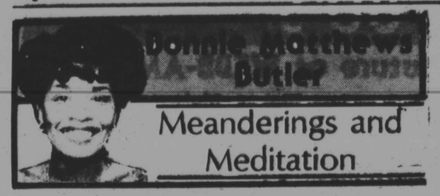

Meanderings and Meditation

It's not everyday someone opens a nightclub from scratch, but, that's just what Essie Cade did when she started CADE'S COUNTRY CLUB on Port St. in East Baltimore.

After working for the U.S. Army for 26 years, Essie decided she would enjoy opening a private club. Actually, she thought it would have to be private for she wasn't sure she would be able to secure a liquor license, but, lo and behold, that proved not to be a problem after all and on September 1, Cade's Country Club officially opened its doors.

Essie immediately brought in Benny Johnson as the manager since his over 20 years in the music business as a vocalist certainly gave him a good understanding of the nightclub business.

For those of you not familiar with Benny, he has worked in almost every night spot in Baltimore and toured with Harold Melvin and the Blue Notes in 1973. He released an album that same year entitled "Visions of Paradise" and can be heard at the club on Sunday's.

CADE'S COUNTRY CLUB is located on the site of an old warehouse in a residential area and when I asked Essie how the neighborhood responded to her opening there, she was eager to point out that "the neighbors had a little apprehension at first because they weren't sure what type of place it would be, but, once we opened, they were glad, since they felt it brought pride back to the neighborhood."

Benny is quick to add, "once a month, we hold a "neighborhood appreciation night" with a band and food so they can see, first hand, what we do. Most aren't coming in now since it takes time but it's starting to build. Senior citizens in the area come in for parties and several have been held already."

If that sounds a little like patting themselves on the back, then they have every right to do so since I didn't just take their word for it. I talked with several of the patrons there the night I was there and Calvin Talbert, who lives on the block said "this place is convenient for me. I like the ambience here, it makes a difference to the neighborhood and I don't have to worry about dinner."

Essie Cade

Benny Johnson

The dining room is catered by Lucky Williams who also does the cooking for parties around town. Lucky has a wide variety of dishes prepared and has the classiest table settings I have ever seen in a nightclub. (I like the cloth napkin approach.)

The drinks at CADE'S COUNTRY CLUB are quite reasonable although you don't get a lot of it.

I'll tell you one thing, you can look for this place to be tops pretty soon for Essie, Benny and the rest of the staff are really laying out the red carpet.

This is one "don't miss" night spot.

NOW ON THE OTHER NIGHTTIME INFO. . . .THE MANOR CLUB over on Eutaw St. is in high gear. Tuesday nights are "Card Night" and games will include pinochle, bid whist and "500" along with several board games. On the fourth Sunday of each month, they'll hold a "Brunch" at $10.95 per person. If basketball is your thing, they'll be viewing the NBA games on the big screen with drinks and snacks. If this is down your alley, call 728-5100 and ask for a membership since this is a private club.....Heard Big Wooten's anniversary party celebrating his 16 years in the business was a rip-roaring success. Don't forget the S and W Lounge (Wooten's spot) has free food there on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday with a breakfast show Saturday and Sunday..... Stopped by the Monte Carlos Night at Mondawmin last Saturday and was a little disappointed at the turn out. Seems there was only about 200 people there. Also was a little disappointed at the games people were able to play. What happened to games such as Blackjack, Roulette or Baccarat?.....

.....Didn't make the RED FOX LOUNGE'S boat ride but I heard it was a success even though the boat left late and there was a mix up as to whether there should be an open bar or not. Speaking of The RED FOX, also heard John Alston, Friday Plus' favorite bartender winner is no longer there....Well friends, got to go 'cause I'm out of space.

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Social Club
2135 Edmondson Ave.
JOHN LAMKIN
Sunday, Nov. 10th
5 to 9 p.m.
Sunday, Nov. 17th
5 to 9 p.m.
LADY REBECCA
November 24th
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Cash Bar
HALL FOR RENT
ALL TYPES OF AFFAIRS
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ALL YOU CAN DRINK
at our $8 Club Rate or Pay $6 and Drink All the Beer You Want
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Lorman Burger • Fresh Lake Trout • Club Sandwich • Club Sandwich • Kosher Hot Dog • Polish Hot Dog • Chicken Wings • Steak Sandwich • French Fries • Potato Salad & Cole Slaw (Homemade)
Frankie's Sunday Breakfast
6 a.m. Til 12 noon
Serving You in the Kitchen: Frankie
In The Lounge:
Beta, Nellie, Terry, George
Music by: Vernon "Big Hat"
Proprietor: Dennis Hill

Jazz Nites at
CADE COUNTRY CLUB
1835 N. Port Street
675-5043
Wednesday
JAZZ NITE with ANDY ENNIS, sax & FRED THAXTON on keyboard
Friday
LADY REBECCA
Sunday
BENNY JOHNSON
HAPPY HOUR 3-7 p.m.
Monday Thru Friday
JAZZ 9 p.m.-until
Monday
CARIBBEAN NITE
Thursday
LADIES NITE
Male Exotic Dancers
50¢ OFF All Ladies Drinks from 8 to 11 p.m.

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EASTSIDE CLUB
2300 E. Oliver St.
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Home of Tiger Lil's Bowlers and the Scanners M.C.
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99¢ SPECIAL
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Monday Nite High Bowlers Meet
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CARD NITE
(Card games of your choice includes pinochle, plus chess & backgammon. For those persons who think they can play)
WEDNESDAY & FRIDAY
SEAFOOD NITE
6:00 p.m.-until
Special 11 p.m.-2 a.m.
Serving you:
Camille, Suzanne & Walter
Your Hostess:
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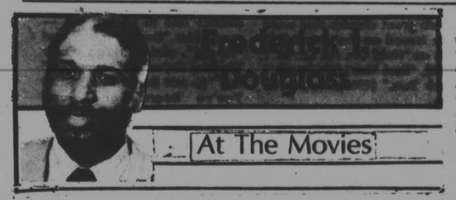

At The Movies

"Krush Groove," the 1980's musical starring Sheila E., The Fat Boys and Kurtis Blow moves and grooves while winding its way through a bevy of contemporary songs that make your feet skip to the beat; whereas "Jagged Edge" is an acute mystery story filled with gripping suspense that will make your mind keep ticking from the film's first frame to the Alfred Hitchcock style ending.

"Krush Groove," which is a Warner Brothers film, has grossed $2 million $5.4 million in the two weeks that it has been playing in the nation's theaters, is proving to be a financial success despite the fact that it has been panned severely by most establishment critics. The reason that the movie is making money is that there is a market for the music and performers whose lives the flick gives a glimpse. The fans of rap music, Sheila E. and Kurtis Blow are into rapping and high energy music. They are heavily engrossed in their contemporary lifestyles and could care less what critics, black or white, have to say about their musical and movie going preferences.

While I loathe and abhor the Gargantuan panting, wheezing, coughing, sputtering, moaning, groaning, sneezing, rasping and extremely primitive sounds made by The Fat Boys as they do their "human beatbox" routine, I do find that the rapping performances of acts like Kurtis Blow and Run D.M.C. represent a meaningful artistic genre in their own right. Black people have been rapping for centuries, from the days when the brothers and sisters had to pass coded messages past the master's ears via gospel songs and field chants on down through the fiery sermons of preachers in the pulpits or the emblazoned speeches of Martin Luther King, Malcolm X, Mandela and Farrakhan.

Rap is a slang derivative of the word "rhapsodize" which means to "deliver a highly emotional utterance or rapturous discourse." It also brings to the mind the image of knocking on a door to gain entry. So when one raps in the contemporary black definition, one is essentially trying to gain entry to another person's mind. Rappers like Kurtis Blow have a positive message and can be a worthwhile influence on the youthful minds who listen to and memorize every word from his songs. Of course, when one evaluates the music that your children are listening to, you must remember the acronym "GIGO" which deals with the cardinal principle of computer programmers — "garbage in, garbage out."

Generally, I liked "Krush Groove" because of its exploration of contemporary music. My main complaint is that the two times I viewed the movie (at the Hippodrome and Reisterstown Plaza) I found the soundtrack to be very weak and tiny, with the frequent cry "turn up the music" drowning out the minimal volume.

While "Krush Groove" is a visceral movie, "Jagged Edge" is a very cerebral mystery flick starring Jeff Bridges as a man accus-

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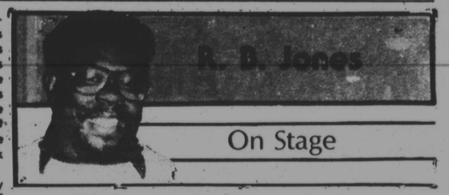


On Stage

One of the tragedies of community theater in Baltimore is that often productions for various cost and space related problems cannot run more than one weekend and so excellent shows are seen by a limited audience and plays that need work cannot reach their full potential because they do not have time to rework themselves.

This problem is illustrated by last weekend's showings of "Home" and "West Side Story." Both plays only ran for two days and they are gone.

"Home" was produced by a new group, The Baltimore Actors Theater Ensemble under the direction of Denise Boston. "Home" is favored by many young theater groups because it is a small show (three actors) with a minimal set. It is also an opportunity for the actors to stretch themselves since the male actor who portrays Cephus Miles is on stage the entire play and the two women actors play multiple parts.

"Home" is a play that praises the simple farm life in North Carolina and juxtaposes the harsh and false joys of the city with the enduring rewards of a life close to the land. It is the rich black soil of the farm that represents fertility, stability and a sense of one's life purpose.

The three actors Randy Smith (Cephus) Phadelma Ashley (Woman One) and Rhonda Perry (Woman Two) bring the play to life with a genuiness of portrayal that made the play a warm theater experience.

"Home" is about a simple farmboy in North Carolina who plans to live his life the way his ancestors did, farming tobacco, married to his childhood sweetheart and enjoying the company of his friends. This hope is shattered when his sweetheart leaves to go to college and eventually marries someone else.

Then he receives a draft notice that he turns down because of his simple belief that "Thou shalt not kill." He is imprisoned for draft refusal and when he is released seven years later his farm is gone and he must migrate to the city, New York, to find work.

Cephus's sojourn in the big city becomes a disaster as his past follows him and he ends up a wino on the streets. A mysterious benefactor comes to his aid buying back his farm and turning it over to him. This same person arranges for his transport back to his hometown.

The play ends happily with Cephus and his lady-love back on the farm.

Randy Smith made an excellent Cephus, portraying the simplicity and good nature of the character without making Cephus a simpleton. Phadelma Ashley and Rhonda Perry displayed versatility, energy and a great deal of charm, especially considering the multiple characters they had to portray.

— —

"West Side Story" is a classic and one of the characteristics of a classic is that amateurs cannot totally ruin it. The Cultural Arts production of this past weekend came nowhere near close to ruining it but there were some major trouble spots that they should be aware of before they tackle another show as this.

The show had great energy, sparkling choreography and dancing and an air of enthusiasm that made up for many flaws in technique among some of the secondary characters.

The set was well designed and the lighting except for a few flaws was well done. Three basic things undermined the show. The orchestra which played well, was far too loud when actors were singing. The stronger voices could barely transcend the volume of the orchestra and the weaker voices were eradicated by it. At some point in previews and rehearsal this should have been discovered.

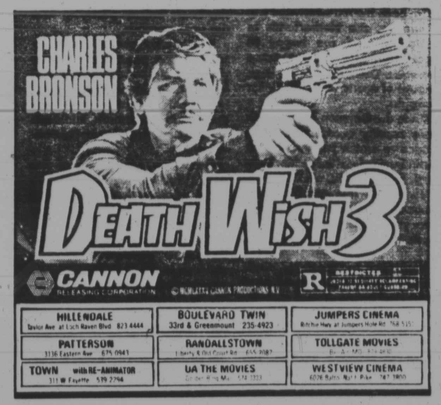
The second major problem was the acting of the two star crossed lovers Kwadzo James Bradley III and Carolyn Montgomery as Tony and Maria. They exuded no passion and warmth for each other in their scenes. Theirs must be an overwhelming passion that risks death for its fulfillment.

The final problem was the casting of Ms. Montgomery as Maria. She stuck out oddly because she was the only white character in the show and this casting created a certain symbolism that I am sure was unintentiongl. Something should have been done to make her look more Puerto Rican.

These flaws are frequently seen in community productions but a teaching agency with professional or semi-professional instructors should be a little more careful. However it was an ambitious attempt by the Cultural Arts Agency and similar efforts would enhance the cultural scene immensely.

—D.J.'s

(Continued from page 3)

artists and their records in stores and clubs. I also review the trade magazines and TOP-40 charts, but they do not determine what we play. Next, I listen carefully to the new records come out to see what my ear tells me. And then I make a decision based on what I think will be hit records and what will fit into our musical format and demographics. Our most adventurous programming is during the afternoon after the teenagers get out of school, the time of day when our demographics are much younger than in the morning. That's when we play the club music, the rap songs, and the tunes that are happening on the 12 inch discs."

Chuck Maxx is definitely a progressive deejay of the 1980's because he utilizes the knowledge and experience he has gained during his years in the music industry to make himself a very successful program director and marketing expert relative to contemporary musical trends. Born in Annapolis, Maryland, Chuck Maxx started out at WIKI in Chester, Virginia and moved on to WANT in Richmond, Virginia where he became the host of the city's first black television dance show. Moving up in the broadcast industry, Maxx went to WOL in Washington, D.C., where he enjoyed great popularity before coming to WEBB in 1982 to succeed Don Brooks. Now he is doing a superb job as the Program Director of a powerful AM station with a directional, 5,000 watt regional signal that spans a 50-90 mile radius, reaching as far south as Fredericksburg, Virginia. When WEBB goes 24 hours a day in 1986, Chuck Maxx's influence on the musical tastes of people living in the Baltimore-Washington-Virginia corridor will be amplified considerably.