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BLACK HISTORY MONTH

WITH A BIG GIVE-A-WAY DRAWING AND QUIZ

EVERY WEEK

You have a chance to win a FREE COLOR T.V., PERSONAL COMPUTER, MICROWAVE OVEN, and many other valuable prizes. If your entry blank is drawn and you answer one or more simple questions about Black History. THREE AWARDS WILL BE MADE EACH WEEK. Monday, March 12, 1985 will be the final drawing. (A Total of Four Drawings) Enter as many times as you wish.

HISTORY AND CULTURE QUIZ

ANSWER ONE OR MORE QUESTIONS CORRECTLY TO QUALIFY FOR THE WEEKLY DRAWING—(MARK THE CORRECT ANSWER)

Question A: The first Black man to win the Nobel Peace Prize (1950)
Answer: ☐ Martin Luther King ☐ Ralph Bunche ☐ Desmond Tutu

Question B: Which African leader claimed to be a descendant from King Salomon
Answer: ☐ Kwame Nkrumah ☐ Julius Nyerere ☐ Haile Selassie

Question C: Black athlete who won 4 Gold Medals in the 1936 Olympics held in Germany
Answer: ☐ Paul Robinson ☐ Wilma Rudolph ☐ Jessie Owens

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Damon Evans

Showtime

Ida M. Peters

What's Happening

Damon Evans wins $10,000

By Ida Peters

Two big things have happened to Baltimore-born Damon Evans recently. First he performed at a black tie competition at the Kennedy Center and won a $10,000 study grant from the National Institute for Music Theatre. His prize was presented by Miss Leontyne Price and Tony Randall the host.

He sang "There's A Boat Leaving for New York" from "Porgy and Bess". Damon you will remember from his early role on TV as Lionel on "The Jeffersons."

The second big thing happening in Damon Evans life is his role as Harriett Tubman's brother Benji in the Virginia Opera Association's world premiere of Thea Musgrave's "Harriett, The Woman Called Moses."

The opera written in honor of the Virginia Opera Association's tenth anniversary will be performed in Norfolk, Va. on March 1 at 8 p.m.

It will be broadcasted locally Sunday, March 3 at 2:30 p.m. on WBJC, 91.5 FM. The opera will be repeated March 3-10 at the Norfolk Center Theatre.

The opera will open in Richmond Sunday, March 15 at the Virginia Center for the Performing Arts.

Cynthia Haymon has role of Harriett; Alteouise DeVaughn of Washington, Rit, Harriett's mother; Ben Holt, Josiah and Jay Willoughby, Old Master.

"Harriett, The Woman Called Moses," will travel to London's Royal Opera House later this year.

Damon told the AFRO that he auditioned for "Porgy and Bess" now sold out at the Metropolitan Opera House in New York but that he felt that "Harriett" was a much more meaningful story. He has been in rehearsal since January in Norfolk and the last time he was in Baltimore was New Year's when he came home to bury his grandfather, Charles Evans.

He is the son of Richard Evans, the retired laboratory technician at the Veteran's Hospital and Mrs. Berteal Matthews, now living in New York. His grandparents are Mr. and Mrs. Mayon Matthews.

During 1984 he resumed his studies at the Juliard School in New York. He is going to use his study grant to work with his teacher Marlena Malas in New York. Later this year, he has the role of Sportin' Life in "Porgy and Bess" to be presented at the Glydebourne Festival in England. He hopes to study in Italy in 1986.

'Sing, Mahalia Sing' tour announced

A press conference was held Feb. 20 in New York City at Carnegie Tavern to announce the production and national tour of George Faison's "Sing, Mahalia, Sing", a new musical about gospel legend, Mahalia Jackson. Producers Rev. Dr. Louis G. Bond formerly of Baltimore; Marty Bronson and Tad Schnugg were present, along with the show's star, Jennifer Holliday; director George Faison; and musical director Richard Smallwood, who performed selections from the show. Carnegie Tavern, a popular restaurant behind Carnegie Hall, was chosen for the reception in honor of Miss Jackson's many annual concerts on that famous concert stage. "Sing, Mahalia, Sing" will open at Philadelphia Shubert Theatre on March 18 then Baltimore, and travel to 11 other cities during its tour.

"We're delighted that Jennifer Holliday has agreed to re-create the musical power and personal majesty of the great Mahalia Jackson," said Louis Bond, who also explained that the producers had delayed production for Miss Holliday to complete recording and concert tour commitments. "There is no other performer today," he said, "who could do Mahalia justice."

Jennifer Holliday came to prominence in the 1979 Broadway production of "Your Arms Too Short To Box With God." She was only 18 years old and had previously been a soloist with the nationally renowned Pleasant Grove Baptist Church Choir in Houston. Two years later she again took Broadway by storm as the talented and determined Effie in "Dreamgirls." Miss Holliday won a Tony for Best Actress in a Musical and a Grammy for her show-stopping solo, "And I'm Telling You I'm Not Going." She has recorded two albums for Geffen Records, 1983's "Feel My Soul", for

Jennifer Holliday

Glenn Jones

which she received a Best Female VocalistR&B Grammy nomination, and "Say You Love Me," which will be released this Spring. "Sing, Mahalia, Sing" is her first theatrical project since "Dreamgirls."

George Faison, the acclaimed director - choreographer, won Tony and Drama Desk Awards in 1975 for his choreography and musical staging of the Broadway blockbuster, "The Wiz," and was nominated for a Tony in 1983 for his choreography of "Porgy and Bess" at Radio City Hall. His musicals "Apollo, Just Like Magic" and "Tilt" were hailed by the critics and he is now being praised for his work in the new film, "Cotton Club."

"Sing, Mahalia, Sing," will blend some of Mahalia's most famous songs with original material by gospel master Richard Smallwood. The show will span the gospel queen's life from New Orleans laundress to international star. It portrays the depth of faith and scope of talent which defined Mahalia Jackson's life and career.

Supporting Holliday is a cast of more than 20, including Glenn Jones and gospel greats Lynette Hawkins (of the famous Hawkins Singers), The Richard Smallwood Singers and Brother John Sellers. Sellers, now an established gospel singer in his own right, was Mahalia Jackson's godson, often termed by Mahalia "my surrogate son." Sellers lived and travelled with Miss Jackson for many years and, in addition to his role is research consultant for the production.

Musical director Richard Smallwood has, for the past seven years, been the guiding force behind the Richard Smallwood Singers. Their first album held sway for 57 weeks on Billboard's Gospel chart and their most recent album, "Psalms," was No. 1 on this chart for 14 weeks and was nominated for a Grammy this year. The Howard University graduate has been honored by the Smithsonian Institution as a gospel innovator and songwriter.

In 1983 he accompanied Leontyne Price during a command performance for President Reagan. In addition to creating original music and lyrics for "Sing Mahalia, Sing" as well as providing musical direction, Mr. Smallwood has created all vocal arrangements.

The producers have assembled a stellar creative team to make the show a gala tribute to Mahalia and a soul-stirring entertainment. Costumes are by Nancy Potts, sets by Tom McPhillips and lighting by Tom Skelton. Smallwood's original music has been meshed with a strong, history-filled book by Faison.

MAHALIA JACKSON, the granddaughter of slaves and the daughter of a longshoreman - barber preacher, was born in New Orleans in 1911. From childhood, Mahalia secretly and passionately listened to the jazz and blues artists of her day (Bessie Smith was her idol and a great influence), but attention to "sinful" popular music was discouraged by the devout aunt who raised her.

By the time Mahalia moved to Chicago in 1927, she had been singing in church choirs for 11 years. She became a soloist at Chicago's Greater Salem Baptist Church and sang with a gospel quintet, The Johnson Singers. By the mid-1930's she had her own hairdressing and flower businesses, had invested in real estate and had made her first record for Decca. Her solo career began in 1941 and by 1950 she was a smash success in Europe and began to achieve recognition at home. The next 22 years took Mahalia across the country and around the world as the greatest gospel success America has ever produced.

Mahalia Jackson served as a valued Good Will Ambassador, entertained royalty, performed at President Kennedy's inauguration and even outshone Martin Luther King, Jr. at the 1963 March on Washington. She was generous to charity and active in the civil rights movements all her life. At the time of her death in January, 1972, she was one of the most beloved and respected women in America.

The Best of Yahya at Eubie Blake Center

Jazz musician Abdu-Raschid Yahya will be featured in "The Best of Yahya" Sunday, Feb. 24, at the Eubie Blake Cultural Center of Baltimore, 409 N. Charles St. The performance begins at 3 p.m.

The concert will highlight Mr. Yahya's most popular original compositions and focus on the art of improvisation. His appearance is sponsored by the Urban Services Cultural Arts Program with support from the Maryland State Arts Council.

Mr. Yahya is a veteran of over 30 years of musical experience as a teacher, pianist, composer and arranger. He has worked in the house rhythm sections of such clubs as Peyton Place in Baltimore; and the Bohemian Caverns in Washington, D.C.; as well as various concert and club sites in Detroit and New York. His experience includes performances with: Jimmy Heath, Clifford Joran, Marcus Belgrave. Salley Blair, Roy Brooks, Frank Foster, Tommy Turrentani, Stevie Wonder, The Temptations, Chuck Jackson and many other giants in the music industry.

Abdu-Raschid Yahya

In 1979, Abdu-Raschid Yahay received one of six "individual fellowships" from the Delaware State Arts Council, to perform his original composition, "American - Afro Brazilian Experience" at Wilmington's Grand Opera House.

Currently, he is the Director of the Creative Artists Music Ensemble.

For additional information and reservations call 396-1300.

CELEBRITIES

Arriving at Radio City Music Hall Feb. 16 for the dress rehearsal for "Night of 100 Stars," to benefit the Actor's Fund, are Billy D. Williams and Geoffrey Holder.

The soundtrack album from the upcoming Highgate Motown Production film, "The Last Dragon," is due out Feb. 22, a month in advance of the pic's release.

First single is DeBarge's "Rhythm of the Night" (also included on their new LP of same name); other performers on the soundtrack include Stevie Wonder, Smokey Robinson, Rockwell, the Temptations, Syreeta, Charlene, Willie Hutch, Alfie and Vanity.

Vanity in new Motown pic "The Last Dragon."

Vanity, who has the female lead in the pic, is reportedly the only cast member who sings on screen. If the feature is successful, it could give a boost to her debut solo album, "Wild Animal," currently hovering in the top 40 on the black contemporary charts.

Male lead of the martial arts film, spiced with a little magic and a love story, is Taimak, a black belt karate instructor from New York in real life.

Other topliners of the picture include Julius J. Carry 3d, and Leo O'Brien. Louis Venosta and Suzanne de Passe wrote the screenplay from a story by Venosta.

"The Last Dragon," to be distributed by Tri-Star, was directed by Michael Schultz and produced by Rupert Hitzig, with Motown helmer Berry Gordy listed as exec producer.

Previous music-oriented pics in which either Gordy or Motown have been involved include three Diana Ross-starrers, "Lady Sings The Blues," "Mahogany" and "The Wiz."

Tri-Star plans to roll out "The Last Dragon" nationally March 22, according to a spokesperson.

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Morgan Fairchild portrays a beautiful but ruthless terrorist, and Billy Dee Williams, Merlin Olsen and Joseph Bottoms play a team of highly trained transport agents in "Time Bomb", a suspense-packed drama about a hijacking attempt on an armored vehicle carrying nuclear fuel. The film will be rebroadcast on NBC Movie of the Week, March 1.

Using her beauty to allure a government agent, the stunning Rene DeSalles steals vital identification codes for a highly-technology super-transport vehicle from him and then coldly murders him. She and her band of terrorists plan an elaborate hijacking attempt, complete with a mock-up of the armored truck, which will be carrying deadly nuclear weapons-grade plutonium across Texas.

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Rowena Harris has been named Vice-President, Promotion, Urban Contemporary - Black Music Division, PolyGram, it was announced by Jack Kiernan, Executive Vice President of the label. Ms. Harris was formerly National Director of Promotion for PolyGram's Urban Contemporary - Black Music Division.

Rowena Harris, new vice-president at PolyGram.

Lynn Swann will serve as expert commentator when ABC Sports begins its 1985 coverage of the United States Football League. ABC's coverage of the USFL begins Sunday, Feb. 24, when the N.J. Generals visit the Birmingham Stallions.