SHOWTIME

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'Jazz in America Specials' air on WHMM-TV

LIVING JAZZ LEGENDS Dizzy Gillespie (center) baritone saxophonist Garry Mulligan and Max Roach appear together in the premiere of "Jazz In America" Friday, Sept. 9 on PBS WHMM-TV 32.

Gerry Mulligan, Dizzy Gillespie, Max Roach

Living jazz legends John Birks "Dizzy"Gillespie, Max Roach, and Gerry Mulligan perform and speak about their relationship to jazz, America's own unique contribution to global culture in "Jazz in America", a series of four television specals which premieres at 10 p.m. on Friday, Sept. 9 on WHMM-TV 32.

Friday, Sept. 9, 10-11:30 p.m. "The Jazz in America' premiere will be a special 90-minute broadcast featuring trumpet master Gillespie, virtuoso drummer Roach, and baritone saxophone nonpariel Mulligan — with a line-up of all-star jazz artists — performing at New York City's Lincoln Center.

The orchestra — "Dizzy's Dream Band" — includes Pepper Adams on baritone sax, percussionist Candido, guitarist George Davis, bassist George Duviver, Jon Faddis on trumpet, Frank Foster on saxophone, Curtis Fuller on trombone, Gillespie on trumpet, and pianist Roland Hanna.

Also Jimmy Heath on saxophone, singer Jon Hendricks, Milt Jackson on vibraharp, pianist John Lewis, Melba Liston on trombone, baritone saxophonist Mulligan, arranger Chico O'Farrill, Victor Paz on trumpet, sax player Paquito Rivera, drummer Roach, Janice Robinson on trombone, Marvin Stamm on trumpet, drummer Grady Tate Frank Wess on saxophone, bassist Paul West, and Joe Wilder on trumpet.

Friday, Sept. 16, 10-11 p.m.- in the second special Roach, considered the most influential modern jazz drummer, leads a four-piece ensemble at Washington,D.C.'s Blues Alley.

With Cecil Bridgewater on trumpet, Odean Pope on tenor saxophone and Calvin Hill on bass, Roach performs an eight-number set that displays the high-risk artistry and explosiveness of music that traces back to the bebop era.

Friday, Sept. 23, 10-11 p.m.- Mulligan, who made his emergence as a teenage prodigy with Charlie Parker, his idol, and has continued to carve out a niche as one of jazz's most accomplished and creative saxophonists, leads a quartet in a club appearance at Eric's in New York City.

On piano is Harold Danko, with Frank Luther on bass, and Billy Hart on drums. The quartet performs a set of Mulligan compositions that show off Mulligan's crisply lyrical technique as a performer and his fluency and inventiveness as a composer-arranger.

Friday, Sept. 30, 10-11 p.m.- The final "Jazz in America" special features Gillespie leading an octet through a four-song session at Concerts by the Sea in Redondo Beach, Ca. The band includes alto saxophonist Paquito d'Rivera, Ed Sherry on guitar, pianist Valerie Capers, drummer Tom Campbell, Tom MacIntosh on trombone, Michael Howell on electric bass, and on stand-up bass, Ray Brown.

The vibrant intimacy of the small club performance is captured as a celebratory and passionate Gillespie plays, sings, dances, and enjoys the music that made him one of jazz's preeminent figures.

James Booker's N.Y.

New York: Washington Wire- Despite its many agendas, the historic 20th anniversary March on Washington was one of the most exciting in recent history. While the press downplayed the size of the crowd and the effects of the gathering, it was black Muslim Minister Lewis Farahkan who provided the emotional impact that brought the audience to its heights, even more so than the traditional singing of "We Shall Overcome". The one weakness of the event, however, was that entertainers should never be allowed to try to be race leaders. They almost always fail at the job.

Star Gazing.....

By Ernest P. White, Jr.

At the age of 8, James Garrett discovered that he could sing; it was an outlet for him because he was very shy. A native of Winchester, KY, a small town, Garrett was hailed as exceptional, a novelty.

It was a small Kentucky town and there wasn't a lot of kids doing the kinds of things I was doing at my age," said Garrett. He also discovered that he had a very good ear and could sit down at the piano and play melodies that he heard. My mother and relatives," says Garrett, immediately recognized this and got me involved in the church, singing and playing for several of the church choirs."

He continued to work in his church until he graduated from high school and moved to Cincinnati.

Once in Cincinnati," said Garrett, I joined a group called the Northern Kentucky Community Choir (across the river from Cincinnati). They'd heard that I could sing and I became a soloist."

The group travelled extensively in and around the Kentucky and Ohio area. While in Cincinnati, Garrett enrolled in Southern Ohio Business College. It had always been stressed in my family," says Garrett, to get an education to have something to fall back on, so I chose business college." He left Ohio Business College to join the Air Force and got activeiy involved with singing with the U.S.O.

I entered a variety show," said Garrett, in Little Rock, AR, where I was stationed, and won first place." His singing was not limited to gospel, he also sang pop music in some of the clubs in the Little Rock area.

In 1970 Garrett moved to Washington on the advice of a relative who told him that Washington was a good place to express himself musically with gospel music.

JAMES GARRETT

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Maze and Phyllis at Civic Center

By Frederick I. Douglass

Maze, the radioactive group that is currently gaining beaucoup airplay with "Love Is the Key" and other mellow songs from the album "We Are One", will be appearing at the Baltimore Civic Center this coming Sunday evening at 8 p.m. Phyllis Hyman, the unpredictable female vocalist who is enjoying a resurgence of popularity with her latest chart release "Ride the Tiger", is also scheduled to be on the scene to belt out a few tunes from "Goddess of Love," her latest vinyl etching.

Maze began to achieve national attention in 1978 when everyone within earshot of a radio or stereo tuned into the mellow title track of the LP "Golden Time of the Day". Since then, Maze has continued to amass a strong following that makes the group's concerts sell out from coast to coast. Presently, Maze is scoring big with "Love Is the Key", a tune that is being heard on both Top-40 and progressive FM stations, an indication of the group's broadening appeal to diverse audiences.

During an era when so much of songs committed to wax consist of unintelligible and gobbledygook lyrics that only attract listening because the superimposed over a funky, danceable beat, Frankie Beverly and Maze have distinguished themselves from the crowd by bringing back good lyrics that are clearly articulated on each song they sing.

Composing their music from a positive perspective, Maze comes on inspirationally while crooning "Right On Time", another up tempo tune from the "We Are One" album. This is the kind of music that helps you get your day started on an upbeat note because it is not blaring, harsh or abrasive but it does have the kind of beat that gets your spine, knees, neck and other bones and joints in gear to face the hassles and blessings that come with each 24-hour cycle of your life.

Maintaining a mellow groove, Maze's ballad "Your Own Kind of Way" is another excellent composition that will make your ears perk up while marvelling at the group's tight instrumentation and Frankie Beverly's ability to evoke myriad different moods with the subtle shadings of vocal timbre and dynamics he uses to get his message across.

But the best ballad of the "We Are One" album is "I Wanna Thank You" a song that is heard frequently on WEAA-FM, Morgan State University's radio station, and other progressive FM formats.

Phyllis Hyman

After hearing this song, you will be saying "I Wanna Thank You" to Frankie and Maze for coming up with such a mellow and soulful jam and making it worthwhile to add this platter to your collection.

"We Are One", the album's title track, delves deeper into the positive message that Maze is putting across to the nation urging togetherness, self respect, respect for others and love of life and the people you share it with.

Further displaying the group's penchant for lovely melodies and instrumentation, Maze does a beautiful job on "I Love You Too Much", a ballad that is distinguished by skilled interplay between voices and instruments as well as thoughtfully expressed sentiments. "Never Let You Down" is another artfully composed and performed ballad that has the capabilities of soothing the savage beast as well as the frayed nerves of contemporary men and women after a hard days battle at the nine-to-five.

Briefly summing up Frankie Beverly and Maze's latest album "We Are One", it can only be said that the music etched between the grooves provides a pleasant respite, an oasis of sounds that provides an excellent alternative to the all to often jarring, grating sounds and lyrics that comprise so much of contemporary music.

Phyllis Hyman appears to be back on track with her current "Goddess of Love" album which was partially produced by Narada Michael Walden, a percussionist and producer who first made the scene as a jazz musician and then went on to produce Stacey Lattisaw and Angie Bofill while scoring big with his disco rendition of the Four Tops classic "Reach Out, I'll Be There".

Thom Bell also produced some of the songs on this LP. While listening audiences first turned on to up tempo tunes like "Goddess of Love" and "Ride the Tiger", the progressive FM stations are starting to play some of Ms. Hyman's more laid back tunes including "Why Did You Turn Me One" and "Your Move, My Heart", a song with a haunting melody.

Moving into side two of Phyllis Hyman's album "Goddess Of Love", the listener is treated to five excellent ballads that are distinguished by Thom Bell's skillful arrangements and Ms. Hyman's vocal interpretations of the lyrics. Indeed, this is the most impressive collection of songs that Phyllis Hyman has ever been associated with. Hopefully, she will be able to do justice to these tunes in person.

The concert at the Civic Center this Sunday evening at 8 p.m. will be worth going to see just from Frankie Beverly and Maze who are guaranteed to put on an excellent performance. Perhaps Phyllis Hyman will feel like giving it up to the audience and will also choose to perform Sunday night. But it really does not matter what Ms. Hyman chooses to do because Frankie Beverly and Maze will definitely put on a show that will make you feel like it was worthwhile spending your hard earned ducats for an evening out on the town.

So says the VA... ALLEY BOP by Dave Gross

Contact nearest VA office (check your phone book) or a local veterans group.

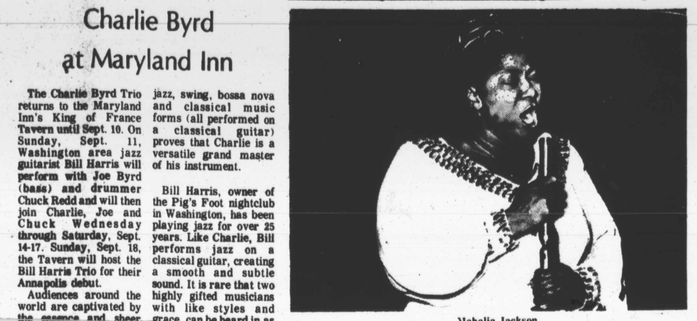
Motown's newest star, Finis Henderson visited in Baltimore and Washington this week to promote his new album which features the hits "Skip to My Lou" and "Making Love." Originally from Chicago, his name means "The End" in his family. His trip has taken him to New York, Philly, Chicago and Cleveland. He's shown above with his girl friend from Cherry Hill, N.J. Also shown AFRO secretaries Jackie Tyson (L) and Camilla Pegues (R).

Charlie Byrd at Maryland Inn

The Charlie Byrd Trio returns to the Maryland Inn's King of France Tavern until Sept. 10. On Sunday, Sept. 11, Washington area jazz guitarist Bill Harris will perform with Joe Byrd (bass) and drummer Chuck Redd and will then join Charlie, Joe and Chuck Wednesday through Saturday, Sept. 14-17. Sunday, Sept. 18, the Tavern will host the Bill Harris Trio for their Annapolis debut.

Audiences around the world are captivated by the essence and sheer magic of Charlie's performances. The remarkable ease with which he commands jazz, swing, bossa nova and classical music forms (all performed on a classical guitar) proves that Charlie is a versatile grand master of his instrument.

Bill Harris, owner of the Pig's Foot nightclub in Washington, has been playing jazz for over 25 years. Like Charlie, Bill performs jazz on a classical guitar, creating a smooth and subtle sound. It is rare that two highly gifted musicians with like styles and grace, can be heard in as intimate a setting as the King of France, and this opportunity is one not to be passed by.



Mahalia Jackson

'Mahalia's Song' slated at Howard University

Mahalia's Song," a production which dramatizes episodes from the life of gospel singer Mahalia Jackson, will be presented at Howard University's Cramton Auditorium Sept. 9-11 at 8 p.m.

Pearl Williams-Jones along with Sharon Steele will star in the show which is directed by Mike Malone. The script was written by Llewellyn Smith.

Beginning with incidents from the youth of Mahalia, the production focuses on the impact of the music of New Orleans and Chicago on her vocal style, and ends with her return to New Orleans to star in a Christmas telecast hosted by Dave Garroway.

The show is described as more musical extravanza than drama—a kaleidoscope of chorus, instrumental ensemble and dance, recalling the rich legacy of the Afro American idiom which traveled with Miss Jackson from New Orleans to Chicago in the 1920s and thereafter throughout the world. The production, which is dedicated to the black performers of Washington, D.C. draws its cast from the large numbers of gifted musicians and dancers who live in the area and showcases the magnificent talent of the arts community.

Pearl Williams-Jones brings to the title role a devout fervor & musical artistry that comes by way of her long experience and education in Afro-American gospel. The daughter of Bishop Smallwood Williams of Bible Way Church of Christ World Wide in D.C., Williams is Associate Professor of Music at the University of the District of Columbia, director of the Bible Way Radio Choir, and host of Gospel Perspectives which is broadcast weekly from WYCB radio.

Director Mike Malone had done choreography for the Baltimore City Ballet, the original Broadway production of The Great White Hope," and the operatic versions of Hansel and Gretel" and the Wizard of Oz," both of which were selected for performance at the White House. His original theater productions include the highly acclaimed works of Owen's Song," A Certain Dark Joy," God is in the Street Today," The Life and Times of Stagolee," and adaptations of the medieval drama Everyman" and Langston Hughes' Prodigal Son." His other credits include appearances in Les Ballets Contemporains in Lille and Paris, France.

Sharon Steele, at the age of 11, has released her first recorded album, Standing Tall," which is rated number 13 in the country by the Gospel Music Association and a second album is scheduled to be released later this year. She made her debut in 1980 at the Christian Tabernacle in Highland Park, MD, and has since appeared throughout the country as a soloist in concert and with her family, The Steele Family.

Writer Lewellyn Smith has been associate producer of the television series Jumpstreet," and is the author of a previous Howard production Sankofa."

Mahalia's Song" will play along with a matinee performance on Sept. 10 at 2:30 p.m.

Arena adds orator to Board

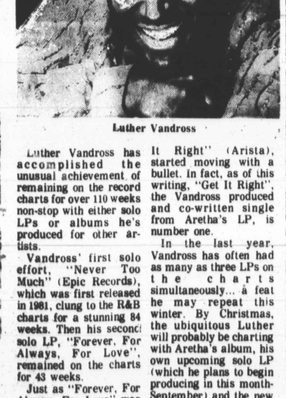
Verna L. Day, actress, orator, teacher and mother has been appointed to the Arena Players, Inc., Board of Directors.

After graduating from the Irene Kaufman School of Drama in Pittsburgh, Pa., Verna came to Baltimore. Not long after her arrival in this city, she found herself performing on stage in the Arena Players first production "A Happy Journey to Trenton"

Since then she has performed numerous times on Arena's stage as well as with Center Stage and the New Bolton Dinner Theatre.

Her most recent and rewarding acting assignment was as Pearl (The Villian) in "Reaching For the Power", an original drama produced and aired on WMAR-TV 2 in February of this year.

Mrs. Day is also a member of Mass Transit Authority Advisory Board, the Interdenominational Ministers Wives, Woodlawn Toastmistress (winner of world toastmistress contest in Toronto, Canada, 1980), Sigma Wives and the State Ministers Wives. She will serve as Board Member for two years.



Verna Day

Vandross on charts 110 weeks

Luther Vandross

Luther Vandross has accomplished the unusual achievement of remaining on the record charts for over 110 weeks non-stop with either solo LPs or albums he's produced for other artists.

Vandross' first solo effort, "Never Too Much" (Epic Records), which was first released in 1981, clung to the R&B charts for a stunning 84 weeks. Then his second solo LP, "Forever, For Always, For Love", remained on the charts for 43 weeks.

Just as "Forever, For Always, For Love" was sliding from the charts, Vandross' production of Aretha Franklin's latest long-playing effort, "Get It Right" (Arista), started moving with a bullet. In fact, as of this writing, "Get It Right", the Vandross produced and co-written single from Aretha's LP, is number one.

In the last year, Vandross has often had as many as three LPs on the charts simultaneously... a feat he may repeat this winter. By Christmas, the ubiquitous Luther will probably be charting with Aretha's album, his own upcoming solo LP (which he plans to begin producing in this month-September) and the new album by Dionne Warwick (which Vandross will finish producing shortly).

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Authority: Robert C. Turner, Treas.