Antonio Ongsingo: sensation in horse world

Linda Zang and her horse Fellow Traveler

By Ida Peters

Antonio Ongsingo a 26-year-old Peabody student, who has only been studying dance for a year, is the first person in the world to have danced with a horse and rider.

He not only performed but choreographed "Adage for Horse, Rider, and Dancer" that was the 'sensation of the Baltimore Internationale Jumping Classic at the Civic Center, the Washington Horse Show and the Madison Square Gardens National Horse Show last October and November.

Since November, Ongsingo has been the subject of many local and national media articles in Maryland Horse, The Georgetowner, The New York Times and is one of People Magazines' persons to watch in 1983.

The dance that he choreographed is a stunning routine with a dressage horse, rider and dancer. The effect on audiences is highly emotional. A beautiful dressage horse with elegant girl rider and a young man stripped to the waist with gorgeous muscles enter the arena and stand poised. The lights go out.

Over the the loud speaker you hear Neil Diamond's "Americ". Ongsingo says the message of the song "is everything we have in this country right thre before the audience: man and woman; human and animal; black and white; work and art. The whole American ideal coming together".

Then in Alan Parsons Projects "Eye of the Tiger" Ongsingo portrays the historical fantasy of man's interaction with the horse. The dance begins in a competition of a love-hate situation. Man sees the power of the animal and thinks he can do better. Then as each learns what the other can do, a respect emerges. From this, a unity evolves, until man and horse are doing the same movements together".

—

The other [illegible] dressage riders are Kelley Corrigan and her Swedish horse, Nöbel and Linda Zang and her great horse, Fellow Traveller. And, it was Ken Holt in charge of the entertainment for the Junior League 1982 Baltimore Internationale Jumping Classic that thought of the dancers and dressage horses and Dale Schnert, chairman of the dance department of Peabody who thought of on horse, on rider, one dancer idea, who recommended Ongsingo.

—

Antonio Ongsingo took five weeks to create this sensational dance by studying long hours at the Enoch Pratt Library. Todayhis a sensation in the horse world. He gets up at 6 a.m. every day, runs 20 miles, works in the Peabody office, takes four hours of dance classes and workouts at night... and then runs home.

In three short months, he has won a Peabody Scholarship; there is a possiblity of a national tour; a PBS $150,000 [illegible] on his life. Plus, the owner of the Black Stallion, a Texan who saw him in Madison Square Garden has engaged him for a promotion tour for the movie "Black Stallion II" coming out in gmarch.

Who is Antonio Ongsingo? Where is he coming from? Why his odd name?

The AFRO talked with him last week in our home office about his hopes and dreams and his family. He is an outgoing young man, uninhibited and a joy to talk to.

He is the son of a black Haitian mother and a Chinese - Philippino father. He has five sisters and one brother who attended Poly and is a senior flight attendant for World Airways.

They grew up in the Flag House Projects and because his mother was extremely dark and his father Chinese looking the kids in the neigbborhood resented his family and "didn't like us because you [illegible] somebody".

Antonio remembers that his mother instilled in her seven children "to work ethnic, have short term goals and work hard to achieve the prize".

He remembers that his mother was raised in an orphanage in Haiti nd stressed not race, "but be an individual". They had an old upright piano and she used to give free piano lessons to kids in the neighborhood.

His dad, who died six years ago was merchant [illegible] and when he was home would get up at 6 a.m. to make biscuits, blueberry pie and other goodies. His sisters were always on a diet so he ate and grew up a little fat boy.

His father was Catholic and his mother a Jehovah's Witness. After her children were grown, Antonio says his mother, now 56, went back to school at Eastern High School and later enrolled in Sojourner-Douglass College. Her philosophy is that "you can always [illegible]".

Antonio attended David E. Weglein Elementary; Woodbourne Junior High and Patterson High School.

He got interested in body building and weight lifting to get rid of his baby fat and protect his five sisters.

Antonio Ongsingo . . . to tour for movie "Black Stallion."

SHOWTIME

Kevin Wilson winner of 'Divine Sarah' contest

For the last two weeks the AFRO's Entertainment Department has been running "The Divine Sarah" Contest. Letters have been pouring into our office from all over Baltimore with folks trying to win two free tickets to see Miss Sassy at the new Joseph Meyerhoff Symphony Hall, Sunday, January 16.

Folks let me tell you it has been a heck of a job selecting just one winner. The letters have been extremely creative, full of poem and prose. We sincerely wish that everyone who wrote a letter could be a winner, but unfortunately there could only be one.

Kevin Wilson our winner writes:

She is magnificently talented all seem to agree, with hr "Emmy", Grammy nominations, and honorary degrees. Fitzgerald, Ross, Price, Streisand and Horne, have all been referred to as the greatest singer ever born.

Vaughan sings from Jazz to opera-her voice like a fine crafted gem stone, a rare and multi-faceted diamond that places her in a peerless throne. Woe unto any singer who has to follow the "Divin One", Sarah will never have to fear of being out done!

Sassy's golden hits include "Misty", "Close To You" and "Eternally", "Whatever Lola Wants" and "Broken-hearted Melody", "Perdido", "Poor Butterfly", and "How Important Can It Be?" I love to see her come out in one of her gorgeous designer gowns, and chirp my favorite song "Send In the Clowns".

On this one beautiful song of personal tragedy and love, Sarah's voice goes from bullfrong baritone to soaring like a dove. She was brilliant in her PBS special "Rhapsody and Song". It netted hr an "Emmy" which she's deserved for so long. Her 1978 special "Live At Wolfe Trap" was excellent without a doubt. Vaughan's version of "Someone to Watch Over Me" is what singing is all about.

Her recent album "Gershwin, Live!" is a tribute to the magic she can weave, a magical spell so strong nobody in the auditorium wanted to leave. While many singers voices decay like grapes left on the vine, Sarah's has ripened and aged like a fine French wine.

Many have proclaimed Ella the queen, but Ella has only one thing to say, Sarah Vaughan is the "greatest singing talent in world today". What more can I say?

Miss Sassy, Sarah Vaughn will be appearing in concert at the Meyerhoff Symphony Hall, Sunday, Jan. 16, 1983.

Rebecca Sydnor at Gallery 409

The Urban Services Cultural Arts Program presents lyric soprano Rebecca Sydnor at Gallery 409 on Sunday, Jan. 16 at 5 p.m.

Rebecca Sydnor is a Baltimore native who is a graduate of Towson State University. She has been a prize winner in the Marion Anderson Vocal Competitions, a finalist in the Metropolitan Opera Regional Auditions, and a recipient of a Hermitage Foundation Scholarship.

Miss Sydnor is currently pursuing a Master of Music Degree in Performing at the University of Maryland, and is studying with Leon Fleming. She has also studied and performed in Graz, Austria under the auspices of the American Institute of Musical Studies.

Gallery 409 is located at 409 N. Charles St. For further information call 276-4646.

Rebecca Sydnor

Disney characters come alive on ice

The stage is set and the only unanswered question is: "Who will triumph? Mickey Mouse, Donald Duck, Cinderella and the Handsome Prince? Or the fiendish Evil Queen?

Mickey and his Disney friends plus a host of world class figure skaters from the four corners of the earth are at the Baltimore Civic Center for a classic showdown between "right and might' when they challenge the Evil Queen and her hideous Black Guard. And the outcome remains in the hands of fate.

It all happens in the World Premiere Edition of Irvin Feld and Kenneth Feld's Walt Disney Great Ice Odyssey playing now thru Sunday, Jan. 16.

Walt Disney's Great Ice Odyssey combines the fun of Walt Disney with the best figure skating in the world. America's "bigger-than-life" superstar, Mickey Mouse, departs from his traditional roles to become a heroic adventurer to save the world from the forces of evil. Audiences cheer the good guys and boo the villains as the hands of time are turned back to the days of old when fire-breathing dragons roamed the countryside and knights in shining armor rescued fair damsels in distress.

A host of Disney celebrities star in bold new roles as never before seen. The lovable Goofy becomes entrapped in a web of intrigue; the irasciable Donald Duck becomes a "hero of the day" when he fights off a legion of warriors; Winnie-the-Pooh and his friend Tigger lead a fantasyland dance band; the Fairy Godmother creates a mysterious Time Tunnel; and the Big Bad Wolf allies himself with the sinister Evil Queen.

The entire extravaganza is underscored by a medle of famous Dinesy tunes. A 50-member precision skating ensemble creates a kaleidoscope of sights and sound in four brilliant production numbers. Beautiful figure skating and comedy treats delight young and old in this all-new live family entertainment adventure.

Marlon Johnson, Jr., from Atlanta, GA. and Eric Lee Smith of Cleveland Heights, Ohio are shown as they appear at leisure and on the job. Both enjoy and work at skating in the all-new epic ice adventure "Walt Disney's Great Ice Odyssey" at the Civic Center thru Sunday, Jan. 16.

BOB MATTHEWS Night Scene Seen

Got into a big discussion the other day which revolved around the question, "Which is the oldest continuously operated nightclub in Baltimore, which features live entertainment.

The three nominees were The Sphinx Club and the Casino on Pennsylvania Ave., and the Club Astoria over on Edmondson Ave. It was conceded that there are probably some bars in town which have been in continuous operation longer, but these were the ones who had a history of live music.

Not being a native Baltimorean (Detroit is our hometown), couldn't answer for the period prior to WWII, but the arguments raged hot and heavy.

Have to lean on some of our AFRO readers with long memories to set the matter straight. If you have an answer, please drop us a note, or give us a call.

Guess this whole question was precipated by word reaching us that the Sphinx Club has opened its second-floor bar. The entire place is undergoing a restructuring, what with a VIP room called "Charlie's Room" in the works.

—

While checking around, found out that Bill Harris, along with Jenelle Fisher, will be the weekend attraction at the Soul Shack. This kinda made us wonder what was happening on Thursday night, the usual beginning to the weekends live entertainment.

These nights have been a fixture for Carlos Johnson, so we kinda wondered where he was. Found out that he is in Atlantic City, playing an engagement at the Claridge Casino as backup to vocalist Damita Jo.

—

The Left Bank Jazz Society has announced its opening attraction which is scheduled for Sunday, February 6 at 5 p.m.

The Marsalis brothers will bring their group into the Famous. The group is led by Wynton Marsalis, who is rapidly laying claim to being the top trumpeter extant.

Branford is the other Marsalis, who concentrates on the reed instruments. This has got to be a dynamite session, and one you should plan to attend.

—

The Woodstock Lounge over on Park Heights Ave. continues to pack them in for the live music sessions on Tuesdays and Fridays. There has been a slight change in the Tuesday lineup.

Actually, Ralph Fisher has replaced Bobby Ward on drums. The rest of the group, Mr. Dennis, reeds; Tom Hurley, organ, and Jenelle Fisher, vocals, remains the same.

This is the same group which will be featured on the Friday happy hour sets, backing up Lady Rebecca for the date.

Made us kinda wonder what happened to Bobby Ward. A little investigation divulged that he is playing a 6-nights-a-week gig over in Alexandria, Va. with an integrated group.

—

The live music scene continues to dwindle. The Saturday afternoon jazz jams at the Sportsmen's Lounge are in hiatus. Rather than live music, there are classic jazz albums played.

Of course there is live entertainment in the evenings, this week featuring Dave and Marlene Ross. Dropped in to the lounge last Monday night, and am happy to report that this night is really thriving.

Another club which is taking a respite, for about a month, from the live music scene is Gatsby's. To all intents and purposes, the Billie Holliday Room is closed, except for special cocktail sips and things of that ilk.

Of course, the downstairs is still jumping and will continue to do so.

James Booker's N.Y.

New York is Gov. Mario Cuomo setting himself up in an old familiar pattern black politicans know so well? While admitting that it was the black vote that got him in, his beginning symbols spell for bad politics. There were no blacks in the "inner circle" announced in Albany during the inagural and two key jobs, Secretary of State and head of the Women's Division—have been lost to blacks in favor of white women. The naming of a black woman to head Housing Preservation , where there is little new mortgage money, and a reappointment in Labor to solve unemployment in a near depression period, do not satisfy the black male ego.

—

Former Harlem Democratic district leader Mrs.. Virginia Bell, who was nominated by New Jersey's Gov. Kean for the State Divison of Women, wrote him to withdraw her name for consideration after the State Senate failed to confirm her nomination because of the confusion over the honorary degree she received from a southern college.

—

Show Biz: Look for 1983 tobring some new life in Harlem. Plans are underway for a new group to take over the shuttered Vincent's Place and the long closed Renaissance is being discussed for renovations and renewal... Insiders also advise that Percy Sutton's Apollo revival is still up in the air, but might be settled before too long... Rodney, the chef at Lenox Avenue's new Casablanca, formerly spent eleven years at the Playboy Club and did a brief stint with the New York Jets... Popular Irene Reid to bring her soul singing back to the small's Paradise next weekend... Nearly a dozen ex-New Yorkers including former newscaster Barbara Gelobter and producer Lloyd Weaver among those in Nigeria helping to setup and train Nigerians for their national television network.

Hurst exhibit at Louies

Artistdesigner Laurence Hurst will exhibit his work at Louies Bookstore ' Cafe at 518 Charles St., from January 16 to February 28.

A multi-talented artist, Hurst is known widely for his drawings and paintings. He has studied at the Maryland Institute and at the Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.

Hurst works as ArtistDesigner for the States Commission on Afro-American History and Culture thats involved with the development of the Banneker-Douglass Museum in Annapolis.

He has a major exhibition titled the 'Pyramid Series' which will oegin museum showing later this winter.

Laurence Hurst, artist - designer will exhibit at Louie's Bookstore Cafe from Jan. 9 - Feb. 28, located at 518 Charles St. Hurst has studied at the Maryland Institute and Smithsonian Institute in D.C. He is artist - designer for Commission on Afro - American History and Culture.

Pratt Happenings

Talks

Women who overeat will be the subject of two one-hour classes conducted by Taffy Griswold, clinical social worker, beginning at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, Jan. 18 and 25, at the Waverly Branch, 400 E. 33rd St. Free. Call 467-3980 for more information.

—

Films

Admission to all film programs are free.

"Swiss Miss", escapades of Laurel and Hardy at an Alpine resort, will be screened at 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday, Jan. 19, at the Fells Point Center, 606 S. Ann St.

"A Married Woman", Jean-Luc Godard's treatment of a young wife's dilemma, will be screened at 7:30 p.m. on Wednesday, Jan. 19, at the Central Pratt Library, 400 Cathedral St.

—

Free events for children

Monday, Jan. 17

Canton Center, 1030 S. Ellwood Ave.: Film, "Shoeshine Girl", 4 p.m.

—

Wednesday, Jan. 19

Highlandtown Center, 3323 Eastern Ave.: Feature-length film based on a book by Astrid Lindgren, 3 p.m.

Dundalk Avenue Branch, 912 Dundalk Ave.: Films, "The Little Mermaid" and "The Tale of Custard the Dragon", 3 p.m.

Brooklyn Branch, 300 E. Patapsco Ave.: Films, "Hoober-Bloob Highway" and "Granny Lives in Galway", 3:30 p.m.

Light Street Branch, 1251 Light St.: Film, "The Trouble with Tribbles", 3:30 p.m.

Walbrook Branch, 3203 W. North Ave.: Films, "The Ransom of Red Chief" and "Skating Rink", 3:30 p.m.

Thursday, Jan. 20

Northwood Branch, 4420 Loch Raven Blvd.: Films, "Mr. Gimme" and "Miss Nelson is Missing", 3:30 p.m.

Friday, Jan. 21

Patterson Park Branch, 158 N. Linwood Ave.: Films, "The Cricket in Times Square", Superman in "The Bulleteers'," and "Superman in 'The Mummy Strikes'," 3:15 p.m.

Friday Plus
THE WEEKLY ENTERTAINMENT/ LEISURE TIME GUIDE FOR WASHINGTON AND BALTIMORE
Includes A Complete T.V. Guide
Published every week-end in the Baltimore and Washington AFRO-AMERICAN
You know because you read... The AFRO
For further information contact your Advertising Representative at 728-8200

The American Music Awards, one of the recording industry's most prestigious honors will celebrate its 10th anniversary live on the ABC network, Monday, Jan. 17.

Since the first telecast in 1974, some of the award winners, hosts and presenters have included (l to r, top) Rodney Allen Rippey, Ricky Segall, Diana Ross, (bottom, l to r) Chuck Berry, Lief Garrett, Smokey Robinson, Helen Reddy and Dick Clark, who is the executive producer of the annual telecast.

Stage, film and recording artist Melba Moore will appear as herself on the ABC Television Network's top - rated daytime serial, "All My Children," Friday, Jan. 14 and Monday, Jan. 17, 1 p.m. on both days.

This week on black talk shows

By Vanessa Johnson

Black Horizons: Discussion on the investigation into the death of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Guests include Les Payne, journalist. Hosted by Dwayne Wickham. Saturday, 7:30-8:00 p.m.-Ch. 11.

—

Gospel Variations: Guests this week include The King David Singers; and The Jim Heath Singers. Hosted by Al Stewart. Sunday, 8g;00-8:30 a.m.'Ch. 11.

—

City Line: Reviews with teenage actress Kim Fields of "Facts of Life" fame and telephone interview with Lou Gossett, Jr.; Also Rev. Bill Minnes from "Alliance For Success". Entertainment video tape on Michael McDonald. Hosted by Dan Henson, Jaki Hall; Entertainment, Tim Watts and World and News Report with Tea Mentler. 12:00-1:00 p.m.-Ch. 13.

Ten of Hollywood's most lovely women are about to cover up those lovely smiles with crash helmets to participate in a smashing demolition derby, in "Celebrity Daredevils," a two - hour special featuring some of Hollywood's top personalities, Sunday, Jan. 16, on the ABC network. Shown are: Linda Blair, Barbi Benton, Donna Dixon, Gloria Loring, Jenilee Harrison, Telma Hopkins, Meredith MacRae, Cathy Silvers, Shelley Smith and Betty Thomas.

Melba Moore on "All My Children"

An original song, created for the ABC Television Network's daytime serial, "All My Children", will be sung on the show by stage, film and recording artist Melba Moore.

The song, "Easy to Say, Hard to Do", was written by Lesley Gore and Oscar-winning composer Sid Ramin, who composes and arranges the incidental [illegible] "All My Children".

Melba Moore will sing when she appears as herself on the show today, Friday, Jan. 14, and Monday, Jan. 17 (both days at 1 p.m.) The setting will be the elegant New York nightclub, the Nexus, newly created for "All my Children".

Ms Moore starred as Sheila in the Broadway musical, "Hair", nd played opposite Cleavon Little in the Tony Award-winning musical, "Purlie". The song "I Got Love", from "Purlie" became her personal trademark. Her films include "Hair", "Lost in the Stars", and "Cotton Comes to Harlem". On television she won acclaim for her portrayal of Harriet Tubman in an ABC Television Network special, "The American Woman: Portraits of Courage". She co-starred in the made-for-television film, "Flamingo Road", guest starred on ABC's "The Love Boat" and had her own summer series on the CBS Television Network. Additionally, she has recorded a number of hit singles and albums.

STRAIGHT MAN

After years as one of America's top comedians, Charlie Kirby is now [illegible] become a straight man. Following a long battle with drugs, which saw him imprisoned in 1977, Kirby has gone straight. Don't miss *George Kirby Presents King Heroin.* On this upcoming edition of Tony Brown's Journal, the famous funny-man and impressionist lays it on the line about the dangers of drugs and his life in prison.

Starting of the month, the Journal presents *When the Sisters Come Marching Home,* a promo of the first Black WAC unit to serve overseas during WWII.

And later in January, Tony Brown brings you *National Urban League: What Direction?* with the League's president, John Jacob. And *A Black Man's Life in White America,* an autobiographical exposé on growing up in White America by Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Roger Wilkins.

This January, keep informed. Keep tuned to Tony Brown's Journal.

Photo: Bert Andrews

Presented by Pepsi-Cola Company

For an issue of the Tony Brown's Journal Magazine featuring Black history of facts and entertainment program transcripts and background information, please enclose $3.00 and send to:
Tony Brown's Produktions
1500 Broadway, Suite 2014
New York, NY 10036

WMPB-TV, Ch. 67, Thursday, January 20, 11:30 PM
WAPB-TV, Ch. 22, Thursday, January 20, 11:30 P.M

JAN