Flicks

MOVIE REVIEWS

'Richard Pryor, Here and Now'

By BOB MATTHEWS

The latest of the Richard Pryor "in concert" movies was released recently, with the latest epic entitled: "Richard Pryor Here and Now."

This is the third in the series which began with "Live in Concert," followed by "Live on Sunset Strip." Those who viewed the previous two will have noted a gradual shift in presentation by Pryor.

There are obvious attempts to be "more relevant" to be more concerned with issues of the day, which while interesting, is seldom humerous.

These tidbits are interspersed throughout this latest episode, and coupled with a totally unruly audience, tends to slow down the pace of the presentation.

A lot of the material is familiar, having been tried on audiences such as appearances on the "Johnny Carson Show," and others.

Richard Pryor . . . true genius

Although Pryor had promised to retire the character of "Mudbone," he surfaces in this latest movie, although he is never identified.

It was difficult to remain concentrated on the vagaries of the Pryor presentation when he was continually interrupted by an audience which seemed totally insensitive to the performance.

You were forced to question the taste of the editing and direction for allowing most of this to stay in the final print. On the plus side, Pryor's public resolve to discontinue use of the word "nigger," holds. Not once was the word used in this movie.

Now before you think all is negative, be assured that some parts of this movie will have you rolling in the aisles. When he is allowed to craft a situation, it is hilarious.

But there is an attempt to go further than humor—to exercise the drama in an existence little known by the average person. For example, Richard does a graphic scene in which a heroin junkie gives himself a fix, and nods out.

Unfortunately, the skit is overlong, and defeats the purpose for which is was originally inserted. Likewise with a portrayal of an alcoholic. What should have been a sympathetic response turns into one of apathy and boredom.

Tried and true Richard Pryor fans will not be dismayed by the changes in this presentation—the obvious pitch for humanization. He once again discusses his recent trip to Africa, describing the beauty of the country—and some of the perils.

He frequently discusses his bonedry 7 months, completely devoid of drugs and alcohol. Actually, he confesses that this is the first time he has been drugfree since about the age of 14.

For those who might think the language has changed—forget it. The language of the streets is still his forte, with the "not to be discussed in polite society" material a major focus.

Personally, I liked the film—but then I am a fan, recognizing the true genius of the man, despite the sometimes obfuscating aura around him.

This movie is not in the class of the shriekingly funny "Live in Concert," but has some of the funniest moments on film, it is worth seeing for these jewels.

'Under Fire'

By Arthur J. Johnson

What makes those television and newspaper journalists we are seeing in Grenada, South America and Beirut crave positions on the bloody batfronts of the world?

Recently reporters were incensed when American military officials would not allow them to cover the Granada invasion. Reporters covering Vietnam walked alongside the troops in an effort to cover the triumphs and atrocities of that war. As a rule newspeople are often killed while in pursuit of the big story.

What makes these people want to risk life and limb for that page one story or that photo on the cover of Time magazine? Fame? Money? Madness?

This a question that remains unanswered for two hours in the new political thriller "Under Fire", the story of three journalists and their experiences covering civil wars in South Africa and in Nicaragua.

Nick ("48 Hours") Nolte portrays an award-winning photo-journalist and Gene ("The French Connection") Hackman is a reporter involved in a disintegrating love affair with fellow reporter Claire (Joanne Cassidy).

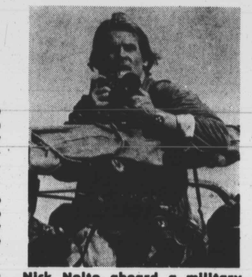
As these three newshounds dodge tanks, grenades and bullets during the last days of the Samoza regime in Nicaragua in 1979, Nolte and Cassidy slowly lose their professional objectivity as the U.S. role in that country's problems becomes evident.

Finally Nolte and Cassidy choose to become participants in the events to which they were once observers. They become part of a macabre masquerade that changes the course of history. Nolte, who once says, "I don't take sides, I take pictures", destroys that code with one photograph.

"Under Fire" is a tidy, competent political thriller but never sufficiently involves the viewer on a personal level. Even if viewers cannot follow the politics, knowing the personal motivation of the characters who march into battle with pens and cameras instead of weapons could have been the film's saving grace.

Nolte, Hackman and Cassidy however make no emotional contact with the audience. Instead the screenwriter chooses to involve the three in a lackluster love triangle that is less than completely believable.

Since we never discover what makes these three journalists so passionate about their work, they remain as distant and enigmatic as those reporters we see on the nightly news.



Nick Nolte aboard a military transport in Chad, Africa in "Under Fire."

Hackman and Nolte give credible performances despite the limitations of the script. Miss Cassidy, however, wanders through the film looking as if she has a slight headache instead of as though she is in the middle of a war. Ed Harris' story interpretation of a conscience-less mercenary who "war hops" for the highest bidder is the perfect opposite of Miss Cassidy's wooden performance.

Ultimately "Under Fire" does not deliver emotionally since we never understand what makes the characters tick. This might have been that rare bird—a political thriller where the characters don't get lost in the politics. Last year's "Missing" managed that feat much more successfully.

Chocolate Festival

Chocolate lovers and bakers are encouraged to enter the 1st Annual Chocolate Recipe Challenge—a special feature of the upcoming BALTIMORE CHOCOLATE FESTIVAL being held at the Lexington Market Dec. 1-3.

Three categories of chocolate recipes will be judged by a panel of chefs, bakers and local food editors. The categories include, chocolate baked good, chocolate candy and chocolate speciality item.

Three finalists will be chosen in each category and will be invited to bring their prepared recipes to the Lexington Market on Thursday, Dec. 1 for a tasting and final judging. A top winner will then be picked in each category.

Prizes include, cookbooks, chocolates, a $50 shopping spree at Lexington Market, tickets to the fantastic Hershey Park and a special V.I.P. weekend in Hershey, Pa.

Deadline for entry is Monday, Nov. 21. All recipes must be made from scratch and participants may enter in more than one category.

Mail recipes to: Chocolate Recipe Challenge; Lexington Market, 400 W. Lexington St., Baltimore, Md. 21201.

For more information call the Lexington Market at (301) 685-6169.

His birthday celebration ended in his death

(See column 1 below)

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Rent strike a possibility

By Tyrone Vines

Discontentment has flared up in several public housing highrise apartments throughout the Baltimore City area over what they described as "indecent and inadequate housing conditions." This could very well lead to a rent strike by 128 highrise tenants.

The tenants with the assistance of the Baltimore Welfare Rights Organization, Inc. (BWRO) have sent letters of complaint to both the Baltimore City Fire Department Commissioner and J. Brodie, Housing & Community Development Commissioner about certain housing code violations.

The 128 completed form letters detailed problems from broken elevators to holes in high - rise patio fences to poor heating.

The controversy arises with the complaints by the tenants and BWRO giving the city until Dec. 2, to respond. The alternative, they feel, will be to to stop payment of rent.

This action could cause some hardships for the 128 residents living in the Geo. B. Murphy Homes, Lexington Terrace, Flag House and Lafayette Projects, in the event the rent court judge decides the violation listed are unfounded. The residents face possible eviction notices from the city.

One option the city has is to file for a non payment of rent complaint against the tenants who have refused to pay their rent. In this case the public housing

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Final salute paid marine Davin Green

More than 300 friends, relatives and classmates attended last rites for Lance Cpl. Davin Marcell Green Tuesday night at Wayland Baptist Church on Garrison Blvd.

The 20-year-old Marine was killed in the bombing attack on the Marines headquarters in Beriut on Oct. 23. He is buried in Arlington National Cemetery in Arlington, Va.

The Rev. Darneal Johnson, pastor of Wayland said, "Green stood for Peace and that's a blessing. He laid down his life because he believed in peace."

The flagged draped coffin was surrounded by colorful flowers and a picture of Green was placed on top of his coffin.

Green was born July 16, 1963 in Baltimore and was the son of Patricia J. Briscoe and Ronnie Smith. He was a June 1981 graduate of Woodlawn Senior High School.

A relative said his dream was to join the U.S. Marine Corps. He did his training in Lejune, N. C. and was transferred to Beirut, Lebanon on May 11.

Relatives said, "He was a homebody who used most of his time building model airplanes with the hope of constructing a real one in the future."

Green is survived by his wife, Deborah S. Green; parents, Patricia J. Briscoe and Ronnie Smith; two sisters, Sheria Scott and Kia Briscoe and one brother, Damion Briscoe; grandmother, Mrs. Tini Smith, great grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Alexander Iverson.

'Friends of Morgan' warn Hughes on engineering school

By Arthur Johnson
AFRO Staff Writer

The Friends of Morgan Legal Defense Fund announced Wednesday that unless Governor Hughes and the General Asembly give the highest priority to fully funding a new engineering school at Morgan University, "We will have no choice but to seek legal redress."

The Friends of Morgan (FOM) ultimatum follows the November 3 State Board of Higher Education (SBHE) endorsement of an engineering school for University of Maryland Baltimore County (UMBC) and Morgan.

This most recent ruling of the board reversed a June 2 board recommendation which denied UMBC the right to house the state's newest engineering school and gave Morgan the go-ahead to begin planning for an engineering school.

"We feel that the June 2 resolution by the SBHE was the right decision. It would have increased enhancement funding to Morgan and helped in the state desegregation effort," says the FOM statement which was read to a standing-room-only crowd in the Baord Room of McKeldin Center on the Morgan University campus.

FOM members feel that the board changed its decision because of political pressure from the governor and General Assembly members.

"To allow UMBC to establish degree granting programs in engineering, in our opinion, would continue to perpetuate a separate and 'underequal' higher education system."

"We do not believe the state will have adequate funds to establish two separate schools of engineering," the statement continues.

FOM cites past inequities in the funding of Traditionally Black Institutions (TBIs) as evidence that Morgan would equal funding in comparison to UMBC.

"We saw Towson State University and UMBC spring out of the ground while Morgan was already in existence. The state used the capital budget to funnel money to these schools to

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City schools have tight security force

By Arthur Johnson
AFRO Staff Writer

Before September 1967, there were none.

But after a series of violent incidents in several city junior high schools, security officers became a way of life.

One month later, the security division of the city schools began with a force of 21 positions.

Now there are 101 officers (13 women) and ten supervisors who provide daily law enforcement services for 183 Baltimore City Public Schools.

According to Larry Burgen, city school security chief since 1973, officers deal with "the same range and types of problems they deal with in the community."

Disorderly conduct and trespassing are the most frequent security problems faced by the officers in addition to incidents of robbery, assault, weapons possession, narcotics violations, and larceny.

Currently one or more officers are assigned in all regular secondary schools. Elementary schools do not have regular security personnel because they tend not to have the frequency of problems found on the secondary level.

"Most calls from elementary schools are for trespassing complaints," says Burgen.

Still some secondary principals complain about lack of coverage as do some elementary schools.

"We keep very accurate records and they are used as the police department uses its records to determine if our people are put where they are needed," Burgen says.

"We look at the records at the end of the month to see if they are effectively assigned," Burgen says.

"The records reflect that there is no ongoing need for security officers at elementary sites; although problems do arise," Burgen says.

To qualify for the security officer civil service examination applicants must be at least a high school graduate, 21 years old.

They must also have at least one year of experience in some field of commissioned civilian or military law enforcement.

After passing the examination and a criminal record check, applicants are interviewed by security division personnel. A background investigation and physical are required before final appointment.

All school security officers are commissioned as special police officers by the city police commissioner. All entry level officers must successfully complete 385 hours of training at an academy certified by the Maryland Police Training Commission.

The commission also requires regular inservice training every year thereafter.

City school security officers

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City gearing up for big subway opening

By Eddie King
AFRO Staff Writer

As the $797 million subway system gears up for its gala opening on Mon., Nov. 21, planning continues for possible extension of the Metro into the city's northeast corridor.

Meanwhile, a series of pre-opening events such as free rides and parades are being scheduled to lure the public to what Mass Transit officials describe as the world's newest rapid transit system.

The Baltimore Metro which will run from the downtown Charles Center to the Reisterstown Plaza will be the shortest new subway in the country, one of the longest to get built and the largest public works project in Maryland's history.

Plans to extend the eight mile line for another mile and a half

(Continued on page 23)

Broadwater successor sworn in

ANNAPOLIS, MD. — Former oprhans court Judge Decatur Trotter replaced Tommie Broadwater in the Maryland Senate Wednesday. But the prison-bound Broadwater joined the festivities and again vowed to reclaim his seat in 1986.

Trotter, who was named to fill the Prince George's county seat after Broadwater was sentenced to six months in prison for Federal food stamp fraud, said he hoped to heal the wounds inflicted during the battle among county democrats to select Broadwater's replacement.

He called Broadwater and other county senators to the rostrum of the ornate, marble-walled senate chamber and said, "you can see we are a team and we will remain a team."

"As the great emancipator said, 'we're going to heal our wounds,' " Trotter said. "We want to move the 24th district and together with your help and the help of God, I think we are going to be successful in the months and years to come."

In the months to come, Broad-

Continued on page 2

HAPPINESS IS — Becoming a Md. State Senator. Former Orphans Court Judge Decatur Trotter (L) was sworn in to replace Tommie Broadwater. Congratulations are in order as the former senator greets his successor following ceremonies in Annapolis.

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