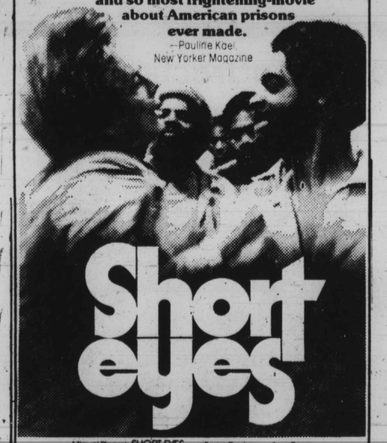
"A POWERHOUSE."
—William Wolf, Cue
"'Short Eyes' get us by the throat. It may even be the most emotionally accurate- and so most frightening-movie about American prisons ever made.
—Pauline Kael
New Yorker Magazine



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GENE SHALIT, NBC-TV

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James Earl Jones in defense of 'Robeson'

By Ida Peters

James Earl Jones is one of America's most versatile actors, having played everything from Shakespeare to the "Great White Hope" and a dogooder in "A Piece of the Action."

He is now playing in Don Gregory's one-person play "Paul Robeson" at the National Theatre in Washington, D.C. and opens at the New Mechanic Theatre in Baltimore, Jan. 10-15.

He took a day off, a week ago, to hold a press conference before local press people and a lot of non press people and free lancers.

Some theatre reviewers had already seen the play and before Jones arrived were prepared to ask all kinds of hostile questions. Most were concerned about why the play had been picketed in Philadelphia, Boston, Chicago and D.C.

Jones took all the wind out of their sails with his opening statement.

He told the group that shortly after Paul Robeson's death earlier this year, television exploded with a new awareness of Paul Robeson.

He explained that the play "Paul Robeson" is in the try-out stage in Washington, Boston, Philadelphia and by the time it gets to Baltimore the play will be completely changed. We will see what the Pulitzer prize people will see on Broadway.

Further he explained that he respected Paul Robeson Jr. for his protests. He plans no counter protests against him but he feels that something is not being said on both sides.

Paul Robeson Sr., he went on, suffered the same way his own father did . . . lack of opportunity . . . lack of roles. He said he understood the depth of pain he suffered. "I don't think anyone can fulfill Paul Robeson Jr's image of his father."

Admitting that the playwright, Philip Hayes Dean did not have access to the Paul Robeson archives, he asked the question:

"Is it better to allow a nearly perfect drama to be done, rather than be buried while we're still a democracy?"

I admire James Earl Jones as an artist. When asked if he owned a piece of the show, he said, no. The play was a job to him,

This is compromise. Why must the fabulous achievements of Paul Robeson be told hurriedly?

Millions of young people have never had the chance to hear the magnificent voice of Paul Robeson or see him in person.

They deserve the best of Paul Robeson properly researched so that their inquiring minds will know exactly why Paul Robeson, . . . athlete, scholar, singer, actor, linguist and freedom fighter has been kept out of sight and out of their textbooks for lo these many years

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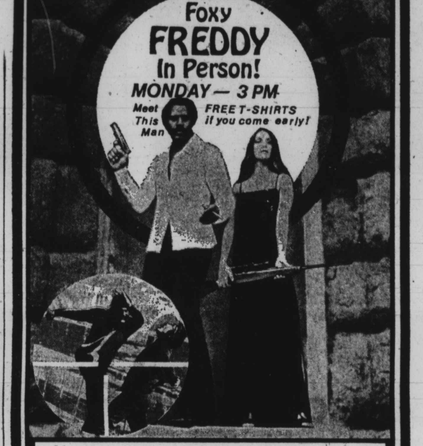

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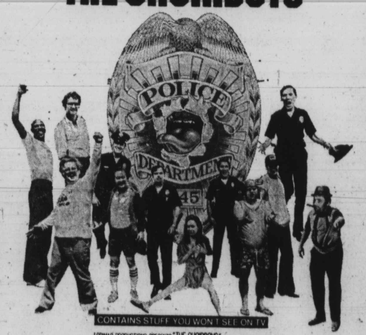

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... and now a word

By Jesse H. Walker

NEW YORK — "Car Wash," Universal's hilarious comedy directed by Michael Schultz and starring Richard Pryor, Clarence Muse, the Pointer Sisters, Franklyn Ajaye, Ivan Dixon and Prof. Irwin Corey will be on NBC-TV Monday Night movie special early in January.

—

Al Hyslop is the new producer of "Sesame Street," replacing Dulcy Singer who will be the producer of several TV specials marking the 10th anniversary of the popular award-winning educational series. The specials will be presented next fall and feature the regular members of the "Sesame Street" crew, plus guest stars who have appeared on the show. Regulars include Loretta Long as Susan, Northern J. Calloway as David, Roscoe Orman as Gordon and Alaina Reed as Olivia, Gordon's sister.

—

The Harlem Cultural Council will host its night at the free Community Holiday Festival at Lincoln Center on Thursday, Dec. 29. The Festival is presented in cooperation with Con Edison. Harlem Cultural Council's program at Alice Tully Hall will include excerpts from "Comments" by Abiodun Oyewole and Company, the Leon Thomas Quintet and a new work by the Fred Benjamin Dance Company. For tickets call (212) 460-3123 or (212) 862-3000.

—

Tom McNab, previously a British national and Olympic coach has been appointed executive director of The Dubai International Open Track and Field Championships '78; with responsibility for Europe, the Middle East, Asia and Australia, Leonard Evans, Chairman of The Dubai International Open Track and Field Championships announced in London. Organizers also announced an increase in prize money to total $2.2 million with possible sites narrowed to four — Berlin, Tokyo, Honolulu and Mexico City.

—

International Telephone and Telegraph Corporation's "Big Blue Marble," is aired all over the globe, including: The Bahamas, Canada, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Mexico, Nicaragua, Bermuda, Chile, Educador, Netherland Antilles, Trinidad-Tobago, Englands, Finland, Germany, Greece, Belgium, Bahrain, Dubai and Kuwait.

—

Lady Sara Lou Carter, who has been in Peking, China with her husband, Guyana Ambassador Sir John Carter has kept busy taping interviews with the many black and white Americans who have visited there and is now hoping that her shows can be syndicated on radio in the U.S.

Mable Mercer is back in "her room" at Cleo through January 7. Recently fellow Cleo-ites who opened Club Cleo in St. Maarten had a get-together in the Lincoln Center oasis to see photos, slides and prints of their festive weekend in St. Maarten.

—

If you wonder why a lot of people are cancelling out of the various dinners being held in NYC, take a look at two recent affairs. The Jackie Robinson Award Dinner, held at the Hotel Pierre was a $200-per-person dinner. The Negro Actors Guild Fortieth Anniversary Dinner-Dance at the Essex House was $50 per person.

—

Duke Ellington Boulevard will be officially dedicated on Tuesday, Dec. 27 at 106th Street and Riverside Drive. The Boulevard runs from Central Park West to Riverside Drive and its naming was through the efforts of John Rainbow, former President of The Duke Ellington Jazz Society.

Sidney Poitier's "A Piece of the Action" continues to be a hit. It's been in fifth position of the "50 Top-Grossing Films" for the past three weeks. Richard Pryor's "Which Way Is Up?" is in 15th position.

—

Frankie Crocker, former program director of WBLS-FM N.Y. will recommend talent and producers to Polydor Records under a new pact with the recording company. Crocker is awaiting a new trial on charges of lying to a Federal Grand Jury investigating payola in 1975. His conviction in Newark (N.J.) Federal Court last December was overturned by the Federal Court of Appeals in Philadelphia on grounds that potentially prejudicial testimony not related to the specific charges had been permitted.

—

"Fixed," the musical conceived by Anita L. Thomas and George Faison and directed by George Faison, continues at the Theatre of the Riverside Church. Cast includes J. Edward Adams, Miriam Burton, Harold Dumont, Mel Grayson, Patricia Hayling, Ray Anthony Jones, Urlee Leonardos, Ilene Lewis, Crystal Lilly, Stuart Mabray, Barbara Montgomery, Janette Moody, Gwendolyn Strand, David Weatherspoon, Flo Wiley and Margo Williams. The show "takes a look at the faces and facades of the clientele of a beauty parlor set in the late 1930s and early 1940s."

—

Tommy Furtado, in-house singer-pianist, currently performing at Jimmy Weston's Eastside supper club, will be a featured artist seen on ABC-TV (Channel 7) in the network's special — "Christmas In Jazz" on Christmas morning, Dec. 25 at 8:30 a.m.

—

Four musicians have been awarded a total of $196,000 in general and punitive damages to be paid by singer Marvin Gaye. Default judgment came in Los Angeles in the wake of Gaye's refusal to fight a lawsuit alleging he failed to pay the fellows a year's wages. Court testimony revealed that Gaye evidently felt his "superstar" status was sufficient compensation for the musicians, who would receive worldwide exposure as a result of touring with him.

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Christmas Nostalga... or I didn't know I was that old!

By Vashti McKenzie

A popular daily comic strip showed college graduates returning to their Alma Mater ten years later to find co-ed dorms.

A decade ago, college freshmen where I began to matriculate had to be in their dormitory rooms by 11 p.m. at all times.

Men were never allowed to visit in the room even when the door was open or a hundred yards outside the door.

The comic strip character went through a lot of cultural shock in adjusting his liberal 1960's values to the common ordinary - every - day 1970's way of life.

Soon the character embarked upon a nostalgic celebration: a 1960's revival.

Each party - goer was to come in a 1960's costume. There were, of course, a couple of black people; student radical demonstrators, liberal white people (Democrats of course) and a dash of the vocal minority.

I used to think about the 1960's as a distant era. It used to seem like only yesterday when we danced to the Supremes and the Temptations in club basements . . . doin' the Mashed Potato, Chicken, 'N the Bop, Madison, Backward Slop, Monkey, Hully Gully or whatever.

We used to wear tight skirts to school, real nylons, lots of mascara, and got away with everything we could.

Our music wasn't the Doo - Whop of the 1950's. Our music was mello, melodied with a lot of California Soul.

People were hitchhiking to the West Coast to find their Soul, when we already knew what soul was all about.

We used to love Maryland's steamed crabs, beer and Marvin Gaye. Today, people love anything they can get besides the Parliament - Funkadelics and Earth, Wind and Fire.

If you wore suede vests, bell - bottom pants, love beads and all kinds of fringe, people said you hung loose.

Today in 1977, you hang loose in whatever you've got. It's not the clothes, it's the personality.

Slowly, I came to the realization that you can tell your age by your Christmas decorations.

If your tree wears large glass handpainted balls from Germany with angel hair, chances are you came of age in the 1930's and 1940's.

If you have large primary colored lights and tinsel you are a product of the 1950's.

If your tree is engulfed with white doves and satin balls you are a Peace Child of the 1960's.

And, if your tree is adorned with hand-made gingham and straw ornaments and Snoopy dolls, you are a child of the 1970's.

My tree? Let's just say I don't have any white plastic or gold glass stars or the top and my Angel hair went out with the Lionel Trains.

Christmas is always a special time of year. A time when we spend more money than we have. A time when we buy more things for others than we give ourselves. A time of celebration. A time of eating and not too much libations.

Christmas is a time when we, as a society allow ourselves to be generous with others. We allow people to fail. And instead of criticizing them we help them. We allow people and ourselves to be happy.

We allow ourselves emotion. We laugh over silly Christmas cartoons. We giggle over cute Christmas plays. We cry over dramatic television and movie presentations.

We find ourselves shouting beautiful and kind words to each other across the office, factory, or breakfast table.

We touch and kiss each other. We hold each other and feel close to one another as humans and friends.

We allow ourselves one day to show who we really are. Isn't it a shame that we cannot open our hearts, minds and real souls to each other all year along.

That is perhaps wishful thinking. But there's a little boy in our house who is wishing that God is going to take care of all the hungry boys and girls in this world and bring him a grown-up bike and a CB radio.

Who'se going to tell him?

—

Are you?

Peace on earth and good will to all mankind. Happy Kwanza.

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Chuck Mangione
4 New Vintage
Maynard Ferguson
5 Ruby, Ruby
Gato Barbieri
6 Action
Blackbyrds
7 Enigmatic Ocean
Jean-Luc Ponty
8 Quintet
VSOP
9 Magic Billy Cobham
10 Blow It Out
Tom Scott

...and all that Jazz

By Bob Matthews

There were a few disgruntled patrons at the Left Bank Jazz Society's concert last week — there was a change in artists.

The Thad Jones-Mel Lewis big band ran into trouble in Europe, and could not make it back to play a scheduled concert for the LBJS.

A substitute was found in chet Baker, who had just finished an engagement at "Blues Alley" in Washington, D.C.

Some people turned around when they saw the Baker name on the marquee, but those who attended were rewarded with one of the best, swinging concerts of the season.

The Chet Baker of today bears little resemblance to the Chet Baker of yore, who while teamed with Gerry Mulligan, typified the "cool school" of jazz during the late 1950s.

While in Europe and deeply involved in narcotics trouble, Chet had a condition which resulted in a severe change in embrochure. In fact, it was predicted, that because of mouth problems — gum troubles — he might never blow his horn again.

The truth, Chet had to learn to blow all over again and he did, but with a different sound. During his cool school days, Baker's tone was light and airy, and faintly reminiscent of the clipped sound of a Clifford Brown.

Now, the tone is on the gutteral sound, mostly in the middle register. His playing sounds more like a flugelhorn than a trumpet.

But, he is right in the mainstream, and blows straight bop brilliantly. Ideas seem to just flow from him, and you can almost see him fighting to execute them.

So — he has turned to singing. His is a pleasant voice, could be compared to a young Mel Torme. But when he takes off on a scat solo, it is exciting. It is here that he brings forth all the sounds he would like to be able to create on his horn.

Most scat singers, like Betty Carter, Ella Fitzgerald or Leon Hendricks, do their solos as though they were playing a reed instrument. Baker emulates a trumpet.

Couldn't help remembering Slam Stewart's answer when asked why he sang his bass solos: "if there's a note I can't reach on the bass — I simply sing it."

Although the quartet has played together for a while, the concert still was in a more or less jam session framework.

After a piano introductory vamp, there would be a trumpet solo, followed by solos on piano, bass, then a set of 4s or 8s with the drummer.

Most of the tunes were familiar, "Never Be Another You," "Just Friends," "This is Always," or "So What."

Great Christmas records

By Frederick I. Douglass

You will be totally captivated by the man's control of the piano as he romps through tunes like "Take the A Train" and "St. Louis Blues." Tommy Flanagan, an often underrated pianist, wails up a storm on "Tommy Flanagan Three," and his trio can be heard backing up the superlative vocalist on "Ella Fitzgerald with the Tommy Flanagan Trio." Ella is magnificent as usual, breaking glasses on high notes as she sings "One Note Samba" and "Ain't Got Nothin' But the Blues."

One of the world's heaviest trumpeters can be heard on the "Roy Eldridge Four" LP which teams the man up with Oscar Peterson. Eldridge is in top form on "Bye Bye Blackbird" and "Perdido."

The sound of well played vibes is the highlight of the "Milt Jackson - Ray Brown" jam which is really a monster. Jackson can wail on the vibes with the best of them and his ideas are well complemented by bassist Ray Brown. When you listen to "Slippery" and "C. M. J.," you may not want to give this recording away.

The spirit of the Monterux Jazz Festival is well documented on "The Pablo All Stars Jam" and "The Jam Sessions" which team up the greats like Gillespie, Jackson, Peterson, Brown and others in hard core jamming that would make a lady of the night blush with the straight-forwardness heard on the tunes contained between the grooves of these two albums. These jam session LP's do not duplicate any of the music heard on the other albums we have just been discussing, and are worthwhile additions to any collections.

Just one caveat to the buyer — be prepared to buy at least two copies of each of these LP's because you will find these recordings will be hard to give up, or that you will be borrowing them from your friends all the time.

Kwanza at Pratt

Tues., Dec. 27
"Nothing Sacred," film at the Central Pratt Library, 2 p.m.

Wed., Dec. 28
Kwanza celebration at the Pratt Library's Lafayette Square Center, 6 p.m.
"The Cure," "Winter of the Witch," and "Mrs. Amworth," films at the Pratt Library's St. Paul Street Center, 6 p.m.

Thurs., Dec. 29
Kwanza celebration at the Pratt Library's Edmondson Avenue Branch, 6:30 p.m.

Fri., Dec. 30
Kwanza celebration at the Pratt Library's Hollins - Payson Branch, 3:30 p.m.

Exhibits
"Crafts Potpourri," an exhibition of handiwork by the Pratt Library staff, at the Central Pratt Library, second - floor cases, through January 21, 1978.
"Baltimore by Night: Center of Life, Light, and Beauty," an exhibition of black and white photographs by camera artist Henry Holmes, at the Pratt Library's Broadway Branch, through December 23.

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1 All In All
Earth, Wind & Fire
2 Live!
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3 Reach For It
George Duke
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9 Come Go With Us
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