Norman Connors performs

By Sheryl Michelle Jeffries

Multi-talented producer and entrepreneur, Norman Connors, was in Baltimore recently to commemorate Coppin State College's homecoming and make an appearance at the club, 20 Grand.

Connors new album, "Passion," which was premiered at the Coppin concert, will be released nationally March 16. The first single released, already played frequently on their airwaves, is called "I Am Your Melody," and features the lead vocals of Spencer Harrison. Harrison, along with co-vocalist, Gabrielle Goodman, (who hails from Baltimore), are featured vocalists in the "Starship Orchestra," the entourage presently touring with Connors.

Connors is known countrywide for recognizing potential in artists and songs and bringing that potential to its highest form of expression. He has discovered such artists as Jean Carn, Michael Henderson, and Phyllis Hyman.

Hyman, who was in town last weekend for a special Valentine's Day concert with Glenn Jones, was introduced to Connors after he was looking for a replacement for Carn and was told about a songbird singing in New York on the west side. After being discovered, she sang a duet with Henderson, "We Both Need Each Other," and a solo song of the Stylistics' hit, "Betcha By Golly Wow."

Unfortunately, Connors was unable to join Phyllis on stage and vice versa, because they both were touring in different cities at the same time. Connors did say that they keep in touch often and plan to work together in the future.

After touring, Connors will head back to the studio to wear his main hat, that of producer. Some of the featured artists in the line-up include, Angela Bofill, Ashford and Simpson, Stanley Turrentine, and the Winans. He also has plans to do videos and there should be one upcoming with the single, "I Am Your Melody."

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Weekend Treats

The Big Band Society of Annapolis presents the Ed Williams Orchestra on Sunday, February 21, from 7-11 p.m. It takes place at the Governor Calvert House Ballroom in Annapolis. For reservations call (301) 263-2641 in Annapolis, or 202) 216-2206 in Washington.

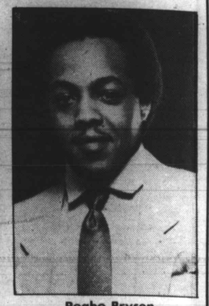
* * *

MyCoy Tyner and Freddie Hubbard appear at Blues Alley in DC from February 16-21. For more info call (202) 337-4141.

* * *

At the Palladium this weekend for the finals o the Remy Man of the Night Contest will be peabo Bryson, Meli'sa Morgan, Zero Hour, Chad, and Vaneese Thomas. The event starts at 11 p.m. For more information call (301) 367-6862.

Meli'sa Morgan



Peabo Bryson

Coming Soon

The Urban Services Agency Cultural Arts Program in Baltimore will present Stephanie Powell and Friends in "A Celebration of Dance," at the Dunbar Performing Arts Center on Monday, February 26, 1988, at 8 p.m. Admission Free, but must have tickets.

For information call 396-3181.

* * *

R.S.P. Production presents Baltimore's Royal Theater Night," The night features a talent contest with hosts comedian Rickey Shackleford and The Amazing Josini. The event takes place March 2, at 8 p.m. at 202 Park Avenue. Cash prize of $100 will be awarded. For more information call (301) 523-0676.

* * *

The Harlem Globetrotters bring their basketball wizardry to the Capital Centre in Landover, MD, March 13 at 1:30 p.m. For more information, call (202) 432-0200.

* * *

Coming to the Palladium in Baltimore on February 26 is an all-star line up. Keith Sweat, Kool Moe Dee, and Tony Terry will be in performance. For more information call (301) 367-6862.

* * *

On Saturday, February 27 at Constitution Hall in DC, The Dells Ray, Goodman & Brown and The Manhattans perform. For tickets call 1-800-233-4050.

Ray, Goodman and Brown

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628 N. Eutaw St.
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John J. Oliver, Jr.
Chairman of the Board/Publisher
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Contributing Writers
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Deborah Quinerly
Denise Dorsey - Production Coordinator

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Glynn Turman stars in 'I'm Not Rappaport'

By Deborah Johns Moir

Glynn Turman has been known to many of us over the years for many different reasons. From February 23 through March 20 at the Morris Mechanic Theatre in Baltimore, we can know him as "Midge" in the play "I'm Not Rappaport."

In a recent phone interview with the AFRO, Turman talked about the play, work he's done in the past, and the movie his production company currently has in the making. One thing he didn't want to talk about (he's been asked so much and so often) was his marriage (and divorce) to Aretha Franklin.

He now lives on a ranch in Lake Hughes, CA. It is there, 80 miles from Los Angeles, that he "breeds, trains, and raises" Arabian horses. "That's why I'm on the road now," he said laughing, referring to the expensive upkeep of the horses.

Turman says he got involved with "Rappaport" when the road company came to California. "This is my first time on a road tour. It's a little longer than I thought it would be. We started out in October (1987) and we'll finish up in May."

"I'm Not Rappaport" is a comedy co-starring Vincent Gardenia. It deals with the friendship of two lively senior citizens who share a bench in Central Park. Turman describes his role as a "wonderful character. He's 81-years-old, and quite a survivor. He's definitely got his own ideas. He's one of the more fascinating characters I've played."

Turman started his career on stage as "Travis" in the original 1959 Broadway production of "A Raisin In The Sun." Later, he was cast as the father, Walter Lee in the New Federal Theater's production of the play. He also appeared in plays which include "The Toilet" at the Actors Studio, "What The Wine Sellers Buy" in Los Angeles, "Eyes of the American" at the Negro Ensemble Company, "Who's Got His Own" at the American Place Theatre, "Seasons Spent" at the Tyrone Guthrie Repertory Theatre, "Ceremonies in Dark Old Men" in Los Angeles (which won a L.A. Drama Critics nomination), and "Don't Get God Started," at the Walnut Street Theatre in Philadelphia.

He has been in several movies including "The River Niger," "Five on the Black Hand Side," "The Serpent's Egg," "Gremlins," and "Out of Bounds." He also appeared in "Cooley High" and "J. D.'s Revenge." These last two have become "cult classics."

Turman played "Preach" in "Cooley High." He and Lawrence-Hilton Jacobs ("Cochise") and Corin Rogers ("Pooter") were inseparable buddies in this film set in the early 1960s. It was a very unforgettable movie with one of Turman's most moving performances.

"J. D.'s Revenge" dealt with a man who becomes possessed by the evil spirit of another man long dead. "I didn't really like it when it first came out," says Turman. "I think they made it more exploitive than it should have been."

Turman's character in "Rappaport" certainly is a departure from those previous roles. "The play is about identities," says Turman. "The main character (Gardenia) decides he's been one character all of his life, but now he'll be all the characters (he wants to be) for the rest of his life. He expects my character to play along with him."

Turman has also been seen on television in "Attica," "Centennial," "Ministrel Man," "J. J. Starbuck," "Matlock," and "Murder She Wrote." He's won awards which include the NAACP Image Award for theatrical achievement. It was for the theater production of "Deadwood Dick, Legend of the West, which was a Los Angeles Inner City Cultural Center production.

In addition to performing in "Rappaport," Turman's own production company is currently making a movie. His company, Backyard Ventures, Inc., is now filming scenes for the movie which centers on a reggae singer (Turman). The "Reggae Sunsplash" the annual reggae concert held in Montigo Bay, Jamaica is the backdrop of the movie.

While Turman is on the road, the company is filming around him. "We've been filming Anthony Fargas and Pam Grier and doing editing and the storyboards. It should be out at the end of this year."

Turman is looking forward to his stay in Baltimore. "Last time I was here, I was promoting Cooley High. I do have some friends who live in Baltimore, so I'll be visiting them." Last time he was in DC, he was in the play "Don't Get God Started," which will be in town about the same time as "Rappaport." Giancarlo Esposito plays the role that Turman had in "Don't Get God Started." Incidentally, Esposito can also be seen in Spike Lee's movie "School Daze."

Turman is hoping that the community comes out to see "Rappaport." "One thing there has been a lack of is black people coming out to see the play . . . It's not a play that is just for white folks. I don't know whether it's been the promotion or whatever . . . but I think it is a play black folks should see."

Vincent Gardenia and Glynn Turman star in the 1986 Tony Award winning comedy "I'M NOT RAPPAPORT."

TURMAN—"COLLEY HIGH'S" KID GROWS UP IN "J.D.'S REVENGE"—Turman started in the dual role (as pictured above) of a law student who becomes possessed by the spirit of a long-dead hoodlum.

MATINEE LAUGHS—L-R Preach (GLYNN TURMAN) and Sandra (CHRISTINE JONES) enjoy a joke about the movie playbill with Johnnie May (JACKIE TAYLOR) and Cochise (LAWRENCE-HILTON JACOBS) as they prepare to attend a Saturday matinee in American International Pictures' hilarious film about high school life in the '60's, "COOLEY HIGH." Michael Schultz directed Eric Monte's screenplay.

Marvis Martin performs with BSO

MARVIS MARTIN

Marvis Martin is scheduled to perform Feb. 18 and 19 with the BSO at the Meyerhoff in Baltimore. Both nights performances begin at 8:15.

Marvis Martin has been hailed by the international press for the rare beauty of her voice and a special ability to communicate with her audience. The past few seasons have seen Miss Martin's steady climb to a pre-eminent position among the performing artists of her generation. Her international engagement schedule in season 1987-1988 attests to that position.

Performances with orchestra play a considerable part in the season: the Brahms *Requiem* with the Baltimore Symphony, *Messiah* with both the Pittsburgh Symphony and the Montreal Symphony, Mozart's *C Minor Mass* with the Detroit Symphony, and Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony* with the National Arts Centre Orchestra in Ottawa, Canada under such conductors as Gunther Herbig, Robert Shaw, and Claudio Scimone.

The soprano also appears with a number of regional orchestras across North America including the Minnesota Chorale, the McGill Chamber Orchestra of Montreal and the local orchestras in Lincoln, Nebraska, and Flint, Michigan. In Europe, Miss Martin will appear in Holland as Clara in concert version of Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess* conducted by Henry Lewis. Performances take place in Utrecht and in Amsterdam's famed Concertgebouw and will be heard live over Dutch radio.

During February and March 1988, Miss Martin joins the Chamber Orchestra of the Auvergne as soloist for the popular *Chants d'Auverane* in

(Continued on page 7)