AT THE AUCTION

Licensed black auctioneer says there is nothing like it

By Tea Monier
AFRO Staff Writer

At first glance it would appear that many are just browsing through a warehouse full of used items, old chairs, slightly worn Oriental rugs, and beveled glass mirrors. A closer inspection reveals that most have pen and paper in hand, jotting down numbers and descriptions of items in such a way as to limit any peeking on their paper. And the excitement starts. The auction begins.

Auctions are fascinating affairs. Electricity can be felt rippling through the air as everyone waits to get the good bargain at the lowest possible bid. People glance at their papers, then the items on the floor checking to see that nothing has been overlooked and every bargain is accounted for.

When the auctioneer begins, everybody listens.

"Lot number four is a working 19 inch color television . . . any bid will start the bidding," declares Barr Harris owner of Harris Auction Gallery on Howard Street.

"Twenty dollars," comes the response from one anxious buyer.

"Twenty-two fifty," another shouts back.

"Twenty-five," yells a third party as the bidding begins to take on frantic pace.

"Twenty-five, twenty-five, do I hear twenty-seven fifty?" queries Harris, almost singing.

"Twenty-seven fifty here," yells Dave, a Harris auction assistant.

As Skip and Dave rush hurriedly through the crowd identifying bids and displaying products for sale, the question arises; how many blacks take advantage of auction sales and even more importantly, how many blacks are themselves licensed auctioneers?

The answers to those questions are very interesting.

The first question on how many blacks take advantage of auction sales in Baltimore City is an easy one to answer: not enough. This writer estimates that of the 50 or so people attending the Harris mid-week auction, only two or three were black.

Of the nearly half - dozen auctions attended by this writer over the past three months blacks consistently made up a very small portion of those waiting to take advantage of some very big sales. Why so few blacks take advantage of auction sales is definitely a topic worth exploring at another time.

On to the second question of how many blacks are licensed auctioneers in the State of Maryland the answer is short and sweet. There is only one licensed black in the entire state of Maryland certified to be an auctioneer, and he loves his profession but says more blacks should be involved.

"Auction sales are good places to buy," confirms John McKay, 45, Maryland's only licensed black auctioneer. "Periodically I do see blacks attending auctions, but there could be more if they would just read the papers."

McKay, who is currently working out of his office until he identifies a suitable location to set up shop in northwest Baltimore, says in all of the years he has been involved in the auctioning profession even before being licensed in 1982, he has knowledge of only one other black involved in professional auctioning.

"One reason is the availability of the education end of it," McKay added while explaining why so few blacks are professionally involved in auctions.

"There are several schools in the U.S. but most are in the South and Midwest. Until recently, there wasn't one here in the state. But another reason is, I guess, we just aren't auction oriented or our parents weren't into it."

The undismayed by sparse black participation in the auction process, McKay says he loves his profession and is totally fascinated by it.

"The method of selling, the bid calling, the way people respond to the bid calling...It's all in the excitement of the sale."

John McKay, Maryland's only licensed black auctioneer makes the gestures that auctioneers are known for. 'Sold' he says as the bidding draws to a close. Although McKay currently has no permanent building that he works out of he says he is scouting a facility in northwest Baltimore and should be opening some time in the near future.

Student Government Association officers at Villa Julie College are left to right Susan Mitchell, corresponding secretary; Mary Carol Brennan, recording secretary; and Monica Melton, president.

Coppin honors Russell, McGowan for fund-raising

Nearly 500 community members and alumni of Coppin State College gathered in the school's Tawes College Center last Friday night to attend the 2nd Annual Scholarship Fund Dinner.

This well - attended affair began with a most enjoyable social hour, starting at 6:30.

A delicious assortment of appetizers and refreshments including cheese, crackers, cold cuts, fruits, tropical punch, and white wine was served.

It was a lively and delightful occasion full of happy talk and old friends. As the evening progressed, the affair worked its way to the center's main ballroom on the second floor where dinner was served.

The dinner included a choice of baked chicken or pot roast, cheese potatoes, and salad. Musical entertainment was provided by the Bob Smith Trio.

The program began with comments from Joseph Bracy, chairman of the school's Development Foundation Program. The Rev. James E. Power gave the invocation which was followed by greetings and introduction of the honorees, George Mc Gowan and Judge George Russell, Jr.

After a musical interlude, Mrs. Flossie Dedmond gave a brief presentation on the honoree before introducing the keynote speaker, Schools' superintendent Alice Pinderhughes.

"We the members of the community must work diligently to keep schools like Coppin alive. By doing so we are assured that future generations will be well-trained and competent in dealing with the problems that plague us today," stated Mrs. Pinderhughes in her keynote address.

She continued, "We need leaders, humanists, thinkers, and creators. Coppin is an institute that fulfills the needs of our community."

At the conclusion of Dr. Pinderhughes address, Development Foundation Awards for distinguished public service were represented to George Mc Gowan, president of Baltimore Gas and Electric, and Judge George L. Russell, chairman of Coppin State Colleges 1984 Annual Fund Campaign and Board Chairman of the Harbor Bank of Maryland.

Charles Wright, vice president of Institutional Advancement at Coppin, said, "Any school interested in being around 25, 50, or 100 years into the future should be very sophisticated in its methods of fundraising. In my opinion, direct person to person solicitation is the most effective means. If you are going to go after hundreds of thousands of dollars, you cannot afford to waste your time on small nickel and dime operations."

"We are honoring Mr. Mc Gowan because his company is one of the largest supporters of our fundraising efforts in terms of scholarship support and in-kind services. We're glad that BG&E believes in helpng institutions that provide resources for the community. However, without Mr. McGowan's approval, it would be impossible for us to receive the kind of cooperation from BG&E that we have," Wright told the AFRO.

Explaining Coppin's choices for honorees, Mr. Wright further stated, "We honor Judge George Russell because he chaired the first fund raising campaign that the school embarked on. This took place last year. It was very successful. Also Judge Russell continues to do whatever he can to uplift Coppin.

As the evening continued, scheduled, Mr. Wright spoke highly of Coppin and its curriculum. He stated, "Although Coppin is still thought of largely as a teacher education college, we have outstanding programs in Management Science, Nursing, and Pre-Engineering."

He continued, "Coppin is the most well-kept secret in Baltimore. Here a caring, competent, and talented staff of professionals takes students and moves them to a level of sophistication and preparedness as far as the community is concerned. Also the caliber of Coppin students is constantly being enhanced."

Coppin president Dr. Calvin Burnett and Dr. Carl Adair, Development Foundation chairman gave final remarks as the evening came to c ulose with music by the Bob Smith trio.

Salute to Vernon Gray

A champagne brunch to salute Councilman C. Vernon Gray, chairperson of the Howard County Council will be held, at the Turf Valley Country Club on Sunday, May 5 from 12:00 noon to 3:00 p.m.

The salute is a tribute to Councilman Gray's dedication and work on behalf of the citizens of Howard County. Dr. Gray, a Morgan State professor, has been an active and concerned citizen of Howard County for 11 years and a member of the Howard County Council for the past two and one-half years.

Tickets for the affair are $25 per person (tax deductible) and are available by calling Joe Wagner at 992-5724 or Frank Turner at 997-3115. Tickets will also be available at the door.

Armed Forces Day Celebration

ABERDEEN PROVING GROUND, MD. – One of the more popular and crowd pleasing events of the annual Armed Forces Day Open House to be held Saturday, May 11, at Aberdeen Proving Ground, is the live firing and equipment demonstration.

The latest and most sophisticated Army equipment and weapons, along with some tried and tested equipment in Army's inventory, will be displayed and demonstrated for the public.

From 9 a.m. until 5 p.m., dozens of events and activities are scheduled to accommodate the various interests of the thousands who will visit the proving ground.

The demonstration on APG's main front firing range will provide the public with a close - up look at new and improved military hardware being tested by the Combat Systems Test Activity. Tracked vehicles, such as tanks and armored personnel carriers, machine guns, rifles and the new family of Army trucks will be made available for public viewing.

The highlight of the event will be the formidable M1 Abrams tank demonstrating its mobility and firepower. The much acclaimed Abrams, moving at speeds up to 45 mph, will traverse a specially prepared mobility course. The awesome fire power of the tank includes a 105mm main gun and three machine guns, one of which is located at the Commander's station.

Another featured attraction will be the Army's new family of trucks including the M923 cargo truck and the Heavy Expanded Mobility Tactical Trucks (HEMTT).

The M923 cargo truck is equipped with single radial tires which improve mobility under adverse traction conditions.

The HEMTT is an eight-wheeled - drive, 10 - ton truck designed to negotiate the toughest cross - country terrain. A two - speed transfer case allows the truck to be geared for both high speed highway use or low speed, off - road use. There are five models of the HEMTT.

Scheduled to be displayed is the M247 Sgt. York Division Air Defense Gun system. The system is composed of four sub systems, the armament, radar - directed fire control, turret, and chassis. The Sgt. York is currently undergoing initial production testing.

The M109E4 is a prototype of the improved 155mm self - propelled howitzer. The M109E4 features an inertial navigation system which continually displays the howitzer's ground location in numerical coordinates.

Another scheduled attraction is the M992 Field Artillery Ammunition Support Vehicle (FAASV). The FAASV provides an automatic ammunition conveyor system, increased ammunition payload capacity and an auxiliary power unit that supports both the howitzer and ammunition vehicle while in a battery position.

SALUTE MOM ON MOTHER'S DAY

Win An Orchid For Your Mother

Do you want to bring a smile to her face and happiness into her heart? If so, write in 100 words or less why you think your mother (or the mother figure in your life) deserves this honor.

Send entries to Salute Mom, AFRO-AMERICAN, 628 N. Eutaw St., Baltimore, Md. 21201. All entries will be judged on the basis of the exceptional qualities of "Mothering" which you point up in your entry that your mother or mother figure has exhibited.

Entries must be postmarked not later than Monday, May 6th.

In addition to the top prize, General Foods is giving surprise awards to the next 10 best letters.

So hurry! Get your entry in.

Mail to: *Salute Mom*
AFRO-AMERICAN NEWSPAPERS
628 N. Eutaw St.
Baltimore, Md. 21201

Morgan Choir at Meyerhoff

The Morgan State University Choir, under the direction of Nathan Carter and assisted by members of the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra will close out its 1984-85 season with the seventh annual benefit concert at the Meyerhoff Symphony Hall, Sunday, May 5, at 8 p.m. Also to be featured with the choir as guest soloist is the celebrated soprano, Henrietta Davis, from San Francisco.

The Meyerhoff concert comes on the heels of the Choirs' two command performances on the Island of Bermuda over the Easter weekend. Singing to standing room only audiences, the Bermudians are already requesting annual visits from the Morgan State University Choir.

Earlier this year, the Choir were guests of the Oakland Symphony in California where they performed "Scenes From the Life of a Martyr" by Undine Moore to the memory of Dr. Martin Luther King, Henrietta Davis was soprano soloist on this occasion and made such a hit with the choir and concertgoers that she was invited to show off her artistry to our East Coast audience by director Carter.

Before going to California, the Choir performed "Scenes" with members of the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra at Turner Auditorium, Johns Hopkins Hospital, prompting critics to write a glowing account of the presentation under the headline "Morgan Choir Honors King with Vere, Vitality."

True to the versatility of the Choir, 30 of its members joined Patti LaBelle at the beginning of the season in the closing scene of her show at the Lyric Theatre, November, 1984. It was one of the most electryfying moments in the already power - packed evening of entertainment.

Meyerhoff goers for the Morgan Choir will hear a variety concert ranging from Bach to Pop and gospel.

Cantata No. 190A, Johann Sabastian Bach.

Messiah (Part III), George F. Handel.

Popular Gospel and Spirituals.

Symphonic Choruses highlighting "We Shall Behold Him" as sung by Sandi Patti.

The Choir is being jointly sponsored by the Baltimore Urban League and The President's Committee for the Morgan State University Choir.

Henrietta E. Davis

Nathan Carter, Conductor of Morgan State University Choir.

Showtime

Ida M. Peters

What's Happening

'Real Thing'...stupidity made coherent?

"The Real Thing" is a heart-breakingly funny, absolutely brill ant play about the foibles of modern love and marriage. It is a play of unusual wit, loaded with provocative ideas and rich language, and one of the most moving plays about contemporary relations ever wri tten. Brian Bedford, familiar to Baltimore audiences from such plays as "Deathtrap," "Whose Life Is It Anyway," "Butley" and "The School For Wives" stars as Henry, a playwright searching for how to feel and write about love. The brilliant director recreates his Tony Award winning staging for "The Real Thing's" national tour.

The above is reprinted from the invitation to First Nighters for the opening of Tom Stoddard's "The Real Thing" direct from a triumphant Broadway run and winner of the 1984 Tony Award, the New York Drama Critic's Circle Award, the Drama Desk and the Outer Critic's Circle Award.

Now either this road company is entirely different from the New York version with Jeremy Irons and Glenn Close or opening night was an off-night because Brian Bedford and Sara Botsford were stunningly boring.

The opening night audience was decidedly cool with only knowledgeable critics laughing in the right places. The average First Nighters were snoozing in their seats. Frankly, I began to question my own sanity and perceptions when we found ourselves in danger of sleeping with a fear of falling in the aisle. And, we're the kind of person who has trouble falling asleep in our own bed. The man in front of us struggled alternately giving in and straightening up.

"The Real Thing" is about Henry (Brian Bedford) a playwright searching not only for how to feel love, but how to write it as well.

The opening scene is the most confusing. Here Max (William McNulty) is accusing Charlotte (Marianne Owen) of infidelity because she was supposed to go on a business trip to Switzerland but left her passport home.

You think this is "the real thing" until later you discover this is a scene from Henry's play. Max is really the first husband to Annie and Marrianne Owen is Charlotte, the first wife to Henry.

Annie makes a play for Henry and finally marries him. She then becomes involved with Brodie (Bennett Liss) a revolutionary who has written a bad play and persuades Henry to fix-it-up.

Somehow, the play within the play never clearly indicates when Henry's plays are being enacted or the characters are presenting their own life stories. Anyway, it seems that Annie is getting it on with both Brodie the revolutionary and the young actor in Brodies' play.

You'll need a blueprint to figure all of this out and we believe that Henry with his brilliance and wordiness forces his wife to flee to other men just to escape his "stupidity made coherent."

The Mechanic-Lyric has had an iffy but successful season this year. "Octette Bridge Club" has not done well on Broadway; "Grind" has been given mixed reviews on Broadway but has been drastically changed since leaving Baltimore. Suggest you read Tom Stoddard's play before going and don't let your "expectations be greater than your realization."

Another viewpoint

by Bob Matthews

'Real Thing'...urbane, witty, obscure

One of the words which cropped up in dialogue during the play is "badinage," which aptly describes a great deal of the interplay between characters in "The Real Thing," which opened at the Mechanic Theatre Tuesday night.

This road company production of the 1984 Tony Award winner, gives ample evidence as to why the play is a winner, despite a comprehension gap.

Devotees of the slick, witty bandinage (that word again) with a satirical bent will revel in the dialogue which ranges from the mildly amusing to the belly - laugh mode.

Those with fixed ideas relating to marriage - divorce - infidelity, not necessarily in that order, will find it difficult to understand the thought processes engendered by the Stoppard characters.

The unflappable character Henry, brilliantly played by Brian Bedford, is challenged for top honors by the character Annie, played by Sara Botsford, who together promulgate infidelity as a happenstance — not a commitment.

Reminiscent of the ancient device used in "The Lady and the Tiger," there is no attempt at resolution of the marriage - infidelity theme — rather, the viewer is left to draw his - her own conclusions.

"The Real Thing" is a play which demands absolute attention and concentration. At the opening night performance, the sound level of the actors and actresses often left you straining to hear.

But what you heard was a richly rewarding foray into the interplay between couples whose emotions are expressed through the subtle phraseology once known as "drawing room language."

For those fortunate enough to have seen the Broadway version of the play which starred Jeremy Irons, they recognize the strength of the characterization of Annie.

She became a believable female who subverted boredom and marital apathy with extra - marital dalliance, all the while having the courage to admit to it.

In all except the final "affair" which remained secret to the audience and to her husband — to some, this was a distraction, but we feel it lent a certain charm to the play.

The production runs for three weeks at the Mechanic Theatre — through May 18. Budding playrights should consider see it an absolute must.

Same goes for looking for an evening of enjoyable theatre. Don't look for a thunderingly profound message — but be prepared to be thoroughly entertained.

CELEBRITIES

Jesse Johnson: guitarist goes solo

With the recent success of guitarist Jesse Johnson, it has become evident that Johnson was one of the key elements that propelled "The Time", to its phenomenal success before disbanding last year. Jesse Johnson is better known to the public as the debonair, suave, high-stepping, lead guitarist of "The Time," that always wore his traditional pink attire. He also co-wrote a succession of their hits, including "Jungle Love" and "The Bird."

Just a few weeks ago, Jesse Johnson released his debut album, **The Jesse Johnson Revue** on A&M Records. Like so many of the Price & the Revolution clan, Jesse was considered a fallout of the Prince subculture. There was Jimmy Jam, Andre Simone, Vanity, Appolonia, Morris Day, and now Jesse. But like the old cliche says, The Cream Always Rises to the Top. In just three short weeks, Jesse's debut album "The Jesse Johnson Revue", is No. 1 with the music trade magazine Radio & Records, knocking out Luther Vandross and he has the Top 5 album in Billboard Magazine. With this , his first solo album, he has already sold over 400,000 albums. In addition to his outstanding record success, he has a featured single on the movie soundtrack from "The Breakfast Club," an album that's sure to go gold and an upcoming concert tour with the No. 1 pop singing group, New Edition.

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Columbia is set to release **DREAM OF A LIFETIME** a collection of eight previously-unreleased **MARVIN GAYE** songs. The material has been taken from the album that Gaye was working on before his untimely death along with several tracks that he has recorded over the years and left with his mother.

"Dream of A Lifetime," produced by Marvin Gaye, Gordon Banks and Harvey Fuqua, Gaye's knack for writing and recording songs that make use of a wide cross section of different musical influences, ranging from funky dance tunes to sweeping ballads. A man of contrasts, Gaye's material on this LP deals with a variety of subjects and themes such as the blatant sexuality exhibited in "Savage In the Sack" and "Masochistic Beauty" and the religious overtones of "Life's Opera" (which includes the Lord's Prayer). One of the most moving and uplifting of all the tracks is "Dream Of A Lifetime", where Gaye concluded with the lyrics "I thank God for my wonderful life."

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Country music star **CHARLEY PRIDE** will soon be Dr. Charley Pride. Wheeling College, a Catholic liberal arts school in West Virginia, will award Pride an honorary doctorate in humanities at commencement ceremonies May 11.

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JEFFREY DANIELS, a former Soul Train dancer and original member of the Shalamar singing group has been selected from scores of British-born prospects as the host of the BBC's Channel 4 version of Soul Train. Since leaving Shalamar several years ago, Daniels has made his home in the U.K. and last year made his stage debut in Andrew Lloyd Webber's runaway hit musical "Starlight Express." Daniels played what has been described as an "outrageous" electric train.

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"When you have a friend like **BILL COSBY** going to bat for you, how could you help but be excited?" says the enthusiastic **TONY ORLANDO**, who returns to television after an absence of four years to guest-star on NBC-TV's hit family comedy series "The Cosby Show" (Thursday). The episode, entitled "Mr. Quiet," to be telecast May 2, is the forerunner of a possible NBC series.

Michael Jackson is now pushing a line of stuffed animals bearing the "Michael's Pets" label, and $1.00 from each purchase will be donated to a children's charity.

In Junior Miss Contest

Towanda Cofield, 5, daughter of Edith and Perry Scott of Ardley Avenue has been entered in the Little Junior Miss Maryland contest to be held at the Holiday Inn International Afrport, Linthicum, Md. Sunday, May 5.

She is an entrant-at-large and attends Sinclair Elementary School. She is a member of New Carmel Star Baptist Church and on the Sunbeam Choir.

She won Sunburst USA Little Miss Photogenic Contest in 1984 and won $200 towards fee to go to the finals in Florida in August of this year.

Towanda Cofield

By Elizabeth M. Oliver

Little Miss Nikia Mona Greene, age 8, a Second Grade pupil at Mt. Washington Elementary School, has the distinction of being chosen as a participant in the 1985 Little Junior Miss America Pageant. She will be in line for the title of Little Junior Miss Maryland.

The Maryland event is scheduled for May 5 at the Holiday Inn, Linthicum, Md.

Nikia is the daughter of Mrs. Marvelee Speaks Greene and member of the Virginia clan which bears the title of "The Largest Black Family in America." Among the descendants is Bill Cosby, the noted TV star.

Miss Nikia Mona Greene
Bill Cosby kin

UMBC Spring Dance Concert

The final UMBC dance concert of this season will feature choreography by students, faculty, and guest artists. The program will have a wide range of styles including modern, jazz and tap on May 17-18, at 8 p.m. at UMBC Theatre.

Featured works: Respighi Suite by New York choreographer Victoria Uris will be performed by the student repertory group.

Moorings by UMBC faculty performed by members of the PHOENIX Repertory Dance PHOENIX Repertory Dance Company (resident company of UMBC) and students.

Journey, a new work by UMBC faculty member Sandra Lacy will premiere.

Also on the program will be two large group works. Jazz II class will perform choreography by Judy Pannebaker, also of the UMBC faculty and there will be another jazz piece by senior student Sylvia Strusa.

Due to limited seating, reservations are suggested. For more information or reservations call 455-2917 weekdays, between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m.