Nathaniel Oaks: A politician running scared

By Clarence W. Hunter
AFRO Staff Writer

His name is Nathaniel T. Oaks.

To hear one of his mentors, Sen. Clarence Blount, tell it, Oaks is a smart, confident man who "does his homework" and "is young enough to be governor — someday."

But the simple fact of the matter is that Nathaniel Oaks, who is candidate for the House of Delegates in the 41st Legislative District, is running scared.

"Any politician not running scared is a fool," Oakes told the AFRO. "When Art Murphy was alive at least you had some idea who the players were. Now even I don't know who all the players are."

Yet Oaks is not going to let a little thing like uncertainity stop him from campaigning for a seat in the House.

His campaign got into full swing Tuesday night with a wine and cheese fundraiser at the Lord Baltimore Hotel.

"My aspiration right now is to win a seat in the House of Delegates," he said. "The incumbents have been guilty of presentations and not representations.

"There is a need for elected officials in the 41st to be accessible, accountable and most of all effective. We need some young faces with fresh ideas to handle old problems."

The 31-year-old candidate sees his campaign as a community effort accented by youth and backed by a strong need for change.

He say a survey he took himself among community residents shows the issues in his area to be unemployment, improvement in the educational system, crime in the street and voter apathy.

He's fighting the voter apathy by carrying voter registration cards in his campaign kit.

"I found that people remember you at the polls when you care enough and take the time to help them register."

As one of the founders of the Five and Five Political Organization, chairman of the 41st District Democratic State Central Committee and executive board member to the Maryland State Central Committee, Oaks says his campaign has citywide political support but a "struggling" financial base.

"Like I said it's a community effort. We've already had fundraisers for $5, $8 and $15."

Oaks sees himself as a team player with the community's best interest at heart.

"I'm loyal to Five and Five," he said. "I will give the organization my efforts 100 percent as long as they realize that the people are the number one priority."

His loyalty and efforts, according to political sources, guaranteed him a spot on the Blount ticket early in the campaign despite the numerous questions in recent weeks concerning who Blount would pick for the ticket.

Though Blount has not officially made up his mind, sources say Oaks' spot on the ticket was strengthened with the knowledges that Murphy had plans to run for the office of Baltimore city's State's Attorney.

That really doesn't concern Oaks right now because as chairman of the state central committee he must pick someone to finish Murphy's term.

"I'm trying to get Art's wife to take over the seat," he said. "I intend to meet with her and encourage her to take the seat is the only moral thing to do."

He said the committee plans to meet July 8 to make a final decision.

Oaks, though he will not directly admit it, is aware of the fact that political experts within his district put him in strong contention with Mrs. Murphy to be picked to finish out Murphy's term.

He is also aware of the fact that whoever the state central committee picks for the seat will have the advantage of being an incumbent in this election.

But he can't concern himself with that right now. He is concentrating on just getting elected.

Nathaniel Oaks

Solomon orders plan to provide hospital care for poor people

State Health Secretary Neil Solomon has asked for a plan that would provide hospital care for poor people who are not sufficiently covered by Medicare, Medicaid or other health insurance plans.

Solomon, Secretary of the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, asked state employees to devise a "workable plan" to help poor individuals who are dunned for hospital bills they cannot pay.

He appealed to the department's health service development office after it was reported that three men and a woman had been approached by hospital officials to pay their bills.

"This is a group we've got to help," Solomon said. "There are people who are just above the poverty level and who are struggling to keep off Medicaid and, in effect, we're penalizing them."

A family of four in Maryland cannot earn more than $3,200 yearly and still qualify for medicaid, the national health plan for the poor.

Soloman said there are also patients with Medicare or Blue Cross insurance who are unable to pay all their hospital bills because their plans do not provide suitable coverage.

Bruce Dunham, chief of Health Services Development, said his staff was too small for him to promise a quick solution, but said he would report to Solomon after meeting Friday with the Maryland hospital association and the legal aid bureau.

Legal Aid attorney Mark Davis said the bureau has recommended that the state spot check all hospitals for compliance with a section of the Hospital Construction Act of 1946 that requires them to provide care to people who need it, even if payment cannot be guaranteed.

But Dunham said it was nearly impossible for his small staff to conduct the spot checks.

"With my present personnel, I'd have to say no . . . with the two people we have we would not be able to go out in the field and do the spot checks and whatever else needs to be done," he said.

LINCOLN UNIVERSITY, Pa. — John Young, a resident pianist at Lincoln University, is to compete in the American Music International Competition June 22-23 at the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C.

Young's program is to include works from Henry Cowell, Hale Smith, Aaron Copland and Carl Ruggles.

Young will be among 120 pianists competing under the auspices of the Rockefeller Foundation and the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts.

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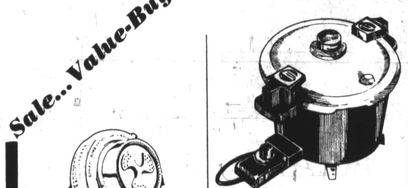

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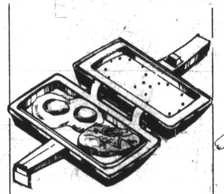

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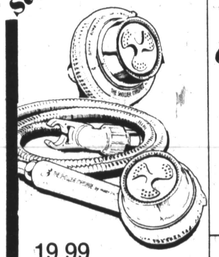

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SHOW TIME

The arts, music, theatre, movies

O'Jays here Saturday...

'Use Ta Be My Girl' No. 1 tune in U.S.

By Ida Peters

After nearly 20 years, the message is still the music . . O'Jay music.

And Eddie Levert, Walter Williams and Sammy Strain, do to music what few can and many would love to do. They radiate class, but at the same time are down home and make easy what is hard and work hard and come off so easy.

This week as the O'Jays prepare to come into the Baltimore Civic Center on Saturday, the Philly International stars have the number one top R and B single in the country, "Use Ta Be My Girl".

Their album "So Full of Love" is number two on the Cashbox charts behind the Commodores "Natural High". And if that's not enough, "Use Ta Be My Girl" is number 14 in the top 10 singles.

Kicking off their third decade together as recording artists and their sixth year of association with Gamble and Huff's Philadelphia International Records, the O'Jays have a sales history of 28 million.

Last year on a 75 - city tour the group grossed three million dollars.

An O'Jays concert is not just two hours of music — it's an experience. See you there.

IN TOWN — The O'Jays, Walter William, Eddie Levert and Sammy Strain will be in town Saturday performing at the Civic Center.

Arena Players Awards

The Arena Players will have their 30th annual Awards Presentation at the Blue Crest North, 401 Reisterstown Rd., Friday, June 23, 7 p.m. This affair will be black tie and subscription price is $25.

As in the past, the Arena Players will presrent Artistic Awards to deserving persons in the field of theatre and dance. Recipients of this year's awards, will be Sylvester Campbell and Howard Rollins.

The Civic Award will be awarded posthumously to Jack Williams, while the Sheldon B. Hoskins Humanitarian Award will go to Samuel Phillips.

Sylvester Campbell became the principal dancer for the Maryland Ballet in January 1977 and has appeared with the company in leading roles in such productions as George Balanchine's "Donizetti Variations", the Tscherny shova - Tschernyshova "Romeo and Juliet", and George Skibine's "Daphnis and Chloe". More recently he was the leading dancer and associate director of the Capitol Ballet in Washington, D.C.

Sun from left: Curtis Hooks, Keith Cheatham, Ernie Kinsley, Kym Yancey, Nigel Boulton, Robert Arnold, Byron Byrd, Sonnie Talbert and Gary King.

...at Civic Center

Suns' music sizzling hot!

A star at the center of the funk - rock - disco galaxy, Sun's music is sizzling hot.

The band that kindled a BIC lighter inferno with concert appearance after the release of their debut Capitol album, "Wanna Make Love (Come Flick My BIC), and gave a boost to the energy crisis on their second LP, "Sunrower", Sun explodes with energy to spare on their latest release, "Sunburn", 1978.

Led by the multi - talented Byron Byrd the nine - member group with emphasis on instumentation, classy vocals and a sophisticated horn section will hail into the Civic Center, Saturday with the O'Jays.

Their musical innovations include doubled - belled tromobones, and instruments equipped with FM transmitters.

They'll be singing mellow love songs, "I Had A Choice" and "When You Put Your Hand In Mine" plus contagious disco tunes "Dance (Do What You Wanna Do)" and "Long Drawn Out Thang."

JUN

Notes to singers

classical music

Dominique de Lerma

Dr. DeLerma is professor of music at Morgan State University. He also hosts a radio show, "Melodies, Notes and Lyrics." Sunday, 11 a.m., WEAA - FM.

Willis Patterson, voice professor at the University of Michigan, and the Edward B. Marks Music Corporation have produced a very significant "Anthology of Art Songs by Black American Composers."

This collection of 39 art songs belongs it every library and in the hands of every serious teacher and vocal student.

The 24 composers whose works are represented are all from this century, and there is a wide variety of styles included. The earlier figures include Florence Price, John Work, and Margaret Bonds (whose cycle, "Dream Portraits," is now at long last readily available).

Among the more melodic, conservative contemporaries are Leslie Adams and Eugene Hancock. The more innovative figures would include Wendell Logan and Olly Wilson, with David Baker being represented by a trio of songs not always too far from rock.

Baker's songs are set to angry and strong words by Mari Evans.

Text sources for the other songs, all unexpectedly, come from the Bible, Claude McKay, Owen Dodson, Langston Hughes, Paul Laurence Dunbar and others.

One excellent consideration in the choice of songs is that not everything is for the soprano or tenor voice (the compiler is a distinguished baritone whose ambition for a career was stimulated by Paul Robeson).

So often, altos and baritones feel like second - class citizens when black music repertoires are being examined. Not so here.

An added feature is the introduction, provided by Wendell Whalum of Morehouse College, if not also the prefatory remarks by Neil on electric bass. Neil, by the way was straight out of the Stanley Clark school, and the entire quartet gave evidence that they try to fit the music to the audience.

Evidently, they have played a lot of clubs and colleges which thrive on the high - energy sound — and they are equipped to comply.

Fortunately, at the LBJS, they yelded to the knowledgeable jazz audience and reverted to the basics.

Have to say, while Yusef and his group are apt and able, they really don't generate too much excitment these days. They need to search for a new direction — and Yusef can lead them there, if he chooses.

Next week, the Horace Silver quintet heaves into view for the LBJS, and he is still creating.

Currently, the Quintet consists of John McNeil, trumpet; Larry Schneider, tenor sax; Jon Burr, bass, and Harold White, drums.

They are playing at Blues Alley over in D.C. this week and reports are that Horace is doing a lot of experimental material. The present quintet is rated as on par or above groups he has worked with.

His real name is Horace Ward Martin Tavares Silver (quite a mouthful, eh) who was born in Norwalk, Conn. in 1928, and burst on the jazz scene during the 1950s with Stan Getz and Art Blakey groups.

An obvious disciple of Bud Powell, he expanded on the Powell single line premise to create what became known as the "funky" school of pianistics.

A prolific composer, he is still writing for his groups, and like Blakey, has been responsible for bringing along new instrumentalists.

Used to wonder about his roots, and discovered that his father is Portuguese, from the Cape Verde Islands.

He tried out a new composition during the Blues Alley set, it's an extended work in four parts. The first section of it is called: "Turning in to the Master," and we will on Sunday.

have not yet been written. Perhaps we need commissions, perhaps we need more poets. We certainly need more singers who are interested in including works such as Dr. Patterson has gathered on their recitals.

There really is not much justification now to ignore the contributions of black composers on anybody's recital.

There are also songs by non - American blacks which need to be published — songs by Samuel Akpabot, George Bridgetower, Saint - Georges, Samuel Coleridge - Taylor, Halim el - Dabh (why doesn't he, or Talib Hakim, write a song to Arabic poetry?), Akin Euba, Amadeo Roldan and Jose Nunes - Garcia.

So there is yet work waiting for another compiler, which will need to win the attention of another publisher but, meanwhile, we have 148 pages which document a lot of major black creativity for voice, available from the publisher or your local music store for $14.

It is an important collection, meriting the attention of all singers.

...and all that Jazz

Whither goes Lateef?

By Bob Matthews

Yusef Lateef was the featured artist at the Left Bank Jazz Society's Sunday bash last week, and presented a program which has to be described as a melange.

It was almost as though Lateef couldn't quite decide what bag he wished to be in, so the entire thing was uneven.

Not to say it wasn't enjoyable — it was, but those who remember Yusef as a leader of the avant garde movement must have been a trifle startled by the placidness of his offerings.

When we arrived, the quartet was doing "Feelings," which featured Yusef on his complete range of instruments, beginning with a vibrant flute solo, and concluding with improvisations on the oboe.

Lateef has undoubtedly the slowest flute vibrato we've heard, and uses it to great effect, but when he picks up the tenor sax, Yusef delves back into his jazz roots and comes up with that full, funky sound.

Note in our jottings on the concert, that we likened his tenor playing to that heard during the old Jazz at the Philmarmonic series.

Then, Yusef showed us his vocal abilities doing a thing called "Robot Man," which was merely a basic 12 - bar blues with inane lyrics, and a fusion beat.

"This was the beginning of a series of segues into such tunes as "Sophisticated Lady," "As Time Goes By," and "Am I Blue." There were even snatches of "See See Rider," done on the oboe and reminiscent of the Yusef Lateef of old.

Besides Yusef, the quartet consisted of Khalid Moss on keyboards, Greg Bandy, drums and Steve

The first genius of reggae

Every time I hear the crack of a whip
My blood runs cold
I remember on the slave ship,
How they brutalized my very soul.
Slave driver,
The tables have turned,
Catach - a - fire,
You're gonna get burned.

Bob Marley, the master of Jamaican music and the leading exponent of the musical form Reggae was at the Capitol Center in D.C. for a rare appearance last week. The good news is that he and his Wailers were alive and literally kicking.

And, if you've seen the group, Marley does an interesting dance step to his music . . . high knee lifts and leg kicks.

Capitol Center was less than filled maybe because the producers failed to utilize the black print media to advertise the show.

The show opened with The Imperials . . minus Little Anthony as the lead of the group. The audience was very kind to them probably because they were not sure whether to blame the producers for putting them on or the Imperials for playing 1950's lyrics to a made - over disco beat. . . to an audience who came to hear Marley.

"Night and Day" expresses the contrast best and The Imperials spared us by not singing that tune, either.

Next came Stanley Clarke. Who is Stanley Clarke? Well, he is probably the best bass player this area has seen in years. His finger dexterity and drive is super but believeable. He does not strum through the chords and changes, he plays each note individually.

However, the audience came to hear subtle expressions of a black angry man's view of life in the Caribbeans.

Stanely Clarke would have made a great lead in for a rock or jazz concert or rock - jazz Afro concert. He was so loud that you never got your ears adjusted to listen to Bob Marley's lyrics . . . the key to Reggae.

Bob Marley is a Rasta, the religion of many in Jamaica. The Rastafari are religious sect formed 40 years ago out of the Marcus Garvey "Back to Africa" movement. The main precepts of the movement is that black people sold into slavery should be repatriated not just to Africa but to Ethiopia, the Mother Country, where Haile Selassie, Emperor of Ethiopia, Lion of Judah, direct desecdant of David and therefore of Jesus Christ ruled over the only black monarchy in the world.

The Rastas adhere to a Nazarene code of behaviors, do not drink alcohol, smoke tobacco, eat meat or any food cooked with salt or any fish which are predeators. They live in communes, share their possessions. They preach the brotherhood of black men and their greeting is "Peace and Love"

Reggae has not been accepted and widely unterstood by American blacks. The music of ska, blue beat and Reggae is closer to tribal music of Africa and even closer to the slave - gospel protest music of pre - Civil War days.

Marley was the first to truly substantiate that Reggae is a commercially viable product and he brought it to the point where it is today a growing musical art form world wide.

The word for Marley, in person, is exciting.

With 'dreadlocks' flying . . . his hair is styled in snakelike ringlets all over his head . . he sings about everyday problems using a language similar to our black ghetto slang.

The lyrics warn the people they must be careful when confronting the system (Babylon) and that death and loss of self will result from using hard drugs.

Best tunes were the old ones including "Roots, Rock Reggae", done extremely well and "Positive Vibrations"

For this concert, three female vocalists added a little something extra.