—Legislative spotlight

(Continued from page 1)

"The bills I have introduced are attempted to redress some of the social ills affecting the disadvantaged. Consequently, most of my legislation will be of particular interest to the black community."

Del. Walter R. Dean made these comments in an interview concerning his plan of action during the 13 - week run of the General Assembly.

He continued, "I have filed House Bill 176 to mandate that $314 per month be paid to a welfare family of four. I have joined forces with the social welfare lobby in Maryland to request that Governor Harry R. Hughes set aside $10,000,000 additionally in the budget for the poor."

Dean, now in his third term, consistently over the years has filed bills on behalf of those people with little or no income.

HB 191 expresses his concern for the people involved in the CETA (Comprehensive Employment Training Act) program who may not be able to find a job when their term expires. "My bill requests that the state pick up the CETA workers after they finish their term," he explained.

The CETA program has been a major source of jobs and income for nearly 7,000 people in Maryland.

On the matter of economic development, Dean stated, "I am in the process of introducing two bills. One would give employers incentives to provide jobs for the long - term unemployed and another that would give a tax credit for refurbishing your building.

"It seems to me that unless employers are given 'sweeteners' or benefits, they will not hire many persons who are in critical need of jobs."

In the area of prison reform, Dean has filed a measure that would ban medical, psychiatric or psychological experimentation on prisoners and to provide ex - inmates with unemployment insurance.

For several years the veteran delegate has attempted to ban experimentation on prisoners in correctional institutions. The federal government has banned such experiments in federal prisons.

The bill to provide unemployment insurance for ex - inmates was created by Dean because he felt many ex - offenders have performed productive work while incarcerated, yet upon release are faced with unemployment without the opportunity to obtain any benefits.

Dean also has before the assembly, a resolution asking the governor to consider commutation of the sentences of inmates who have graduated from a special program at Coppin State College.

"Inmates who seek and obtain college degrees and who make serious attempts to correct any deficient behavior should be given major consideration as being rehabilitated," explained Dean.

To assist with his hectic schedule, Louise Johnson works as Dean's administrative assistant. Mrs. Johnson is the president of the Black Women's Consciousness Raising Group and is a community specialist.

Also working in the legislator's office are Marian Cox and Donna Holloman, who serve as interns. Ms. Cox is a senior majoring in Social Welfare at Morgan State University and Mr. Holloman attends Towson State University where she majors in Mass Communications.

Del. Dean serves on the House Ways and Means Committee and in past sessions has been chairman of subcommittees on social services, community development, health and Medicaid.

R Y ALES PHOTO

ROBERT DASHIEL, attorney for the Minority Contractors, receives a plaque from Robert Clay, board chairman.

ROBERT CLAY, the noted contractor and chairman of the board of Maryland Minority Contractors Association Inc., receives honors from the group and Lt. Gov. Sam Bogley and Senator Clarence M. Mitchell III.

Minority Contractors cite 1978 awardees

The Maryland Minority Contractors Association Inc. held its monthly meeting at Morgan State University's McKeldin Student Union Building Jan. 26 and named the 1978 awards winners.

Highlights of the evening session were the presentations by Lt. Gov. Sam Bogley and State Senator Clarence M. Mitchell III of citations to the group's chairman of the board, Robert Clay. Clay is the president of Robert Clay Contractors, a $ multi - million business located in Laurel, Md.

Mr. Clay along with Douglass Sands, president, has led Minority Contractors to become a viable, firm and active organization in just a few years.

Others receiving awards were Robert Dashiel, attorney; Henry Johnson for Council for Equal Business Opportunity (CEBO); Arthur Welch for Sherman R. Smoot Co; Robert Chester for Keystone Steel Construction Co.; David Green for David Green and Associates; Jerry Sheppard for Sheppard's Interior Contracting Co. and Bruce Hinton for Carob.

Mr. Sands, Avon Evans, Hanford Jones and Robert Chester, also received plaques for service.

In addition to speakers Sen. Mitchell and Lt. Gov. Bogley, Sal Glorioso was present to represent the Associated Builders and Contractors Inc. Apprenticeship Program.

AVON EVANS HANFORD JONES DOUGLASS SANDS JERRY SHEPPARD

DAVID GREEN

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Opens at Mechanic Feb. 6

'Eubie!' celebrates Baltimore's favorite musician

By Portia E. Badham
AFRO Staff Writer

When the hit musical revue "Eubie!" opens Tuesday, Feb. 6 at the Mechanic Theater, the people of Baltimore will not only be able to witness the acclaimed production for themselves but experience the legendary musical talents of composer, Eubie Blake.

Eubie is no stranger to Baltimore. He was born here almost a century ago. And he will be on hand for Tuesday night's gala opening where he will be honored at a party following the show to celebrate his birthday.

The dynamic composer, still going strong, will be 96 years old on Feb. 7. A dinner party will be given by Mayor William Donald Schaefer in his home and later at the theater, Eubie's well - wishers will include such dignitaries as Gov. Harry R. Hughes.

Although Eubie; a prolific writer with an output of over 1,000 songs, is known for the syncopated sounds of the "Roaring 20's," his music as heard in "Eubie!" spans a wide range of time and style from classic vaudeville to hot Latin, to tango, gospel, and stormy torch songs.

96 YEARS YOUNG - Eubie Blake, legendary musical composer.

The colorful production, highlighted by dancing up the walls and an array of beautiful costumes, opened on Broadway Sept. 30, 1978. In less than three months, the national touring company was formed and made its first appearance in December in Minneapolis.

This proves that "Eubie!" is a definite winner. Most touring companies are formed after the production has run about a year on Broadway.

The national touring company is a collection of talented artists, pooling their talents to make "Eubie!" a dynamic musical that will have a long life on the touring circuit.

Featured in the production is a young lady whose father also is no stranger to Baltimore. She's Chris Calloway, daughter of singing great, Cab Calloway. And she has an established track record on Broadway as well as on television.

Also featured in the cast are Donna Ingram, Gail Nelson, Kara Grannum, Kaaren Ragland, Millie Foster, Ron Gattis, Winston DeWitt Hemsley, Danny Miller Beard, Bernard Manners and Robert Anderson.

"Eubie!" which will run through Feb. 24, features 24 songs by Blake and includes some of the finest tap dancing since the grand old days of Broadway when almost every show featured at least one production full to the brim with tap.

The man responsible for the creation of the tap dancing sequences is Henry LeTang, considered to be one of the few true experts in the field. His past and present students of tap include Betty Hutton, Lena Horne, Bette Midler, Harry Belafonte, Chita Rivera, Billie Holiday, Lola Falana, Ben Vereen, Gloria Gaynor, Joey Heatherton, and Hines, Hines and Dad.

Producer Ashton Springer said recently, "When you have someone great, you stay with him." He was referring to Billy Wilson, who is responsible for the choreography and musical staging for "Eubie!"

Wilson also choreographed another Springer produced hit, "Bubbling Brown Sugar" and received a Tony Award Nomination as well as the Charlie Award from the National Association of Dance and Affiliated Artists.

Bernard Johnson designed costumes for the show that are quite stunning. The costumes range from satin dresses to tuxedos highlighted with sequins, ruffles, flounces and bows.

Johnson holds to his credit, designing costumes for such shows as "Guys and Dolls," "Bubbling Brown Sugar," "Raisin," "Ain't Supposed To Die A Natural Death" and "Don't Play Us Cheap."

The production was conceived by Julianne Boyd who came up with the idea of "Eubie!" after hearing a record album of the 1921 Broadway musical "Shuffle Along" which was written by Eubie Blake and lyricist Noble Sissle.

On a summer vacation in Woodstock, N.Y. last year, Ms. Boyd discovered the album in the local library. Two years ago, New Worlds Records, under a grant from the Rockefeller Foundation, produced a recording of "Shuffle Along," considered by theater historians as the first Broadway show produced, directed, written, and performed by blacks.

It was then that Ms. Boyd, who also directs the show, decided to create a musical revue based on the album.

She was turned down when she took her idea to the Manhattan Theatre Club because they had just agreed to present "Ain't Misbehavin'".

Determined to get the show on the boards, she found another theater and in February 1978 a showcase entitled "Shuffle Along" opened off - Broadway at Theater-Off-Park.

Critics who reviewed the production offered it great acclaim. And several legitimate theater producers offered interest but only one was prepared to move it to Broadway right away and that was Ashton Springer.

RUFFLES, TUXEDOS, FANS AND CIGARETTES — Members of the national touring company of the Broadway hit musical "Eubie!" pose with style. In photo at left, Kaaren Ragland, Gail Nelson and Donna Ingram show ruffled dresses and jeweled fans. In the photo above, dancers Bernard Manners, Sargent Faulkner and Winston DeWitt Hemsley (L to R) lunge, cigarettes aloft, in a dance number. "Eubie!" opens at the Mechanic Theater, Feb. 6 and runs through Feb. 24.

Night Scene Seen

Reviving AFRO After Hours Tradition

With Bob Matthews

Wednesday came, the snow held off, so we merrily set out on our appointed rounds to bring you the word about the clubs.

Stephanie Clayton
Rassan's Bar

Took along John "John-John" Gaskins this trip since we planned to make a foray into unknown areas. If you are a regular reader of Night Scene, you know that we encountered a few problems trying to bring you the word on Club Or, and Wells Lounge.

Gwendolyn Carter
Club Or

Club Or

So, we made another trip this week. Club Or, on Franklintown Road and Fairmount was alive and bustling and buzzed us in with nary a hitch.

Chatted with Gwendolyn Carter, who was behind the bar this eve, who shakingly tried to steer us away from commenting on the denial of admittance last week.

Gwen admitted: "I didn't know you, and I was scared, so I didn't buzz the door."

Couldn't argue with that — that's what the bulletproof glass is all about. So, we are now friends, along with Rosalind High, who was also working the bar this eve.

The club is strictly a neighborhood bar, with all the accoutrement expected. A group was watching TV in one corner, another was playing the pinball machine, while others just chit-chatted back and forth.

A sign on the wall announces disco on Fridays and Saturdays, and we were assured that they really "get down," on these days.

Might comment that the owners have done a fine job of remodeling the place.

Still can't report on Wells Lounge, for this time, we were told, "You're welcome to come in, but you can't bring your camera." So we left.

Robin Hill
Club Climax

Club Climax

Next stop was RayAnn's Club Climax at West Baltimore Street at Warwick Avenue, and a delightful place it was. The friendliness was overwhelming.

Mrs. Ann Butler, the proprietress, was there and told us she had had the place for over 10 years. In an aside, she told us she is back in school, taking some business courses at CCB.

Elizabeth Matthews
John's House of Jazz

Marguerite Brady
Silver Rail

The day manager Ethel Goines was there, as was Robin Hill behind the bar.

Although there is a small dance floor in the space opposite the bar area, Ann insists that disco is not the major thing here.

As she put it, "We cater to all age groups, whether or not they're into the disco scene."

Upstairs they have the London Room, which is used for meeting, parties and the like. In fact, the Vanguards, a group of black policemen, were holding a meeting while we were there.

Deborah Sykes
Esquire Lounge

(Continued on Page 10)

On Black Classical Music

By Dominique de Lerma

Dr. deLerma is a professor of music at Morgan State University. He also hosts "Melodies, Lyrics and Notes" on WEAA-FM on Sundays at 11:30 a.m.

How many readers of this column have ever been to an orchestra concert, not at a shopping mall, but at the Lyric Theatre?

For quite a while, we felt the idea of transporting the orchestra (no matter what city) to where the people are would, somehow through this exposure, win converts to the subscription concerts.

The conductors for the events eventually became black, and the repertoire represented something they thought black folks could "relate to." We really thought this was a good idea.

The trouble is that the hall downtown belongs to all the people, and there is certainly no harm to see one's city orchestral players in their natural habitat. As for the repertoire, there is the implication that snazzy arrangements of show tunes will do the job.

The administrators of our major orchestras made a valiant effort to win support from that minority which, in our largest cities, was at least en route to becoming the majority.

The black conductor certainly helped, but the orchestras still have so few black instrumentalists that they all appear to be tokens.

Personnel for community relations were engaged, but these were not always persons who had direct entry to black society or who really knew enough about music to discuss it.

The Detroit Symphony Orchestra, like the city where it resides, has many advantages.

On the conducting staff is Paul Freeman who is not only black, but is also an international figure and one of the most frequently recorded conductors of his generation. Dr. Freeman is no token.

Then there is Wayne Brown, a dynamo of professional reliability, who is a member of the management staff and an active member of the administrators of the National Association of Negro Musicians. Wayne Brown is no token.

Mayor Coleman, New Detroit, and all of the morale which Detroit's urban renewal projects have hastily engendered — and in a city which, a decade ago, was headed for the pits — have created an atmosphere within which there is hope. Major hope.

We should not overlook Josephine

Detroit's orchestra and the black community

H. Love, whose Your Heritage House has provided a haven for the city's youth, to learn about all the noble contributions and accomplishments by black people, too many of which have been forgotten by the older generation, and too many of which are not being taught in the school systems.

Audiences at Detroit's orchestral concerts are not yet in the same racial proportion as is the city, but the orchestra is developing a base from those who live nearer Ford Auditorium than those who must commute from the suburbs.

And now there is a new project en route. Dr. Freeman has selected the Nunes-Garcia Requiem (published by Associated Music Publishers, in New York) as the medium for involvement of the church choirs and soloists with the orchestra.

The work, coming from 1816 and written by an Afro-Brazilian composer, does not tax the abilities of a good church choir more than it does challenge the musicians, and it is a first-rate work besides.

When the auditions are over, the work will be performed by the working choirs and soloists with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra. Don't you know we both gonna be jolted out of it?

Experience certainly is what it is not enough and Detroit knows it. The plan I heard about for these events of [illegible] is sound.

The Detroit Symphony Orchestra, already proven to be a part of the city, is gaining strength by serving the public on whom it must depend.

So now, what about New York, Chicago, Atlanta, St. Louis, Cleveland, Kansas City, Boston, Houston, Miami, Baltimore, Washington and the rest? May we hear from you?

THEATER FESTIVAL — Clarence Davis, as Tshembe Matosah, returns from Europe to become a revolutionary African leader and dons his father's tribal robes in "Les Blancs," the Lorraine Hansberry drama which will be presented by Catonsville Community College (CCC) at the Region XI American College Theater Festival at CCC, Feb. 9, 10, 11. Three other productions featured during the festival will be "Becket; Five One-Act Plays," by the University of Maryland, Baltimore County; "The Snow Queen," by the University of Delaware and "The Thieves' Carnival," by Anne Arundel Community College. The three-day event, including 24 workshops, will take place on the Catonsville Community College campus, 800 S. Rolling Road. For more information, call the box office at 455-4318.

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