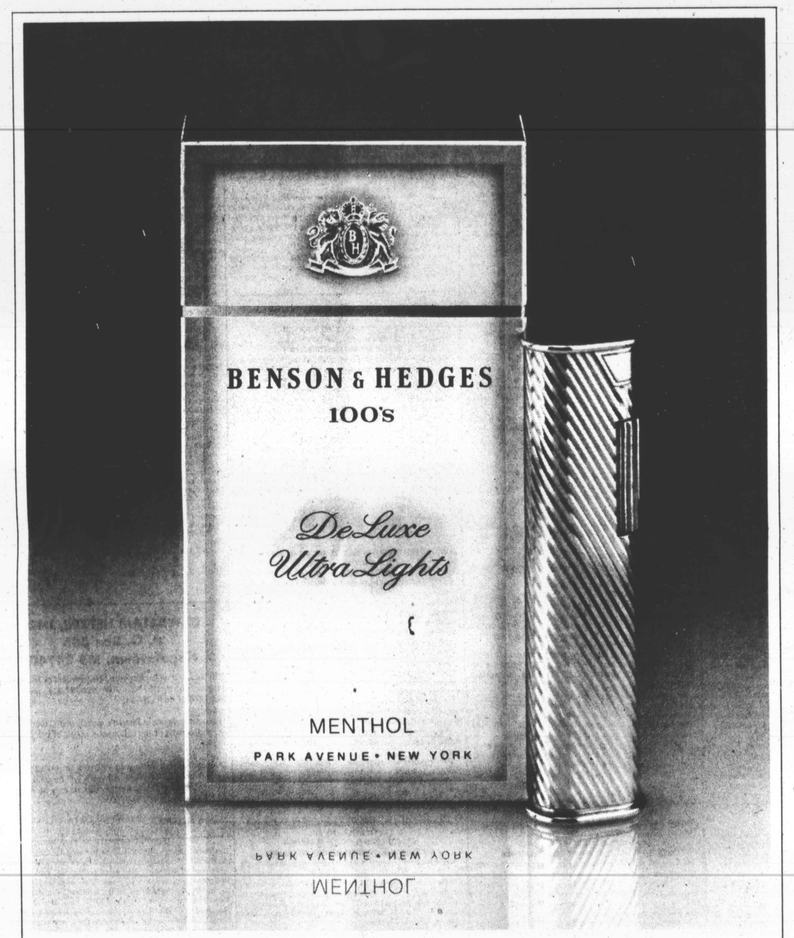
BENSON & HEDGES

Deluxe Ultra Lights



The Deluxe 100.

Menthol and Regular.

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Warning: The Surgeon General Has Determined That Cigarette Smoking Is Dangerous to Your Health.

6 mg "tar," 0.5 mg nicotine av. per cigarette, FTC Report Mar.'84.

Sippie Wallace at 86 still writes, shouts the blues

Sippie Wallace recalls the humid summer nights of 1910 in Houston, Texas when she heard the distant sounds of a ragtime band from her bedroom window.

Eleven-year-old Sippie - born Nov. 1, 1898 as Beulah Thomas - tiptoed from the Thomas house and dashed to the traveling tent show, a southern entertainment staple in these days much like vaudeville in the North.

At the campground, she peeked throught the canvas tent flap and listened to the blues singers, captivated by a music form that soon became her calling.

"When Momma went to bed, I would sneak out the window to the tent shows, or leave the door open so she thought I was going to the privy. Lord, I have come a long ways," Sippie Wallace says now with a laugh.

At age 86, she is still going strong - writing and singing the kind of songs which made her a queen on the blues circuit, the so-called "Texas Nightingale" who recorded hit after hit beginning in 1925, backed by musicians including Louis Armstrong and Joe "King" Oliver.

"I've been singing all the time. Tent shows all through Texas, vaudeville. I got to be a celebrity," she said.

In the old days, Sippie recorded for Okeh, the prime label for what were classified as "race records."

"The record company told me, the world wants blues, women's blues.' I write the blues every day of my life now," she said in an interview at the Detroit home she shares with a niece.

"Experience makes the best blues. I write my blues from experience. I was misused by some men," she said. "I bet you I've got 5,000 blues."

The blues, Wallace said, is a music form which can't be taught.

"I haven't taught nobody. I teach myself. The young people today haven't got the time to learn it. You've got to have the feeling to be successful with the blues. It is something you have to experience. You can't learn it."

Sippie Wallace taught herself to play piano by watching her brother George, who went on to write music and open a song publishing business.

Her nickname results from her grammer school days. "My schoolmates called me that. They called me Sippie because my teeth were so far apart and I had to sip everything," she said.

In the late 1930s, the death of her second husband, Matt, and her brother, George, were more than Sippie could bear. She abandoned the blues in favor of gospel music at Detroit area churches for the next three decades.

Then in 1965, she was coaxed back into jazz and blues singing by music researchers who found her voice was as strong as ever. She has continued to perform, except for 1970-72 when she was confined to a wheelchair. It was another redhead, contemporary folk and blues singer Bonnie Raitt, who coaxed her back to the stage in the late 1970s.

Wallace's personal repertoire includes "Suitcase Blues," "Gambler's Dream," "Women Be Wise," "Special Delivery Blues" and "Mighty Tight Woman." All are from her 1983 Grammy-nominated album, "Sippie," and are featured when she performs with a full band or solo piano accompaniment.

"How am I doin'? How am I doin'?" Wallace asks the audience after each number. "Thank you, thank you." Then she introduces the next number, explains why she wrote it, and gives accompanist Jim Dapogny her standard order: "Play it, maestro."

"In the old days, blues singers couldn't talk about rye or whiskey. Now, they can say anything. My brother used to say I can't feel frisky without my whiskey', but he couldn't sing that. It's better today. I can get up and shimmy. You can do anything you want to now," Wallace says.

Dapogny, a historian and performer whose own music tastes are rooted in the 1920s and 1930s, said he performs with Sippie including a Carnegie Hall concert last autumn, because she is one of a kind - the last of the blues shouters.

Sippie Wallace: "Lord I have come a long ways."

"People often confuse Sippie and Alberta Hunter (who died Oct. 18 in New York). They are very different people and very different singers," Dapogny said. "You could hear in Alberta's singing the fact that she has heard Billie Holiday, Ella Fitzgerald and Sarah Vaughan. She was more into a kind of show business that Sippie was never a part of.

"Alberta sort of kept up with things. Sippie didn't. When Sippie stopped singing blues in the 1930s, she sang only gospel music for 30 years or so. She wasn't out there playing jobs and having to sing the latest pop tunes, having in a sense to measure herself against the Big Band singers and other people who became popular.

"So when Sippie began singing the blues again, she simply thought out her old style of singing. That's why you hardly hear anything that doesn't come directly out of that older tradition of the twenties and before," Dapogny said.

Showtime

Ida M. Peters

What's Happening

Arthur C. Clarke, one of the world's best known and most respected authors of science fiction and science fact literature, poses before one of the Paypro II computers used to relay information between the MGM production office and his Sri Lanka home.

In 2010—we are not alone

What will life be like 26 years from today?

This reporter joined more than 200 Entertainment Editors and writers in Los Angeles last weekend to view new MGM Christmas blockbuster, "2010: Odyssey Two" and interview Arthur C. Clarke who wrote the original "2001: A Space Odyssey" and co-authored the screenplay with Stanley Kubrick in 1968.

MGM is gambling $20 million on the sequel and Peter Hyams' screen adaption to pack theatres with fans who want to go on the "ultimate trip".

In coming issues we'll be talking about our interviews with Peter Hyams and actors Bob Balaban and John Lithgow.

By 2010, my grandchildren will be 38 and 46 years old... As for this reporter, a little out of touch with the computer world and feeling no concern about what will be happening 40-50 or 60 years from now feels that if God had wanted us on Mars he would have put us there in the first place.

Is man on earth an accident in the universe? Are we an orphan race lost forever in the void of space?

Nearly a decade ago, we learned we are not.

The year is 2010. Among the moons of Jupiter, an enigmatic black monolith orbits in silence, its age, origin, composition and purpose unknown. All that is known is that it exists — and it has claimed astronaut David Bowman, the commander of the American spacecraft Discovery, for itself. For nine years, it has confounded our science and religion.

Now, a team of Soviet and American scientists have united aboard the Russian spacecraft Leonov on an expedition to investigate this haunting interloper. Before their epic journey to Jupiter is over, they will witness a cosmic miracle, one which will transform their perception of man and his destiny in the universe.

And for all time to come, 2010 will be remembered as the year we made contact. More on the film "2010" coming in Tuesday's AFRO

Samm-Art Williams' early play revived off-Broadway

By reviving "Welcome to Black River," a play by Samm-Art Williams, the New Federal Theatre is offering New York audiences a chance to see an early work by one of the nation's more highly regarded playwrights.

They might have done Williams a favor and refrained. "Welcome to Black River" is a soap opera of a play - the kind in which a family is tormented by a secret that has allegedly been buried for a generation, but manages to get hinted at in every single conversation.

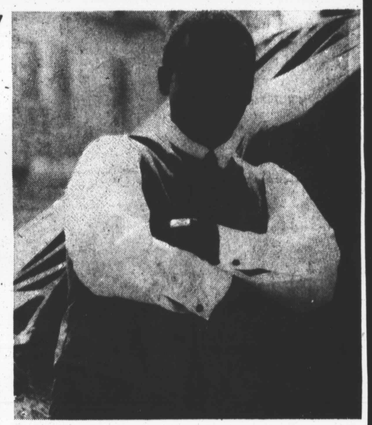
The secret - which the audience should be able to figure out about two hours before the characters on stage - is that the three families in the play, two black and one white, are all related due to the philandering of one now-deceased patriarch.

There are all sorts of interesting things in "Black River" - the relationship between struggling white small farmers in the South and the impoverished black families that work for them, and racial discrimination in a small closed society in which the racial lines themselves are not at all clear.

The play, however, is not really about any of that. It is a play in which the racial and economic injustices of Southern rural life in the 1950s seem trivialized by the angry young son whose most specific complaint seems to be that they have sent men to the moon "but papa's got a second-hand pickup truck."

The alienated white son, meanwhile, is up in the big house smoking marijuana and mulling unhappily about his experiences in combat in his inability to write songs like Hank Williams. Neither work, and both promise to leave town soon without, unfortunately following through.

"We made a wrong turn somewhere with these boys," the white father says to black mother in a thundering understatement. The whole thing is resolved after more than two and a half hours by a hurricane and an improbable happy ending.



Williams wrote acclaimed play, "Home"

'The Adventures of Buckaroo Banzai'

"The Adventures of Buckaroo Banzai", an action-packed science fiction adventure-comedy about a multi-talented hero who pushes himself beyond the bounds of known science is now playing at area theatres.

The Sidney Beckerman Presentation of a Sherwood Production stars Peter Weller, John Lithgow, Ellen Barkin, Jeff Goldblum and Christopher Lloyd under the direction of W.D. Richter.

Peter Weller stars as scientist - adventurer Buckaroo Banzai, who is plunged into his most hair-raising adventure when he drives his high-speed Jet Car through the side of a mountain, thus proving the existence of the mysterious 8th Dimension and precipitating a battle with evil red aliens from Planet 10.

Joining Weller ("Shoot the Moon") is a distinguished cast including Ellen Barkin ("Tender Mercies") as Buckaroo's sweetheart Penny Priddy and Jeff Goldblum ("The Big Chill") as New Jersey, a recent recruit to Buckaroo's rock 'n roll commando group, The Hong Kong Cavaliers.

The forces of evil include two-time Academy Award nominee John Lithgow ("The World According to Garp," "Terms of Endearment") as Dr. Emilio Lizardo and "Taxi" star Christopher Lloyd, who recently played the evil Klingon Commander in "Star Trek III: The Search for Spock," as the villainous John Bigboote.

The special world in which Buckaroo and his friends battle the forces of evil was created by production designer Michael Riva, with a team of Hollywood's top special effects artists collaborating on the visual effects, which includes a glimpse of the eerie universe of the 8th Dimension. The exciting syntheseizer score is by Michael Boddicker, winner of a 1983 Grammy for his song "Imagination" in "Flashdance."

In their spacecraft high above New Jersey, good aliens from Planet 10 decide the fate of earth.

Give to AFRO's Mrs. Santa Fund

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