SHOWTIME

Bob Marley's estate is tangle of claims

KINGSTON, Jamaica — When legendary reggae star Bob Marley died of cancer in 1981 he left 11 children by eight different women, copyrights to hundreds of songs, three music companies and dozens of collaborators. What he didn't leave was a will.

The result is a 7-year-old international snarl of lawsuits, forgeries, and infighting by lawyers, musicians, producers, children and associates of the tangle-haired singer who helped rocket reggae from Kingston's ghettoes to the international spotlight.

"(It) is perhaps the most complex and difficult estate ever to be administered in Jamaica, if not the Western Hemisphere as a whole," managing director Louis Byles of the Mutual Security Merchant Bank and Trust Co. Ltd., which helps administer the estate, wrote in a 1987 report.

Even the estate's size is in question.

The only audit, done a few years after Marley's death in Miami at 36, showed the estate had only $250,000. Official figures are not available, but it is widely believed that in the 1970s Marley's earnings accounted for up to 10 percent of the nation's foreign exchange — all non-Jamaican money entering the country — a figure that could be in the tens of millions of dollars.

The wrangle heated up in July in the Supreme Court when lawyers for two children blocked the $8.2 million sale of Marley's companies, properties, name and copyrights to Island Logic Inc. of New York, a record company owned by Chris Blackwell, one of Marley's producers.

BOB MARLEY left his legend to the world, but what he didn't leave was a will. It is perhaps the most complex and difficult estate ever to be administered in Jamaica, if not the Western Hemisphere.

Lawyer Barry Frankson successfully argued that the price was suspiciously low and alleged that Blackwell may owe the estate royalties from records he produced for Marley.

Justice Lensley Wolfe adjourned the case until August to give lawyers time to assess the estate's value.

But this fight is only the latest in a series of controversies that have plagued the estate, initially administered by Mutual Security Merchant Bank and Trust, a court-appointed lawyer and the singer's widow, Rita Marley.

Don Taylor, Marley's former manager, accused Rita Marley last year of forging Marley's signature on documents that made it appear the singer transferred much of his property to her years before his death.

Rita Marley admitted the fraud and resigned as administrator. She is helping prosecutors prepare a case against her former U.S. advisers.

By law, Marley's widow receives 10 percent of the estate. All his children get equal shares of 50 percent of what remains. The remainder is placed in trust.

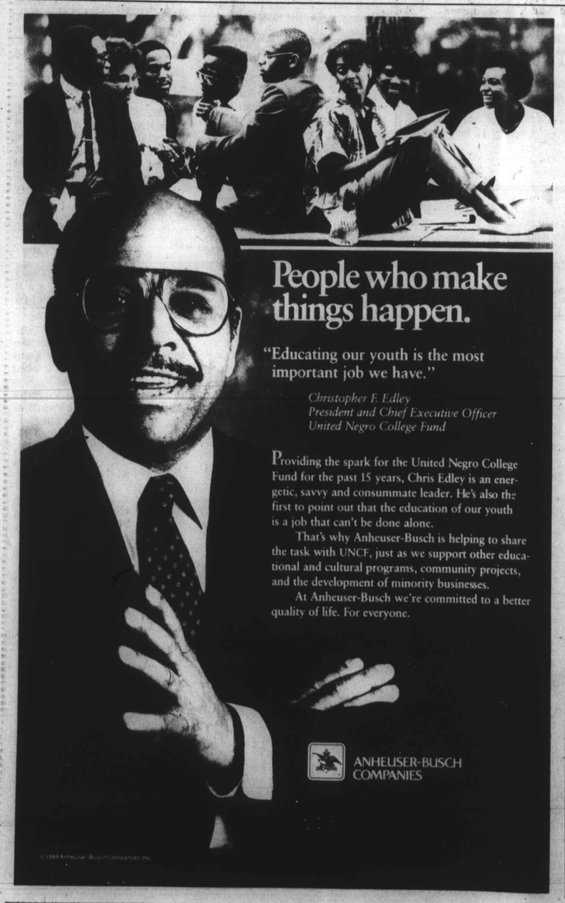
Rita Marley is entitled to interest on the percentage held in trust. At her death, that portion is to be divided among the children.

The children receive their shares when they reach 18 and their mothers get an allowance until then.

But lawyers say some of the mothers of Marley's seven children born out of wedlock are receiving as little as $75 a month, and two children reportedly are on welfare in the United States.

Because so much of the estate went to Rita Marley, her children — including budding reggae star Ziggy Marley — have fared much better than the rest of Marley's children, they say.

Also hampering administration of the estate is a New York court case brought by former Marley music publisher Danny Sims, who claims he owns many copyrights to Marley's songs. The case is scheduled for trial this year in the state Supreme Court's Appellate Division.



Atlanta opens black art expo

ATLANTA — HARLEM RENAISSANCE: The Art of Black America, the highly acclaimed exhibition of paintings, sculptures and photographs from the 1920s, went on display recently at the High Museum of Art.

The exhibition is sponsored by Philip Morris Companies Inc. and the Fulton County Board of Commissioners upon the recommendation of the Fulton County Arts Council. This exhibition will remain on display through September 4, 1988.

Organized by the Studio Museum in Harlem, the exhibition contains 135 works by painters Aaron Douglas, William H. Johnson and Palmer Hayden, sculptor Meta Warrick Fuller and photographer James Van Der Zee.

Karen Brosius, Manager, Cultural Affairs and Special Projects, Philip Morris Incorporated, said "it is our tradition at Philip Morris to bring artists and ideas to a wider public — artists and ideas that have forged an important part of our American culture and tradition."

Michelle Smith, Executive Director of Atlanta's National Black Arts Festival, Inc., said Atlanta was an ideal location for the Harlem Renaissance exhibition. This city, she said, has become a principle Southern arts center.

The growth of Atlanta as an arts center, she said, was also pushed by "viable partnership of public and private support for the arts, and especially on the part of Fulton County and the City of Atlanta."

The Harlem Renaissance is a part of the National Black Arts Festival, the nation's first, which will mount 85 arts events, including visual arts exhibitions, music, dance, and dramatic presentations in Atlanta between July 30 and August 7, 1988. Most of the events will be free to the public, Ms. Smith said.

Have you heard?

By Penny S. Demps

THAT rap star L. L. Cool J is miffed with First Lady Nancy Reagan. Seems that after he agreed to appear at a Say No To Drugs Foundation benefit concert in N.Y., she not only didn't show up for the affair, but she didn't even send him a formal note of thanks for his efforts. L. L. had said he wanted to be part of the benefit to try to clean up the image of rappers, but claims Nancy just cast him aside like "a poker chip in Vegas."

* * *

THAT a 39-year-old Houston woman who says that former three-time heavyweight boxing champ Muhammad Ali is the father of her six-year-old daughter, is suing Ali in a Houston Court, seeking to establish paternity. Barbara Mensah claims in the suit that she and Ali have had a relationship over 20 years, and that they produced a daughter Kiiursti (pronounced KEER IS TEE), who was born November 19, 1981. Mansah alleges "Ali always took care of Kiiursti, he used to visit her often and he's never denied her."

* * *

THAT Whitney Houston's Ione U.S. concert in 1988 will be an August 27 benefit at N.Y.'s Madison Square Garden and it will be the fulfillment of a family tradition. The show is a benefit for the United Negro College Fund—a cause that her mother, (singer Cissy Houston) and her cousin, Dionne Warwick, have both been involved in.

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BETTY CARTER

HOWARD ROLLINS

THAT songtress Betty Carter's new album is entitled "Look What I Got!" and what she's got, and we get in turn, is this unique singer's first album in more than six years, and her first major label album in 20 years. There is a mixture of original compositions and her very personal interpretations of standards. Critics claim Carter works with a tune and reshapes it like nobody else, usually keeping the words intact but stretching and re-emphasizing the melody to give the son a new mood. Good news—Verve has agreed to reissue and distribute her Bet-Car albums—in vinyl, tape and disc formats.

* * *

THAT despite what you may have read, a Louisiana prosecutor says actor Howard Rollins will still face charges of speeding, driving while intoxicated and possessing cocaine. An erroneous Hollywood report had stated that because Rollins had gone through a rehab program, the charges would be dropped but, no so, says East Baton Rouge Parish assistant district attorney Glen Lorio, who claims "there is no basis for dropping charges." Rollins, 37, was arrested in March in Louisiana filming a TV remake of "In the Heat of the Night" with Carroll O'Connor. Police clocked his car at 100 mph and discovered cocaine in it too.

* * *

THAT jazz trumpeter Wynton Marsalis will probably take up playing lullabies on his horn now that he and financee Candice Stanley are the proud parents of a baby boy. Just call him Wynton Learson Marsalis, Jr., of course.

* * *

THAT multi-millionaire real estate mogul Donald Trump has agreed to serve as boxing and business manager for undefeated, undisputed heavyweight champion Mike Tyson, including backing with current manager Bill Cayton. Trump also revealed that Tyson asked him to be his manager the day before the Spinks bout.

* * *

THAT Gregory Hines is a man who wants to do it all. Renowned as a tap dancer, he earned respect starring on the Silver screen and is now making his mark on the recording world with his hit debut solo album on the Epic label. The self-titled LP was produced by Luther Vandross. Hines, 42, is currently working on another movie, "Tap," which he claims is "an accurate, state-of-the-art view of tap dancing today" and also stars Sammy Davis, Jr.

HORSEPLAY — While shooting a commercial at Walt Disney World for Mickey's Birthdayland, "Cosby Kid" Keisha Knight Pulliam impromptly planted a big kiss on the nose of a shy, yet gracious petting farm pony.

METRO PROFILE

■ High School Sports 3C
■ Kids Talk 4C

Vocational Education Students, doing well in the job market

LAYING BRICKS — Bending to the ground, a future bricklayer lines his bricks in sequence as he gains practical experience in his trade.

By Jill P. Carter
AFRO Staff Writer

Vocational Education has long been a target for criticism, but recent statistics indicate that Baltimore City's Vocational Education graduates are faring well after graduation. A recent survey of the 1986 graduates shows that 81-percent of the 1,336 who responded are engaged in some positive activity, employment or continuing education, one year following graduation.

"I believe that when folks make judgements, they don't distinguish between Vocational Education grads and those who did not participate in any kind of vocational ed. program," said Dr. Earl Jones, executive director of Vocational/Alternative Schools. "It is my belief that given the economy and given the need to have a trained work force, more youngsters should be involved in Vocational Ed. programs."

While critics have maintained that vocational education is a dumping ground for academically inept students, Jones believes the opposite is true.

"We make sure youngsters are able to do something when they leave us," Jones said. It's a two-track system where academics are stressed in addition to vocation, so in many ways hey are stronger than other graduates of general high school curriculum."

Jones also said that vocational ed. programs prepare students for college and stress college education at least as much as general curriculum does.

"Vocational education has always been looked upon as being less than," Jones said. "It goes way back to practical arts training when it was thought that if you weren't bright, then you could work with your hands."

Of the graduates responding to the survey, 36 percent were enrolled in school and 44 percent were employed. Another 8 percent were enrolled in school and 44 percent were employed. Another 8 percent was enlisted in the military, 1 percent was in an apprenticeship program, and 2 percent were homemakers.

The high levels of employment seem encouraging, but another statistic indicates that 50 percent of 1986 grads are working in their fields, a 57 percent decrease over the number of 1985 grads working in the areas they were trained in.

Jones believes this decrease may warrant further exploration, but is probably no cause for alarm.

"Vocational education is obligated by the State Department of Education to run programs in what is referred to as the top 40 trade areas in the state," Jones said. "The programs are indeed viable programs with respect to service industry."

The decrease could be attributed to changeble career interests, of youth and the nature of the labor market, according to Jones.

"In the past, it was not difficult for a youngster to come out of the class and go directly into Bethlehem Steel, Bendix, or Martin Marietia," Jones said. "They were taking our graduates as soon as we could produce them."

Now, a major source of support comes from the Commonwealth Program, where students who are top in attendance and achievement are guaranteed a job opportunity or a college opportunity upon graduation. The program, sponsored by The Greater Baltimore Committee (GBC) works with such corporations as Baltimore Gas & Electric (BG&E), Chesapeake and Potomas (C&P), Equitable Bank, and many other thriving businesses that have locations in the Baltimore area.

Although 99 percent of all employers responding to the survey said they were pleased with their empoloyees' performance, job placement is an area in need of more resources.

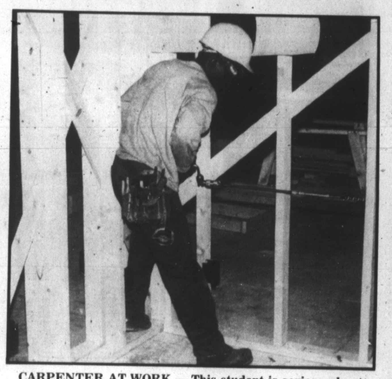
"That is a weak point at this time," Jones said. "We don;t have the people to work at getting youngsters from the schoolroom to being successfully placed in the job market."

Placement, by and large, goes from the teachers and other members of the department who have contacts in a field," Jones added.

Presently, the only schools that have formal placement programs are Carver Voc-Tech High School and Mergenthaler Voc-Tech High School.

Vocational education supporters hope to see the employment number rise above the 60 percent mark for 1987 vocational ed. grads, and they look forward to receiving at least 2,000 responses to next year's survey.

POSITIONING IS EVERYTHING — that is when you want to use a drill the right way as this young man does.



CARPENTER AT WORK — This student is serious about his work.

EMPLOYMENT RELATED TO TRAINING

EMPLOYED FULL-TIME RELATED TO TRAINING	59.4%
HOURLY WAGE AND EMPLOYMENT RELATED TO TRAINING:	
EMPLOYMENT CLOSELY RELATED	$5.04
EMPLOYMENT SOMEWHAT RELATED	4.68
EMPLOYMENT NOT RELATED	4.47

AVERAGE HOURLY WAGE OF ALL FULL-TIME EMLOYED VOCATIONAL GRADUATES:

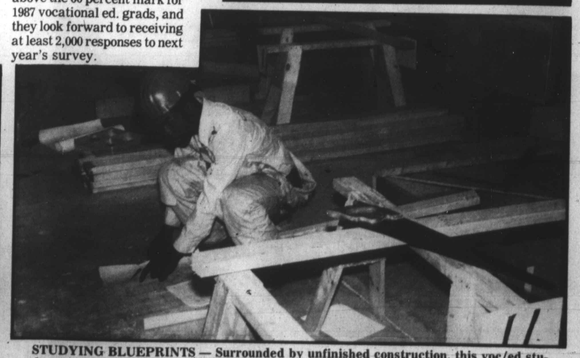
$4.96 PER HOUR

BEAUTY WILL BE HER BUSINESS — A future cosmotologists practices on a mannequin before attempting beauty maneuvers on a human head.

EMPLOYMENT STATUS

EMPLOYED FULL-TIME	479	36%
EMPLOYED PART-TIME	106	8%
EMPLOYED MILITARY	110	8%
EMPLOYED APPRENTICE	3	1%
EMPLOYED	775	58%

PRESSURE CHECK — Future nurses practice taking blood pressure on one another as they learn professional nursing for their futures.



STUDYING BLUEPRINTS — Surrounded by unfinished construction, this voc/ed student works his project to completion.