Showtime

IDA PETERS What's Happening

Watching a movie being made!

Part 1

Baltimore was warm and sunny last week as we flew off to Dallas-Fort Worth, Texas. There we transferred to a little 15 passenger plane for an hour's ride to Fort Smith, Arkansas.

Occasion was an invitation from Columbia Pictures to visit the set of "A Soldier's Story" finishing up shooting after nine weeks.

Trip was arranged by a black consulting firm, Tri-Ad Consultants headed by Charles Richardson and Angela Smith. Along with Don Levy, the Columbia publicist we spent two days of interviews and watched Patti LaBelle make her movie debut as Big Mary. Her part was added to the film as a woman was not in the original "A Soldier's Play" by the Negro Ensemble Company.

During the two days press people did one on one interviews with the stars and the director, Norman Jewison and producers Norman Jewison and Ronald L. Schwary.

The weather turned cold as soon as we hit Fort Chaffee in Fort Smith. The first day we toured Fort Smith after checking in at the Sheraton Inn. Then we visited the set which was an abandoned barracks. Howard E. Rollins Jr. was being photographed for stills. Don Levy who was directing this operation was also the publicist for "Midnight Express" and we first met in Baltimore.

Making the tour was Billy Rowe, columnist from NYC; Ed Castleberry, National Black Radio Network; James Borders, The Black Collegian, New Orleans; Karen Glover, Black Beat Magazine; Emery Holmes, editor Players Magazine; Jack Slater, free-lance Essence; Curtis Marlowe, Right On Chain; and Monroe Fredericks, photographer for Ebony and Jet.

The first night Patti LaBelle entertained the cast and patrons of Faux Pax night club behind the Sheraton Hotel and was photographed and videotaped for a segment of "Entertainment Tonight".

The second day was spent entirely on the set and in between interviews with cast members we watched daily rushes.

If you've seen the play one key scene is where Howard Rollins, as the smart young lawyer confronts Dennis Lipscomb as Captaon Taylor. Taylor is the white West Point trained commanding officer of Fort Neal's segregated troops.

The cast and crew spent all-day shooting this one scene and Howard Rollins is terrific. Just as in "Ragtime"- he comes across as a powerful controlled actor.

Norman Jewison told us after the screening that he hopes to have a "exciting tight film. It is a mystery film" and he hopes that movie-goers will get caught up by the characters . Jewison produced and directed screen versions of musical "Fiddler on the Roof" and "Jesus Christ Superstar".

CHARLES RICHARDSON, Tri-Ad Consultants has been in the advertising and research business for seven years. His firm provides marketing services on black consumers to firms such as Columbia Pictures, Brown and Williamson, and General Foods.

A business major graduate of Syracuse University he started his career at Lever Brothers and then joined Beech-Nut as group supervisor. In 1976 he set up his own company to feed information on black consumers for senior management teams.

COMING TUESDAY's AFRO- Interviews with stars Adolph Caesar whose wife's aunt is Mrs. Clarice Parrish of Bryant Avenue.

Rollins in this scene is shown arriving at 221st Smoke Generating Company in Fort Neal, La. Fort Smith Arkansas. In foreground is Author M. Morton Sr. of Los Angeles. He's a Vietnam technician and the only brother in the electrical department. Larry Lydia is shown working the daily grip.

Don Levy, publicist on "A Soldier's Story" for Columbia Pictures is shown with Charles Richardson (L) head of Tri-Ad Consultants, the New York firm which arranged movie tour.

(Photo by Ida Peters)

Tour hostess, Angela Smith of Tri-Ad Consultants poses with Adolph Caesar who has key role of Sgt. Waters. Caesar won an Obie and a New York Drama Desk award for the role in the Broadway production of "A Soldier's Play." His wife's aunt lives in Baltimore, Mrs. Clarice Parrish. Right is Karen Glover of Black Beat Magazine.

Baltimore's Howard E. Rollins Jr. plays a Howard University trained military attorney in "A Soldier's Story."

'A Soldier's story'

"A Soldier's Story" is an American story.

It is 1944, in the autumn of World War II, when Technical Sergeant Vernon C. Waters, leader of the all-black 221st Smoke Generating Company based at Fort Neal, Louisiana, is shot and killed on a lonely road outside the base. Waters becomes the latest in a series of unsolved slayings in this racially tense town. The Department of the Army pressured to investigate the repeated murders, dispatches Captain Richard Davenport, a polished black military attorney, much to the dismay and initial distrust of the white base commander who assumes Davenport's findings are a foregone conclusion.

As Davenport unravels the circumstances surrounding Waters's death, the stories of the soldiers he speaks with reveal a temper and temperament of a nation on the threshold of change. The men of the 221st talk of pride and prejudice, of honor and humiliation, of freedom and frustration, of dignity and disdain.

As a mystery it uncovers more a portrait of the victim than of the killer. The real mystery is Waters, not who killed him. The question is not so much who killed Waters as it is why.

Columbia Pictures presents a Caldix Films, Ltd. Production of a Norman Jewison Film, "A Soldier's Story", directed by Norman Jewison from a screenplay by Charles Fuller. Based on Fuller's Pulitzer Prize-winning play, the film stars Howard E. Rollins, Jr., Adolph Caesar, Art Evans, David Alan Grier, Dennis Lipscomb, Larry Riley, Robert Townsend, Denzel Washington, and William Allen Young. "A Soldier's Story" was produced by Norman Jewison ("In the Heat of the Night", "The Cincinnati Kid", "... And Justice For All", and "Best Friends" among others) and Ronald L. Schwary (Academy Award winner for "Ordinary People"). Patrick Palmer is executive producer and Charles Milhaupt is associate producer.

Howard E. Rollins, Jr., Oscar-nominated as Best Supporting Actor for his performance as Coalhouse Walker in "Ragtime", stars as Capt. Davenport, a Howard University-trained lawyer. Sporting Douglas MacArthur aviator sunglasses, Davenport cuts a fine military figure—stern in manner, uncompromising in approach.

Adolph Caesar recreates the role of Tech Sgt. Waters, for which he won both an Obie and a New York Drama Desk Award as Best Supporting Actor in the original Negro Ensemble Company production. As told in flashback, Waters is the portrait of a man obsessed with bettering himself in order to be more acceptable to whites—a man willing to adopt white values to gain acceptance yet inwardly resentful of whites. So desperate to move away from the master-slave mentality and cut to rid the Army of "shiftless, lazy" blacks with no stake in the American dream, Waters never misses an opportunity to humiliate and manipulate his segregated troops into line.

Fifteen years ago, Jewison examined racial prejudice through the eyes of a southern sheriff and a northern black detective in his Academy Award-winning 1968 film "In the Heat of the Night". Now, he returns to the South for "A Soldier's Story" and explores the changing social attitudes, both black and white, at the end of World War II. As much as anything, it is a film about the American dream, human nature and man's complex struggle for dignity.

"I have written an American story", says Charles Fuller. As such, "A Soldier's Story" is not a drama about blacks and whites and racism but, rather, a drama about people.

"I just can't make pictures about spaceships", says Norman Jewison. "I'm not interested in them. I'm interested in people and that sometimes creates difficulties".

On Patti.....

For songstress PATTI LA BELLE it was a backstage meeting at the Philadelphia opening of Charles Fuller's Pulitzer Prize-winning A Soldier's Play" that lead Norman Jewison casting her in her first motion picture. Now, in her 22nd year in show business, Patti LaBelle makes her feature film debut playing Big Mary, a sultry entertainer in a segregated night club frequented by Fort Neal's black troops.

Patti LaBelle, who climbed to the top of the Pop charts with her "Nightbirds" album and the hit single "Lady Marmalade", recorded her first hit in 1962 when Patti LaBelle and the Bluebells released their million-seller, "I Sold My Heart to the Junkman". Successive hits followed including "All or Nothing", "You'll Never Walk Alone", "I Believe", "Danny Boy" and "Down The Aisle".

In the late 1970s, Patti embarked upon her solo career with the albums "Released" and "The Spirit's In It" which gained the critic's respect and gave Patti a chart-buster with "Release".

Her newest album, "I'm In Love Again", was released and represents a career and style shift to a softer sound with more emphasis on ballads.

In this past year, Patti LaBelle has completed a two-year tour in Vinnette Carroll's "Your Arms Too Short To Box With God", sharing the stage with Al Green; joined Grover Washington, Jr. at the top of the Soul chart with their hit single "The Best Is Yet To Come", and has appeared in three major PBS specials: tributes to Duke Ellington and Eubie Blake, and in a stunning cameo in Studs Turkel's "Working".

In the coming months, she will be honored in a special tribute by the National Afro-American Historical and Cultural Museum, head a fun-draising walk-a-thon for the United Negro College Fund and begin to rehearse for her first concert tour in two years. At less than 40 years old, Patti LaBelle has spent more than half her life singing, has been married to the same man for 14 years and has raised three children ((two adopted).

(Photo by Ida Peters)

Patti LaBelle who has role of a night club singer. Press watched her shoot her scenes during last two days of filming. Above, she's made-up by Bernadine Anderson, first black female make-up artist to be accepted in union. Hairdresser is veteran of many movies.

BOB MATTHEWS

Night Scene Seen

If we seem a bit exuberant about the activities at the Left Bank Jazz Society concerts for the past week—and this week too— it's because we feel these are probably the most significant concerts of the entire season.

Last week, it was Nat Adderley, along with Larry Willis, piano; Walter Booker, bass, and Jimmy Cobb, drums. The added feature, which we didn't mention in our column last week, was the appearance of Benny Fortuna on alto sax.

What made this concert so very great is the fact that this rhythm section is one of the most driving on the scene today—they really swing from beginning to end.

As Nat put it, they are able to explore a lot of new music because the musicianship of the group is so great. And explore they did.

There were a lot of originals, most by members of the group, such as "Tallahassee Kid," "La Mandre," "For Duke and Cannon" among others.

Twas a knowledgeable audience on hand, for they insisted that the group perform some of the old favorites associated with Nat. Thus, they did "My Funny Valentine," "Bye, Bye Blackbird," and "Workaway" among tunes presented.

Won't dwell on the performance, for it was as near perfect as any jazz concert gets to be. Am already looking forward to the next appearance of the group.

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Which brings us to this Sunday's presentation. In our opinion, the greatest jazz vocalist on the scene today is Betty Carter, and she will be the featured artist.

Betty Carter

She'll have her regular trio with her, according to Leon Manker of LBJS, which includes John Hicks, piano; Kenny Washington, drums, and Curtis Lundy, bass.

Can remember going to hear Betty up at the Maryland Inn in Annapolis earlier this year, when she told us that the reason she had not played the LBJS concert in a while, is because "...they never asked me."

You can believe we lost no time in relaying the word to Left Bank, which to its credit had already started negotiations with Betty. Result—this week's concert.

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Must continue to sing the praises of the renowned Birdcage as we hear nothing but excellent reports on the Monday night sessions.

Was chatting with Walter Carr of the Nitelifer, who was high in his praise for the music now being played at the Birdcage. Last week, for instance, Johnny Polite on drums headed up the group.

With him, and sitting in, were Ernest Fisher, organ; Webster Lewis, Arnold Sterling, who stuck around for the entire evening, and Jennifer Jones was the premiere vocalist. We'll just have to make it.

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For the TV watchers, WHMM-TV, Channel 32, the Howard University station over in D.C., will be holding their fund-raising event this weekend, and the programming is really a plus for jazz fans.

On Saturday at 8 p.m., the feature is Chaka-Khan in concert. The Jazz on Stage feature at 9 p.m. will be the classic film, "Blues Like Showers of Rain" featuring blues singers Otis Spann, J. B. Lenoir and Little Brother Montgomery.

Sunday, the 7 p.m. "Soundstage" feature will be the Chicago Jazz Festival from the past Summer at 8:30, Nancy Wilson and Chick Corea, and at 9:30, Johnny Griffin.

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Blues Alley over in D.C. has Milt Jackson, vibes, along with Ray Brown, bass through Sunday night...The King of France Tavern of the Maryland Inn in Annapolis is featuring Gene Bertoncini, guitarist and Michael Moore...Carlos Johnson is at the Sphinx Club this weekend, and at Macco's Sunday afternoon...Nikki Cooper, along with Tom Hurley, Andy Ennis and Bobby Ward are whaling away at the Channel Eastern Lighthouse Inn on Frederick Road...Monday nights are still Customer Appreciation night at The Sportsmen's Lounge...and Lady Rebecca still holds down the bandstand at Woodstock tonight (Friday) until 9 p.m.

Mrs. Santa says:

Please help!

The need is even greater this year and the AFRO's Mrs. Santa urges you to dig deep and help feed hungry families again this year. Our goal is $20,000 by December 17.

The AFRO's Mrs. Santa uses money to buy food baskets which are delivered by the Maryland National Guard. We also buy food coupons which are mailed to people referred to us by our readers, AFRO Clean Block Captains, City Agencies and the Police Department.

We are asking businesses, clubs and organizations and individuals to make a generous cash donation. Also, we are asking individuals and groups to sell Mrs. Santa's flowers at $1 each. Senior citizens and volunteers are crocheting 5,000 red and green flowers to be sold at social functions. Many people are placing them on their counters at their places of business so that giving to help feed hungry families will be easier because people are so hard pressed for cash these days.

Contribute good used toys and clean clothes to Mrs. Santa's Store. When you contribute to the store, we will contact our families so they can select the things they need in their sizes.

SPECIAL NOTE: We'll be glad to arrange a picture with Mrs. Santa for all contributions over $100. When it is published in the AFRO, it will encourage others to give and we desperately need all the help we can get.

Please make checks and money orders payable to Mrs. Santa, AFRO Charities, 628 N. Eutaw St., Baltimore, Md. 21201. All contributions are tax deductible.

If you know of a needy family...

The AFRO Charities, Mrs. Santa Program provided as a service by the AFRO-AMERICAN Newspapers is designed to help needy families have a Christmas dinner. If you know of a needy family WRITE AFRO Mrs. Santa, 628 N. Eutaw St., Baltimore, Md. 21201. Give name, address, telephone number, zip code, number and ages of children and why they need help.

Mrs. Santa fund

$5,460.00

Softball Marathon	$1,750.87
S.A.T. Foods	500.00
Pearl Records	300.00
Myra Grand Chapter, O.E.S.	250.00
Able Building Service	150.00
Mr. & Mrs. John B. Myers	125.00
Ernest L. Nash	125.00
In Memory of Dr. & Mrs. M.L. Barksdale	
Dr. Roland Barksdale Williams	100.00
Continentals Society of Baltimore	100.00
Bland Gatewood	100.00
Mrs. Lillian McLee	100.00
Anthony Gatewood	100.00
James Burley	100.00
Ms. Bernice H. Shorter	100.00
The V.A.G.'s	100.00
Arena Players	
Herbert Alston, Jr.	75.00
In Memory of Rev. N.B. Carrington	
Mrs. Agnes A. Carrington	75.00
Rev. St. George I.B. Crosse & Daughter	53.00
The Chit-Chats	42.00
Mrs. Edith Coleman	35.00
Lake Ashburton Neighborhood Assoc.	35.00
Mr. & Mrs. Raymond A.C. Young	30.00
Chi Wives	30.00
Druid Heights Action Assoc.	25.00
The New Jockey Club	25.00
Ms. Nadine Huntley	25.00
Miss Ruth Fegley	25.00
Mrs. Louise Kerr Hines	25.00
The Pals	25.00
Ms. Arnetta Rosemond	25.00
Mrs. Llewellyn H. Walker	25.00
Mrs. Marie E. Murphy	25.00
Mrs. Roy Adams	25.00
Jimmie & Louise Bulluck	20.00
Ms. Gertrude E. Winston	20.00
Mr. & Mrs. Roland Handy, Sr.	20.00
A. Harrison Vessells	20.00
Ms. Ernestine Clinton	15.00
Rodman O. Harris	15.00
In Memory of Mrs. Gladys C. Jackson	
John T. Jackson	10.00
Ms. Marie W. Lewis	10.00
Old Acquaintance Club	10.00

100 families helped for Thanksgiving

By Ida Peters

The AFRO's Mrs. Santa has helped more than 100 families for Thanksgiving. It has been made possible because so many generous people have called Mrs. Santa's office and adopted families.

Operation Needy of East Baltimore adopted 35 families for Thanksgiving and Christmas. These concerned folks would not leave their names or have a picture made. They delivered the baskets in the name of AFRO's Mrs. Santa. Happy families have called to say the baskets answered their prayers.

THANKS to the Harry Mills Society of Oak Street A.M.E. Church who adopted two families; The Crystal Ladies of Maranatha Memorial Baptist Church who adopted several large families.

The National Society of Pershing Angels adopted a large family as did the Toast Masters Club, Jack and Jill and Rother Chambers.

Thanks to SOPHISTICATED FEW Social Club for their donation of $200 to Mrs. Santa. This group of men provide donations to various non-profit organizations; sponsor programs for youth in the community and provide scholarships for eligible youths.

Leroy A. Taylor is president; Vernon A. Brogen, Vice President; Lawrence Shorty, secretary; William Gordon, Treasurer; John Ashby, business manager; Moses W. Wiggins, assistant secretary; George R. Swift, sergeant-at-arms; Members are: Henrye Clark, Bascomi Mason, Johnnie Murchesson, Samuel Mason, Charles Fields, George Reed, Bobby Tucker and Tyrone Conaway.

THE BROWN SUGARS Social Club brought in three large baskets with chickens, apples, potatoes and other goodies which were immediately distributed by Mrs. Santa. Folks have been dropping canned goods off all day Tuesday which we added in order to help one family with seven children whose food stamps had run out. The father was laid off from work because of a back injury.

The Brown Sugars formed in 1963 and their purpose is to provide social aid to the community.

Officers are Nina R. Harper, president; Eleanor Richardson, secretary; Theresa McCrimmon, business manager; Mae Moore, chaplain; Laura Clark, sergeant-at-arms; and Judy Peters, member.

THE NURSING STUDENTS Association of the Helene Fuld School of Nursing at Coppin State College prepared a huge basket including a large ham for one of Mrs. Santa's families. This basket went to a small church in West Baltimore to prepare dinner for their needy youths.

Dr. Loretta Richardson is Dean, Division of Nursing. Deborah Lucas is president; Crystal Black, president-elect; and Ruthie Hall and Alice Cornelison advisors.

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The AFRO Mrs. Santa program provided 15 turkeys and sweet potatoes worth $254 to help Mrs. Henrietta Williams provide Thanksgiving dinner for 300 senior citizens at her church, Lewin United Methodist Church, Reisterstown Rd. and Lewin Ave., Thanksgiving Day.

NOVEMBER 25- Thanksgiving Breakfast, Friday, Nov. 25 8 a.m. at the Forum, will benefit AFRO's Mrs. Santa and WEBB. Pastors to be honored are Father Maurice Blackwell, Rev. John R. Bryant, Bishop Winfield Showell, and Rev. Douglas I. Miles.

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DECEMBER 11- The Baltimore City-Anne Arundel County All-Star Flag Football Game will be held at Walbrook High School Football Field, Walbrook Junction. Ron Stewart is commissioner of five teams. Proceeds will go to AFRO's Mrs. Santa. Admission is canned goods or a good toy.

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THE CHI WIVES, Loraine Brown, president; Mabel G. Young, corresponding secretary sent a check for $30. They wrote:

We are pleased to be instrumental in contributing to the happiness of others. You are to be commended for the outstanding works you have performed through the years.

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Rodman and Gladys Harris sent $15. They wrote:

"Though it may not be a large contribution it comes from the heart". Thanks! We are happy you remembered us and our families are surely in need.

Thanks to Mrs. Agnes A. Carrington, widow of the late Rev. N.B. Carrington for many years head pastor at the AFRO-AMERICAN Newspapers and for many years pastor of Union Memorial United Methodist Church. He was a constant supporter of Mrs. Santa. She writes:

"Another year has rolled around and I have so much to be thankful for, so I am sharing again with you a part of my Christmas savings. God has truly been so good to me this year since the death of my late husband, the Rev. N.B. Carrington. I am sending $75 in his memory.

Thanks also to the Druid Heights Action Association, Mrs. Maggie Quille, president who sent a check for $25.

(Photo by Vanessa Johnson)

THE MONUMENTAL FRIENDS — give AFRO Mrs. Santa a helping hand by opening and separating mail, calling senior citizen centers to pick up the flowers that seniors are crocheting for Mrs. Santa. These ladies will be working with Mrs. Santa until Christmas. Shown are: Mesdames Blanche Beckham and Bernice McDaniels. Not shown: Mrs. Lucille Venture who was manning the phone

Softball Marathon Awards party at 20 Grand

(Photo by Vanessa Johnson)

ROADRUNNERS — Figg Hall, Thadis Hall and Andre Murray.

(Photo by Vanessa Johnson)

B-2 RAIDERS — Kevin Maddox and Vernon "Snake" Thomas.

(Photo by Vanessa Johnson)

STEPS — Keith Gaither, Delery Gaither, Eddie Henry, Melvin Hines, Donald Gaither, Leroy Ray, Vincent Martin and Victor Martin.

(Photo by Vanessa Johnson)

CEDAR HILL — Rose Hinton, Deborah Bessicks, June Harris, Marlene Carter, Angie Colbert, Wendy Edwards and Milton Parks, manager.

(AFRO photo by Earl Ferren)

THE ZODICAS — Remaine Kane, Angela Cager, Rochelle Hill, Melinda Kane, Dana Cornish, Ophelia Brown, Charlene Kane, Karen Bowyer, Konita Flemings and Purnell Dorsey. (Photo by Vanessa Johnson).

HIGH ROLLERS — J. Maetin Buckner. (Photo by Vanessa Johnson).

WESTSIDE ALL-STARS: Eric "Duck" Forte and Robert Moore. (Photo by Vanessa Johnson).

THE EMAMONS — These ladies collected the most money for the Mrs. Santa Football Marathon ($300) to win the Granddaddy Trophy supplied by Coca - Cola. Shown are: Joyce Morris, Naomi "Betty" Myers, coach; Stella Morgan, Freda Steven and Pat Corley. (Photo by Vanessa Johnson).

How Do You Get Your Weekly T.V. Listings?

T.V. Guide — .50

Sunday Paper .75 & $1.00

— or —

Friday Plus

In The Baltimore & Washington Afro American — .35

FRIDAY PLUS AVE

and we inform you about Baltimore and Washington Entertainment