Meet The Count and Cookie Monster of 'Sesame Street Live'

Regina Williams Cookie Monster Verrane Mitchell Tucker The Count

By Ida Peters

There are 22 multi-talented young performers who make up the company of "Sesame Street Live" now playing in a joyous country celebration thru Sunday at the Baltimore Civic Center.

Among them is Regina Williams, of Pacoima, Calif. (a suburb of Los Angeles) in her second year in the role of The Count and Verrane Mitchell Tucker (nickname Slinky) of Los Angeles in his third year as the Cookie Monster. Their roles with "Sesame Street Live" will take them form coast to coast before audiences and critics in more than 40 cities each season.

The Count and the Cookie Monster took a day off this week after arriving in Baltimore to visit the AFRO and chat.

Most folks are familiar with the Sesame Street Muppets by Jim Henson (University of Maryland grad) created for the original Children's Television Workshop. "Sesame Jamboree" is produced by Bob Shipstad and presented by the Vee Corporation based in Minneapolis, Minn. in cooperation with Children's Television Workshop.

As you know, The Count (Regina Williams) is happy only when counting...that is all the time. His delight in numbers and quantity knows no bounds-bats, raindrops, buttons, grains of sand, are all worthy of being counted.

The Count has black hair and beard; wears a black tuxedo with a dark green and multicolored metallic brocade cape.

Regina Williams says her performance over the past two years as The Count takes a lot of energy and she is turned on by the way the children at the shows shower her with attention and love.

Recently one youngster almost swept her off her feet with "Oh Count, I love you so!" She enjoys watching faces light up when she appears.

Regina is 20 and the daughter of Jock and Olive Williams. She is a grad of Sylmar High School with a major in Theatre and Psychology. An extrovert and a Virgo she is a take charge person who has been performing all her life.

she got the job but prayer had a lot to do with it.

As to what she wants to do with her life... she wants to continue her education. A week ago while playing in New York, she heard about the auditions being held for "Dreamgirls" at the Shubert Theatre and rushed over and was given an audition during the men's time, even though she had missed the women's audition.

Verrane Mitchell Tucker (Slinky), 29, of Los Angeles has the role of The Cookie Monster. For an interview at the AFRO, the personable young man was full of jokes and wore a black pin-striped suit, black and white shoes, white open necked shirt with a diamond in one ear and a gold Cookie Monster chain and "Try God" around his neck. He explains the gold Monster was made by a dentist friend... not from gold teeth.

The Cookie Monster is made of warm blue fur with goggley eyes and a overly large mouth for eating everything. He is loveable, affectionate with a gruff voice and always good natured. He hunts and schemes for food...with a special passion for eating cookies.

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Tucker as the Cookie Monster is part of the Dynamic Boppers a group of groovey young men who used to dance on Soul Train, Gianni Thomas also of Los Angeles is in the show and has the role of Harry Monster.

Tucker says he loves the role of Cookie Monster as young children relate to his costume. He's the son of Rita and Alvin Tucker and graduated from Los Angles High School with a major in drama and theatre.

Best bet in town this week is "Sesame Street Live". Be sure to check out The Count and Cookie Monster.

Art Museum's new wing opens Sunday

On a Sunday filled with music and art, dance and art, film and art, magic and art, and food and art, The Baltimore Museum of Art will open its newly completed wing and renovated spaces to the public. After a decade of planning and over three years of construction, the expanded Museum will be open, free to all, from 1 to 6 p.m. on Sunday, Oct. 17.

Among the highlights of the day's activities will be continuous performances by five separate groups of musicians throughout the Museum's newly lighted, painted, and in some areas, carpeted galleries. In addition, there will be a magic show, dance recital, and film—all in the new Joseph and Rebecca Meyerhoff Auditorium.

The Brass Menagerie, a brass chamber ensemble, will welcome those arriving at the Robert G. Merrick Entrance to the original building on Art Museum Drive. Members of this group are Charles Olsen, trumpet; Kenneth Raskin, trumpet; Kay D Nichols, trombone, and Edward Goldstein, tuba.

In the USF&F Court of the new wing, a composition, "Opening Lines," especially written for this occasion by Leon Jordan, will be played by a quartet of musicians: Dana Goode, violin; Gail Cameron, flute; Donna DiStefano, vibraphone, and Talia Schiff, cello.

Billah Lambertis and the group Our Cultural Heritage, wearing African dress, will perform authentic African music on drums, flutes, and kora in the McCall Orientation Gallery in conjunction with the just installed permanent exhibition of the Arts of Africa, the Americas, and Oceania.

A Sort of Consort will be playing medieval and renaissance music in the Mayor William Donald Schaefer Court outside the reopened old master galleries of The Mary Frick Jacobs Wing. They will play on instruments of the 14th to the 16th centuries as well as appearing in period costume. In addition, the folksinger Ned Quist will sing American songs in the Garden Room of the recently completed Alexander Anderson McIlvain Galleries of American Decorative Arts.

The Maryland Dance Theatre of College Park, performing at 2 p.m., will be the first group to use the stage of the Meyerhoff Auditorium. David Arthur will present a show of magic and fun at 3 p.m. and a new film "Museum" will be shown at 4 p.m. to conclude the afternoon's activities. The Auditorium is looped for the hearing impaired and there is also wheelchair access for the handicapped.

The Museum Cafe, given by the citizens of Baltimore County, will also be opened on Sunday for lunch and dinner. The Cafe's hours will be 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. Tuesday through Sunday. New extended hours for the Museum itself are Tuesday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Saturday and Sunday from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m., and Thursday evening from 6 to 10 p.m. Free admission day is Thursday, and both the Museum and Cafe are closed on Monday.

Masquerade Ball at UMBC

The Office of Special Events in conjunction with the Black Student Union, Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity Inc. Zeta Upsilon Chapter and Me-Psi-Hi (Me-Sy-Hi) at UMBC present a Masquerade Ball on Saturday, Oct. 30, from 9 p.m. to 2 a.m. at the University Center Grand Ballroom.

There will be live entertainment featuring Polygram Recording Artists Starpoint and special guest Smile with the Vernon Sharpe Dancers.

Proceeds benefit the Black Student Union Scholarship Fund. More more information, call Jon A. Pinder at 455-2225.

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Children's Day

OCT. 27 — A poster contest for preschoolers will be held on Children's Day at Lexington Market on Wednesday, October 27, 1982, at 10:00 a.m. This event sponsored by Lexington Market and the Mayor's Office of Special Projects, is one of the many activities in celebration of the Market's 200th anniversary.

Children (six years of age and under) enrolled in an organized pre-school or kindergarten program are eligible to participate. A maximum of ten posters are permitted to be entered from each center.

The theme for the contest is "I love Lexington Market because..." This phrase must be written below the drawing of the picture and completed by the contestant. Posters must be 8 ½" x 11" or larger and can be done in ink, pencil, crayon, water-colors, or paind paint.

Prizes will be awarded to 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place winners and honorable mention.

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African art donated in 1954 in the Alan and Janet Wurtzburger Gallery for the Arts of Africa, the Americas and Oceania in the expanded and renovated on the Baltimore Museum of Art's lower level. Above, Caryatid neckrest used by the Luba of Zaire in early 20th Century.

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Calendar

Oct. 15 - 8 p.m. - "MUSIC AND DANCE OF THE SILK ROUTE", featuring the songs and dances of China's vast northwest regions, will be presented at The Walters Art Gallery on Friday. The eight musicians and two dancers from the People's Republic of China will play authentic musical instruments, such as the Mongolian horse-headed fiddle, and the pipa, or pear-shaped lute, while dancers perform both ancient and contemporary folk dances. Graham Auditorium of The Walters Art Gallery, 600 N. Charles on Friday, October 15. The program will begin at 8 p.m. Admission is $2.50 for members, $3.50 for non-members. For more information, phone The Walters Art Gallery at 547-9000.

Oct. 16-17 - Sesame Street Live - Main Arena Civic Center.

Oct. 16 - An Evening With The Artists - Art Faculty Exposition and Ball celebrating Catonsville Community College 25th Anniversary, receiving line and champagne in the Gallery, 8:30. Dancing to Keeling's Big Band, 9:30 p.m. Special benefit raffle of donated faculty art work.

Oct. 16- The Baltimore Museum of Art Members Ball to celebrate the dedication of the new wing, Saturday, Oct. 16, 9 p.m. Music by the Duke Ellington Orchestra.

Drawings and Paintings by Alberto S. Sanguamo now thru Oct. 29 at the Morgan State University Gallery Of Art in Carl Murphy Fine Arts Center, Coldspring Lane and Hillen Road.

Oct. 16, Sat.- KWANDULA KWA NTU, "Recruitment Tea", featuring an African Fashion Show, 4 to 6 p.m. at Coker Hall in Bethel A.M.E. Church, 1300 Druid Hill Ave. Admission is free and refreshments will be served. Kwandula Kwa Ntu is a component of the Department of Women's Ministries of Bethel A.M.E. Church

Oct. 22-24 - "The Robber Bridegroom," country-western musical at Essex Community College 8 p.m.

Oct. 23-27- The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's research ship Mt. Mitchell will hold open house from 10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

The ship will be berthed at Baltimore's Inner Harbor in conjunction with NOAA SERVICES, a week-long series of events spotlighting the research and services of the Department of Commerce Agency.

The ship is currently conducting an intensive, 5-month nautical charting survey from Ocean City, Md. to Cape Hatteras, N.C. The survey, called DELMARVANC, supports marine navigation safety, mineral exploration, environmental management, and deep-draft port development, and is designed to update existing charts of the area.

Checker Tournament

The Mayor's Office of Special Projects in conjunction with Patterson Park Recreation Center will sponsor a Senior Checker Tournament on Thursday, Oct. 21, 1982. The tournament will be held at Patterson Park Recreation Center, located at 2601 East Baltimore Street, beginning at 1 p.m.

Anyone 18 years of age and over may enter the tournament. Trophies will be awarded to 1st, and 3rd place winners.

Further information and entry blanks are available by calling, the Mayor's Office of Special Projects at 396 - 4691.

Melba Moore and The Great Jones in big Morgan Homecoming Show at Murphy Auditorium, Saturday, Oct. 16, 8 p.m.

Urban Services

St. James Youth Development Program Area B, 1001 N. Caroline St., will sponsor an Open Air Flea Market Friday, Oct. 15, from 4 to 8 p.m. For further information, call 563-9490 after 1 p.m.

Office of Youth Affairs of the Urban Services Agency asks citizens of Baltimore to reach out and give an odd job to a deserving youth. Youth Affairs has a list of well-screened and groomed teenagers. They're willing to work on any odd jobs around the house or office. Let's pitch in to help these youngsters who need to work. Call 566-0900 for further information.

Sunday, Oct. 17, has been set aside for Union Baptist Church, 1219 Druid Hill Ave. to observe "Head Start Awareness" at 11 a.m. Morning Services. The Rev. Vernon Dobson is the pastor.

Project Survival Golf Tournament

On Saturday, Nov. 6, 1982, the City of Baltimore's Urban Services Agency, in conjunction with Mayor's Office of Special Projects and the Mount Pleasant Municipal Golf Club, will sponsor the 1st Annual Project Survival Celebrity Golf Championship. The tournament will take place at the Mount Pleasant Municipal Golf Course, located at 6001 Hillen Road. Mayor William Donald Schaefer will preside as honorary chairperson for the event.

The event, is open to anyone 18 years of age and over. All contestants should arrive by 8:00 a.m. A $25.00 entry fee, which includes lunch, green fees, and awards, is required. Proceeds from the tournament will benefit the Project Survival Basketball and Educational Program of the Urban Services Agency in providing tutorial services, basketball leagues and the Sam Lacy Scholarship Fund.

For further information, please call William o'Donnell at 444-9660 or Virginia Baker at 396 - 4691.

'And Baby Makes Two' airs on PBS Oct. 15

According to federal census and health statistics, out-of-wedlock births in the United States have increased 50 percent in the last decade. While a high percentage of these births has been to teenage women, the greatest increase has occurred among women in their late twenties and early thirties who have made a conscious decision to become single mothers.

Reasons for the growing number of single adult women deciding to have children and the impact of their decision are examined in "And Baby Makes Two," produced by the Maryland Center for Public Broadcasting for national and local broadcast as part of the "U.S. Chronicle" series of documentary reports. Hosted by Jim Lehrer, this half-hour program airs Friday, Oct.15 at 10:30 p.m. on TV 22, 28, 31, 36, 62 and 67. It repeats Saturday, Oct. 16 at 11 p.m.

On location in the Baltimore - Washington metropolitan area, reporter Donna Martin visits five women from a variety of economic backgrounds who decided to become single mothers. Three of them did not plan to become pregnant; but when they did, they chose to continue their pregnancy and keep the child. Of the other two, one decided to adopt, while the other selected artificial insemination.

These women candidly discuss the economic and emotional realities of raising a child alone. Shown in their daily routine they talk about the decision to have a child, their feelings about marriage, the frustrations and personal rewards of being a single parent.

"And Baby Makes Two" looks at the way society's attitude towards unwed mothers has changed and talks to a 17-year-old boy who grew up in a single-parent home without a father. Psychologists Anna Rosenberg and Susan Whalen, parenting counselor Virginia Washington, social worker Anna Aukamp and Virginia Rhodes Nuta, assistant editor of "Single Parent" magazine, are also interviewed in the program. They focus on the impact of single parenting on the mother, the child and on society.

"And Baby Makes Two" is distributed to public television stations by the Interregional Program Service (IPS). The executive producer is Everett L. Marshburn, the producer is Elliott Wiley and the reporter is Donna Martin. Steve Gradin is the director-videographer.

TV Watching

By Vanessa Johnson

Friday

Fantasy: Guest Erik Estrada joins co-hostess **Leslie Uggams.** 3:00-4:00 p.m.-Ch. 2.

Strawberry Shortcake Pets On Parade: Strawberry Shortcake and her kitten are berry honored to be judges for the pet contest. Meanwhile, the Purple Pieman takes the cake for villainy. Cartoon. 5:30-6:00 p.m.-Ch. 5.

All-Star Family Feud: It's prime time vs daytime as stars from "Knots Landing" and "Dynasty" take on stars from "General Hospital" and "All My Children" for charity. Celebrities include **Darnell Williams.** 8:00-9:00 p.m.-Ch. 13.

World Series: Game three in the Fall Classic at the American League city. 8:15-11:00 p.m.-Ch. 13.

U.S. Chronicle: A discussion of women who elect single motherhood focuses on the social and economic effects on both the mother and her child. 10:30-11:00 p.m.-Ch. 22 & 67.

Saturday

World Series: Game 4 of the World Series between the Milwaukee Brewers and the St. Louis Cardinals. 1:00-4:00 p.m.-Ch. 2.

Midnight Special: Celebrities include actor-comedian **Richard Pryor.** 7:00-8:00 p.m.-Ch. 45.

Diff'rent Strokes: Arnold composes love letters using romantic passages from "Cyrano de Bergerac" to aid his shy, tongue-tied pal Dudley in winning the heart of a girl in class.

Tony Brown's Journal: Racism in America is discussed by author **Blanche McCrary Boyd,** "The Redneck Way of Knowledge". 11:00-11:30 p.m.-Ch. 22 & 67.

Fridays: Cameo on basketball great **Kareem Abdul-Jabbar.** Regulars include **Darrow Igus.** 12:00-1:30 a.m.-Ch. 13.

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Gimme A Break: Carl can't cope with Samantha and her nonstop conversations with the imaginary friend she's invented. Starring **Nell Carter.** 9:00-9:30 p.m.-Ch. 2.

Entertainment This Week: Guests include singing group **The Pointer Sisters.** 12:45-1:45 a.m.-Ch. 7.

Sunday

Gospel Variations: Guests include griot **Mary Carter Smith** and gospel group "The Lamplighters". Hosted by **Al Stewart.** 8:00-8:30 a.m.-Ch. 11.

Kids Are People Too: From a show taped in 1980 guests include soul-singer **Teddy Pendergrass.** 10:30-11:30 a.m.-Ch. 7.

World Series: Game 5, if necessary, is telecast from the American League City. 4:45-8:00 p.m.-Ch. 2.

Solid Gold: Celebrities include composer-singer **Lionel Richie.** 7:00-8:00 p.m.-Ch. 20.

Movie: John Belushi and Dan Aykroyd are "The Blues Brothers", soul-singing siblings trying to raise money for a Chicago orphange. Starring **James Brown, Aretha Franklin and Cab Calloway.** 9:00-11:45 p.m.-Ch. 13.

The Jeffersons: Florence thinks it's about time she had a pension plan and appeals to George to provide for her retirement. Starring **Marla Gibbs** and **Sherman Hemsley.** 9:00-9:30 p.m.-Ch. 11.

Trapper John: Unlikely romances blossom when Trapper meets a woman who's vague about her occupation; Slocum sends love messages to a patient via Gonzo; and Jackpot takes Shoop's visiting niece on a tour of the city. Starring **Madge Sinclair** and **Brian Mitchell.** 10:00-11:00 p.m.-Ch. 11.

Movie: "Goldie and the Boxer Go to Hollywood", in this sequel to the 1979 TV movie about a Philadelphia heavyweight. This time out, he captures the title, by refusing to take a dive. Starring **O.J. Simpson.** 12:00-2:00 a.m.-Ch. 45.

Free events for children

Monday, Oct. 18

Canton Center- Film, "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow", 4 p.m.

Wednesday, Oct. 20

Dundalk Ave. Branch- Film, "Rip Van Winkle", 3 p.m.

Light St. Branch- Film, "One Good Turn", 3 p.m.

Morrell Park Center- Film, "Abbott and Costello Show—The Haunted House", 3 p.m.

Brooklyn Branch- Films, "Bluenose Ghost", "What Say?", and "Adelie Penguins of the Antarctic", 3:30 p.m.

Herring Run Branch- Film, "Teeny-tiny and the Witch Woman", 3:30 p.m.

Northwood Branch- Film, "Francesca, Baby", 3:30 p.m.

Pennsylvania Ave. Branch- Film, "Topper Returns", 3:30 p.m.

Walbrook Branch- Film, "Man from Nowhere", 3:30 p.m.

Thursday, Oct. 21

St. Paul St. Center- Film, "Mighty Mouse in 'The Witch's Cat'", 10:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m.

Friday, Oct. 22

Dundalk Ave. Branch- Film, "Run, Appaloosa, Run", 3 p.m.

Patterson Park Branch- Feature-length film, 3 p.m.

Waverly Branch- Films, "Nikkolina" and "Rapunzel", 3:30 p.m.

Saturday, Oct. 23

Central Pratt Library, Children's Dept.- Preschool story hour, 11 a.m.

Freda made a decision 17 years ago to give birth out of wedlock to Tony. Single adult women who have children is the focus of "And Baby Makes Two."

Free films

Admission to all film programs is free.

"The House of the Basketvilles", Sherlock Holmes thriller with Basil Rathbone and Nigel Bruce, will be screened at 6 p.m. on Monday, Oct. 18 at the Canton Center, 1030 S. Ellwood Ave.

"The Willmar 8", in which eight women workers in a small Minnesota town take a stand for their rights, will be screened at 6:30 p.m. on Monday, Oct. 18, at the St. Paul Street Center, 2521 St. Paul St.

"The Phatom of the Opera", the original silent version starring Lon Chaney as the disfigured composer who haunts the Paris Opera House, will be screened at 7:30 p.m. on Wednesday, Oct. 20, at the Central Library, 400 Cathedral St.

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