All about Sammy, PALMA ... and Chuck Stone

By Ida Peters

CALENDAR and When Sammy Davis Jr. opens the season May 2 at Painters Mill Music Theatre, Lee Guber and Shelly Gross, the owners, are throwing a gala press party for him at the Pimlico Hotel.

Bea Nixon and Irma Dancy are hosting the Firesiders at a showing of "Same Time, Next Year" at the Mechanic.

Events for Preakness Week are being kicks off at the Civic Center today for the media.

Employees of the Pennsylvania Avenue Lafayette Market Assoc. will held their 24th Anniversary Dinner at Martin's West, Sunday, April 24.

Pennsylvania Avenue has come a long way since 1953 when the present organization was founded. Herman Katkow is still president and Charles Coy-

Seymour Sussman, of Northwestern is vice-president; Irving Friedman, Gilson's Men's Shop, treasurer.

I remember the 1500 to 1800 blocks of Pennsylvania Avenue when my assigment was to cover the stores for retail advertising for this newspaper.

The Hornstein family ran the Regent Theatre the largest business and Henry Hornstein along with the Samuelsons of Crown Loan and Sussmans of Northwestern Loan were pioneers in trying to create a positive business image back in the old days from 1940-1952.

The largest single black force on the 'Avenoo' was Dr. Willard Allen in the 1500 block and his Southern Life Insurance Co. Apex Beauty School took up half a block, also in the 1500 block and did a booming business.

I remember, my father, the late Dr. Carl Murphy, AFRO publishes, authorized the money to rent a room and seed money to get black and white merchants to sit down and start planning activities which included a huge Christmas tree at Wilson and Pennsylvania. . .later Christmas decorations.

The AFRO, through my efforts, sponsored an annual Halloween parade down the length of Pennsylvania Avenue. I'll never forget the year, the late Dr. Hayes Strider was persuded to let the Morgan band lead the parade.

At that original meeting - Reverend Rev. Edwards representing Pennsylvania AME Zion Church, Henry Hornstein of the Regent; George Jude representing Charm Centre a black owned dress shop at 1811; a Mr. Bein of Levie's Shoes; Sam Hendin of Hendin's Hollywood Fashions in the 1700 block, now in Mondawmin.

* * *

In April, 1949, the AFRO sponsored a fashion show at the Coliseum featuring Marva Louis, Joe Louis' wife and the music of Lionel Hampton. The show was a benefit for Provident Hospital and the fashions came from such stores as Baker's Men's Shop, 1503; Charm Center, 1811; Kermisch's 1136; Elmer Liepman, 1705; Dolly Dimple, 1729; Louis Liepman, 1824; The Benjamin Shop, 1827.

* * *

Missed the opening of "Knock, Knock" now playing at Center Stage. Opening night was a love feast for Mayor William Donald Schaefer.

* * *

1977 PALMA honoree will be Mrs. Ruth Dorsey, volunteer of Bon Secours hospital.

Sour Grapes Department - We're sorry to see Darrold Hunt leave Baltimore for Washington. Don't agree with everything he said in his Earl Arnold interview. The Baltimore Symphony is almost like a private club and they shouldn't have expected because they hired Hunt black people would flock to the Lyric because they hired Hunt.

When Hunt came to Baltimore, this columnist took him around and introduced him along with members of the AFRO Entertainment staff. That concert we arranged was at St. James' Church on Lafayette Square.

Don't Miss special treat at Painters Mill of Minni Riperton of "Lovin' You" fame and Letta Mbulu the South African woman who has a powerful voice and sings with joyous enthusiasm.

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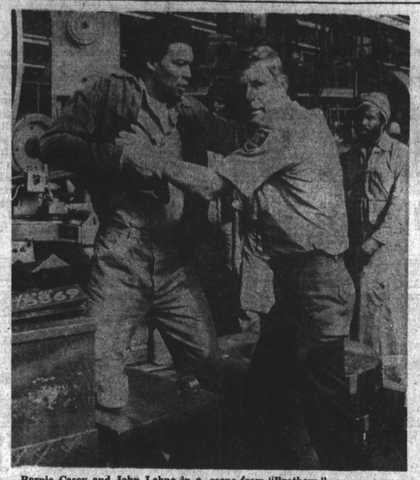

Bernie Casey and John Lehne in a scene from "Brothers."

More . . . more . . . more

Warren Street is organizing a new theatre group, **King Street Theatre.** They need directors, assistants, technical helpers. They meet at Provident Hospital Auditorium, May 2, 7 p.m. Auditions are also on May 9 at 7 p.m. Street has been with the Arena Players and appeared in movie, "Brotherhood of Death".

The Jacksons are OK Department - For once and for all, The Jacksons are alive and doing very well. This columnist has been receiving all kinds of calls from The Jacksons fans . . . asking if they were beat up on their Southern tour etc. All kinds of vicious rumors.

Checked with Steve Manning of CBS Records. The Jacksons are in Philadelphia recording. Their album The Jacksons turned gold and their single "Show Me The Way" is climbing the charts.

In a review of their Easter Sunday concert April 10, at Nassau Coliseum, N.Y. Jacksons sent the crowd into a frenzy with Michael Jackson dominating almost all the numbers. On the bill were Wild Cherry, Brass Construction, Touch of Class. Concert grossed $60,500.

Congratulations to the Association of Black Media Workers for their Newsmakers Luncheon" 90 Days of Transition" this week featuring Chuck Stone, Philadelphia Daily News syndicated columnist and Vernon Jarrett, columnist, Chicago Tribune.

I remember Chuck when he was the dynamic editor of the Washington AFRO and he has always had a sharp ready wit to make the mighty tremble in their boots. He was one of the best editors the AFRO ever had.

He closed his talk with a sharp quote from Ralph Waldo Emerson to sum up his thoughs on President Jimmy Carter:

How can I hear what you say - When what you are-Thunders so loud over what you say-That I cannot hear what you say-To the contrary.

Among other things he said that Carter has a streak of vindictiveness when you oppose him; and he's " fond of Andy Young's hoof and mouth disease".

He also asked the question "Has the shimmer. lost its glimmer?" referring to a column he wrote entitled "Shimmy-Jimmy". Chuck concluded that Carter has surrounded himself with blacks who don't have a National following. . . "Our Mighty Fortress is our good Southern Christian Leadership Conference"

Also, that as far as he can see, nothing has really changed as far as blacks are concerned during the first 90 days of Carter's administration.

Spencer Christian of ABMW of WBAL-TV was supposed to preside at the luncheon but he's off to New York and his new job. DeWayne Wickham president; and Irving Phillips vice president carried on.

In the audience spied Karen Chapman, Coumilwoman Victorine Adams, Marguerite Campbell and Marie Henderson. . .she bringing citations from the Mayors; Sam Daniels from the Prince Hall Masons, Margaret Dyer, Eastern Stars; Margo Williams, new on Channel 2, Dialing For Dollars; Dwight Pettit, Karen Chatmon, Louise and Rick Johnson, Earline Barry, Wanda Dobson, From the AFRO, John Murphy, AFRO chairman; Paul Evans and Theresa Humphrey.

* * *

The O'Jays celebrate their 20th Anniversary this year with a 75 city tour. They'll hit the Capital Center in Larso, Md. May 27, May and June they'll be in Virginia, North and South Carolina.

Morgan chorus in Poe opera

The Baltimore Center for the Performing Arts presents the East Coast premiere of a new American opera, "The Voyage of Edgar Allan Poe" on June 6.

The opera, composed by Pulitzer Prize winner and Peabody Institute graduate, Dominick Argento, will feature the Minnesota Opera Company, the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra and the Morgan State University Chorus.

At a luncheon attended by Mayor William Donald Schaefer, Hays Watkins, chairman and president of the Chessie System, Inc., the principal sponsor of the production, introduced the members of the opera committee: Dr. Milton S. Eisenhower, president Steven Muller of Johns Hopkins University, president Andrew Billingsley of Morgan State University, president Richard Franko Goldman of the Peabody Institute, Harry B. Cummings, president of the Baltimore Opera Company, Alonzo G. Decker Jr., Charles Garland Jr., Paul G. Miller, Mrs. Duane L. Peterson and W. James Price. Also, Sandra S. Hillman, president of the Baltimore Center for the Performing Arts and Peter Lawrence, managing director of the Morris A. Mechanic Theatre.

The opera had its world premiere last May in St. Paul Minn. and received extraordinary critical acclaim in the national press. The last days of Poe's life form the central theme of the liloretto, written by Charles M. Nolte, University of Minnesota theatre professor and concerns the mystery of his whereabouts after sailing from Virginia to Baltimore till his death four days later in Baltimore on October 7, 1849.

Poe's imaginary reliving of his life, during the voyage forms the action of the opera. It has been described as a spectacular theatrical presentation with exquisite scenery and startling stage effects. More than 125 artists are involved, including the superb principal singers who originated their roles last spring.

The Baltimore Symphony will be conducted by Philip Brunelle, music director of the Minnesota Opera Company and the chorus will be directed by Nathan Carter of the Morgan State University. Tanya Moiseiwitsch designed the sets and costumes and H. Wesley Balk is the stage director.

The opera committee is working with the Baltimore City Schools to plan a Poe program throughout the system for the month of May. The Baltimore Edgar Allan Poe Society will present a series of Poe commemorative events during Opera Week.

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Diz wails ... at Civic Center

Frederick I. Douglass

The action was hot and heavy at the Civic Center the past Friday when Jazz artists Dizzy Gillespie, Charlie Byrd and Scott Cunningham were presented in the concert through the cooperative efforts of the Left Bank Jazz Society and the Downtown Coordinating Council.

Charlie Byrd kicked off the show, belting forth classic and flamenco guitar riffs intermixed with some solid jazz. Byrd is technically proficient and is capable of getting off in a variety of musical idioms ranging from bossa nova through Rock on down to some swinging jazz. Byrd's performance delighted the more than 3,000 music lovers who filled the Civic Center's mini-theatre.

When brother Diz came on stage he wasted no time in getting right on down to the basics, talking mucho trash and clowning, but playing superlative trumpet as usual. While Gillespie has been on the scene since the 40's, he has not lost one iota of the vim, vigor and vitality that he possessed during his days with the immortal saxophonist Charlie Parker. Let un not forget that today's top trumpeters like Miles Davis and Freddie Hubbard learned a lot of their craft by listening to Dizzy's records and, in the case of Miles, playing in the fantastic group that included Diz and Byrd. After hearing Gillespie's golden horn playing on Friday night I am positive that he can still teach younger trumpet players a few tricks.

Gillespie's musical pyrotechnics were aided and abetted by the pulsating, throbbing drum feats of Mickey Roker and the fiery guitar fireworks of a twenty year old brother from the Big Apple named Rodney Jones. Rodney Jones is a guitarist who should be watched during the upcoming years because he is highly proficient, has an uncanny sense of timbre and dynamics, and is a damn good musician. He also has the knack of always being exactly where the leader wanted him to be in a musical sense. Whatever the great Diz said on his trumpet, Jones was always hanging right in there with the proper reply.

Gillespie's tour de force of the evening was a satin-Latin treatment of a tune entitled "Barcelona." Diz was in prime form on this jam and belted out chorus after chorus of sterling cascades of notes that earned him thunderous applause. Roker was in background churning and burning on the drums while Jones and the other members of the group provided harmonic and rhythmic support. Gillespie just arched his back and blew his horn for all he was worth and that's plenty in the world of Jazz musicians. Check out his latest album "Dizzy's Party." After Gillespie blew his last note of the evening, nearly 1,000 Jazz lovers marched in 4/4 time to the Civic Center's Howard Room where the Left Bank Jazz Society was hold a reception for Diz. It was a mellow set with music provided by the Scott Cunningham group which has been gaining a lot of attention from Jazz sets being held at the Congress Hotel. 'Twas a bounitful nite of Jazz.

Letta Mbulu, above, and Minnie Riperton, below at Painters Mill this week-end.

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Monday, April 25

Fells Point Center: Films — "Hansel and Gretel: An Appalachian Version" and "The Ugly Duckling," 3 p.m. and 7 p.m.

Tues. April 26

Morrell Park Center: Films — "The Little Cowboy," "Dog's Heaven," "Arrow to the Sun," and "Arigiope Calliope," 3 p.m.

Pennsylvania Avenue Branch: Films — "The Golden Fish," "Curious George Rides a Bike," and "A Lad in the Lamp," 3:30 p.m.

Central Library, Children's Department: Film — "The Fur Coat Club," 4 p.m.

Wed. April 27

Broadway Branch: Film — "Follow the North Star," 2 p.m.

John Taylor as Dr. Coppelia in The Glenelg Country School Tots concert series featuring the Columbia Dance Theatre, Sat., April 24 at 3 p.m.

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LeVar Burton stars in 'Almos a Man'

"Almos' a Man," by Richard Wright and Ernest Hemingway's "Soldier's Home" will be featured on the "The American Short Story" Tues., April 26 at 8:00 p.m. on stations of the Maryland Center for Public Broadcasting — TV 22, 28, 31 and 67.

Harold Krebs, the protagonist of Ernest Hemingway's story, is a soldier who returns home a year too late from service in World War I. The parades, the banners and hurrahs for returning heroes are over.

Robert Geller, executive producer of the series, says, "It stirs haunting echoes of a more recent event — the gradual, week by week return of the American soldiers from Vietnam. Then, after the return of the first POW's was cheered, the arrival of the foot soldiers was without widespread, public recognition.

In the second story, "Almos' a Man," television viewers who first encountered LeVar Burton as the youthful Kunta Kinte in "Roots" will discover his remarkable range as an actor. Burton portrays Dave, a teenage farm worker in the Deep South three or four decades ago struggling for a new identity as a man.

To Dave, the passage to manhood is symbolized by the possession of a hand gun and by his determined efforts to master the weapon. The symbols are dramatic and specific, but the significance is universal.

Paul Winfield plays King in TV movie

Paul Winfield has been signed to portray Martin Luther King in "King," a four-hour NBC World Premiere movie about the adult life of the late Nobel Peace Prize-winning civil rights leader, it was announced today by Joseph Tarrtero, vice president, Motion Pictures for Television, NBC-TV.

Winfield was nominated for an Academy Award as Best Actor for his performance in "Sooder."

He co-stars in the current theatrical release, "Twilight's Last Gleaming," with Burt Lancaster, and co-stars with Muhammad Ali in "The Greatest," a soon-to-be-released film about the heavyweight champion. He starred in the made-for-television movie, "Green Eyes."

Other major castings, including the role of King's wife, Coretta will be announced shortly.

Production is to start June 6 is Atlanta, Ga. A 45-day shooting schedule is planned.

The film will be presented on two successive nights during the 1977-78 television season.

Academy Award-winning writer Abby Mann ("Judgement at Nuremberg") has written the screenplay and will direct "King," an Abby Mann Production in association with Filmways and NBC-TV.

Top Jazz Albums

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2. Heavy Weather — Weather Report
3. Musicmagic — Return to Forever
4. Bob James 4
5. Conquistador — Maynard Ferguson
6. Roots — Quincy Jones

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