Newsman Has Last 'Laugh' On His Song

Fellow Scribes Joked When They Heard Of Larry's Tune

By JAMES L. HICKS

NEW YORK — When newsman Larry Douglas told his fellow newsmen he had written a song they all began to laugh — and "Laugh" was the name of his song.

The boys who push the pencils continued to laugh at Larry until last Friday night when Larry unveiled his new record on a Metro Goldwyn Mayer label — then all the newsmen began to sing "Laugh"

Larry and MGM threw a great party at the Theresa Hotel. There was a bevy of pretty girls on hand and they all wore ribbons with an MGM label which called attention to "Laugh."

Ivory Joe Hunter Sang

In addition, Ivory Joe Hunter, MGM recording artist who recorded "Laugh" was on hand to personally sing the tune to all who would listen. And those who did not hear Ivory Joe in person had no choice but to listen to his version of "Laugh" for once Larry began playing the record at the party he continued it through the night.

There were plenty of people there and plenty of the beverages which make people laugh and the net result was that half of Harlem awoke the next morning humming the tune "Laugh"

Then came the stamp of approval of the song from Billboard, Variety, Cash Box and disc jockeys such as Willie Bryant, Ray Carroll, Ralph Cooper and others and the boys who write the news began to sit up and take notice.

Slow Was The Dawn

Slowly it began to dawn on the boys that Larry might have a hit on his hands and they began to search the records to see what is in the background of a newsman who can write a hit song.

This is what they found: Larry is a graduate of the University of Michigan School of Journalism and while there took a minor in music. In 1935 he was fronting a 17-piece orchestra before such men as Billy Bowen now of the Ink Spots and Milton Brunckner now with Lionel Hampton.

True to the traditions of the newsman Larry had an "angle" when this writer asked him how he came to write "Laugh." These are the words he said:

Stopped In Street

"I was crossing Seventh Avenue in front of Frisco's Flower Shop near the Theresa Hotel when suddenly I stopped in the center of the street. Suddenly it hit me from out of left field. I stopped in the middle of the middle of the street and began to write. Horace Carter, (another news scribe) who was with me thought I was crazy and would be run over by a taxi. I got down right there on my knees and began writing.

"A cop came along and asked me what was the matter. I told him I was writing a million dollar tune. The cop laughed and told me to move on. I went on home and finished the tune."

That's how Larry says he wrote the tune. Before you believe all this kindly take into consideration that Larry is also trained as a publicist.

Anyway it sounds good and so does the tune, "Laugh — Though You Feel You Want To Cry."

Hits Several Stars

Larry also took occasion on this interview to throw a few curves at Sarah Vaughan, Errol Garner, King Cole, Buddy Walker, Ruth Brown and Billy Eckstine whom he claims would not offer him any assistance when he went to them to attempt to get his tune recorded.

He charges that they'll record a "white boy's song" but can't find time for a "colored guy's tune." That comment too is probably aimed more at getting newspaper space than anything else, but when a newsman gets into show business he begins to toss statements around like press agents.

It may not make good reading but, honestly, "Laugh" makes good listening!

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On Local Screens

MIGHTY SPECTACLE SET FOR PATRONS AT REGENT

Cecil B. DeMille's spectacle-drama, "Cleopatra" returns to the Regent beginning Thursday, Nov. 13. Starring Claudette Colbert, Henry Wilcoxon and Warren William, this mighty Roman drama is produced and directed by the same man who gave the public "The Greatest Show on Earth" and "Samson and Delilah."

MARIO LANZA HEADS NEW PROGRAM COMING TO HARLEM

Following the spectacular popularity of "The Great Caruso," one of the most widely-acclaimed motion pictures of the past decade, Mario Lanza starts and sings again in his fourth film role in MGM's "Because You're Mine," opening as the main feature Thursday at the Harlem.

The second feature is "You For Me," starring Peter Lawford, Jane Greer and Gig Young.

THRILLING NEWSPAPER FILM OPENS WEDNESDAY AT MET

Paramount's thrill - packed drama, "The Turning Point," starts Wednesday at the Met. Starring Edmond O'Brien, William Holden and Alexis Smith, it tells a true-to-life story of a newspaperman who becomes involved in the activities of a crime investigating committee out to uncover corruption in a big city.

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Coming To Regent

Sultry Claudette Colbert stars as the famous "Cleopatra" in the film of the same name which opens Thursday at the Regent. Film is directed by Cecil B. De Mille of "Samson and Delilah" fame.

D.C. School Teacher On Jumpy Platters

By The Reviewer

Washington schoolteacher, Jimmy McPhail, turns once more to his lyric side, coming up with another of his welcome platter.

Jimmy takes a jumpy, rockin' topside, "Sugar Lump" and a slow ballad, "I Could Love You More" in equal stride, doing justice to both.

Damita Jo, who divides her time between Steve Gibson's Red Caps and night club eng.gements, has two new etches.

Both tunes, "I'd Do It Again" and "I Don't Care," are jumpy and strictly tailored to the singer's explosive style.

Christmas Albums

Realizing the eagerness with which each new Eddie Fisher platter is awaited by the singer's countless fans, RCA Victor is offering a seasonal bonanza, an album entitled "Christmas With Eddie Fisher."

Lending his thrilling voice to two carols and five pop tunes, as well as to "Jingle Bells," Eddie flashes the accomplished style and know-how that have rapidly canomed him to the top o' the singing profession.

Three Sons Unlimber

In other new albums of the week, The Three Suns unlimber their fleeting fingers to present "The Three Suns" Christmas Party," while Sam Makia and his Waikikians take us to the other extreme "On the Beach at Waikiki."

Perennially popular Wayne King gathers together a stunning collection of sweet danceable melodies in the album "Serenade to a Lady," providing the type of fare that has made him a prime favorite with pop music lovers for many years.

The first of two other contrasting albums presents George Beverly Shea, the country's number one spiritual singer, in a striking collection of favorites entitled, "Beautiful Garden of Prayer."

The Chet Atkins Klek

On an instrumental kick, Chet Atkins lets loose with his magical invention in "Chet Atkins' Gallopin' Guitar," demonstrating once again that he is one of pop music's greatest and most versatile instrumentalists.

Finally, three further albums in the "Around the World in Music" series has been issued, one of Mexico, featuring Los Tres Diamantes; and Volumes II of Italy and Spain starring Tito Schipa.

N.Y. Mayor In Tribute To Bojangles

NEW YORK — Mayor Vincent R. Impellitteri has expressed hope that this city will erect a monument commemorating the memory of the late Bill (Bojangles) Robinson.

He spoke at a ceremony rededicating the famous "Tree of Hope," which once stood in front of the old Lafayette Theatre on Seventh ave. between 131st st. and 132nd st., in Harlem.

The original tree succumbed to the widening of Seventh ave. in 1934. The trunk was transferred to a traffic island at 125st st.

The Negro Actors Guild turned the care of the stump over to the Rev. Lewis J. White, pastor of the Williams Institutional Christian ME Church.

Blues Cavalcade Moves Into Ohio

TOLEDO, Ohio—The Joe Morris-Lowell Fulson Cavalcade of Blues package heads into the Belmont Club here, Nov. 19 for a one-nighter in their current tour.

The package, fronted by trumpeter, Joe Morris, features Laurie Tate, slick young blues stylist, and the saxotic "Wild Man" Billy Clark on tenor sax. Sharing top billing with Morris is the phenomenal blues sensation, Lowell Fulson.

The pack will move on, following this date, to the Top Hatter in Dayton from the 20th to 23rd.

Fulson, one of the top-ten blues stylists, dthfanded his own group last month to share billing with Morris.

Newsreel Series To Show Race Life

NEW YORK — (ANP) — American theatre-goers will have an opportunity soon to witness some of the most novel series of motion pictures, part in technicolor, concerning the life of colored people from Boston to Korea.

E. M. Glucksman, president of American Newsreels, stated last week that crews of motion-picture camera men will be dispatched to cover colored life in Paris, Korea, New York, East St. Louis, Boston and the Artic.

Nearing preparation, historic Boston will be covered in technicolor and the films will cover famous landmarks, from Old North Church, where Paul Revere's lantern let it be known that the British were coming, to modern homes and churches.

From Boston and New York, where the camera crew will film the world's largest collection of African art, American Newsreels covered a raging fire in East St. Louis, Ill., that drove 400 families from their homes.

Talladega's Little Theatre In Action

TALLADEGA, Ala.—The Little Theatre of Talladega College is filling a series of autumn engagements.

Directed by Dr. James O. Hopson, the organization recently presented "Jenny Kissed Me" at the college, and in Cobb High School, Anniston.

They will appear in Parker High School, Birmingham, Nov. 21.

Author To Speak At Conference

ATLANTA, Ga. — Miss Eileen Tarry, author of children's books, will be guest speaker at the Second Annual Conference of School Student Library Assistants of the Atlanta area at 2 p.m., Wednesday, Nov. 19, at Atlanta University.

Miss Tarry, author of "The Runway Elephant," "Hezekiah Horton and "My Dog Rinty," will speak in the afternoon in the auditorium of Dean Sage Hall on the subject, "Book Publishing for Children and Young People."

She will speak again at the University at 7:30 p.m. at the Book Fair sponsored by the Laboratory School. Both meetings are open to the public.

The School Student Library Assistants organization is sponsored by the Atlanta University School of Library Service. Its objectives are to stimulate student interest and participation in school library services, to afford friendly and profitable contacts between student assistants and school librarians in the Atlanta area, and to encourage the exploration of librarianship as a profession.

Listens To Her Own Voice

Juanita Hall, singing star of "South Pacific" listens to one of her recordings when she appeared recently on "Everywhere I Go" on CBS-TV.

Hattie McDaniel's 'Oscar' Willed To Howard University

LOS ANGELES — Howard University has been willed Hattie McDaniel's "Oscar" which the late actress received for her acting in "Gone With the Wind," according to a document filed here, will, dated, Dec. 10, 1951 and probated Monday in Superior Court, showed her fortune had dwindled to less than $10,000 which is to be divided among friends and relatives.

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MGM Seeking Young Actor

NEW YORK — Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer's eastern talent scout is seeking a youthful actor between the ages of 16 and 18 for a role in "Big Mike," story of a high school football star.

The youth must have had acting experience and an athletic background.

Inquiries should be sent to MGM's New York office at 1540 Broadway.

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Collected $100 On 'Break The Bank'

Mr. and Mrs. Wilbur Tyson, 48 West Walk, New York City, and daughter Deborah, 2, (second from right), and son Dominick, 1, narrowly missed winning $840 in cash recently on the radio quiz show, "Break the Bank" (ABC). Selected from the audience and queried by emcee Bud Collyer on the category, "Honesty is the Best Policy," the family answered seven straight questions to win $100. Mr. Tyson, former office equipment company worker, is unemployed.

Scores At Texas College

President I. R. Glass welcomes Marion Downs, lyric soprano, and John Nickel, accompanist, to Texas College, Tyler, Texas, where Mrs. Downs of Baltimore, Md., was warmly received by a capacity audience of 800. The concert marked her first visit to Texas since 1948 when her late husband, Karl E. Downs, was president of Sam Huston College.

'The Climate Of Eden' Stirs Differences Of Opinion Among N.Y. Drama Critics

One Reviewer Describes Play 'Fascinating' But Another Sees Parts Of It 'Distasteful'

NEW YORK (NNPA) — "The Climate of Eden," the poignant and deeply moving play that Moss Hart has written about a missionary's family in the jungles of British Guiana, received a mixed reception from New York drama critics after it opened at the Martin Beck Theater Thursday night, Nov. 6.

The challenging background of the play is Hart's treatment of race relations in the jungle Garden of Eden he created. A large part of the cast consists of colored actors, who portray the natives of British Guiana, descendants of African servants and the play makes it clear that racial prejudices do not exist in this Utopia.

The play begins with the arrival of a young relative of the mission-ary, a neurotic youth seeking peace and solitude, but obsessed with a hatred of his dead wife and bearing a frustrated murder complex.

The unorthodox situation in the play is that the elder daughter of the Rev. Gerald Harmston, a 19-year-old girl, has had a native lover from the age of sixteen until recently, but she and the native are still on good terms. This fact the girl's mother tells the neurotic, who is falling in love with her. Also, members of the missionary's family and the natives go bathing in the nude.

Praised Chapman

The play is a dramatization of the erotic novel, "Shadow Move Among Them," by Edgar Mittelholzer.

John Chapman, drama critic of the New York Daily News, called the dramatization "an eerie, fascinating play" and described the performance as "glowing and beautiful."

"Hart had shown great ingenuity and theatrical craftmanship in writing and staging 'The Climate of Eden,'" Chapman wrote, "but these are not his finest accomplishments; his real achievement is making this drama a thing of warmth and loving insight."

Calls Part 'Distasteful'

Brooks Atkinson, drama critic of the New York Times, found parts of the play "admirable" and other parts "distasteful." He liked the "impromptu family scenes" acted by the older daughter and the younger daughter, and found exalting the scene representing a religious service in the jungle, in which Edward Hall reads the scriptures beautifully.

But Atkinson concluded that the character of Gregory Hawke, the English novelist, and "the unresolved" acting of Lee Montague, who portrays Hawke, "stand between Mr Hart and a fine drama."

Jane White In Cast

Jane White, daughter of Walter White, executive secretary of the NAACP, and Earl Hyman, who created the juvenile lead in "Anna Lucasta," are members of the cast.

The cast also includes as natives Tom Terrial, Charles Gordon, Charlotte Wright, Tamara Thompson, Millie Daniels and Sheila Davis, and as children, Charlyn Wright, Michael Jackson and Roslyn Grieves.

Walter F. Kerr, drama critic of the New York Herald Tribune, particularity disliked the natives and the white girls bathing together in the nude and taking what he terms "casual lovers at tender ages."

Comedy Team Chalks Up 10,000th Broadcast

NEW YORK — Sunday, Nov. 16, will be "Amos 'n' Andy Day" in Los Angeles, by proclamation of Mayor Fletcher Bowron.

The proclamation was issued by Mayor Bowron in celebration of the 10,000th broadcast of CBS Radio's comedy team, which will be done on that date.

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Knoxville Thespians In 3 Plays

BY RONALD C. FOREMAN, Jr.

KNOXVILLE, Tenn. — Knoxville College's newly-organized Drama Society recently gave three one-act plays, Eugene O'Neil's "Ile," Dorothy Kirkpatrick's "A Wedding," and Doris Halman's "Will o' the Wisp."

From point of audience appeal, "A Wedding" received the lion's share of applause, with Everette Manco, sophomore, Knoxville, and Thaddeus Beckett, junior, New York City, turning in good performances.

Mr. O'Neil's "Ile," co-starred Lena Wyman, freshman, of Milan, Tenn., as Annie, and Clarance Thomas, Chicago freshman, as Captain Keesey.

The least appealing of the three, "Will o' the Wisp," nevertheless had its enjoyable moments. Mrs. Jerelene Wells, Knoxville junior, Ernestine Hooker, Durham, N.C., senior, performed capably.

Singing Star In Second Crash

LUBBOCK, Tex. — Blues singer, Billy Ford, with Charles Brown on a southern swing, narrowly missed serious injury for the second time within a month.

Ford and his fellow blues singer, Sonny (Mr. Sad Head) Thurmon, were shaken up when Ford's suburban was rammed by a cattle truck near here.

Both escaped with only minor scratches.

Only last month, the pair had a narrow escape travelling near Corpus Cristi when the car went out of control. No serious injuries resulted.

No Roost Better Than Buzzard Roost

AUGUSTA, Ga. — There was a time when only one white movie house here would admit colored. The Broad st. Imperial.

Then you had to travel the length of an alley, climb over boxes and brooms to get to the "Roost."

The theatre has been remodeled, with a new policy which states: "No Colored Allowed."

Five Keys For All Five Keys

HOLLYWOOD — The Five Keys will be presented with gold keys and key chains to match "... as a token of gratitude for your outstanding record work during The Keys, one of the new vocal groups, jumped into the famelight last year with their sensational Aladdin recording of "Glory of Love" which stayed in the best selling charts for several months.

Talladega College Choir

Under the direction of Dr. Theodore Stent, members of the Talladega College choir sang for the Founders' Day program of the Birmingham Talladega Alumni Club last Sunday. Soloists in the group are Miss Carole Richter of Houston and John Work Jr. of Nashville. Front row, left to right, are Vivian Mims, Macon, Ga.; Gloria Freeman, Birmingham; Maryc Weaver, Asheville, N.C.; Jacquelyne Quinn, Cleveland, O.; Second row, Reuben Sheares, Charleston, S.C.; Barbara Walls, Charlotte, N.C.; Carole Richter, Houston; Sandra Davis, Birmingham. Third row, Earl Scott, Charleston, S.C.; Milton Hurst, Birmingham; Lee Pugh, Birmingham; John Miller, Savannah, Ga. Fourth row, John Work Jr., Nashville; Dr. Cleveland, O.; Second row, Reuben Sheares, Charleston, S.C.; Barbara Walls, Charlotte, N.C.; Carole Richter, Houston; Sandra Davis, Birmingham. Third row, Earl Scott, Charleston, S.C.; Milton Hurst, Birmingham; Lee Pugh, Birmingham; John Miller, Savannah, Ga. Fourth row, John Work Jr., Nashville; Dr. Cleveland, O.; Second row, Reuben Sheares, Charleston, S.C.; Barbara Walls, Charlotte, N.C.; Carole Richter, Houston; Sandra Davis, Birmingham; Ada M. Jarnagin, Raleigh.

Equity To Be Honored For Fight

By GEORGE DANIELS

NEW YORK (ANP) — Just as history will record the titanic struggle for civil rights on the domestic and business fronts, it will also record the tremendous gains of the entertainment field.

And if there were offered, and there should be a medal for valor for those groups who led this raging battle, one should go to Equity.

The greatest victory was won when the Actors Equity Association broke the race barriers of the National Theatre in Washington, D.C. by refusing to allow their members to play the house until colored people were permitted to sit in all parts of the theatre.

The result is that today there is no discriminatory seating at the National.

This action by Equity members is nearly started a nation-wide campaign in other cities where colored people were allowed to sit in balconys only and discrimination was diminished exaginsitly.

Tuesday, Dec. 2, the Committee of Inter-racial Relations of Christians and Jews, will honor the Association at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel.

Scotia College To Present Cantata

CONCORD, N.C. — The Barber-Scotia College choir, under the direction of Miss Clara Otis Edmonds, will present a Christmas cantata in the college chapel, Sunday, Dec. 14.

Marion Downs, Soprano, Scores On Concert Tour

DALLAS, Tex.—Mrs. Marion J. Downs, lyric soprano, of Baltimore, Md., is being warmly received throughout her concert tour of the Southwest.

A mixed audience of over 800 persons applauded her heavily when she appeared here at St. Paul Methodist Church, Tuesday, Oct. 28.

More than 50 students from Southern Methodist University attended.

Choir Joins Her

Appearing with her on the program to sing the spiritual, "There Is a Balm in Gilead," was the 90-voice Chancel choir of First Methodist Church.

Frank Gagnard of the Dallas Morning Newspaper wrote, "... the soloist was most convincing, musically and dramatically. . . . Her tones were clear and true'. . ."

Mrs. Downs, who has a well-rounded background of American and European training, sang three selections by Richard Strauss, eight by Italian composers and several spirituals.

Program Highlights

High points of the program included such songs as Scarlatti's "Le Violette;" "La Pesca Dell' Amelio" by Pizzetti; the lullaby, "Fa La Nona, Bambin," by Geni Sadero and the traditional spiritual, "Po' Pilgrim."

Among other spirituals, she sang, "I'm on My Way Home," "Roll Jordan Roll," and "My Good Lord Done Been Here."

John Nickel accompanied her throughout the entire program.

Encores

For encores she sang, "Declaration of Independence," a novelty song by Celius Dougherty and a spiritual, "Amen," in which the audience participated.

Mrs. Downs also has been presented in recitals at Texas College, Tyler, Tex. and at Wiley College, Marshall, Tex.

Spearman Scores At Town Hall

By GLADYS P. GRAHAM

NEW YORK (ANP) — Rawan Spearman, tenor, and Florida's gift to the concert stage and music world of Europe and America, gave a brilliant recital last week at Town Hall as the fifth annual Jugg, Inc. award winner.

Fresh from European presentation as a member of the cast of "Four saints in Three Acts," in which he sang the role of St. Chavez, Spearman was in rare form.

The tenor accompanied by Charles Kingsford, early works by Kohler, Purcell, Graves, Arne and Robert Schumann for his first and second groups.

His singing of "A Toutes Bridge" and "Une Herbe Pauvre," works by Francis Poulenc, brought a tumultous ovation.

He included a group of five spirituals arranged by Fred Hall. Notable was young Spearman's Afro-American Cycle, "Lord How Come Me Here" and "How Long Befo' the Sun Go Down."

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