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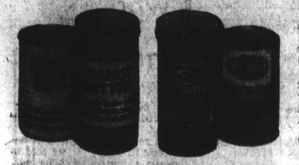

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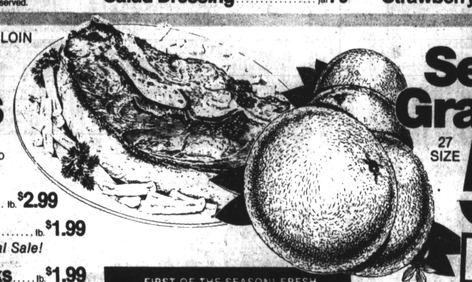

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Peabo Bryson sings music to make love by.

Prince of song

Peabo Bryson reaches the sky on Crosswinds

By Ida Peters

Nat King Cole is remembered for a mellow softly textured voice. Caruso, the great Metropolitan opera tenor, is remembered for his passion; Roland Hayes, for his artistry and Billy Eckstine for his exceptional baritone with lyrical qualities.

Peabo Bryson belongs in this class of vocalists and when he sings there is a golden glow that spreads over everything upon which it vibrates. The man has style and his shading is judicious.

This new Prince of Song comes to town next week. He's a stirring performer and when he appeared last year at the Civic Center, all he had to do was stand flatfooted, open his mouth and pour out his soul in song.

He so infused his audience with enthusiasm that the ladies swooned and cried, lifting their arms to the sky, while their fellows kept their eyes glued to the man, at the same time pulling their ladies closer.

"My goal is to play my music in front of as many people as possible and have that music appreciated," Peabo Bryson explained to an interviewer just prior to the January '79 release of his debut album on Capitol Record, "Reaching For The Sky."

Two soul and pop charted hits, the title track and "Feel The Fire", have earned Peabo Bryson his first Gold album.

Now Bryson has recorded his second Capitol LP, Crosswinds (November 1978), and it looks like the singer - songwriter with the silken, sensuous voice and special way with a lyric is chart - bound again.

"As far back as I can remember, I've always been into music," says Bryson, who was born and raised in Greenville, S.C. He grew up listening to such artists as Chuck Berry and Little Richard and by the time he was fourteen, he was playing in local bands.

He attended college for a few years before deciding to pursue music as a full - time career. That decision made, he left school and joined The Textile Display, a local band. He remained with the group from '68 to '73, performing throughout the country, in the Caribbean and as far away as Vietnam.

Bryson signed a contract in 1970 as a producer - songwriter - singer with Bang Records. He produced several groups for the label before he scored his first solo hit, "Underground Music", a Top 25 single on the Soul charts in 1976. An album, "Peabo" also found its way up the national Soul charts, yielding two more Soul hits in the Top 30, "Just Another Day" and "I Can Make It Better."

Bryson came to Capitol late in '77 and "Reaching For The Sky" was released a few months later. Paired with producer - arranger Richard Evans (who arranges for Natalie Cole), Bryson recorded eight of his own compositions on that debut LP. The album's title track was an immediate hit on the Soul charts and the rest is music history.

(Continued on Page 26)

On black classical music

Lyric — what's missing?

By Dominique-Rene de Lerma

The Baltimore Symphony Orchestra has announced plans for the 1979-80 season. Let's see what's in store and what it means.

Is anything missing?

Do you remember in 1973 when Paul Freeman and I visited Baltimore to initiate that series of black music symposia? This was designed as a chance to focus attention on the contributions of composers of color, and I remember the enthusiasm that many felt as that week drew to an end.

Now, they said, we will perhaps have more black players in the orchestra. A good prediction, one which did not even envision the arrival of Maestro Curry.

They also said, now that the music of these composers secured a local airing, we can expect to find music of Afro-Americans scheduled from time to time by the orchestra.

OK, George Walker's Mass is going to receive its first hearing later this season, and the orchestra has recorded works by Talib Hakim, Olly Wilson and T. J. Anderson for Columbia.

They also felt optimistic that more black artists might be engaged to appear as soloists with our orchestra. So within the past few months we have heard Benjamin Matthews, Alpha Floyd and Betty Allen, and a group of soloists will be here for Dr. Walker's Mass. It is true, of course, that Matthews and Floyd were brought here by Nathan Carter, to appear with Morgan's choir in a concert that was not an official BSO event.

But what happened to next season's schedule? There is not one work by a black composer announced thus far, and not one black soloist.

Before we resort to worn-out rhetoric from the past, we need to answer a few questions for ourselves. Do we have tickets for Andre Watts concert with the orchestra this spring? Have we shown the artistic and administrative management of the orchestra that Baltimore's black community is properly represented in the audience? How much does our orchestra mean to us?

Some might ask what does it matter? And, oh yes, that overworked word "relevancy" might be called out of retirement.

Well, even if it might seem hard to imagine, the mere fact that Baltimore has such a very fine orchestra can be a significant factor for the choice of this city in the location of new industry and new job opportunities, if we must think about economics.

And, when Andre Watts performs, and when Morgan's choir introduces Dr. Walker's Mass to the world, if the color of the audience is changed enough to be noted, when schedules and rosters are next drawn up, we might find Saint-Georges, Coleridge-Taylor, Hale Smith, Primous Fountain and Ulysses Kay among the composers whose works are scheduled, and we might have a chance to hear Shirley Verrett, Seth McCoy, Jessye Norman, Sanford Allen, Leontyne Price, Veronica Tyler and Natalie Hinderas among the soloists.

Dr. deLerma is professor of music at Morgan State University. He also hosts "Melodies, Lyrics and Notes" on WEAA-FM radio on Sundays at 11 a.m.

Roland Freeman-Artist/photographer

"Once I decided it was photography I would use as the medium through which to communicate my views on that which was most important to me -- i.e., the black community -- the greatest challenge was to strive for a clarity of what it was I understood and how best to show it. There was a way of life, deeply rooted in traditions that had a distinctive style, which wasn't being portrayed with the clarity and honesty that I knew it rightly deserved."

Roland Freeman

Roland Freeman, internationally known artist - photographer was born in University Hospital on Greene Street, July 27, 1936.

He spent his early years in Northwest Baltimore. His father, Albert Freeman, was an Araber and had a grocery store at Laurens and Gilmor and his mother, Dorothy Mae was a housewife.

He grew up and used his genius to record with the camera the folkways and lifestyles of black Americans catching such varying subjects as the Black Madonna, the Saturday night corner bar, out of which celebrated blues singer Billie Holiday came, the black church and common people at work and at play.

Freeman's work, "Roland Freeman: A Baltimore Portfolio, 1968 - 1979" will be on display at the Photography Gallery of the University of Maryland, Baltimore County, March 29 through April 30.

This show will reflect Freeman's remembrances of Arabing black lifestyling in the context of his Baltimore roots.

His grandmother, Mrs. Goldie Janey Addison lived in the 1300 blk of Mosher Street and told him about his great - grandfather Peter Richard Janey who was a preacher to both blacks and whites besides being a tugboat captain in the early 1900s.

Freeman spent his late teens on a tobacco farm in Charles County where he acquired important lessons in rural living.

He served in the U.S. Air Force from 1954 - 58 where he traveled throughout Europe and lived in Paris, France.

(Continued on Page 26)

Greenmount and 25th Street

Night scene ...seen

By Bob Matthews

Club Astoria

Indulged in a bit of nostalgia this week. Trekked out to the Club Astoria on Edmondson Ave., which was the first time we had visited the club in over 15 years.

Was immediately struck by the clean, uncluttered appearance of the place, for we remembered it as being just a wee bit dusty in appearance.

It has undergone a complete metamorphosis, and Africa is now the central theme of the place. On the walls are pictures of such luminaries as Malcolm X, Stokely Carmichael, and Dick Gregory.

Painted prominently on one wall are the seven principles of Nguzu Saba. In the center of the huge bar are numerous African artifacts, including hardwood carvings that glisten with the patina age has wrought.

Palm trees arch over the centerpiece, which actually is located where once the band played.

In fact, we can remember seeing the last performance of Billie Holiday in Baltimore at the Club Astoria.

Three psychedelic lights are prominently featured up near the ceiling, and are geared to the juke box so that when music is played — there is an automatic light show.

Our trip, and the crowd on hand was seemingly neighborhood folk. The decor was quiet, and everyone minded his own business. We didn't linger, only noted that the black, red and green Liberation flag was hung prominently over the package goods alcove.

Uptown Lounge

Onward to Monroe Street and Dot Neal's Uptown Lounge, a place we remember as a place to "get down" doing the Madison back in its heyday.

Immediate impression when walking into the lounge was of cleanliness. The place looked immaculate. And the bar stools were huge and comfortable with chair backs.

The bar has been greatly enlarged since our last visit, and extends almost the entire length of one wall.

The Uptown too has lights hooked up to the juke box, so while you noddle with your potable, you can watch the changing light scene. Again it was a quiet night, but things here look like the place swings later in the week.

Vernon's Lounge

On to Poplar Grove Street and

Christina Isbell
Jim Parker's

Persis Butler
Garrison Lounge

Carrie Bailey
Duck's Black Satin

Tina Randall
Jackie's

entrance to the place. No longer can one enter through the package goods side, the door is around the side.

Noted huge placards blazoning the Thursday night disco, and the club is adequately suited for it. There is a dance floor which is surrounded by mirrored walls.

The decorations are in a subdued red with banquettes scattered throughout for couples and larger groups. Won't dwell on things too much, for we intend to return when the busy season is on — weekends.

Jim Parker's

goods side of Jim Parkers' on Liberty Hgts. and Garrison for lo these many years, but this week, dropped in to the bar side.

Chatted a bit with Christina Isbell, who has been tending bar for 11 years in the same bar. Asked her about the changing neighborhood, and the impact it has had on the bar.

According to Christina, the nighttime clientele has changed radically. However, during the day, some of the people who have been coming around for over 10 years, are still doing so.

She doesn't allow any hanky panky at the club, and lounge lizards who just want to hang

biggest days is Saturday afternoons, when the club is jam packed.

Mostly for Music

The Left Bank Jazz Society is presenting the Red Mitchell, Tommy Flanagan, Nissen Sandstrom trio this Sunday, and although we haven't heard this group, anything containing Tommy Flanagan has to be tops.

Red Mitchell, is another of the expatriates who fled to Europe and has been heard on a lot of albums recorded over there. This will mark his first return to these shores in many a moon.

The Bandstand has Junior Cook on tenor sax, along with Reuben Brown, piano, Reggie Johnson, bass and Harold White on drums. This has to be a natural smoker, because with a rhythm section like this, a new zenith is reachable.

Kinda pleased with the club, for Sheldon told me he was just about to throw in the sponge until the Pepper Adams gig brought people out again. But now — The Bandstand will present live jazz for years to come — with the same owners.

become the "in" thing for a Sunday, so it'll be crowded early — we're happy about the whole thing.