Veronica Tyler in Peabody opera

Veronica Tyler
Native Baltimorean

Two performances of the classic American opera, "The Mother of Us All," with music by Virgil Thomson and text by Gertrude Stein, will climax the Peabody Conservatory's festival of American music. The opera, a pageant of real and fictional characters from America's past focusing on the life and career of 19th century feminist Susan B. Anthony, will be presented in a fully - staged production at 8:00 p.m., Wednesday, May 24 and Thursday, May 25 in the Peabody Concert Hall, 1 East Mount Vernon Place.

Veronica Tyler, leading soprano of the New York City Opera and a Peabody alumna, will appear in the title role of Susan B. Anthony.

Ms. Tyler will perform with members of the Peabody Opera Theatre and the Peabody Symphony Orchestra under the musical direction of Frederik Prausnitz. Arne Lindquist is the stage director for the production and Wayne Conner, a member of the Conservatory's voice faculty, is musical coordinator.

Acclaimed world - wide for her operatic, concert and recital performances, Vernoica Tyler was born in Baltimore and is a graduate of both the Peabody Conservatory and the Julliard School of Music.

In 1966, Ms. Tyler was named the winner of the First Tchaikovsky International Vocal Competition in Moscow. She subsequently performed under the direction of Maestros Stokowski, Bernstein, Kostalanets, Leinsdorf and Ormandy. Her diverse repertoire includes such works as Bach's "St. John's Passion," Schumann's "Scenes from Faust," and Gershwin's "Porgy and Bess."

Following her New York City Opera debut in 1964 as Susanna in "The Marriage of Figaro," she immediately became a regular member of the company, appearing in such roles as Pamina in "The Magic Flute," Mimi in "La Boheme," Zerlina in "Don Giovanni," and recently as Ilia in "Idomenio."

Ms. Tyler appeared recently in concert in Alice Tully Hall in New York and as Ericlea in "Scipio Africanus" with the Central City Opera. She will be appearing this summer in a performance of Beethoven's "Missa Solemnis" for the Interlochen Music Festival.

Ms. Tyler serves on the Advisory Board for the Dance Theatre of Harlem and is a member of the Board of Trustees of the Peabody Institute.

"The Mother of Us All" focuses on the life and career of Susan B. Anthony, an abolitionist and pioneer crusader for women's rights in the United States whose work led to laws that granted women full suffrage.

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What's Happening

Ida Peters

On May 20 special effects fans are in for a treat. Douglass Trumbull, who dazzled with the effects for "2001: a Sapce Odyssy," and "Close Encounters of the Third Kind," has directed one film, "Silent Running" which he produced in 1970. That showing at 2 p.m. will be followed by a short film offering glimpses of real space hardware. Trumbull, commenting, says: "Millions for special effects can't top billions for the real thing," which should give space fans something to look forward to.

On May 21 the 1938 version of "The Adventures of Robin Hood," with Errol Flynn, Olivia De Havilland, Basil Rathbone, Claude Rains, Patric Knowles and Alan Hade, directed by Michael Curtiz, will be shown.

This may be Preakness week for some folks but for the parents of 3,650 graduates of the 1978 Class of the University of Maryland, College Park and the parents of the 1,015 graduates of Morgan State University this is "Thank God You Finally Made It Week."

It's not often a mother gets a chance to congratulate her own after spending a lifetime in the Journalism field writing about other folks.

But, today Friday at 2 p.m. in Cole Field House at the University of Maryland, Vashti Murphy Smith McKenzie will be among that 3,650.

Congratulations Vashti and supportive hubby Stan McKenzie and 3 - year - old Jon Mikael. Vashti is currently Entertainment Editor for Dawn Magazine and a contributing columnist weekly in the AFRO.

She started as teen columnist at the AFRO in 1964, fourteen years ago, attended Morgan State for three years. After marriage, she has had her own TV show in Portland and has been a professional model in Phoenix, Houston and Portland. She is currently on the Advisory Board for Koskot Cosmetics and writer for Women's World 7.

"The Wiz", the Best Musical of 1975 and the winner of seven Tony Awards will be at the Opera House of the Kennedy Center, June 14.

"Bobbling Brown Sugar" was to open at the Warner Theatre in D.C. but has been cancelled.

Avon Long, who made "Bubbling" what it was is now in rehearsal in California for the role of Chicken George in "Roots 2". He has the Ben Vereen role. Raul Julia opens in "Dracular" at the New Mechanic May 19.

Lou Rawls and the Dramatics at Painters Mill, May 23. The Spinners with Millie Jackson at Merriweather Post June 2.

The Baltimore Film Festival is now going great guns at the Playhouse Theatre, Charles and 25th.

"The Learning Tree" by Gordon Parks, produced in 1969 will be shown at 10 a.m., May 19 - 20.

A midnight series kicks off this Friday with John Waters' "Desperate Living," followed by "The Harder They Come," by Perry Henzell on Saturday.

On May 19 it will be Russ Meyer's 1970 "Beyond the Valley of the Dolls," of classic trash, and "It Came from Outer Space," in 3 - D, by Jack Arnold in 1953, on May 20.

La - Pont A Inc. holds their first cocktail sip at Scorpio Lounge. with a fashion show, Redell and hot food by Sampson's.

Third World Museum will feature its International Mask and Sculpture Exhibition at Painters Mill in conjunction with the Lou Rawls Show. Public showing will be Memorial Day, May 29 - 1-5 p.m. at Thirdworld Museum, 1769 Carswell St.

The African Heritage Dancers and Drummers are being presented in a free concert Saturday, May 20, 8 p.m. at Coppin State College in the James Weldon Johnson Auditorium. Program is being sponsored by STEP, Student Tutorial and Enrichment Program.

At the Ninth Annual Music Festival at the Kennedy Center in D.C. the Morgan Chorus and the Peabody Chorus performed "An American Te Deum" under the baton of the composer Karel Husa.

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Enoch Pratt

Films

"Reaching for the Moon," Pratt's Kirk Avenue Center, Monday 6 p.m.

"Hong Kong" and "New Horizons — India," Central Pratt Library, Tuesday 2 p.m.

"Mencken's America," Pratt's Patterson Park Branch, Tuesday 7 p.m.

"Famous Movie Monsters," Pratt's Morrell Park Center, Thursday 6 p.m.

"Abilene Town," Pratt's Highlandtown Center, Friday 3 p.m.

"In Old Santa Fe," Central Pratt Library, Saturday 2 p.m.

Concert

All - Bach program presented by the Baltimore Dance Theatre, Pratt's Fort Worthington Center, Wednesday 6:30 p.m.

Other

"Parents: A Presentation on Sharing Books with Children." A program featuring film showings and discussion session led by Terrie Eesley, children's librarian, Pratt's Walbrook Branch, Thursday 6:30 p.m.

Exhibit

"This Gilded Age: Victorian Bookbindings." A selection of colorful and decorative examples of nineteenth - century publishers' bindings from the Peabody collection. Pratt's Peabody Department, 17 East Mount Vernon Place, through August 1.

Monday, May 22

Morrell Park Center: Film — "Follow the North Star," 6 p.m.

Tues., May 23

Central Library, Children's Department: Story hour for ages 6 to 12, 4 p.m.

Wed., May 24

Walbrook Branch: Films — "The Cat in the Hat" and "The Lorax," 3 p.m.

Cherry Hill Center: Spelling Bee for grades 3 and 4, 3:30 p.m.

Thurs., May 25

Brooklyn Branch: Puppet show, 3:30 p.m.

Cherry Hill Center: Spelling Bee for grades 5 and 6, 3:30 p.m.

Friday, May 26

Cherry Hill Center: Spelling Bee finals, 3:30 p.m.

Sat., May 27

Pennsylvania Avenue Branch: Preschool story hour, 10 a.m.

Central Library, Children's Department: Preschool story hour, 11 a.m.

...all that Jazz

SRO for Thad and Mel at LBJS

By Bob Matthews

In six polls, the Thad Jones - Mel Lewis big band was named, "No. One Band in the Land."

And now, we know why.

A standing - room only crowd showed up to hear the band go through its paces at the regular concert of the Left Bank Jazz Society Sunday, and what a set it was.

The 17 - piece aggregation, used voicing that has become its trademark — two tenors, an alto, soprano and baritone in the sax section.

Add to this a brass section that is as tight as any on the scene today, and you have the basis for an outstanding group.

Then, there is the difference that sets this band apart; from the throng. Most of the arrangements are by Thad Jones, and while some of them once were considered experimental, all have jelled and become standard for the group.

Discounting Thad and Mel, the average age of musicans in the band is about 32, and the youngsters — by jazz standards — have done their homework well.

The distinguishing thing about the bands of Count Basie and Duke Ellington is the ability of the soloist to really get up and swing. Given the original charts, soloists are what sets the band apart.

With The Thad and Mel group, every time there was a soloist — and everyone in the band had a chance — it was a surprise.

You had to say to yourself, "how could one group have 16 players, and all be topflight solists." But, it could, it did, and they blew like there was no tomorrow.

'Twas really great to hear some of the standards given the big band treatment, and the Jones arrangements.

Featured were such tunes as "Body and Soul," "Be Mine," "Love-Theme for the Groove Merchant," and others.

In fact, the band got into such a groove, that when they launched into "Rte. 66," one man got up and started dancing in the aisle.

Then there was the vocalist, whose name is Byrdie Green, and whose voice defies categorization.

On the first set, she started out with "Yes Sir, That's My Baby," and evoked analogies with Etta Jones.

But there was a difference, Byrdie had her own phrasing, and possesses some of the most precise diction heard in the music world.

When she did another tune, "The Second Time Around," there were overtones of Nancy Wilson, and Dakota Staton — suffused, however — for it was all Byrdie Green.

And it was great.

The trouble with having a young group of musicians is they are all scholarly, have practically lived wity their instruments, and have mastered them.

Some of the trumpet players could undoubtedly play higher notes that Thad, or string together arpeggios and glissandoes at a faster pace.

But when Thad Jones raised that flugelhorn to blow — there was no doubt who was the master. All the Jones boys, however, are outstanding musicians.

In addition to Thad, there is Hank Jones, piano: Elvin Jones, drums, and Sam Jones, bass. They got together at the Newport Jazz Festival of 1977, and hopefully, LBJS might try to do it again.

This weekend, Arthur Prysock heaves into view, along with his brother Red Prysock and his trio.

Last year, their set drew an audience mainly consisting of women patrons, for Prysock's mellow baritone, really sets a mood.

Now that his voice is being heard more often in that beer commercial (he does the one for Lowenbrau), chances are his fans have grown.

Can only hope that brother Red sticks to playing his horn this time. Those jokes are for the birds.

'A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court' on PBS Tuesday

Roscoe Lee Browne has the role of Merlin

"Once Upon a Classic" presents Mark Twain's "A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court" in a one - hour special Tuesday, May 23 at 8:00 p.m. on stations of the Maryland Center for Public Broadcasting.

Adapted from Mark Twain's novel by Stephen Dick, "Yankee" is the story of Hank Morgan, a 19th century factory boss who, after suffering a blow to the head, wakes up in sixth century England and the court of King Arthur. He showers the Arthurians with such questionable advances as advertising and gunpower, bringing him into conflict with the wizard Merlin.

Starring in the production are Richard Basehart (King Arthur), Paul Rudd (Hank Morgan), Roscoe Lee Browne (Merlin), and Tovah Feldshuh (Lady Alisande). Also appearing are Dan Shor (Clarence) and Frederick Coffin (Sagramore).

Hosted by Bill Bixby and produced by WQED - Pittsburgh, "Yankee" was filmed at Hartwood Acres, a reproduction of a Tudor country estate just outside of Pittsburgh.

Bill Lane in Hollywood

WILLIAM Arnold, a Seattle newsman, spent three years tracing into the life of onetime film star Frances Farmer, whose picture made front pages all over the world some years ago when she was busted for public inebriety. Now he's out with a new McGraw - Hill book, "Shadowland," in which he tells how the actress was jailed and bugged, given many shock treatments, repeatedly raped and, against her will, given by doctors a secret lobotomy.

KENNY BURRELL moved into the Parisian Room here for a swinging guitar session series. With him on the Parisian bill is sure - fire singer Ernie Andrews. Carmen McRae follows. Curt Flood, now a radio announcer for the Oakland A's, says when he was going through his futile ordeals suing the big baseball moguls to junk the reserve caluse not a single active baseball player uttered a peep of vocal support for him — except the late Jackie Robinson, but that was not too surprising, for few black players for a long time ever offered vocal support of Jackie Robinson when he was in the middle of his ordeals." Hear! Hear!

Ja'NET DuBois has been named honorary chairperson for the "Afternoon on the Nile" fashion extravaganza staged by the Shades of Nefertiti at the Beverly Hills hotel here on May 27. The "Shades" are a business and professional women's organization which raises funds for the United Negro College Fund.

RONALD Sanders is out with his new book, "Lost Tribes and Promised Lands," which purports to tell who enslaved whom, and when; that Columbus was a Jew who had converted to Christianity and had sailed for these shores with Queen Isabella's blessings; that Arab slavetraders held contempt for Africans' black color believing the color came from sun - scorching partly as result of the reputed curse on the children of Ham.

But a black woman writer, Eloise Johnson, a teacher at Laney College in Oakland, writes in the curent Black Art Magazine that: "Ancient Egypt was a country of black people, colonized by Ethiopians whose very name derives from a Greek work, Anthiopian, meaning "burnt face.' The early Greeks — as did other sunworshipers of their time — called ALL black people 'Ethiopians.' They esteemed black people greatly because black people were, obviously, the people most favored — or loved — by the sun." Homer's Iliad also extolled blacks as a blessing to mankind, saying they were the only people the Gods of Olympus descended to visit. "The Egyptians' own word for Egypt is Kemmi — 'black land' or 'land of the black people.' The word Africa, also meaning black, derives from the Egyptian term Af - rui - ka, or Kafrica, 'the land of the Kaffir (or Bantus)."

'Eubie' new Broadway musical

"Eubie," a new musical revue with music by Eubie Blake, choreography by Dana Manno, and devised and directed by Julianne Boyd, will premiere on Broadway in early fall preceded by a road engagement which gets underway on June 10 at the Walnut Street Theatre in Philadelphia.

Featured in the musical will be Alaina Reed, Marion Ramsey, Ethel Beatty, Lynnie Godfrey, Lonnie McNeil, Mel Johnson, Maurice Hines, Jeffrey Thompson, Janet Powell with Danny Holgate supervising the music in the show.

Eubie Blake, who just passed his 95th birthday, resides in New York City and makes frequent appearances on television and radio as well as in movies and personal appearances at universities. His chief collaborators were Noble Sissle and Andy Razaf, and his best known shows he composed for were "Chocolate Dandies," "Blackbirds of 1930," "Swing It" and "Shuffle Along," the first all-black musical to come to Broadway 57 years ago (on May 23, 1921).

Some of the songs in "Shuffle Along" to be included in "Eubie" are "I'm Just Wild About Harry," "Love Will Find a Way," "Honeysuckle Time," "Daddy, Won't You Please Come Home," "How Ya' Gonna Keep 'Em Down On The Farm" and "I'm Craving For That Kind of Love." Josephine Baker, Florence Mills and Paul Robeson were performers in that show.

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TV Watching

By Vanessa Johnson

Friday

Baseball: The Orioles vs the Indians at Cleveland Stadium. 7:30 - 10:00 p.m. - Channel 13.

NBA Play - Off: A Western Conference game is scheduled. 11:30 - 1:30 a.m. - CBS.

Love Boat: The Captain engages in a furious battle of the bulge to win an old high school flame. 10:00 - 11:00 p.m. - Channel 13.

Midnight Special: Guest hostess Helen Reddy is joined by Player, Elton John, Andy Kaufman, Billy Preston, and Samantha Sang. 1:00 - 2:30 a.m. - ABC.

Saturday

Fat Albert: The gang learns not to underestimate people who wear glasses. 12:00-12:30 p.m.-CBS.

Soul Train: Guests today are the Fifth Dimensions, Mandrill and the Soul Train Gang. 12:00 - 1:00 p.m. - Channel 11.

Blackpoint: Segments include a discussion of the settlement of Zimbabwe with Cortland Cox of the Trans - Africa Caribbean Lobby and a look at a self help approach to home ownership. 12:30 - 1:00 p.m. - Channel 13.

Baseball: The Orioles vs. the Indians at Cleveland Stadium. 2:00 - 4:30 p.m. - Channel 13.

Wide World of Sports: The Harlem Globetrotters perform at Fort Huachuca Army Base near Sierra Vista, Ariz. 4:00 - 5:00 p.m. - Channel 7.

The Preakness: Three year olds race a mile and three sixteenths at Pimlico Race Course. Estimated purse is $200,000. 5:00 - 6:00 p.m. - ABC.

The Jeffersons: George gathers family and friends to celebrate his new executive offices, but the festivities are cut short when he gets a call saying Louise has been kidnapped for $100,000. 8:00 - 9:00 p.m. - CBS.

Love Boat: Gopher rebels against the Captain's constant barking of orders. A mistress comes down with cabin fever when her boy friend puts a quietus on their affair because of snoopy friends on board. 9:00 - 10:00 p.m. - ABC.

Saturday Night Live: Host Buck Henry is joined by jazz performer Sun Ra. and the Not Ready Prime Time Players. 11:30 - 1:00 a.m. - NBC.

Sunday

Three on Three: Second - Round play, David Thompson (Nuggets), former NBA star Jerry Lucas, and Pat Boone vs. Maruice Lucas (Trail Blazers), former NBC Star Sam Jones and Robert Conrad. 1:00-1:30 p.m.-Channel 2.

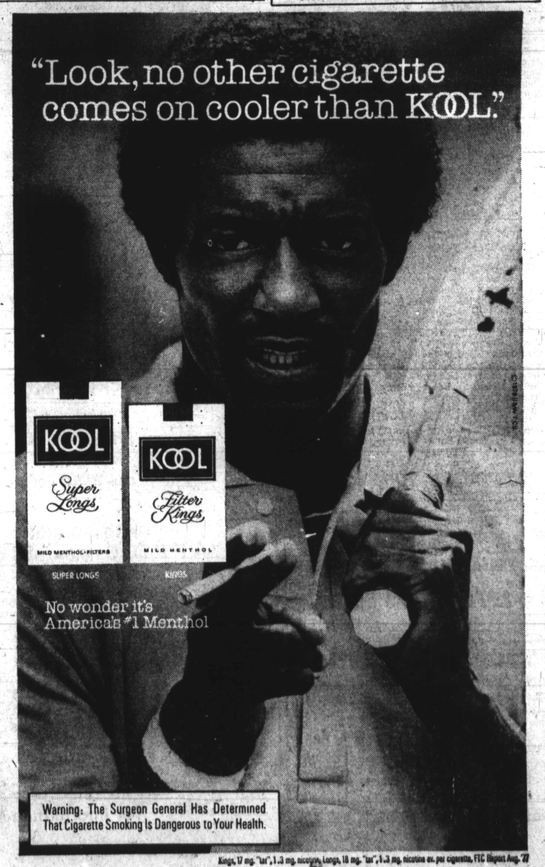
Baseball: The Orioles vs the Indians at Cleveland Stadium. A double - headed. 1:00 - 6:30 p.m. - Channel 13.

NBA Play - Off: A championship round game is scheduled. 1:30 - 4:00 p.m. - Channel 2.

Tony Brown's Journal: Guests include TV correspondent Edwin Newman who discusses differences in language usage among racial and cultural groups. 3:30 - 4:00 p.m. - Channel 11.

Monday

Baby, I'm Back: With a little help from Ray, Angie's church play about the estrangement of Ruth and Naomi is turned into a comedy about Ray and Olivia. 8:00 - 8:30 p.m. - CBS.



Kings, 17 mg. "tar", 1.3 mg. nicotine, Longs, 18 mg. "tar", 1.3 mg. nicotine av. per cigarette, FTC Report Aug. '77