Best Bets

Walters Art Gallery

The Walters Art Gallery will host a Saturday film series for the family from Disney Studios beginning on September 15 at 1:30 p.m. in the Graham Auditorium. The series will open with "Alice in Wonderland." Scheduled for September 22 is "The Rescuers." The films will be shown on consecutive Saturdays. For more information call 547-9000.

Film Series At AACC

The Anne Arundel Community will sponsor a film series beginning Friday, September 14 in the Center for the Performing Arts at 7:30 p.m. Neil Simon's "The Odd Couple" will be the first film presented. Admission is $1.00 for students and $2.00 for the general public. For more information call 269-7341.

Culinary Olympics Benefit

The Baltimore Chapter of the Confrerie de la Chaine des Rotisseurs will host a benefit for the Big Apple Culinary Olympics Team on Monday, September 17 in the Grand Ballroom of the Belvedere Hotel starting at 7:00 p.m. Seven of the 13 chefs in the Olympics will come to Baltimore and prepare a special seafood menu. For more information call 539-0037 or 752-8632.

Print-Making Workshop

The Capital Children's Museum will present a Print-Making Workshop with the Studio Gallery on Saturday, September 15 from 12 noon to 3 p.m. Studio Gallery artist will conduct a special print-making workshop for visitors. This workshop is in conjunction with a special art exhibit on display at CCM until October 7. For more information on this and other activities call 202-543-8600.

Arena Players

The Arena Players are preempting their 32nd season with a showcase featuring talent from the Baltimore and Washington community with two performances on September 14 and 15. Miss Vanessa Stewart will star in the showcase. For further information on this and other productions call 728-6300.

"Pippin" At The Spotlighters

The Spotlighters Theatre located at 817 St. Paul St. will present the Broadway musical "Pippin" on September 14 and continuing until September 30. Performances are Fridays and Saturdays at 8:30 p.m. and Sundays at 2:30 p.m. For reservations call 752-1225.

Auditions For M*A*S*H

The Federal Theatre, located at Our Savior Lutheran Church, 3301 The Alameda, will hold auditions for their fall comedy M*A*S*H on Sunday, September 16 from 2:00 p.m. until 5:00 p.m. All parts are open. For more details call 539-1546 between the hours of 11:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m.

Comedy At Source Theatre

"The Shady Side," a new comedy thriller by Stephen Hayes will continue at The Source Theatre Company until Saturday, October 13. The Source Theatre's Main Stage is located at 1809 14th St., N.W. For more information call 202-462-7782.

Crab Feast And Picnic

The University of Maryland Baltimore County Alumni Association will hold their annual Crab Feast and Picnic on Sunday, September 16 from 1 to 6 p.m. on Giffen Hill on the campus. The feast is open to the public. Tickets can be obtained by calling 455-2901.

Jocelyn Brown At Blues Alley

Jocelyn Brown of "Somebody Else's Guy" fame will appearing at Blues Alley until Tuesday, September 18. Stanley Turrentine will follow on September 19 thru September 24. For more information call 202-337-4141.

Award Winning Artists At CCC

The award crafts artists from the Maryland Crafts Council will exhibit their work in the Gallery of Catonsville Community College starting Friday, September 14 until Friday, October 5. For more information call 455-4279.

WHAT'S AHEAD

Gladys Knight And The Pips

Gladys Knight and the Pips along with Kashif will appear at Constitution Hall in Washington, D.C. on October 5 for two shows at 8 and 11:30 p.m. Tickets are $13 and $15 and all seats are reserved. For information call 202-371-3084.

Center Stage Opens Season

Center Stage opens its 22nd season on Tuesday, September 25 with the American premiere of DANTON'S DEATH directed by Stan Wojewodski. For ticket information call 332-0033.

Irish Festival Closes Season

The summer's final Showcase of Nations ethnic festival will be held on Saturday and Sunday, September 22 and 23 when Baltimore's Irish community celebrates a traditional Irish weekend in Hopkins Plaza from 12 noon to 7 p.m. For more information call 837-4636.

Ntozake Shange will be one of the participants in "A Celebration of Black Creativity" September 14-16 at the Eubie Blake Cultural Center. For more information call 669-8346.

Capital Children's Museum

On Friday, October 25, the Capital Children's Museum will present The Puppet Company in "Peter and the Wolf." This classic fairy tale will be presented by Christopher Piper and his handmade marionettes. Tickets are $2.00. For more informaton call 202-543-8600.

Antique Car Display

On Sunday, September 30, from 1 to 4 p.m., the Chesapeake Region of the Antique Automobile Club of America will sponsor an antique car display at the Baltimore City Zoo in Druid Hill Park. Car owners will be available to discuss their car with those interested. The cost is $1.50 for adults, $1.00 for senior citizens and 50¢ for children ages 2 thru 11. For more information call 296-8270.

Auditions At Limestone

The Limestone Musical Dinner Playhouse will hold auditions for its first show of the season, "Guys and Dolls" on Saturday, September 29 from noon until 4 p.m. All actors should be prepared to dance and sing one uptempo song and one ballad. Pictures and resumes are requested. All parts are open. For further information call 656-8080.

Septemberfest And Quest

Mt. Vernon's Restaurant Row is sponsoring a Septemberfest and Quest on Saturday, September 22 from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. in the 800 to 1000 blocks of Charles St., just north of the Washington Monument. There will also be continuous free outdoor entertainment, celebrity bartenders in area restaurants and prizes to win. Registration is $5.00 and for more information you can call 244-1030.

BSO Celebrity Concert

The Baltimore Symphony Orchestra will open its 1984-85 concert season with Music Director designate David Zinman and guest pianist Emanuel Ax on September 20 and 21 in the Joseph Meyerhoff Symphony Hall. Both concerts begin at 8:15 p.m. For further information call 837-5691.

Poetry Contest

The "Baltimore Is Best" program in conjunction with the Department of Recreation and Parks, Senior Citizens Program, the Commission on Aging and Retirement Education, Eating Together in Baltimore, S.A.G.A., and the Waxter Center, is sponsoring the Fourth Senior Citizen Poetry Contest. The contest is open to all non-professional poets who are 55 years of age and over and reside in Baltimore City. For more details call 396-5640.

Friday Plus

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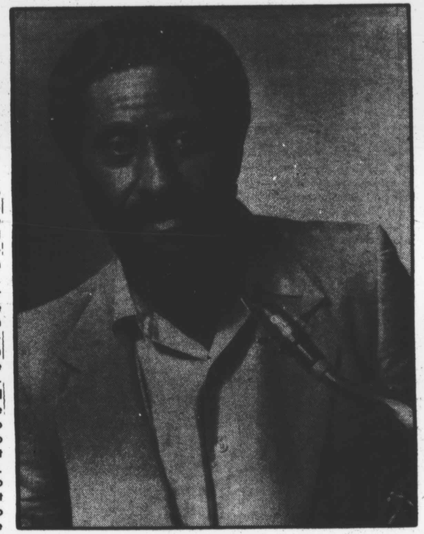
IN PERFORMANCE:

Sonny Rollins: Unpredictable and different

By Frederick I. Douglass

Sonny Rollins, the iconclastic, brilliant tenor saxophonist whose 1962 recording "The Bridge" remains more solid than the Rock of Gibraltar as a benchmark Jazz virtuosō performance, will be coming to Morgan State University on September 21 to play his first Baltimore concert in a decade plus a few years.

Describing how he came to record "The Bridge," Mr. Rollins says "when I first came on the Jazz scene during the 1950's, I was really travelling in fast company, you know, playing with Miles Davis, Fats Navarro, J. J. Johnson, Art Blakey and other musicians who had a lot more schooling and experience than I. I was young, but I was learning horn fast by playing with these cats every night. I've always been a self taught musician and I soon realized that I had to drop off the scene for a while to woodshed if I was going to achieve the level of musicianship that I was striving for. So I went incognito for awhile in 1959. Because I didn't want to disturb my neighbors in the apartment building where I lived, I used to practice at night on the Williamsburg Bridge in New York City. It was my secret for about a year or so and I had a great time practicing there because I could play as loud as I wanted to and try all kinds of experiments on my horn. Anyway, when I returned to the music scene in 1961, I continued playing just like I did on the Williamsburg Bridge, only with the accompaniment of other musicians. So what you hear on my album "The Bridge" represents all the things that were stored up inside me from 1957 until I recorded the album in 1962."



SONNY ROLLINS

While "The Bridge" is a quintessentially fascinating recording, it represents a mere fraction of the vitally important sessions by Sonny Rollins that have been committed to vinyl. Prior to his "early retirement" in 1959, Rollins waxed major LPs like "Worktime," "Dig" with Miles Davis, an LP with the Modern Jazz Quartet, and the revolutionary "Freedom Jazz Suite, an incomparable recording that features Sonny with only drums and bass, an instrumental configuration that was unusual for that day and age.

Reminiscing about his work during the 1950's, Mr. Rollins says "it was really a mind expanding experience working with cats like Clifford Brown, Max Roach and John Coltrane — especially Coltrane because we had a lot of opportunities to bounce our ideas off each other when we worked with Miles. Coltrane was a helluva saxophonist and I keep his music inside me along with that of other saxophonists like Ben Webster, Lester Young and Coleman Hawkins whom consider to be my major influences. But I always think about "Tenor Madness," a song that I recorded with Coltrane back in 1956 on a date that included Red Garland on piano, Paul Chambers on bass and Philly Joe Jones on drums. We just cooked and had a good time on that recording, trying four bar riffs at the end of the song and also stretching out on long solos that really gave us a chance to explore our horns."

During the thirty - plus years that Sonny Rollins has been on the Jazz scene, one of his primary claims to fame has been his innovative, relentless exploration of the technical and timbral possibilities of the tenor sax. Following up his LP "The Bridge" with an album entitled "Our Man in Jazz" which he recorded in 1963, Sonny further established himself as a rival of John Coltrane for heavyweight championship of Jazz saxophonists. This recording featured the throbbing bass lines of Bob Billy Higgins, the pulsating percussion of Billy Higgins, and the increasingly avant garde, frenetic cornet playing of Don Cherry, who were led by Mr. Rollins on incredibly spontaneous, improvisatory rampages through his now classic compositions "Oleo" and "Doxy." Completely unhampered by the choral dictates of a piano, these four master musicians meandered freely in and out of key signatures, soloing individually and collectively, while delivering impressive performances on their respective instruments.

"East Broadway Run Down," another vintage Rollins' LP, is particularly interesting because it teams Sonny up with bassist Jimmy Garrison and drummer Elvin Jones, the famed rhythm section of saxophonist John Coltrane's group, and Freddie Hubbard, one of the most daring trumpeters around during those tumultuous musical days. Rollins seemed to find it fun to work with his rivals drummer and bassist, but managed never to be overpowered by this dynamic duo. Humorously quoting from Coltrane's solos and then returning securely to his own well established musical ego, Rollins gently coerced Messrs. Jones and Garrison to play his game on the recording while challenging Freddie Hubbard to play to 100 percent of his gigantic abilities.

Moving into the 1970's, Rollins began working with a new group of young innovators that had emerged including Patrice Rushen, Bellie Cobham and Bill Summers on "The Way I feel;" George Duke, Paul Jackson and Tony Williams on "Easy Living;" Mtume, Raul de Souza, and Bennie Maupin on "Nucleus;" and he also recorded a very special reunion album with Donald Byrd entitled "Don't Stop The Carnival." During the 1930's, Sonny Rollins' music has shown an increasing Latin, Calypso influence. He explains this by saying "my mother was from the Virgin Islands and I heard a lot of this kind of music in my home and at events my mother used to take me to. So now its coming out of me; you might say I'm going back to my roots, especially on 'Sunny Days, Starry Nights,' my latest album."

Joining Sonny for his concert at Morgan State University will be Clifton Anderson, trombone; Mark Soskin, keyboards; Russell Blake, electric bass; and Tommy Campbell, drums, some of the musicians who can be heard along with the energetic saxophonist "Sunny Days, Starry Nights. Describing what listeners can expect to hear at this Morgan State concert, Sonny Rollins says "I really don't know yet, but I will when I get on stage." He adds "I like to reserve the right to do something different," giving a dash of credibility to the hundreds of stories about his unpredictability which have become part of Jazz lore.

But one thing that can be predicted with considerable certainly is that Sonny Rollins' concert at 7:30 p.m. on Friday, September 21 at Morgan State University will be one of the major cultural events of the year for Marylanders.

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