BestBets

SATURDAY, JUNE 1: Rowhouse Bus Tour

Offered in conjunction with the Peale Museum's permanent exhibit, "Rowhouse A Baltimore Style of Living," this tour traces the development of rowhouses from 1800 through 1950 and features over 10 different neighborhoods including Federal Hill, Union Square, Patterson Park, Ednor Gardens, Bolton Hill, Charles Village and Northwood. 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.; $15 for Museum members, $20 for non-members. Tour begins at the Carroll Mansion, 800 E. Lombard Street.

SATURDAY, JUNE 8: Green Mount Cemetery Tour

Johns Hopkins, Enoch Pratt, Theodore McKeldin, Betsy Patterson, William and Henry Walters, and John Wilkes Booth are just some of the famous and infamous Baltimoreans buried in the great landmark. Established in 1838, the cemetery features some of the finest examples in the country of Victorian and post-Victorian funerary moments and tombstones. 9:30-11 a.m. Free to members; $5 per person for non-members.

Ed Williams Big Band to Perform

The Ed Williams Big Band will perform in the Harborplace Amphitheatre, Sunday, June 2nd, from 7-8:30 p.m. as part of the Summer Sunday Concert Series. This popular 1940s genre big band will bring to life favorites by Duke Ellington, Stan Kenton, Woody Herman, and Harry James.

The 17 piece band has been performing continuously since it was locally formed six years ago. In the last year the Ed Williams Big Band has been featured weekly for Friday nights of big band dancing at "Puttin' on the Ritz" at the Baltimore Hyatt Regency. In addition to numerous local engagements, the band has played up and down the East Coast and has toured in Germany twice, representing Baltimore.

The WLIF-FM 102 Summer Sunday Concerts at Harborplace offer free family entertainment every Sunday evening in the amphitheatre at 7:00 p.m. Concerts run through September 22nd.

For more information call 823-1570.

Lexington Market needs talent

Lexington Market is looking for some new talent to fill the upcoming summer entertainment schedule. Baltimore is full of wonderful talent and if you have some let us know about it.

We're looking for jazz, reggae, R&B, classical, dixieland and pop bands; dancers, Mime, magicians, jugglers and children's groups.

For more information please contact Pamela Carrington at 685-6170.

"Nuts" Opens At Source Theatre

The Source Theatre Company is presenting "Nuts" by Tom Topor at the Main Stage, 1809 14th St., N.W. running through May 25. For more information call 202-462-1073.

New JF Theatre Complex Sparkles: But Pryor Fizzles In "Brewster's Millions"

By Frederick I. Douglass

Going to see a brand new movie in a brand new theatre complex can be exciting, especially if the movie is a good one. The experience can be like a first kiss or a first romantic encounter at the most intense level.

Eagerly anticipating seeing the new JF Theatres Five-Star Cinema at Reisterstown Plaza and anxiously awaiting an opportunity to see one of my favorite comedians, Richard Pryor in his new movie "Brewster's Millions," I went to the grand opening of the facility on Wednesday night. While driving up Reisterstown Road, it soon became obvious that a storm was brewing. Just as I pulled in the parking lot at the rear of the shopping center on the northwest side near Caldor's, a torrential downpour engulfed me and my trusty Oldsmobile. However, I soon decided that I would be safer inside the theatre, away from the thunder and lightening.

Venturing inside, I was greeted by Jack Fruchtman, the man whom JF Theatres were named for. The corporation owns the Hippodrome, Mayfair, Rotunda Cinemas, New, Town, Campus Hills, Yorkridge, Jumpers Mall, plus the two original movie theatres inside the mall at Reisterstown Road Plaza. Excited about the fruition of his latest project, Mr. Fruchtman asserted "The opening of these five new theatres will allow us to bring a greater variety of movies to people living inside Baltimore. Of course, Reisterstown Plaza is a regional shopping center and draws people from all over the state, but what is most important is that we have added a major new cultural facility that will be of greatest service to people living in Northwest Baltimore and Pikesville."

The occasion was festive with a Dixieland band playing plus other attractions. There was also wine, cheese, unlimited popcorn, sodas and other munchies for everyone present. Moving inside, I found the lobby of the complex to be attractive and clean, totally unlike many of the downtown theatres.

Realizing that 9:00 PM was rapidly approaching and that "Rambo," "Fletch" and "Brewster's Millions" would soon be flickering on the silver screen, I made my way into one of the cinemas and sat down in one of the chaste, untouched seats and found it to be very comfortable. Nevertheless, I soon found myself squirming in the chair as Richard Pryor's latest movie fizzled before my very eyes.

"Brewster's Millions: An American Excess Story" is a tale about Montgomery Brewster, a relief pitcher on a minor, minor league baseball team who suddenly inherits $30 million. But there is a catch to his inheritance: he must choose between accepting a million dollars in cash, with the rest of the estate being turned over to the executors for disposition to charitable causes, or he can try to spend every penny of the $30 million within thirty days in order to gain the bulk of his grandfather's estate which totals a whopping $300 million.

Opting to try for the $300 million, Montgomery Brewster, played by Richard Pryor, embarks upon a wild spending spree, hiring everyone in sight and making investments of the most bizarre nature. His friends think that he has gone crazy because of his profligate behavior and Brewster is sworn to secrecy about the fact that he must unload all of the money in order to gain his fortune. So they work hard to help him keep his money, much to his chagrin. Adding to Brewster's problem is the grim reality that he seems to have acquired the Midas touch and all of his investments keep making huge profits, despite the fact that he is trying to lose money.

While this story line has the potential of making a hilarious movie, very little laughter was heard in the theatre. The movie fails to gel because Pryor's abilities as a comedienne are not fully utilized, nor does the writer fully explore the humorous possibilities of a story about a man who has to spend so much money in so little time. Furthermore, the directors and producers do not fully use the talents of the other actors appearing in the movie, like co-stars Lonette McKee and John Candy. Perhaps I expected too much because of Richard Pryor being in the film.

Imagine the letdown of going to see a brand new movie in a brand new theatre and getting served television fare.

Arena Players schedule Summer Performances

I. COWBOYS ON A BLITHE FRONTIER by Gary Corbin sponsored by our Readers' Theatre. In this play two businessmen, Orville and Wilbur, begin to see their personal relationship deteriorate due to the death of Wilbur's wife 25 years earlier. In a highly charged, emotional environment, these two friends work to project an image of business as usual so as to prepetuate the firm and their relationship. Internal office politics rear its ugly head, when employees of the firm secretly plot to take power from two aging executives.
Tickets are $8.00 each and the dates are July 5, 6, 7, - 12, 13, and 14.

II. ONE MONKEY DON'T STOP NO SHOW by Don Evans and performed by Washington Showcase Theatre. This production is returning to the Playhouse after a 3 day (sold out) engagement earlier this season. This play is an amusing comedy about a middle class minister and his pretentious wife who refuses to take the responsibility for rearing their niece (daughter of the minister's brother) who inherited a night club. Ticket price is $8.00 and the dates are July 19, 20, 21, - 26, 27 and 28.

III. GOODBYE BLUES by Al Patacca is a musical love story featuring a young couple living in a southern town in the thirties. The husband sings and seizes every opportunity to appear in his home town. One day a paper boy sold him an Afro announcing a contest at the Royal Theatre in Baltimore, Maryland. Some exciting things happen as he tries to enter and win this contest.
For more information call 728-6500.

Marian McPartland At Charlie's Georgetown

Virtuoso pianist Marian McPartland who has an international reputation as one of the most important figures in jazz today will be performing at Charlie's Georgetown through May 25 with show times at 8:30 & 10:30 plus special midnight shows on Friday and Saturday.

Often called the First Lady of Jazz Piano, Marian McPartland is admired for her inventiveness, her sophistication and her personal style of jazz. She is busy with club dates and concerts, performances and instruction in universities across the country, radio, television dates and composition.

This summer she will be performing throughout Europe at major festivals in places like Copenhagen, Holland and Nice.

Last year, her Peabody-Award-winning radio show. **Marian McPartland Piano Jazz**, began its sixth season for National Public Radio.

Marian McPartland has a number of original compositions to her credit, including "In the Days of Our Love," recorded by Peggy Lee, "Twilight World," recorded by Tony Bennett, and "There'll Be Other Times," sung by Sarah Vaughn.

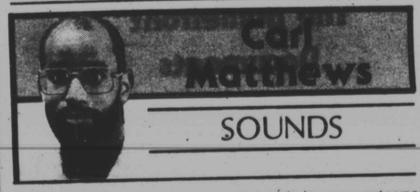
Her music for the educational film, "The Light Fantastic Picture Show," won unanimous praise and a composition award at the Chicago Film Festival.

Marian has recorded for several labels, including her own Halcyon Label. This June marks the release date of her latest album entitled, **Willow Creek and Other Ballads** (Concord). The title song, written by Marian herself as were all of the cuts on the album, was recently recorded by Julius LaRosa.

Friday Plus

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The Reddings

THE REDDINGS
"If Looks Could Kill"
(Polydor)

The Reddings, Otis Redding III, Dexter Redding and cousin Mark Lockett, have their Polydor album debut "If Looks Could Kill," including the recent top-40 R&B hit, "Where Did Our Love Go" (not the old Supremes hit).

You may remember that the Reddings dedicated their 1982 remake of "(Sittin' On) The Dock Of The Bay" to "our father the late great Otis Redding whom we love so dearly" and who hit the charts with such singles as "I've Been Loving You Too Long (To Stop Now)," "Fa-Fa-Fa-Fa-Fa (Sad Song)" and others. Dexter sang lead on the remake of "(Sittin' On) The Dock Of The Bay" which was on their "Steamin' Hot" LP.

The trio, now in their early 20s, first charted with the "Remote Control" single on Believe In A Dream Records.

This LP starts with the upbeat "In My Pants," which sounds like a recent Cameo cut -- perhaps because Cameo's Larry Blackmon produced the track. "Where Did Our Love Go" is the kind of ballad you can trust to set the right mood when you want some relaxing music, even if the opening five notes seem to have been lifted from the Addrissi Brothers' "Never My Love."

The title track has a "new wave" feel thaat is not usually associated with the trio. The mid-tempo rhythm of "Talk's All Over Town" brings out the best in each member's voice.

Other cuts: "Didn't Want To Fall In Love," "Parasite," "I Don't Understand It," "Third Party."

DIZZY GILLESPIE
"New Faces" (GRP)

Jazz fans, especially Dizzy fans, should be quite satisfied with this digitally-mastered LP of seven spicy tracks.

I knew I could count on ol' Diz to bring us another fine disc. The original classic "Salted Peanuts" was recorded long before I was born, but whenever anyone mentions Dizzy, that's the tune I think of first, since the original hit was so much fun.

This latest album finds Gillespie in fine form along with Kenny Kirkland on piano and Branford Marsalis on saxophones.

The album starts and ends strong. Dizzy is warm and getting hotter at the start of the opening cut; by the time "Birk's Works" ends he is hot. Kirkland masterfully backs up the Diz with some great notes, and Robert Ameen on drums also blends in perfectly on "Birk's Works."

Chano Pozo's "Tin Tin Deo" highlights Steve Thornton's spiffy percussion and gives Diz and Branford a chance to show how well they can blow within a variety of rhythmic frameworks, with Ameen presenting almost seamless execution on his drum set of the appropriate tempo changes — here are the kinds of things you should expect from true professionals.



Dizzy Gillespie

The album's final cut, "Every Mornin'," should wake you up with a smile. Judging from the overall sound, a good time was had by all.

Other cuts: "Lorraine," "tenor Song," "Ballad," "Fiesta Mojo."

GRANDMASTER MELLE MEL
"The Mega-Melle Mix"
(Sugar Hill)

This 12-inch single was made for people like me. Grandmaster Flash and Grandmaster Melle Mel have made some of the best rap records around, and I've mentioned before that I have all their hits.

So here's a superbly edited 5-minute mega-mix medley of some of their best tracks, starting off with "Step Off," Mel's rap to the music of "For The Love Of Money," the old O'Jays hit.

"The Message" you're already familiar with; I might mention that it's bleeped on this medley. It segues perfectly into "Beat Street Breakdown."

"New York, New York" was Mel's bite into the Big Apple, as you recall, with all the cleverness of "The Message." "World War III" appeared on the "Grandmaster Melle Mel And The Furious Five" album, and also appears on the other side of this 12-inch, as well as this medley.

Sanny X of London, England did some great mixing on this track which closes with a cleverly cut-up snatch from "It's Nasty (Genius Of Love)." I wouldn't have missed this 12-inch for the world.

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Entertainer Peter Allen Opens the 10-Week Season on June 29.

An all-star season under the stars is set for this summer at the Pier Six Concert Pavilion as the Harborlights Musical Festival, sponsored by WJZ - TV and the City of Baltimore, presents its fifth season of the best in jazz, pop, folk, rhythm and blues, country, rock 'n' roll and symphonic music.

The 13 Harborlights Music Festival is an annual event where the exciting sounds of the country's finest performers and musicians fill the evening air.

The 1985 Pier Six performance schedule at the 3,100-seat open-air pavilion is programmed to be diverse enough to offer "something for everyone" and is affordably priced.

The Pier Six entertainment series will be staged from June 29 through August 28, followed by the fourth annual Baltimore Jazz Festival dedicated to Euble Blake, celebrated August 29 through September 1.

The formidable entertainer, Peter Allen, will literally "kick off" the season on Saturday, June 29 at 8 P.M., and in the 10 weeks to follow. The Manhattan Transfer, the Everly Brothers, Billy Crystal, Smokey Robinson, Gladys Knight and the Pips, and Crystal Gayle, among other major stars, will be featured.

The Baltimore Symphony Orchestra will return for three Sunday evening pops performances, with an "Anchors Aweigh" program and musical tributes to Broadway and the Big Band era. For the first time, there will be special "late shows" added to the performances by Smokey Robinson and Gladys Knight and the Pips. And Baltimore performers will once again be showcased at the Pier with opportunities to participate in the Baltimore Gospel Greats program and the local Jazz Quest.

The spirited sounds of such stars as Melba Moore and The Manhattans (August 24), Bobby Womack and Millie Jackson (July 2), and B. B. King and Bobby "Blue" Bland (August 2) are among some of the double-bill rhythm and blues programs highlighting this season.

Ticket prices for the Pier Six concerts range from $6.50 for lawn seating to $15.00 for reserved seats. Concerts are staged on Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday evenings at 8:00 p.m. unless otherwise noted.

Tickets for both lawn locations and reserved seating under the tent are available now by mail order to: Pier Six Concerts, c/o The Mechanic Theatre Box Office, Hopkins Plaza, Baltimore, MD., 21201. Add $1.00 for handling and enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

The Pier Six Concert Pavilion is located at Pier 6 and Pratt Street along Baltimore's Inner Harbor.

For additional concert information call (301) 837-INFO.

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