Sounds

By Carl Matthews

OMNI

Don't confuse Omni the R&B group with the magazine. The three seasoned musicians who came together as Omni over three years in Chicago now have a new self-titled LP on Mercury.

Two of Omni's members, Yendor N. Yessam (a.k.a. Rodney G. Massey) and Lawrence Hanks, wrote the gold single "The Hurts On You," (which appeared on Smokey Robinson's "Cruisin'" LP) and the number one dance hit, "Breaking And Entering" for Dee Dee Sharp Gamble. They've had their songs covered by Jerry Butler, Thelma Houston, Melba Moore and the Stylistics.

Hanks, a keyboard player, is a graduate of The American Conservatory of Music and has written and/or recorded commercial jingles for major companies like McDonald's, Coke and Budweiser.

The third member of Omni, Larry Williams, has played guitar and bass on records by Curtis Mayfield, Tyrone Davis, Heaven And Earth, The Chi-Lites and others.

The group has produced the LP themselves and written all the material, highlighted by wild dance tracks like "Only The Beginning" and elegant pop like "Just How Bad."

Ain't no question that the boys are talented and experienced. But I found side one to be one of the most boring LP sides I've heard in a long while. The album's second cut, "Rectron," an all-out techno number, only serves to waste 6:38 worth of vinyl.

Of the other cuts, "Warriors" is mildly interesting. This mid-tempo number talks about how people have to "fight" to realize their dreams—and must always keep up their defenses against the real world. Yessam and Hanks do have some talent for writing lyrics.

This mix of R&B and pop is about average. I don't hate it, and I don't love it.

Other cuts: "On And Off (Love Affair," "Let Me Run It," "Leave It Up To Me (The One You Can Turn To)," and "All For The One."

JENNY BURTON

"In Black And White"

It's party time! Just throw this disc on the box and jam! This LP, Jenny's debut album on Atlantic, jumps from groove one. Jenny Burton was the lead singer for C-Bank (remember "One More Shot"? It went top 10 on the national dance charts), and now she's on her own—and she does this LP in that same C-Bank style.

"In Black And White" was produced, arranged and mixed by John Robie, who also played the majority of the instruments throughout the album. Robie first worked with Jenny on "One More Shot," while his other notable associations include such top-charted artists as Soul Sonic Force ("Planet Rock") and Freeez ("I.O.U."). With the exception of the album's opener, the Paul Rodgers/Bad Company tune "Rock Steady," all the songs on Jenny's album are John Robie originals—including the LP's first hit single, "Remember What You Like."

Jenny Burton says "Performing is a way for me to open my arms and heart and to let what's in me come out. Hopefully, what's there is solid enough and healthy enough that it'll also be good for the people that are attracted to me."

John Robie cranks up his multi-moog and his emulator digital synthesizer and gives us dance tracks like "Rock Steady," "Players," and "Vena Cava."

"Small Rewards" is Jenny Burton's type of ballad. I think you overproduced this one a little, John.

You like Planet Patrol, C-Bank, Freeez and groups that sound like them? If so, get this one—it can't miss! At least, not as a dance album.

Other cuts: "You'll Never Come Again," and "All The Time/Time."

Enoch Pratt

FILMS

For Black History Month, the Keyworth Avenue Center, 2610 Keyworth Ave., will show **"Got To Tell It: A Tribute to Mahalia Jackson"**, a film honoring the noted gospel singer, on Wednesday, Feb. 22, at 2:30 p.m.

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At 6 p.m. on Wednesday. Feb. 22, the St. Paul Street Center, 2521 St. Paul St., will continue its "Black Hollywood" series with **"Cry, the Beloved Country"**, a screen version of the Alan Paton novel about life in South Africa.

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The central library, 400 Cathedral St., will have a 2 p.m. screening on Sat., Feb., 25, of an award-winning feature film starring Cicely Tyson and Paul Winfield. Distributor's restrictions prohibit announcement of the title.

Admission to all Pratt Library programs is free.

MUSIC

The Edmondson Avenue Branch, 4330 Edmondson Ave., will present a concert by **Carolyn Dolly** and **Hannah Ajamifuja**, vocalists, and **St. Bernardine's Choir**. The program is scheduled at 6 p.m. on Wednesday, Feb. 22.

At 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, Feb. 23, the **Fernando Allen Singers** and the **Dynamics** will give a gospel music concert at the Northwood Branch, 4420 Loch Raven Blvd.

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Flicks

Movie review 'Unfaithfully Yours'

By Arthur J. Johnson

Dudley Moore stars in this remake of director Prestor Sturges' 40-year-old comedy classic "Unfaithfully Yours". Reincarnated as a combination of Moore's previous hit films "10" (the tale of a middle-aged man who becomes obsessed with a young beauty played by Bo Derek), and "Arthur" (the story of a wealthy drunken playboy who learns the meaning of life and love from his valet and a working class girl), this new "Unfaithfully Yours" is little more than a lightweight star vehicle for Moore: the entire film rests on his tiny (5'2") shoulders.

Moore portrays a middle-aged symphony conductor, Claude Eastman, who has recently wed Daniella, a ravishing young Italian starlet (played by sultry Nastassja Kinski of "Tess", "Cat People and that snake poster). When Claude goes on tour he tells his Italian housekeeper to "keep' an eye" on Daniella, but the servant misunderstands and thinks he has been told to hire a private eye and does so.

When Claude returns, the investigator shows him evidence that suggests his wife is having an affair with a seductive concert violinist (Armand Assante of "Private Benjamin").

Driven mad by his sexy young spouse's betrayal, Claude imagines a complicated scheme to murder Daniella and makes it appear as though her lover has done her in. Unfortunately (or fortunately, depending on how you feel about Miss Kinski) things do not happen quite as Claude had imagined which allows Moore to do his standard comedy routine—the tipsy hero who clumsily falls over furniture and makes a wreck of things as in "Arthur", and who is almost ruined by his passion for a nubile young woman as in "10".

"Unfaithfully Yours" unfortunately yearns for a better script. Except for Moore, who merely plays the bumbling character that has made him famous the films other characters are so shallow that they come off as mere straight men and women for Moore's gags. No attempt is made to develop the other characters except as props such as "The Pretty Young Wife", "The Casanova-like Concert Violinist", "The Comic Private Detective".

Miss Kinski, who has proven herself an enigmatic and promising film actress in the past, is completely wasted in the cardboard role of the wife. We are given no clue as to why she married Moore or what they have in common besides sex. Director Howard ("Private Benjamin") Zeiff doesn't even give us the opportunity to admire her physical beauty since long bangs cover her face and a careless hairstyle hides her expressive features. She has almost no closeups. Kinski-watchers beware!

Clearly "Unfaithfully Yours" is intended as Moore's showcase. Unless you find this man incredibly humorous and think that plotting to stab your wife to death is a barrel of laughs, you'd better avoid "Unfaithfully Yours".

Armand Assante, Nastassja Kinski and Dudley Moore on set doubling for New York's Russian Tea Room.

Peabody-Morgan ...

The Peabody/Morgan Black Music Seminars are designed to be offered annually in February on various themes related to the research and performance of black musical cultures.

The subject of the first Peabody Seminar will be Black Musical Theater. There will be morning and afternoon sessions for the reading of papers, and each evening will feture a special concert.

FRIDAY

9:30 a.m. — Third session, "Minstrelsy." A discussion of the work of James Bland, 1854-1911, by Hazelita Fauntroy; "How Black was Blackface Ministrels?" by Sam Dennison, Free Library of Philadelphia; "Afro - American Ministrels at home and Abroad: Fact and Fancy Focused," by Dr. Helen A. Johnson, The Armstead —Johnson Foundation for Theater Research, York College, CUNY: "Links Between Ministrelsy and Musical Comedy: In Search of a Context for Discussing Black Musical Theater," by Dr. Thomas Riis, University of Georgia.

1:30 p.m. — Fourth session, "Musical Theatre." "Cautions and Congratulations: An Outsider's View of the Black Contribution to American Musical Theater," by Martin Williams, Smithsonian Institution; "Shuffle Along," by Elizabeth Hogue, Morgan State University.

4 p.m. — Tour of the Eubie Blake Cultural Center.

7:30 p.m. — Second concert. A recital by Ben Holt, baritone, with Cliff Jackson piano, in arias from operas by Saint-Georges.

SATURDAY

9:30 a.m. — Fifth session, "Opera." The Life and Works of Harry Lawrence Freeman, 1869-1943, discussed by Dr. Celia E. Davidson, North Carolina Central University; "Theodore Dreiser and the Black Patti," by Margery Lowens, Peabody Conservatory of Music; "Black Opera Singers During the Civil Rights Movement," by Garymichael Murphy, Morgan State University.

1:30 p.m. — Sixth session. "Race Roles in European Opera," by Kevin Short, Morgan State University; "Samuel Coleridge - Taylor in America," by Nathan Carter, Morgan State University: "An Early, Black Musical-Comedy Company: The Hyers Sisters Combination," by Dr. Eileen Southern, Harvard University.

8 p.m. — Third concet. "Ernestine" by Chevalier de Saint-Georges, "L'Amant anonyme" by Chevalier de Saint - Georges, "Dream Lovers" by Samuel Coleridge - Taylor, "In-Dahomey" by Will Marion Cook, with the Peabody Chamber Orchestra, Edward Polochick, conductor.

Single tickets to the concerts, as available, may be purchased at $5 each at the box office.

Black Music Seminar

The musical Shuffle Along, *which opened in New York in 1921, was the work of Noble Sissle and Eubie Blake. Daringly breaking new ground for Black musical talents, which had largely been confined to Vaudeville,* Shuffle Along *is credited with putting Negro artists back on Broadway, heralding the start of the Harlem Renaissance. Songs like "Love Will Find a Way," and "I m Just Wild About Harry" became overnight hits. The show also launched the careers of numerous luminaries, among them Josephine Baker, Florence Mills, and Paul Robeson.*