Pervis Jackson with Spinners and Sylvers at Painters Mill

Harold Melvin and Blue Notes with Jerry Butler at Shady Grove

Damon Evans star of "The Jeffersons" starred on national Tony show

Vivian Reed and home-boy Avon Long stars of "Bubbling Brown Sugar"

Alexander Cohen brings Damon home in style

By Ida Peters

As a kid, Damon Evans used to watch the Tony Awards on TV. When he was a student at Gwynns Falls Junior High School he wrote in the school newspaper his wildest dream and ambition was to be a star on the TV Tony Award show.

Last Sunday, along with the most prestigious stars on Broadway, Damon Evans of Baltimore, who attended Douglass High School and won a scholarship to Interlocken, Michigan performing Arts High School for his senior year, was a presentator and sung "Climb Every Mountain" on the Tony Awards.

The Annual Tony Show, is run by Broadway producer Alexander H. Cohen and his wife Hildy Parks on behalf of the League of New York Theatres. Alexander H. Cohen and his staff are responsible for running the Mechanic Theatre in Baltimore.

I have to believe that the Cohens were so impressed with Damon, who has appeared on Broadway in "Hello Dolly," "Jesus Christ Superstar" and "The Me Nobody Knows," that they included him in the traveling road show of theatre personalities who came to Baltimore Tuesday to help promote subscription sales for the Mechanic.

Damon now star of the TV Show "The Jeffersons," and his grandmother, Mrs. Alice Matthews, former school teacher and past Grand Matron of the Order of Easter Star were guests of honor at a press luncheon called by Alexander Cohen at the very new, very French restaurant, The Chambord.

Other guests were Liv Ullmann, who received a Tony nomination as Best Actress for "Anna Christie;" Jack Albertson, veteran Broadway actor and star of Chico and the Man;" Jane Alexander, now playing in "Master Builder" at the Kennedy Center; and Edwin Sherin, Broadway director of "The Great White Hope."

Over Quiche and white wine, Damon, who was laid back in soft white flannel three-piece suit, confided he had received many offers and was thrilled by his appearance on the Tony Show.

He has still three more years on "The Jeffersons" and he would spend the night with his grandmother and be off to California the next day.

Mrs. Matthews, his grandmother, was equally thrilled with the limo and [illegible] investment. She confided she taught Tamara Dobson in grade school and was well acquainted with Trazania Beverly, who won a Tony for "Best Featured Actress, Play. She remembered the Baltimore-born actress from OES programs at Sharp Street.

Dahon is in good hands, if he's under the wing of impersario, Alexander Cohen.

And, for some of the people who don't understand the significance of this in the theatre. . . Damon is already a young man on the move. Youngsters like Doman Tamara Dobson and Trazania Beverly really have to leave town to make a significant mark—and be appreciated.

This is not confined to black artists. Look what happened to Larry Angelo and Andrea Kirby.

Anyway, some jerk offered Damon $350 week to do a local TV show. No wonder their ratings are at rock bottom.

That Mechanic luncheon

Alexander H. Cohen told the press over luncheon at the Chambord that the only way theatre can survive in Baltimore is to have a sizeable subscription list.

His goal is 20,000 subscriptions to support a three-week showing of each attracted. Producers cannot afford to bring product here without basic grass roots support.

Subscriptions to date are in the 14,000 range and the goal must be met by Labor Day.

The 1977-78 season looks to be more exciting than last year's with management making a sincere effort to reach Baltimore's black population through a new aggressive advertising program.

Coming in are the dance musical "Chicago," Neil Simon's "California Suite;" Jason Robarts "A Touch of the Poet;" Ntozake Shange's "For Colord Girls Who Have Considered Suicide When the Rainbow Is Enuf" with Baltimore's Tony winner Trazana Beverly;" and Bob Fosse's song and dance spectacular "Pippin."

Avon Long to come 'Bubbling' home

Avon Long as the old sage and the vivacious Vivian Reed head the cast of "Bubbling Brown Sugar," the hit musical opening at the Mechanic on June 21.

Avon, who made the part of Sporting Life in "Porgy and Bess" famous, has not been back to his home town to star since leaving Douglass High School many years ago.

When "Bubbling Brown Sugar" had its world premiere at the National Theatre in D.C. classmates and old friends by the bus loads attended. It was here that members of the Mask and Wig Club of Douglass High School honored him and his favorite teacher, Miss Nellie Buchanon, was honored on stage.

"Bubbling Brown Sugar" celebrates some of the more famous people, places, music and night spots of Harlem 1910-1940. Music of three famous Baltimoreans, Eubie Blake, Billie Holiday, and Cab Calloway are featured along with that of Duke Ellington, Andy Razaf, Earl Hines, J.C. Johnson and Fats Waller.

Truly a great day for Baltimore!

Wednesday night, June 22, the Committee for the Preservation of the Orchard Street Church is sponsoring "An Evening with the Stars" of "Bubbling Brown Sugar."

After the performance, ticket holders are invited to mingle with the stars at the Champagne Reception being held at the theater.

You can't print that

That female star who had goons waiting at the airport to keep her from appearing on the East [illegible]. Or, that other star who missed out on a [illegible] contract with a famous star because hubby bashed her in the eye. . . or Sammy Davis Jr. appearing at the special benefit at Wolf Trap for Liz Burton Warner after it is reported she cried and cried. . . that's after Sammy told this newspaper he wasn't ready for D.C. yet. And then, Washington newspapers report that Liz acted all confused after she got all her stars on stage.

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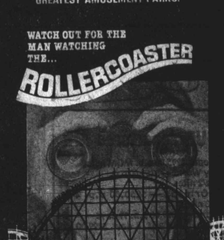

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Marlena Shaw

By Frederick I. Douglass

Foxy vocalist Marlena Shaw jammed the Palace niteclub last Monday nite.

She is currently hitting big with the tune "Go Away Little Boy" from her latest album "Sweet Beginnings." "Little Boy" is copping beaucoup airplay on progressive stations like WEAA and from modern thinking platter spinners like Michael Morogne El. On this jam the lady starts telling her old man that it is time for him to split, but in the end takes him back even though she knows that he won't keep his promise about finding a J-O-B.

In other words, Marlena Shaw sings about the realities of life, the thorn that accompanies every rose.

Marlena Shaw sings songs about the successes and failures that one can experience when searching for love. She sings about the joys that a woman can experience when she meets a man who is capable of taking care of her every need. She also sings about the stress and strain that lovers can undergo when they begin to outgrow one another.

Somewhere, somehow, Marlena Shaw has experienced all of the joys and hardships that a person can go through in life — even if she has only done this in her thoughts. And when she sings, you know that she is totally aware of the meaning of the lyrics.

Marlena can get down almost level with the ground in any format ranging from the most plaintive ballad on down through ultra slick disco as she does on the title track of her "Sweet Beginnings" album. This is a mellow jam that will put your party on the fast track when the evening is early.

Later in the evening you and your friends might want to cool out the pace by digging on lady Shaw in a Jazz bag as she belts out tunes like "I Think I'll Tell Him", "Look at Me, Look at You," or her original composition, "No Deposit, No Return."

By now the folks are probably ready to move to the heated groove of some serious cheek - to - cheek music. Blow their minds by playing her ran on "Yu-Ma" which leads into her thriller-killer version of "Go Away Little Boy." Heavy.

Then follow up on these two jams by playing the easy going ballad "Johnny." Then lay it on thick by dusting off your copy of Shaw's album "Who Is This Bitch, Anyway?" and hitting them with a couple of ballads like "You Taught Me To Speak In Love" and "Feel Like Makin' Love."

Before taking this album off the turntable, pick up the pace by playing "Loving You Is Like A Party" which is similar to Stevie Wonder's "I Was Made To Love Her."

By now the lovers are starting to ease out the door to seek out more intimate settings. Lay one more ballad in them like Van McCoy's composition "Walk Softly" and then give them some up-tempo walkin' music by playing "The Writing's on the Wall" and Top-40 potential "Pictures and Memories."

Africans from Soweto at TNT '77 festival

The largest international and domestic gathering of new theatre in the country begins next week in Baltimore at the University of Maryland Baltimore County. Among the over 140 performances scheduled during the nine day event will be a large number of performances by foreign groups.

A company of five young Africans from the riot torn city of Soweto will perform "Survival." Brought to this country by James Berthoff after many difficult negotiations, the company presents a rare look for Americans into the human situation in South Africa.

SQUAT is a theatre commune no longer allowed to perform in their home country Hungary for political reasons. They now plan to emigrate to the United States. SQUAT's most recent work Pig, Child, Fire, acclaimed as one of the highlights of the 1977 theatre festival at Nancy, has been described by Franz Marijnen as bringing "a vital new impulse to theatre.

Other foreign participants include Studio Scarabee from the Hague in the Netherlands, performing Havana Jojo; Tuestre de L. Aquarium from Paris, France, who did the research for their latest piece among militant French factory workers; Le Groupe Teatram from Quebec, Canada, performing Erlanes, a theatrical essay based on Genets The Maids, Andromanne by Euripides and Aeschylus Mathadi Krishnan Nagabudiri from India, director of the Kala Kendra Ballet Troupe of New Delhi, master and teacher of Kathakali, the ancient dance theatre of India; and from Japan, Yoshi (Katashir Janan, Yoshi (Katashira Iida), associate director and actor with Peter Brook. For ticket and registration information contact Karen Henry at 301-455-3193.

Camilla Izard and Sylvester Campbell are competing in Russia.

Md. dancers to Moscow

Maryland Ballet dancers Camille Izard and Sylvester Campbell are participating in the Third International Ballet Contest to be held in Moscow June 13 through June 24.

Contestants from all continents endeavor to enter this competition, considered the Olympics of ballet, and only those with strong recommendations are accepted.

Ms. Izard was a soloist with the Cologne Dance Forum in Germany before joining the Maryland Ballet in 1975.

Campbell, the son of Mr. and Mrs. Linwood M. Clark of Silver Spring, Md., was formerly principal dancer with the Royal Winnipeg Ballet in Canada. Prior to that he was a premier danseur of the Dutch National Ballet in Amsterdam. He joined the Marvland Ballet in January 1977.

Their repertoire for the competition will be: "Le Corsaire Pas de Deux" (music: Drigo - Minkus; choreography: traditional, after Petipa), "Pas de Deux Romantique" (Rossini; Jack Carter), "Belong" (John Cocker Mills; Norbert Vesak), and "Din Quixote Pas de Deux" (Minkus; traditional, after Petipa).

Spinners-Sylvers at Painters Mill

The Spinners, one of the longest lived and most popular acts in the business are due into Painters Music Theatre June 13-19 with that young flashy group The Sylvers.

Talked with Pervis Jackson last week just as the group flew home to Detroit for a rest from Japan.

Henry Fambrough, Billy Henderson, Bobby Smith John Edwards and Pervis are booked solidly through 1977.

Pervis says The Spinners were greeted most enthusiastically in Japan and he was surprised that a lot more people spoke English. The only thing is that people talk a little slower.

Their main problem was a terrible case of Jet lag. While Pervis talked you could hear his two-year old P.J. jabbering in the background.

The Spinners have a new album coming out in July as yet un-named. At Painters Mill they'll be singing "Throwing A Good Love Away," "Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow" and "Me and my Music."

TV Watching

By Vanessa Johnson

Friday: June 10.

Sanford and Son: Finding his home bereft of all furnishings, Fred Promptly settles with the insurance company, never suspecting that his family and friends are secretly having his furniture reupholstered to honor his 40th year in business. 8:00-8:30 p.m. NBC.

* * *

Beretta, "photograohv by John Doe" — with guest star Brock Peters. The death of retired policeman leads Baretta into investigating an unholy alliance between a respected judge and a mobster. 11:30 p.m.-12:30 a.m.

* * *

Saturday: June 17

A pair of famous races — The Belmont Stakes, third jewel in the Triple Crown of horse racing, and The World 600, longest race on the NASCAR circuit — will be featured on "CBS Sports Spectacular," 4:00-6:00 p.m.

Sunday: June 12

The mayors of five American cities will be the guests on a special one-hour edition of "Meet the Press," with Kenneth A. Gibson, of Newark, N.J. 12:30-1:30 p.m.

"Task Force" — Steve goes undercover as a mercenary in an attempt to prevent the seizure of a powerful missile by a treacherous gang posing as American military personnel. 8:00-9:00, ABC.

* * *

"Phyllis"; Phyllis invites her friends to a post-funeral when she decides to relocate her departed husband, Lars, in San Francisco. 8:30-9:00 p.m. CBS.

The Undersea World of Jacques Cousteau: "The Unexected Voyage of 'Calypto and Cristobal'" — The crew of the Calypso adopts a pair of fur seals off the Cape of Good Hope and during the long Atlantic crossing the men begin establishing a relationship of trust and friendship with the mammals. 9:00-10:00.

MONDAY: June 13

The Jeffersons: Lionel decides to move out and his parents hit the ceiling when they find out who his roommate is going to be. 8:00-8:30 p.m. CBS.

Percy Thomas plays Harper Edwards in "First Breeze of Summer" by Leslie Lee at the Arena Playhouse - 801 McCulloh Street on June 10, 11, 12.

Loran Lewis is Mitch in Tennessee Williams' drama "A Streetcar Named Desire" presented by "A New Experience" at Slayton House Theater, Village of Wilde Lake, Columbia, Md. June 10-11-12.

Melvin, Blue Notes Butler at the Grove

Two Washington natives are members of the dynamic singing group, Harold Melvin and the Blue notes coming to the Shady Grove Music Theatre in Rockville with Jerry Butler, June 11.

Twenty years ago Harold formed the Blue Notes and began to climb the ladder of musical success. Today, recording for ABC Records, they are a wholly self-contained unit, managed, produced and directed by Melvin enjoying tremendous recording and performing success.

The group's tenor, Jerry Cummings, is a Washington native. He nearly entered a career in professional baseball before his musical leanings won out. He sang with a local group called the Internationals and his appealing, wide-ranging voice caught the attention of Melvin.

Dwight Johnson, the other Washington native, is the group's bass singer added from the Internationals last year.

Bill Spratley from Newport, News, Va. sings baritone and Philadelphian David Ebo shares lead singing chores with Melvin.

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