'Only when I laugh

Marsha Mason and Kristy McNichol make you laugh and make you cry as they star together as a brilliant Broadway actress and her spirited teenaged daughter, in Neil Simon's "Only When I Laugh".

The first of Simon's 19 plays and 17 screenplays which the prolific writer has personally produced, "Only When I Laugh", co-stars Jimmy Coco and Joan Hackett as the actress' closest friend, a waggish, unemployed actor and a fading beauty queen.

Roger Rothstein co-produced the compassionate comedy, a Columbia Pictures release, with Simon, while Emmy, Peabody and Directors Guild of America award winner Glenn Jordan makes his feature bow as director.

As Georgia Hines, who has bounced between hit shows and private storms as long as she can remember, Mason has the most challenging role of her career, one which encompasses three Academy Award nominations ("Cinderella Liberty", "The Goodbye Girl" and "Chapter Two").

Marsha Mason and Kristy McNichol play mother and daughter in "Only When I Laugh."

It was six years before that Georgia gave up custody of daughter Polly while she "straightened out her life". Her life is still in knots. But Polly had decided to move back in and won't take no for an answer.

In another year, the youngster points out, she will graduate from high school and go on to college and... "I thought it would be nice if we spent some time together before we both became the same age".

It is a characteristic insight by Simon, who admits that he could not have written "Only When I Laugh", at least "not in its present form", without the experience of having raised his own two daughters.

"You don't get nearly enough time to enjoy your kids and if you blow it, you'll never know what you missed", he observes. "During the past few years, my oldest girl, Ellen, suddenly grew up. She became a wife, a mother, a woman in her own right. And I had to relinquish some of my precious parental rights.

"It wasn't easy. But I've always had an open relationship with Ellen and my younger daughter, Nancy, the kind I wished I had had, but I didn't, with my own parents. And I found that the more I gave up, the more we came together, in a new and different way".

His children, Simon adds, have frenquently been his toughest critics. "They have said things to me which were so strong and honest that I was taken aback. But beneath it, there's always been affection and humor".

Those same qualities carry Georgia and Polly through their turbulent trial as instant roommates.

When Polly picks up a pair of Rutgers freshmen at a health food bar, and introduces her mother as her sister, Georgia goes along with the gag on one condition, "I'm not going to any proms".

Even when Georgia prepares to relinquish Polly again, under the pressure of preparing for a new play, written by her ex-lover and based on their roller-coaster romance, she continues to express it in her own wry way.

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'Honky Tonk Freeway'

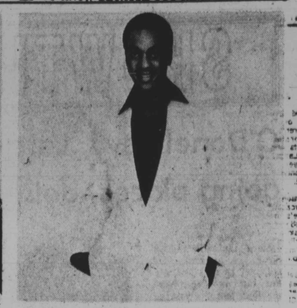
Universal Pictures, "Honky Tonk Freeway," a comic and affectionate look at contemporary America, involves a diverse and loveable group of characters who accidentally find themselves driving into Ticlaw, a tiny Florida town bypassed by a new superhighway, that will try anything to attract tourists.

One hundred and ten speaking parts comprise the cast of this very American human comedy directed by the very British John Schlesinger who successfully assimilated the American scene in such films as "Midnight Cowboy" and "The Day of the Locust" as well as presented his native outlook in such acclaimed works as "Darling," "Sunday Bloody Sunday," and "Yanks."

The huge cast of "Honky Tonk Freeway" includes William Devane, Hume Cronyn, Jessica Tandy, Beau Bridges, Beverly D'Angelo, Howard Hesseman, Teri Garr, Paul Jabara, Geraldine Page, and Daniel Stern, not to mention a water-skiing elephant named Bubbles!

William Devane, the mayor, with the elephant Bubbles, on skiis.

The Funky 4 Plus 1



Spoonie Gee

Back to school jam showdown

The Sugar Hill Gang will be in town at the Civic Center for a "Back to School Jam Showdown", Saturday and a whole lot of new rappers will be on the bill.

They are managed by a black owned company, Sugar Hill Records out of Englewood, N.J. owned by Sylvia Robinson.

Meet Spoonie Gee, real name Gabriel Jackson. He's 19, born and raised in New York and still a student majoring in Refrigeration. His hit tune is "Monster Jam" and he's backed by Sequence, the lady rappers.

Sequence are three lady rappers from Columbia, S.C. who have been singing together since high school and have a gold hit, "Funk You Up".

Blondie (Gwenolyn Chisolm) thought up the idea for the first female rapping group. She is 21, 5'2", a Libra with a B.A. in Nursing.

Angie B (Angela Lavern Brown) is 19 and a Sagittarius. She started singing in her church choir at 12 and someday hopes to do a Broadway play.

Cheryl The Pearl (Cheryl Lorraine Cook) writes and arranges most of the group's songs including "Funk You Up". She is 20 and a Scorpio.

The entire group got their start in 1979 when they were auditioned backstage at a Sugar Hill Gang concert.

The Funky Four Plus One started singing together in Junior High and performed at small parties and clubs in The Bronx, N.Y. Their hit release is "That's The Joint".

K.K. Rockwell, ("Kevin Rockwell") began singing five years ago. He was born in Atlanta, Ga. and raised in the Bronx. He is 18 and a Gemini.

Keith Ceasar was born and partially raised in Chicago. He came to New York in 1964 where he obtained most of his education in the Bronx. An Aquarius and 18. He enjoys writing many of the rhythms for their recorded tunes.

Jeff Miree always had a great love for music at the age of 12 his family allowed him to have music lessons. Born in Detroit, Mich. but spent most of his adolescene years in the Bronx. He is 17 and a Cancer.

Rodney Stone was formerly with another group entitled, "The Magnificent Seven". He attended Lehman High School where he met K.K. Rockwell. Rodney was born in the Bronx. He is a Leo and only 18.

Sharah Greene is 19. She has been singing since she was five and always had the desire to achieve a career in music. Some of her hobbies are writing songs, and playing tennis. Born under the sign of Scorpio. She would like to someday get involved in films.

Grand Master Flash and the Furious Five had their first release "Freedom" certified Gold in less than six months. These six Rapping young men from the Bronx are on the move. They have recently toured the United States with such well known artists as: Michael Henderson, Zapp, The Barkays, Stacy Lattisaw, The Commodores and many more. Their new release entitled, "The Birthday Party" has picked up momentum across the country and looks like another fantastic hit!

The primary originator of the group Joseph Saddler better known as Grand Master Flash was born in Barbados and raised in the Bronx. He has been a Disc Jockey in clubs since he was 14. He is now 23 and has come a long way from playing for small private parties.

Melvin Glover, "Melly Mel" is only 19, a Taurus and has been a Disc Jockey since he was 15. He is the brother to "Kid Creole", another member of the group.

Eddie Morris, "Mr. Ness", has been playing the drums since he was 14. He is a Scorpio and comes from a family of five sisters.

Guy Williams, "Rahiem", began his singing career at 9 while he was still attending elementary school. He attended Truman High School where he later met Flash. He is an Aquarius and 17.

Keith Wiggins, "Cowboy", was only 16 when he began playing as a Disc Jockey for clubs. He is a Virgo, and is 20.

Danny Glover "Kid Creole", has been rapping since 1976. He attended Roosevelt High School and is 20. He wrote most of the rhymes for "Freedom" and enjoys writing music.

Rapping... black and white and crossover

Bill Lane in Hollywood

Kurtis Blow blew millions of black youth out of their musical chairs when he came on via records and radio with his kinetic "rap" recordings. It was not the first time that such peculiar talk recordings with musical background had suddenly become a highly saleable product on the American market. A fellow named Larry Darnell had sold millions of his talk records years ago, especially one based on the song "I'll Get Along Somehow." And there...were...others. But Kurtis Blow used the music of today's black youth as a background for his esoteric outpourings that touched the minds of young men who secretly wanted to learn how to "get down" with speech rather than with their dancing feet.

Sylvia Robinson, who made hits years back with her "Love Is Strange" and "Pillow Talk" recordings, began recording special rap series, featuring the Sugar Hill Gang, the Funky Four and the Treacherous Three. She herself became known as the Queen of Rap. Jockey Jack Gibson became Jack The Rapper.

But suddenly black radio began a ban on rap records. Some black program directors said the recordings were too profane. Some said they were "too black." How black one can or cannot be in black radio is anybody's guess. Many blacks years ago shunned and condemned the "jive talk" of Cab Calloway and the late Chicago Defender writer Dan Burley.

In fact, in those days it was more chic to be ebony than black. There were songs, like "Ebony Rhapsody." Billy Daniels was the only singer who got away with "Old Black Magic."

Nowadays, it's peculiar that black radio in banning rap records by black artists made a cross-over hit of the new rap recording of the white singer Blondie. Some black stations are also playing a Cockney-sounding "Wikiwrap" disc from Sam Records, also featuring a white singer. One fellow joked, "Next thing you know they'll be selling skin-bleach creams."

When disco was ablaze white discos were criticized for banning mostly black-speech disco songs in favor of those by white singers and musicians. Now some black-oriented radio stations are doing the same thing.

It would seem that way. If our young people sound "too black," we made them that way. They sound like us.

I attended a club a few nights ago where the place was packed with whites from the L. A. news media and the recording industry. A young white fellow who's a music critic for a big daily newspaper was the in-house deejay, spinning rap records like they were the life blood of the place. People were gettin' down all over the dance floor.

It was notable that virtually every song played was by a black singer, or a black group. Why? Because there are comparatively no white rap records with the funky black beat and rapidfire words of the streets.

But they remedied that after awhile. Deejay Ken Tucker of the Herald-Examiner put on a recording that featured only a soundtrack of stompdown, funky black music. And up to the mike stepped two white chaps called the "Age of Consent," and they began to rap over the music background like two Angol-Saxon Kurtis Blows.

I understand now that similar happenings are taking place all over the U.S., with white hipsters doing their level best to turn out their own brand of rap records. Before long, as a natural corollary, the white rock stations that have been playing black rap products will join the contemporary black-oriented radio stations and stop playing them.

White rap will be in, and, once again, blacks will have helped to kill their own generic, indigenous creativity. Shades of the days when American blacks were ashamed of their own spirituals, blues and jazz. Of course, the subsequent white stamp of approval may have made us proud, but it surely did not bring more money to our pockets. In most cases we lost it, to new white producers and promoters who knew a good money thing when they saw it.

The $140-billion-a-year black consumer just might be speinding himself into the poorhouse — by steadily seeking to buy white.

But maybe there's a bright side. Sylvia Robinson says her Sugar Hill Records is preparing to record white rap singers wherever she can find them. So, just as white insurance companies have for years hired black salesmen to gather black business, perhaps this black woman recording executive can upgrade her monetary coffers by tapping the white market the way Ewart Abner did when his black-owned V-J record firm recorded Frankie Valli and the Four Seasons.

The Mean Machine

Grandmaster Flash and the Furious Five

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TV Watching

By Vanessa Johnson
Prister

Good Evening, Captain: The host of TV's longest-running children's show, Bob Keeshan, celebrates his silver jubilee. Guests who help celebrate are: Ted Lange, Jarod Dulica, Todd Bridges, Kim Fields and Lynnanne Page. 6:00-6:30 p.m.-Ch. 2.

Benson: Individual vignettes showcasing each member of Katie's mansion family are played out by the cast as she envisions each one while describing them in a school essay. Starring Robert Guillaume. 8:00-8:30 p.m.-Ch. 13.

Baseball: The Baltimore Orioles meet the A's at the Oakland Coliseum. 10:30-12:30 a.m.-Ch. 2.

Saturday

Pat Albert: The gang learns not to underestimate people who wear glasses. Hosted by Bill Cosby. 12:00-12:30 p.m.-Ch. 2.

Weekend Special: "The Winged Girl", against the wishes of his uncle young Charles decides to ride their unusual colt. Part 2 of 3. 12:05-12:30 p.m.-Ch. 13.

Soul Train: Performances by The Spinners and Skyy. 12:30-1:30 p.m.-Ch. 11.

30 Minutes: A look at the lives of a diplomat's children in an African nation. 1:30-2:00 p.m.-Ch. 2.

Baseball: The Baltimore Orioles meet the A's at the Oakland Coliseum. 4:30-6:30 p.m.-Ch. 2.

Sha Na Na: Guests The Spinners sing "Cupid". 7:00-7:30 p.m.-Ch. 4.

Enos: The country cop bears echoes from home in the case of an urban moonshiner who strongarms customers. Starring Samuel E. Wright. 8:00-9:00 p.m.-Ch. 2.

NFL Football: The Washington Redskins vs the Colts in an exhibition game, taped earlier tonight at Memorial Stadium in Baltimore. 11:30-1:30 a.m.-Ch. 2.

Movie: "Death of a Gunfighter", a tough marshal vs community leaders. Starring Lena Horne. 11:45-1:45 a.m.-Ch. 7.

Sunday

Kids Are People Too: Guests include Todd Bridges of "Diff'rent Strokes", and figure skaters Tai Babilonia and Randy Gardner. 10:30-11:30 a.m.-Ch. 13.

Movie: "Stormy Weather", entertaining all black backstage tale about a struggling tap dancer and his singing-star lady love. Starring Bill Robinson and Lena Horne. 12:30-2:00 p.m.-Ch. 9.

Baseball: The Baltimore Orioles vs the A's at the Oakland Coliseum. 4:30-6:30 p.m.-Ch. 2.

Movie: Supernatural possession torments a Manhattan couple and their child in "Audrey Rose". 9:00-11:00 p.m.-Ch. 4.

The Jeffersons: Despite George's protests and her own embarrassment, Louise is coaxed into going to a male strip show. Starring Sherman Hemsley and Isabel Sanford. 9:30-10:00 p.m.-Ch. 2.

Trapper John, M.D.: A student nurse has eyes for Gonzo but finds romance with Trapper. Starring Gregory Harrison and Madge Sinclair. 10:00-11:00 p.m.-Ch. 2.

Monday

Roots of Rock 'n Roll: The Doobie Brothers are the hosts for a look at the years from 1975 to the present. Featured is a tribute to Donna Summer and others. 8:00-9:00 p.m.-Ch. 2.

Movie: The "Death Penalty" invites a 15-year old gang leader who killed two teenagers, unless a psychiatrist can save him from the electric chair. Starring Ted Ross. 9:00-11:00 p.m.-Ch. 11.

Merv Griffin: Guests include singer Ray Parker Jr. of Raydio. 9:00-10:00 p.m.-Ch. 5.

Baseball: The Baltimore Orioles take on the Mariners at Seattle. 10:30-12:30 a.m.-Ch. 2.

Tonight: Guest host Bill Cosby is joined by WBC welterweight champion Sugar Ray Leonard. 11:30-12:30 a.m.-Ch. 11.

Eric Kilpatrick stars as Ricky Duran, the intrepid soundman for television news reporter Jessica Novak on "Jessica Novak" a new drama series premiering this fall on Thursdays on CBS.

Olufunmilay at Inner Harbor

Olufunmilayo and Company, an African dance group, will perform at the Harry D. Kaufman Pavilion on August 25 as a part of the Inner Harbor's Little People's Program at noon and Kid's Stuff at 7 p.m.

They rhythm, the movement, and the colorful costumes of the dancers magically draw the entire family into a world far beyond the boundaries of the imagination. The African tribal dances combine dance, music, magic, history, and song to create a unique visual and educational fun-fare for children.

The dance troupe, formed in May 1973, travels to cities across the United States while maintaining its home base in Baltimore. The Olufunmilayo Dance Company has performed for group organizations, colleges, theatres and festivals.

For more information on the Inner Harbor's free children's program call the Baltimore Office of Promotion and Tourism at 685-TOUR (8687).

Free Films

Admission to all film programs is free.

"Weekend", "What Fixed Mir", and "What is a Friend?", three films in which teenagers come to grips with important issues, will be screened at 5:30 p.m. on Mon., Aug. 24, at the Light Street Branch, 1251 Light St.

"The Hound of the Baskervilles", with Basil Rathbone as Sherlock Holmes on the track of a supernatural hound in the misty English moors, will be screened at 3 p.m. on Wed., Aug. 26, at the Central Library, 400 Cathedral St.

"Blockheads", a Laurel and Hardy comedy, will be screened at 6 p.m. on Wed., Aug. 26, at the Pennsylvania Avenue Branch, 931 W. North Ave.

"The Doorsbury Special", an animated film based on the comic strip, and two short added attractions, will be screened at 6 p.m. on Wed., Aug. 26, at the Reservoir Hill Center, 2201 Park Ave.

"A Chump at Oxford", in which Laurel and Hardy mingle with higher education, will be screened at 6:30 p.m. on Wed., Aug. 26, at the Light Street Branch, 1251 Light St.

Free events for children

Monday, August 24

Canton Center: Films- "The Hospital" and "Very Good Friends", 4 p.m.

Wednesday, August 26

Govans Branch: Creative Drama Workshop, 1 p.m.

Hamilton Branch: Films- "Towed in a Hole", "Alexander and the Car With a Missing Headlight", and "Peewee's Pancia", 1 p.m.

Pimlico Branch: Films- "Lickety-Split Licorice", "Billy the Kid", and "Granny Lives in Galway", 1 p.m.

Clifton Center: Film- "The Incredible Cat Tale", 1:30 p.m.

Brooklyn Branch: Films- "Dr. Seuss on the Loose" and "Maurice Sendak's Really Rosie Starring the Nutshell Kids", 2 p.m.

Highlandtown Center: Films- "Cicero: The Queen's Drum Horse" and "A Movie Star's Daughter", 3 p.m.

Pennsylvania Avenue Branch: Film- "The Red Balloon", 2 p.m.

Northwood Branch: Films- "Billy the Kid", "Five Survivor" and "Lickety-Split Licorice", 2:30 p.m.

Thursday, August 27

Light Street Branch: Film- "Dear Lovey Hart: I Am Desperate", 1 p.m.

Pimlico Branch: Films- "Lickety-Split Licorice" and "Billy the Kid", 1 p.m.

Waverly Branch: Films- "Hurry, Hurry" and "Brats", 1 p.m.

Friday, August 28

Patterson Park Branch: Film- "Pippi Longstocking", 3:15 p.m.

'Sin' at Walters

Sinners roast and are cruelly tortured by gleeful devils in the jaws of Hell in the "Wages of Sin", an exhibition of manuscripts, rare books, and objects at the Walters Art Gallery. How the sinners got in such dire straits is made clear in an array of depictions of sins: gluttony, lust, and pride for example. Given the great imagination and variety displayed in the scenes of temptation and punishment, the exhibition demonstrates that artists took a perverse delight in picturing otherwise off-limits subjects.

A small tribute to Baltimore's summer heat, the exhibition runs through October 11, and is located on the third floor of the Centre Street building.

Admission to the Walters Art Gallery is always free.

At a recent concert in Dayton, Sharon Bryant, member of A&M recording group Atlantic Starr, took time out for a warm hug from Motown recording artist Rick James. Atlantic Starr is currently on tour in support of their third album, "Radiant" with Rick, followed by a tour with Smokey Robinson

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Columbia Records celebrates

In celebration of the release of Cheryl Lynn's fourth album "In The Night", Columbia Records feted the songbird to gala receptions on both East and West Coast recently. Cheryl is show with king rapper Kurtis Blow, who stopped by the festivities in New York. (Photo top left).

Walter Jackson (aka The Doctor) filled many of his own Rx when he performed at New York-New York Disco in a special one night concert. Shown with Walter after his performance are Lou Courtney, Archie Bell and recording artists Ben E. King. (Photo top right).

Deneice Williams seems to have Walter Jackson under her spell! Walter stopped by backstage after Deneice's electrifying performance at the Savoy in the big apple recently. And word has it that Ms Williams has been bringing the house down in each of the 17 cities she toured! (Lower Left).

Michael and Robert Brookings make up the musical team of AfterBach. The brothers are signed to ARC-Columbia and their debut LP entitled 'Matinee' is produced by Verdine White of Earth, Wind & Fire. AfterBach have just completed an eight city promotion tour for the album accompanied by Verdine into St. Louis, Chicago, Detroit, New York, Philadelphia, Washington, Baltimore and Atlanta before returning home to California.

Legendary saxophonist Dexter Gordon celebrated his 40th anniversary in the music business with a special lunch hour performance high atop New York's Empire State Building (Photo lower right).

Cloister's Museum

The Cloisters Children's Museum will be offering special weekday activities during the last two weeks of August and the first week of September. Tye Dying Week will be August 19, 20 and 21. From 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. a workshop in all types of tye dye and dip and dye techniques will be free and open for visitors. August 26, 27 and 28 will be a special Printmaking Week where techniques in stenciling and object and fish printing can be explored. The week of September 2, 3 and 4 will be Sandpainting Week in the afternoons and a General Tour for the public to learn about the history, objects and architecture of the building. The tour will begin at 11 a.m.

★ Beautiful AFRO Clean Block ★

The 400 blk. E. Federal St. is painted blue and white. They were clean and sparkling. The captain is Mrs. Octavia Robinson; co-captain Leroy Washington and advisor, Lonnie Ray, and coordinator, Darryl Coleman of Urban Services.

Photo by Vanessa Johnson

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See your Travel Agent for reservations and information on these Great Goombay Dollar Savers, which are available through Adventure Tours, Bahama Island Tours, Caribbean Holidays or Go-Go Tours. Or call toll free 800-327-0787.

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