Show review

Village People, flashy show

By Ida Peters

The Village People brought a feverish, heart pounding show to Baltimore Wednesday night and left their screaming fans on their feet demanding "more,more."

Gloria Gaynor, the Queen of Disco opened with a fast-paced show, dressed in black harem pants and silver crafton.

Backed by a six-piece band and two white suited back-up singers, she made the crowd scream for more with tunes from her album "Never Can Say Goodbye."

The time she got to "I Will Survive" she had the akdience on their feet screaming "Will You Survie? "Yes... Tell'em... I will survive".

Gloria received a Baltimore standing ovation.

After a brief intermission... the lights went out and the four tiers of white speakers on each side of the stage boomed THUMP...THUMP... THUMP...THUMP.

The curtain parted with flashing disco lights. David Hodo, the muscular hard - hat condtruction worker came writhing out of a portable white Joh.

Randy jones with guns blazing as the sexy cowboy, broke through swinging doors of a make-believe saloon.

Felipa Rose, the fether - bedecked Indian Chief burst out of real - live tepee and began to mix it up with the cowboy.

Glenn Hughes, footed in leater jacket, cap and gloves, drove a full sized motorcycle with throttle wide open into the melee.

Then, Alex Brally, a uniformed army MP drove into the action in his full army Jeep... followed Victor Willis, the lead singing policeman, on his policeman's motorcycle with stick flying, blue lights and siren wife open

The audience was shouting "Macho Man"! "We are the Village People" shouted the group... and add to this a multi - media backdrop flashing "Village People" and you get an idea of why the crowd went literally wild.

The Village People" calmed down for a minute and then broke into choreographed, hip shaing, back breaking gyrations with tunes from their new album "Go West" ... giving "San Francisco - Hollywood" a rousing rendition.

The redominately whi e crowd camed reseed as their favorite Macho man and screamed as Victor Willis in his wife gloves and tight white policeman's pants exhorted the Macho men to scream and then the Macho women to scream. The women outdid the men.

At 10:15 p.m. after the "Macho Man" song the curtains closed as if the end of the program9 The audience didn't move.

The curtains opened with a Navy ship backdrop, guns. Alex Briley dressed as a Navy SP and Victor Wills as a Navy Commander in spotless white, medals and ribbons. What a wondderful spoof as the group went into their "We want you!... In the Navy."

Two big burley black sailors were mounted at the guns as Victor Willis pointed at the Construction Worker, Indian, cowboys and hood... "We Want You.

The crowd roared... sang along. At 10:40 p.m. Village People launched into their Platinum single "Y.M.C.A." kpnally leaving the crowd singing, screaming and clapping.

As lead Victor Willis said... they came to get down and they got down... funky and low.

Village People

'Exorcist' Child Star

Linda Blair achieved international stardom at the age of 14 when her first film schocked motion picture audiences as they had never been shocked before.

That film was William Peter Blatty's "The Exorcist," one of the most successful films of all time, now being re - released by Warner Bros., in which Blair plays the role of a tormented, demon - possessed child.

Blair was cast in the role — probably the most demanding part ever written for a child performer — after an exhaustive search in New York and Hollywood which was later extend to countless sschools around the country, during which hundreds of children were interviewed and auditiond.

The selection of young Blair — initially discovered by casting director Juliette Taylor — was finalized by producer - screenwriter Blatty and director William Friedkin, who mutually agreed that the attractive child was perfect for the part.

Since her sensational role, which won her an Academy Award nomination, Blair who is now 20, has gone on to portray a variety of dramatic characters. She played a rape victime in the highly controversial "Born Innocent," was kidnapped in "Sweet Hostage," hijacked in "Victory at Entebbe," was a witchcraft victim in "Summer of Fear," a transplant patient in "Airport '75" and a drunk in "Sara T., Portrait of a Teenage Alcoholic." She also had her trials and tribulations in "The Heretic," the sequal to "The Exorcist."

Despite the assorted cinematic traumas Blair has experienced, she remains a remarkably uncomplicated young woman without any evidence of psychologicil scars.

Blair makes her home in Connecticut rather than in Hollywood because, she says, she prefers to live in the real rather than the reel world. Her great interest in life is horses, and when she does spend time in Los Angeles, she stays in Suburban Los Angeles with her horse, away from the social swirl of Hollywood.

Ellen Burstyn tries to restrain her demon - possessed daughter, Linda Blair in "The Exorcist."

'Grandma', new record by Les Parson

By B-More's Les Parson

Grandma

Once there lived a lady
Who was oh so sweet,
Like a special pice of candy,
Nothing could compete.
She always wore a smile,
Even when she felt bad,
But never did she once complain
Over the good times we had.

Chorus

Grandma, I miss you,
Things are not the same
Without you,
I wonder where you are,
Grandma

Les Parson 'Grandma'

"Grandma" a musical tribute to mothers and grandmothers in getting airplay on all the local radio stations this Mother's Day weekend.

Baltimore's Les Parson, who got his start to fame by entertaining at AFRO Clean Block meetings at the Masonic Temple back in the 1960s under Mrs. Jeanette Leath, has produced the record.

Parson has formed his own record company, Sylvester Records, Ltd. gased in Baltimore. The record was produced and recorded at Sheffield Recording Studios also here in Baltimore.

Local telent billed as "Friends of Mine" backing the record include Curtis Davidson, Carrett Martin, Tony Anderson, Stan Green, Roscoe Evans and Joe Williams.

Les Parson has been performing professionally in the Baltimore - Washington area for more than 10 years. His biggest hit record was in 1973, "I Get My High Listening To Music."

He formerly belonged to a group called the Cameroes and performed in opening acts at the Royal Theatre. Other highlights of his ccareer include opening for Ike and Tina Turner at the Merriweather Post; and a benefit with Frank Sinatra here for the Hubert Humphrey campaign.

"Grandma" is a very timely record for this Mother's Day. Give it a listen.

Theatre review

'Chapter Two' about coping

By Ida Peters

Neil Simon's autobiographical "Chapter Two" now playing at the Mechanic Theatre is a funny, witty, over - long account of four modern frustrated people trying to cope with death of a loved one, divorce and boredom.

In real life, Simon's first wife died of Cancer in 1973. Weeks later he met Marsha Mason who had a role in his play "Good Doctor" on Broadway. After a whirlwind courtship, three months later after the first Mrs. Mason died, they were married. Simon in this play seems to be acting out his guilt feelings about his quickie marriage.

The action of the play takes place in Jennifer Malone's upper East Side apartment (Marilyn Redfield playing the Marsha Mason role) and George Schneider's lower central Park West apartment (Henry Orbach plays Simon). The curtain rises on a late February afternoon and continues through late Spring when the couple marry.

William Ritman's modernistic, innovative set is the key that holds the play together. Both the East Side Apartment and the Central Park apartment are on stage with completely different decor, kitchens, entrances living rooms and bedrooms. Through the use of brillant lighting and movable furniture the action moves forward.

Jerry Orbach is excellent as the playwright who has just returned from Europe after a nervous breakdwon.

Herbert Edelman plays his big brother Leo who tries to fix him up with adates to cheer him up all of which turn out badly... especially Bambi.

Then he starts to push nice girl, an actress, Marilyn Redfield recently divorced and not interested in getting involved with anyone Leo then tries to uduce her girlfriend played with humour and high spirits by Jane Johnston.

Johnston is elegantly funny... the kidd of girl who shops 12 stores to find the right underwear and then is afraid to take off her clothes. Her tussle with Leo in a seduction scene is the funniest.

Some mixed up hone calls get the lovere together and into quick marriage.

The Marsh Mason character at the end turns into a doormat... always turnging the other cheek, trying to get the playwright to foreget other honeymoons and lother loves.

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Hair Dimensions anniversary

A disco hair show, lighting show with disco music will mark the First Anniversary of Hair Dimensions Beuty Salon.

The affair at Emerald Gardens, Saturday, May 26 at 10 p.m. will feature creative and sophisticated dress, a beautiful room and beautiful people according to owner, Cornell Cottrell.

Televisions finest hours will be recalled in "The Television Annual 1978-79", Monday, May 14. Above, Michael Learned "The Waltons"; George Stanford Brown, "Roots"; James Stephens and John Houseman, "The Paper Chase"; Olivia Cole, "Backstairs at the White House" and Cicely Tyson who will speak on women

Critics hit 'Love at First Bite'

Bill Lane in Hollywood

ISABEL Sanford and Sherman Hemsley are getting mixed reviews nationwide for their comedic roles in the movie "Love At First Bite." When this column chronicled the film's making some months ago it was not realized then what kind of black receipt of their roles would be in the offing. Just like when this writer prevailed upon Alan Horn and Charlie Hauck to put a black as star in "Mr. Dugan," we had no idea, then, what kind of performance was or would be desired of the actor hired — until later.

But in the Dracula - flavored "Love at First Bite," both Rita Griffin, entertainment editor of the Michigan Chronicle, and Jovida Joylette, arts editor of the Philly Tribune, say they feel the roles played by Ms. Sanford and Mr. Hemsley in "Love at First Bite" are a bit racially demeaning.

Says Miss Griffin: "I don't see how anything Cheavon Little was doing in 'Mr. Dugan' could be as racially ludicrous as what Isabel and Hemsley are shown doing in this picture. As a guage of what black Congressmen said about Little's character being demeaning to black legislators, what Isabel Sanford does could be said to be degrading and demeaning to black judges."

Ida Peters in the AFRO writing about the mishmash of Sherman Hemsley as Rev. ter said Isabel Sanford as the judge said " I'm not sure how to take it... whether to be offended or shurg and say "We've been shafted again by someone's crooked sense of humour".

Well, black preachers rapped Plip Wilson's qortrayals of "Rev. LeRoy'," too.

We are reminded of the performances recently of Richard Pryor and Bill Cosby in Neil Simon's "California Suite." In their cases the criticism, calling their roles racially demaning, came first from white critic Pauline Kael. Cosby reacted qngrily with letters to the movie trade papers and to the black press in general. When a black star was rapped in the black press in the past, no word of reaction or protest ever came. But here was criticism from white circles, suggesting that the Cosby and Pryor roles depcited them as "savages."

Cosby retorted that some people, even white critics no doubt, "do not understand comedy."

Let's hope Isabel Sanford and Sherman Hemsley do not come back and say "Black critics (also do not understand comedy." Or, maybe, Cleavon Little could say the same.

But haven't we black people for all these eons lived lives of "laughing to keep from crying"?

And maybe the Pope shall consign to purgatory all those comedians who tell dumb Polish jokes.

Editor's Note: Hey Bill I can't buy this. We all know that actors o for the money and the roles. They don't write the scripts and if they protest, they get shafted. Remeber John Amos on "Good TImes" and Esther Rolle?

And... if you are reading national news media across the country, even Time Magazine, the white critics are saying that the racial humour in "Love At First Bite" is raw and unnecessary.

B.B. KING back from Russie where he was the first blues performer ever to play his guitar and sing pretty for the people of the Soviet Anion. King, who like the Rev. C. L. Franklin and Atty. Charles Loyd hail from Inianola, Mississippi, had been playing concerts in many prisons around the U.S. Russian was the biggest "slammer" he ever played.

—On Black Classical Music

(Continued from Page 41)

Allen, who made his exit for a solo career as violinist.

Before Zubin Mehta arrived as music director, the orchestra worked under Pierre Boulez, certainly a most important composer and a conductor of high repute.

But M. Boulez, it is said, did not schedule any works by Afro - American composers, not out of racial bias, but because he was not conv... were any American composers of any color who were substantial.

Before Mehta arrived, he had been in Los Angeles, where she built a fine ensemble. And, on at least two occawons, he provided his audience with a chance to hear music of black composers.

There might have been more instances but, we must remember, the existence of black concert composers is a fact that was rather well unknown until recently.

One of the first things Mr. Metha did was to consult with Dr. Thompson about music by black composers. He might have attended our symposium with the Philaharmonic in 1977. I'm not sure, but he certainly saw the programs.

Within the first few weeks of his tenure with the Philharmonic, Mr. Mehta scheduled "Marking," by Ulysses Kay, a composition which appears under Paul Freeman's beton with the London Symphony Orchestra in volume 3 of The Black Composers Series (Columbia M - 32783). That's a major start.

I think New York's new ... might have a lot of exciting discoveries awaiting him he has time to examine more of Dr. Kay's works, and when he gets to Georgre Walkr, Hale Smith, Talib Hakim, Saint - Georges, William Grant Still, and the many other significant figures in black music history.

Meanwhile, I think and hope, things are going well in New York.

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

Redd Foxx sued by IRS

Jesse Walker in New York

An investigation of comedian Redd Foxx's 1977 tax records has resulted in a quarter - million - dollar lien against his Las Vegas home. The IRS took action against Foxx and his third wife, Yun Chi Chung, in the amoung of $248,789. Redd is kurrently appearing at the Landmark Hotel in Las Vegas.

The Our Children's Performing Arts Center in Brooklyn is holding "A Dance Dedication to the Late Thelma Hill" on May 18 and 21, with top dance groups and performers, including the Dance Thetre of Harlem, the Pittsburgh Black Dance Theatre, the Rod Rodgers Dance Co., the members of the Alvin Ailey Dance Co., Ballet Hispanico, Fred Benjamin Dance Co., George Faison and the International Afrikan American Ballet.

Pianist Bobby Short performed at the White House for the state dinner for Japanese Prime Minister Masayoshi Ohira. His guest was Gloria Vanderbilt. Among othe guests were U.S. Solictor Genral Wade H. McCree and Mrs. McCree, Atlanta Mayor Maynard Jackson and Mrs. Jacksen, and Robert C. Embry, assistant HUD secretary.

The Federal Communications Commission has approved sale of a network - affiliated VHF - TV station to a 100 percent minority - owned business for the first time in U.S. broadcast history. The Station is WAEO - TV in Rhinelander, Wisc. and the purchasing group is Seaway Communiations, Inc., of Chicago, a group of 34 black businessmen and women. Purchase price was $913.000. Station's market is primarily German Scandinvian and American Indian and hasn't had a black resident since thelate 1940!

The regulars are still going to 22 West, the popular Harlem restaurant that was the scene of a 13 - shot shootout last week among drug connections and had all the patrons ducking for cover. "Black Bobby" Robinson was shot four times, but his new nickname is "Wonder Man." He had already been shot 12 times before last week's incident. Two other were hurt in the shootout.

The Amersterdam News and its Executive Editor, Bryant Rollins, have called in thirty — for the second time around. The Harlem weekly also is expected to announce shortly that veteran staff artist Mel Tapley will be its new arts and entertainment editor.

Broadway wouldn't support "Zoot Suit", its first solid Chcano play. It closed April 29 at the Winter Carden after 17 previews and 41 performances, at an $800,000 loass. The original, however, is still going strong at the Aquarious.

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