Easter at the movies

'Saturday Night Fever'
By Marvin Pittman
AFRO Teen Critic

John Travolta is the kind of actor who gives the impression that he learned acting from a correspondence course and failed.

This is not to say that his performance in "Saturday Night Fever" is bad, because it isn't.

But its not good either. It's located somewhere between adequate and average.

Luckily, the picture itself is much better. It has a driving pulse that keeps you interested and absorbed. Not to mention the thrilling choreography by Lester Wilson; the superb supporting cast and the overwhelmingly exciting score.

Norman Wexler's screenplay has good points, but for every good point there are two to three bad ones.

The story of a frustrated 19 - year - old who goes to discos to release tensions and to become another person, superior to his usual self, doesn't seem to be a new idea or a very good one. At times it's reminiscent of "West Side Story."

Quickies

By Ida Peters
Entertainment Editor

AMERICAN HOT WAX: (PG) — Slightly twisted story on rock 'n roll DJ Alan Freed and how he introduced black music to white teenagers in 1950s. Hints of payola and how black groups got conned out of royalties through ignorance. Stars Chuck Berry and Screamin' Jay Hawkins as themselves and two new groups, The Delights and The Chesterfields.

THE BOYS IN COMPANY C: (R) — A powerful look at the Marine Corps and the Vietnam War. Stan Shaw is tremendous as a Marine Sgt. Don't miss this if you want to know what really happened in the Nam.

BLUE COLLAR: (R) — A Universal film starring Richard Pryor, Harvey Keitel and Yaphet Kotto. A powerful, gritty, violent profile of three automobile workers banging their heads against the monotony and corruption of factory life.

WHICH WAY IS UP? Starring Richard Pryor as a triple threat. Audiences find it hilarious. Pryor plays a beleaguered farm worker, a farm worker randy old father and a hypocritical preacher. Stars include Lonette McKee, Margaret Avery, Morgan Woodward and Marilyn Coleman.

CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE THIRD KIND: (PG) — About UFO's and other worlds contacting us. Splendid sound effects. Melinda Dillion as the terrified mother of Cary Guffy, a 4 - year - old kidnapped by visitors from another planet. Richard Dreyfuss is the power company trouble shooter who also witnesses the night visitors and stumbles on the government trying to make contact with music.

STRAIGHT TIME: (R) — About a small time robbery spree. Dustin Hoffman, out on parole after six years in prison is a perpetual loser. Back home in Los Angeles he quickly pulls a grocery stickup, a bank job, and a jewelry store hold-up. Warner Bros. release.

THE FURY: (R) — 20th Century Fox - Stars Kirk Douglas as a dad who is trying to rescue his teenage son possessed of psychic powers from a super secret U.S. agency which is using him. They meet up with a young psychic girl and from there on in it's blood and gore.

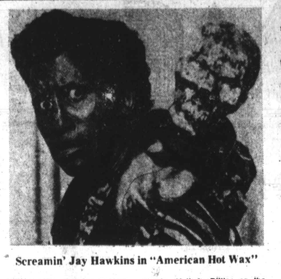
HIGH ANXIETY: (R) — Mel Brooks comedy with seriousness beneath the madness. Brooks views America's mania for medical gurus who peddle instant enlightenment and pays a bead on man's avarice and his own inhumanity to his fellowman and his growing pre - Occupation with kinky sex. 20th Century Fox.

A HERO AIN'T NOTHING BUT A SANDWICH: (PG) — Larry G. Scott stars as a teenage junkie and how his mother, Cicely Tyson and her live - in lover turn the boy around.

CASEY'S SHADOW: (PG) — The story of a dirt poor Cajun family who strike it rich on the quarter - horse racing circuit. Superior family movie. Stars Walter Matthau, Alexis Smith.

Pleasant person met — James Gamble is the handsome CBS-TV Photo Editor. We've been touching bases for the past five years and the man responsible for inviting the AFRO to the press preview of "The Minstrel Man" the CBS-TV special last year.

He's the son of Mrs. Faye Gamble of Cleveland, Ohio and has been with CBS-TV 13 years. HA graduate of East Technical High in Cleveland, he is a graduate of Western Reserve University. He served in the Marine Corps and was stationed at Norfolk, Va. He started at CBS as an attendant and worked up to photo editor.



Screamin' Jay Hawkins in "American Hot Wax"

Concert review

Law, Hyman, Sanders steal Henderson show

By Constance D. Cannon
AFRO Staff Writer

The relaxing and mellow voice of Eloise Laws, followed by the vibrant sounds of Phyllis Hyman and Pharoah Sanders' sultry saxophone, highlighted with Michael Henderson's introduction of a captivating new female vocalist, Rita Scott, delighted and pleased the capacity audience of 4,000 at Constitution Hall last week.

Ms. Laws, sister of noted jazz musicians Hubert and Ronnie Laws, showed the audience that musical talent may also be hereditary.

With her strong yet tranquilizing voice she enchanted the audience as she displayed her various vocal capabilities.

As she made her entrance singing a tune entitled "A Thousand Laughs a Minute" from her recently released album "Eloise" the crowd applauded enthusiastically.

Although this was Ms. Laws's first singing appearance in the Washington, D.C. area, the chances of her returning are excellent, considering her performance. The audience definitely received positive vibes.

Before Ms. Laws sang "You are Incredible," she told the audience that they were incredible. It appears that the feeling was mutual.

Phyllis Hyman

In addition to Ms. Laws, Phyllis Hyman, with her usual flair fascinated the audience as she and Pharoah Sanders blended together to produce the melodious tones of their hit recording "Everything I Have Is Good," from the album "Love Will Find A Way."

The purring sounds of Ms. Hyman's voice and Sanders' saxophone as they performed another item, "As You Are," from the same album, caused the audience to rise to their feet and give the couple a standing ovation.

When Ms. Hyman left the stage, leaving Saunders to present more of his musical talents, the audience's attention was just as intense as it had been earlier, for Sanders was releasing sounds from his saxophone and tenor sax that eased the minds and souls of all who could hear.

The alleged "highlight" of the concert, Michael Henderson, a rather frequent visitor to the

(Continued on Page 23)

Calendar

Music

NELDA ORMOND — In recital Metropolitan United Methodist Church, Carrollton Ave. and Lanvale. Sun., April 9.

BETTY MALKUS — Faculty recital, Murphy Auditorium, Morgan State University. Sun., April 2 8:15 p.m.

ORCHESTRA PICCOLA — Center Stage, April 10, 8:15 p.m.

Dance

MARYLAND BALLET — Goucher College. Fri., March 31 and Sat. April 1 8:15 p.m.

Art

"IMPRESSIONS: CHAPTER 26" — Student Artist Association of Morgan State University April 3 - 28, art gallery Carl Murphy Fine Arts Center.

Jazz

THEATRE PROJECT — Aaron and Joel Marcus, jazz and classical music thru Sat. March 25, 8 and 10 p.m.

More...

Todd Bridges is cute as Loomis on ABC's "Fish." When the rock star visited the "house," Loomis came down to see what all the excitement was about and commented "Man I'm going to move to a black home."

Kudos to the Maryland Chapter of the Telephone Pioneers and WBAL Radio who entertained some 350 children from the Maryland School for the Blind and the Maryland School for the Deaf at the Ringling Brothers circus last week.

Al Green will be the subject of a one - hour edition of the weekly music series Soundstage, which is aired on 270 Public Broadcasting Service stations. The show will air the week of April 2, 1978.

A special series of 45 - minute Lunchtime Movement Classes taught by Liz Lerman and members of her Washington, D.C. Dance Exchange will be held at the Theatre Project, 45 W. Preston Street, Monday, March 27 through Friday, March 30, beginning at noon.

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Record news

Linda Clifford ... raw and real

"If My Friends Could See Me Now"

Linda Clifford

Whether you are into disco or not, grab Linda Clifford's brand new album, hot off the press . . . "If My Friends Could See Me Now."

She served notice on the unsuspecting public last year with her debut album, "Linda." Her "From Now On" became a disco smash.

A former Miss New York State, Linda has been making a name for herself performing in clubs in and around Chicago for the past five years.

For "If My Friends Could See Me Now," she has teamed with former Motown producer Gil Askey. The legendary Curtis Mayfield has also stepped in to produce two fantastic selections "Gypsy Lady" and "You Are, You Are."

Standouts and highly danceable are Askey's "Runaway Love" and "Please Darling, Don't Say Goodbye" which Linda co - authored with Askey.

Listen for Mayfield on guitar and The Jones Girls on background vocals.

Natalie Cole is completing her own television special for CBS — TV. She'll have a new live album in late April. She's now playing, through Easter Sunday, at the Latin Casino in Cherry Hill, N.J.

Forgot to mention back around Valentine's day that Melba Moore's hubby gifted her with a "drop dead" super - bad fox fur coat with a modest price tag of $35,000. She's making a hit with Eartha Kitt on Broadway in "Timbuktu" . . . and makes a special guest appearance on NBC's "The Doctors."

Easter Sunday, Mayor Henry L. Marsh III of Richmond will honor **Shirley Caesar** as the "First Lady of Gospel" and will declare "Shirley Caesar Day in Richmond." Event will be at 3:30 p.m. at the Mosque. The concept began last August when Mayor William Donald Schaefer of Baltimore made Ms. Caesar an Honorary Citizen.

Earth, Wind and Fire is helping D.C. based Compared To What Inc.? with its technical arts workshop program. They will take some of the youngsters on the road with them to acquire practical training in staging, lighting sound etc.

Hundreds of celebrities including **Reggie Jackson** turned out when Columbia Records hosted a party for Earth, Wind and Fire at Studio 54, the lavish disco in New York earlier this month.

Maurice White Helps students

E. J. Rice, local homeboy who has been touring with Harold Melvin and the Blue Notes, the Manhattans and Millie Jackson will be at the Club Casino, Easter Sunday. Watch for his new release "Try To Live A Day."

CBS's first 50 ... lacks color

By Ida Peters
Dear Boss:

I am still somewhat puzzled by the mailgramed invitation from Robert Daly, president of CBS-TV Entertainment to their 50th Anniversary Gala held last week over three days at the Waldorf Astoria, NYC. The Four Seasons Restaurant and - '21.

You remember my recent column "Baby, Stay Back" when I told you that the new CBS - TV series "Baby I'm Back", starring Demond Wilson and Denise Nicholas was highly offensive showing black men as clowns, fools and failures; black children as impudent and disrespectful, and grandmothers as nags.

"CBS: On The Air" is a week - long nine and a half hour recollection of the first 50 years of CBS, starting Easter Sunday and hosted by news correspondent Walter Cronkite and Mary Tyler Moore.

115 of the brightest stars of CBS over 50 years gathered in Television City in Hollywood last December, to videotape the grand opening you'll see Sunday.

Believe me, there's very little color. If you but your eyes you'll miss Cicely Tyson, "Miss Jane Pittman," Sherman Hemsley and Isabel Sanford from "The Jeffersons"; John Amos, the former father of "Good Times" and Demond Wilson from "Baby I'm Back."

And to really show how insignificant blacks are in the 50 years of CBS, only Cicely Tyson showed at the Four Season gala to preview the nine hours . . . and only Miss Tyson will guest host a segment.

Sylvia Sidney star of "Siege"

Alexander Cohen Producer

Alexander H. Cohen was the Executive Producer of this "24 - Karat gold assignment" and his wife Hildy Parks wrote and conceived the special. He is currently in charge of producing Broadway plays at Baltimore's Mechanic Theatre although his contract has not been renewed by the city.

However, the producers can't make something out of nothing and the press clips reveal we'll see some blacks in a positive way, such as . . . Greg Morris in "Mission: Impossible"; Cicely Tyson in "The Autobiography of Miss Jane Pittman"; Harry Belafonte in "Tonight With Belafonte"; and Eddie "Rochester" Anderson on a clip from "The Jack Benny Show."

Most of the aging stars at the Four Seasons gala were not recognizable. I sat next to Eric Sevaried and didn't know it until later.

During the screening, sat next to Arthur Godfrey. Remember, he gave Ethel Ennis a big push.

'Siege' racist

After breakfast at Oscar's in the Waldorf was accosted by two strange white women. They said they were from Baltimore and they just knew I was a Murphy. Turns out they were a Mrs. Betty Seidel and a Mrs. Samuels. Seems AFRO secretary Gertrude Steele who used to be secretary to sister Bettye Moss used to be secretary for their late husband and father, a physician, a Dr. Herman Seidel.

CBS - TV then bussed the press to the CBS screening room on 52nd Street to view a new two - hour made - for - television film "Siege" starring Martin Balsam and Sylvia Sidney.

It's about a widow who becomes marked for a repeated series of robberies by a young neighborhood gang of blacks and Puerto Ricans.

The apartment for older people is integrated and the gang preys on blacks as well as white old people.

Dorian Harewood, now playing the lead in "The Mighty Gents" at the Kennedy Center, has the role of the mean, evil, dope crazed gang leader beating up defenseless old ladies. He is so good, that the good white press people almost wanted to strangle him bare - handed.

"Larry Scott, the dope kid in "A Hero Ain't Nothing But A Sandwich," is also featured.

The film is a kick in the teeth and a good setback to race relations in this country.

Later at lunch at "21" and cocktails amid the million dollars worth of Remington oil paintings, got a chance to chat with Sylvia Sidney and Martin Balsam.

My question . . . why the gangs were black and Puerto Rican and no whites in that gang in New York City.

From where I sit, the problem of gangs and young people is not a black and white situation. It's a people problem.

In Baltimore, Washington, and other AFRO cities where neighborhoods are segregated we have whites robbing whites and blacks robbing blacks and where we have blacks living in white neighborhoods we have whites harassing blacks.

Miss Sidney replied that the TV critic from a Baltimore daily had just told her the film was not racist.

Well, Dear Boss, it was highly inflamatory and racist and I'll give you a full review later.

'Amos 'n Andy'

Another kick in the teeth. While I have been complaining about racism in "Siege" and the overwhelming and one-sided portrayal of blacks on "Good Times" and "The Jeffersons" . . . the CBS Television Network is planning another all-black situation comedy.

It's called "Fresh Air" and will be made by comedian Alan King's production company.

Announcement was made in Variety as follows:

"King said that the all - black pilot derives its title from the Amos 'n Andy taxi company called "Fresh Air." He noted that the script tries to capture the Amos 'n Andy-type humor which King feels was the funniest material ever on radio or later on TV."

Can you believe it?

Here we go again with the stereotypes and the myths of blacks being lazy, shiftless, jive - talking J.J.'s . . . only worse.

Is it any wonder our young people are being programmed for failure by being fed a steady diet of poor images which infest, and poison their minds?

American television has been guilty for more than 50 years of only portraying a certain element of black life while ignoring hero or positive figures. Sure we got Reggie Jackson and other role model sports figures.

but what about the positive good roles of blacks . . . doctors, lawyers, educators, inventors?

It's hard to bite the hand that feeds you, Boss, but it's time to examine the whole spectrum of TV and not just CBS.

... and all that jazz

By Bob Matthews

Sometimes fans of the LBJS sets, and this column, can almost predict what will be said in this space — and most of the time they are correct.

For example, everyone who was at the Left Bank Jazz Society's set last week, knows that the quintet Sam Jones put together would blow up a storm.

And they did.

The Jones boys (Sam, Elvin, Han and Thad) are a consummate musicians. They will tolerate nothing less than the very best. It was obvious that Sam has been building this particular quintet carefully.

They were well rehearsed, although their repertoire was limited. They did a lot of chart reading, all of which is to their credit.

But it was as individual soloists that they shone.

The overall sound of the assemblage could be classed as classic 1970s jazz, with tinges of high energy - fusion sound.

Here the solos were frenetic, Bob Berg on tenor sax and flute, building pyramids of notes, cascading up and down in shimmering glissandoes.

Terumasa Hino on cornet was a newcomer to the LBJS sets. Downbeat Magazine has heralded him as the bright, new star in the brass instruments ascendancy — and they're right.

You can always take the measure of an instrumentalist by his treatment of the classic old standards.

So, after several excursions with Hino playing cornet like Freddie Hubbard plays trumpet, the time arrived for a solo stint.

The tune was "My Funny Valentine," and he made that horn sing.

By now, the initial shock of seeing an oriental swinging on American jazz had worn off, and the pure form emerged.

He makes the cornet sound like a flugelhorn, and the clipped notes as stylized by Art Farmer seem to take precedence.

All of the remainder of the quintet have played the Famous many times, most notably Ronnie Matthews on piano.

It is impossible for Ronnie to play a set that doesn't swing.

His touch and drive are sheer inspiration — no glittering, twinkling solos, just heavy chord changes — somewhat reminiscent of a Ahmad Jamal - Erroll Garner blend.

He also took over the announcing chores. Sam Jones remains a somewhat reticent performer, except when he is plucking that acoustic bass.

He has developed a method of leaning against a stool, somewhat similar to the symphony orchestra basists, and just as Blakely sparks the Messengers, so Sam Jones sparks his group.

We dare say, we've never heard Sam play a wrong note. Add to this the pure professionalism of performance — and you've got a topflight group. The concert was scheduled to start at 5 p.m.— it started at 4:59 p.m.

Next week the Barney Kessel - Herb Ellis quartet. Two of the stalwart guitarists. Both have been around so long they are legends.

If you'd like to check them out, see if you can get a chance to listen to some of the old Norman Granz 'Jazz at the Philharmonic" records. You'll hear them.

In fact, for the generation that grew up listening to the wild, loud sound electronic guitarists, this will provide a lesson in jazz guitar playing.

Shirley Caesar here for Easter

Frederick I. Douglass

Gospel singer supreme Shirley Caesar will be in Baltimore on Monday, March 27, to headline a concert of religious music at the New Refuge Holiness Church located at 2005 East Monument Street.

The program will also feature Slim and the Supreme Angels out of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, the Swanee Quartet of Augusta, Georgia, and Mattie Johnson and the Star of Faith, Baltimore will be represented in this concert by the Fernando G. Allen Singers, the Singing Disciples, and Tommy Roberts and the Gospel Music Workshop.

I don't get a chance to talk about gospel music very much in this column, but I am a fan and student of the music. Additionally, my wife Beverley and her sisters Ramocille and Heysette are gospel singers and perform frequently at churches in the Baltimore-Washington area.

To my ears, gospel music has figured prominently in the evolution of contemporary black music and religious musical motifs can be heard prominently in the sounds of Aretha Franklin and James Brown as well as the works of many Jazz artists like Less McCan and to a degree with the piano stylings of Horace Silver

Gospel music has also figured prominently in freedom movements from abolition on down through Civil Rights. At one time, gospel music was the only way that black slaves could send messages about the Underground Railroad and when they sang "Steal Away," the brothers and sisters in bondage were talking about the latest escape routes to the northern states.

The all - time greatest gospel singer was Mahalia Jackson, but since she departed from this dimension her throne has been occupied by Shirley Caesar, the very first black gospel singer to win a Grammy Award. Born in Durham, N.C. Shirley Caesar's classic recordings including "I'll Go" and "Stranger on the Road," two LP's that earned her gold records, something rare for gospel albums, and a gold single entitled "Don't Drive

Shirley Caesar

(Continued on Page 23)

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TV Watching

Peter Cottontail Tonight

By Vanessa Johnson

FRIDAY

Evening Magazine: Dr. Joyce Brothers discusses "male menopause;" a profile of the New Jersey Reds, the basketball team that continually loses to the Harlem Globetrotters. 7:30 p.m. - Channel 13.

Here Comes Peter Cottontail: Danny Kaye and Vincent Price lend their voices to this tuneful fantasy about Peter Cottontail's campaign for Chief Bunny against the sinister Iron Tail. 8:00-9:00 p.m. - CBS.

CPO Sharkey: Sharkey ventures into a punk - rock night spot to stop a fight and comes out with a loose filling and the affections of a teen - age runaway. 8:30 - 9:00 p.m. - NBC.

Midnight Special: Guest host is Tom Jones with Electric Light Orchestra, Dan Hill, and the Emotions. 1:00-2:30 a.m. - NBC.

SATURDAY

Pat Albert: Pat Albert tries to help Undine cope with her uncle's death. 12:00-12:30 p.m. - CBS.

American Bandstand: Raydio performs "Jack & Jill" and "Is This A Love Thing?". 1:00 - 1:30 p.m. - Channel 7.

Wide World of Sports: Heavyweight boxing, ranking contenders Earnie Shavers (54-6-1) and Larry Holmes (26-0) square off in a 12 round bout telecast live from Las Vegas. 5:00 - 6:30 p.m. - ABC.

Everywoman: "Male Contraception," a comprehensive report that examines existing and anticipated birth control alternatives for men. 7:30 - 8:00 p.m. - Channel 9.

What's Happening: Dee has a hard time accepting the fact that her estranged father (Thalmus Rasulala) has decided to remarry. 8:00 - 8:30 p.m. - ABC.

The Jeffersons: With an eye to posterity, George commissions an artist to sculpt his bust and invites friends and family to a monumental unveiling. 9:00-9:30 p.m. - CBS.

Love Boat: A comedy of errors has a frantic wife trying to elude her husband, convinced he's trying to kill her when he's really arranging her surprise birthday party; Isaac (Ted Lange) falls for a sizzling singing dynamo (Diahann Carroll). 9:00 - 10:00 p.m. - ABC.

Kojak: A racketeer anxious to revenge the murder of his brother recruits a teenager as a hit man. 10:00 - 11:00 p.m. - CBS.

Fantasy Island: An accountant wants a chance to be a baseball superstar. A conservative American couple seeks a place where traditional values still prevail. 10:00 - 11:00 p.m. - ABC.

Saturday Night Live: Guests include veteran horror film star Christopher Lee (host), the rock performer Meatloaf and comedian Richard Belzer, and the Not Ready For Prime Time Prime Players. 11:30 - 1:00 a.m. - NBC.

SUNDAY

Baseball: The Orioles play the Kansas City Royals at Ft. Myers, Fla., in the first of two scheduled televised pre - season games. 1:30 - 4:00 p.m. - Channel 13.

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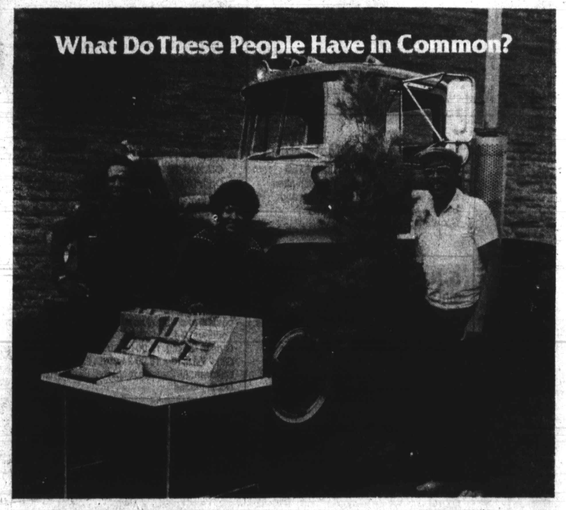
What Do These People Have in Common?



They Are All Procter & Gamble Suppliers!
Meet, from left to right, Lester Ward, owner of Sudden Trucking Co., Jean Bailey, owner of Bailey Keypunch Service, and Tom Pitts, president of Tom Pitts Landscape Service.
These business owners are among the growing family of minority suppliers who help provide Procter & Gamble's plants, laboratories and offices with many of the vital goods and services they require each year.
To encourage this trend, the company's Buying Department locates and works with minority businesses able to supply our needs for quality materials and services. Today, dozens of minority-owned companies, from coast to coast, have joined our supplier family . . . and the list keeps growing.
By being able to compete successfully in today's marketplace, these businesses grow and prosper. New jobs are created and more dollars flow into minority communities throughout the country.
That's why P&G believes that supporting minority-owned businesses makes good business sense.
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