SOUNDS

By Carl Matthews

JOHN WHITEHEAD
"I Need Money Bad" (Mercury)

"I Need Money Bad" is the first solo LP from the Philadelphia-born singer and songwriter who, with Gene McFadden, gave us the memorable hit single "Ain't No Stopping Us Now" in 1979.

Whitehead formed his first group when he was 12. Gene McFadden, John's friend since elementary school, and a huge Otis Redding fan, later joined Whitehead's group as lead singer.

Later, the boys went on tour with Otis Redding, and in 1967 sang background vocals ("Yeah, man") on the Arthur Conley recording of Redding's composition, "Sweet Soul Music." In the 1970's, McFadden and Whitehead wrote such Philly-soul smashes as "Backstabbers," recorded by The O'Jays.

Whitehead's new album, produced by McFadden, starts off with the title track, a soulful ballad that tells a story many of us can relate to. Whitehead's vocal delivery recalls Teddy Pendergrass at his finest. I keep thinking of Ray Charles' classic "Busted" when I hear this song.

The other tracks, such as "One Million Tomorrows," "Let It Be Me" and "Body Moves," are all professionally-handled not-too-mellow-and-not-too-funky pop tunes.

Compact Disc Review

KOOL AND THE GANG
"Kool And The Gang Spin Their Top Hits" (Mercury)

If you can't get enough of that classic funky stuff, this CD will bring back dancing memories of 1973-1976, in the days before Kool And The Gang had their current lead singer, James "J. T." Taylor.

This is the CD version of a 1978 greatest hits album originally released on De-Lite Records. The CD contains the same songs as the vinyl LP, but the CD includes the full-length versions of "Spirit Of The Boogie" and "Love And Understanding" in place of the edited versions that were on the LP. They should have also included the full length version of "Caribbean Festival," since there was plenty of room for it on the CD, instead of the short version included here.

Since these tunes were compiled in 1978, this album obviously does not contain the group's biggest hits, such as "Celebration," "Joanna" and "Fresh," which were recorded later. Much of the music on this CD sounds dated now, and has probably been forgotten by a lot of folks.

These are the kinds of hits Kool And The Gang doesn't make any more. When Robert "Kool" Bell and his crew made these records, they really sounded like they had a lot of fun. Their most recent recordings lack that playful energy, I feel.

These digital transfers bring new life to these funk classics. The chatter and vocal carryings-on in "Funky Stuff" are more pronouced, "Funky George" Brown's drums on "Jungle Boogie" sound more natural, the percussion on "Hollywood Swinging" sounds clearer than ever.

But in some cases here, as is bound to happen with CDs mastered from analogue recordings, the CD reveals shortcomings in the original masters. "Summer Madness" on this CD suffers from an annoying amount of background "hiss" which is especially noticeable at the very beginning (and this is one of the group's best-known keyboard solos, too!).

Until Mercury puts out a 1979-1987 compilation, I'll be happy with this one. It's one of Polygram's reduced-price CDs, too.

Kool and the Gang with Elton John

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Ossie Davis, Ruby Dee pay tribute to professor at theatre conference

"Theatre in Black Higher Education" will be the theme of the fifth annual National Conference on African American Theatre, Inc. (NCAAT). The conference will be held at The Belvedere Hotel in downtown Baltimore on April 7-8 at 8:30 a.m.

The organization, which is devoted to Theatre scholarship, aims this year not only to discuss the history and development of Theatre programs at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), but also to find ways and means of saving these programs, according to Dr. Thomas Pawley, NCAAT president.

Dr. Margaret J. Seagears, executive director of The White House Initiative on Historically Black Colleges and Universities, will keynote the conference. Dr. Seagears works directly with the presidents of the 101 black universities to help President Ronald Reagan achieve his goal of improving the quality of education at HBCUs.

James W. Butcher, professor emeritus of Drama at Howard University, will receive the prestigious Mr. Brown Award. The award is given annually to the person of any race or national origin whose lifetime achievements in Theatre command great respect and admiration. Actors Ossie Davis and Ruby Dee will pay tribute to Professor Butcher.

The program will include papers by Theodore Cooper on The Howard (University) Players, C. Lee Turner on Prairie View A&M University, Robert Louis Stevenson on Tennessee State University, and Ethel Pitts-Walker on Lincoln University (MO).

For more information call (301) 792-2765.

ABOUT TV

By Deborah Quinerly

Public television, Channels 22, 26, and 67, mark the 20th anniversary of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s death with a major documentary film, "MARTIN LUTHER KING: THE DREAM ON HOLD," airing Monday, April 4th from 10-11:30 p.m. on the above channels.

The 90-minute film combines three elements: an intimate portrait of one of the greatest figures of the 20th century, a profile of his epoch-making career as a civil rights leader, and an account of how far his famous dream of racial equality has been realized today.

Using the recollections of friends and little-known personal interviews with Dr. King, "Martin Luther King: The Dream on Hold" shows him as a warm, humorous, and intensely sympathetic figure. Yet, he was also a fallible human being. As the film reveals, J. Edgar Hoover, the, then, head of the FBI, had no scruples about using King's weaknesses in a long campaign of dirty tricks and character assassination which he waged against the civil rights leader.

King's own campaign aimed to win social justice for blacks, both in the deep South and in the North, concentrating on Chicago, then as now, the most segregated city in the United States. The film follows his struggle, using often rare archival footage and extracts from his momentous speeches, some of which have never been seen or heard before. It reveals the extraordinary courage of the civil rights leader in the face of racial violence from the Ku Klux Klan in the South, and other organized race hate groups in the North. It draws on the memories of key figures in the civil rights movement, including Mayor Andrew Young, C. T. Vivian, Hosea Williams and King's closest friend, Ralph Abernathy, who gives a moving account of his last moments in Memphis, Tennessee, where he was leading a campaign to improve the lot of poor workers, both black and white.

What makes the third and final element of the film different from other celebrations of King is its account of how far his diagnosis of the ills of America is still applicable today, and how far the cure is prescribed in taking effect. The film charts the undoubted successes of the civil rights movement in securing black rights. But it also takes a bleak look at the failures: the continuing poverty, unemployment, and race hatred; the crime in Chicago's black ghettoes (made worse by the removal of an emergent black middle class into the suburbs); and continuing white efforts to resist integration.

What emerges most remarkable from "Martin Luther King: The Dream On Hold" is that Martin Luther King's prophesies were uncannily accurate and that his solutions are still profoundly relevant, not just to the United States but elsewhere in the world. King's martyrdom was a tragedy, but black leaders, like Andrew Young, still hope that in the long run his "innocent suffering" may prove to be a triumph. Certainly his legacy was an immensely rich one and his message lives on.

* * *

"FROM RIOT TO RECOVERY,?" a half-hour documentary examining the political, economic, social, and physical impact of the 1968 riots in Washington, D.C. will premiere on WETA/TV26 at 8:00 p.m. on Tuesday, April 5th.

Produced by WETA/TV26, "From Riot To Recovery?" will present a historical perspective and an intimate look at Washington, D.C. before, during and after the riots. In exclusive interviews, **Washington Post** writer and award-winning author of "Eyes on the Prize: America's Civil Rights Years 1954-65," Juan Williams will talk with the District's first mayor, Walter Washington and black nationalist and former Black Panther, Stokely Carmichael. Williams will delve with them into the politics and tension that took place in the riots that were raging in the streets.

"From Riot To Recovery?" will explore the history of Washington's black community, featuring archival footage shot during the riots which resulted in over 7,600 arrests and 12 deaths. The documentary will illustrate the power of the black community, in spite of segregation and a lack of black representation in Congress.

John Hechinger, Walter Fauntroy, and current Mayor Marion Barry will also be featured in the program as they discuss their roles during the tumultuous year of 1968, as well as the long-lasting impact the riots had on the city.

The program will profile the unique partnership between Jeffrey Cohen, a private developer, and Ibrahim Mumin, president and executive director of the Shaw Coalition Redevelopment Corporation, in helping to rebuild the 14th Street corridor.

TV Capsules

Saturday, April 2
"50 YEARS AT THE FINAL FOUR" (5-5:30 p.m.) A commemorative look at the Final Four as the NCAA Men's Basketball Championship celebrates its golden anniversary. Channels 9 and 11.
"NCAA BASKETBALL CHAMPIONSHIP—THE FINAL FOUR" (5:30-10:00 p.m.) The 1988 NCAA Men's Basketball Tournament narrows down to the Final Four, as the East Regional winner plays the West Regional winner and the Southeast Regional Winner squares off against the Midwest Regional winner, live from Kemper Arena in Kansas City, Mo. Channels 9 and 11.

Sunday, April 3
"THE FOURTH ANNUAL CBS EASTER PARADE" (12 Noon-1:00 p.m.) Tim Reid and Daphne Maxwell Reid, Stars of the acclaimed "Frank's Place," will host this annual event, live from New York's Fifth Avenue. Channels 9 and 11.
"NCAA WOMEN'S BASKETBALL CHAMPIONSHIP" (4-6:00 p.m.) The 1988 Women's Basketball Championship, live from the Tacomadome in Tacoma, Washington. Channels 9 and 11.
"MASTER JAM W/BLINK" (12:30-1:00 a.m.) No information available. Channel 45.

Monday, April 4
"NCAA MEN'S BASKETBALL CHAMPIONSHIP" (9:00 p.m. - Conclusion) The winners of Saturday's semifinal games play for the 1988 NCAA Basketball Championship, live from Kemper Arena in Kansas City, Mo. Channels 9 and 11.

Tuesday, April 5
"I, DESIRE" (2:10-3:30 a.m.) Dorian Harwood stars in this mystery-drama about a coroner's aide who gets involved in a bizarre series of events when a body, drained of blood, is brought in one night. Channels 9 and 11.

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