "Just In Time," "A Summer Place," "Have You Seen Miss Jones," "My One and Only Love," and other favorites.

Over in the corner, the discussion revolved around who could be considered the greatest all-time jazz pianists.

The consensus was: 1. Art Tatum; 2. Oscar Peterson and 3. Ahmad Jamal.

Bass players were not discussed, but they should have been. for Jerome Hunter easily won laurels as "the happiest bass player ever seen."

Oh, he really enjoyed himself, and it showed.

His mastery of his instrument was immediately obvious and sheer delight.

He irterspersed plucked with bowed passages, glissandoed and staccatoed all the while changing rhythms, yet clinging to the thread of basic chorus.

A truly masterful performance, and equally matched by Frank Gant, an understated drummer, whose presence seemed to be felt rather than heard.

Never obtrusive, Gant's drumming can be succinctly summed up as "tasty."

NEXT WEEK :ART BLAKEY AND THE JAZZ MESSENGERS.

Top Jazz Albums

1 **Breezin'** — George Benson
2 **School Days** — Stanley Clark
3 **I Heard That** — Quincy Jones
4 **Barefoot Ballet** — John Klemmer
5 **Main Squeeze** — Chuck Mangione
6 **Secrets** — Herbie Hancock
7 **Romeo and Juliet**—Hubert Laws
8 **Benson and Farrell** — George Benson and Joe Farrell
9 **Caliente** — Gato Barbieri
10 **Very Together** - Deodato

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