THEATRE

'The Fantasticks'

Goucher College's Open Circle Theatre is presenting "The Fantasticks" on Thursday, March 12 through Saturday, March 14 at 8 p.m. in Merrick Hall. Tickets are $3. For more information, call 337-6275.

'Brighton Beach Memoirs'

Essex Community College is presenting "Brighton Beach Memoirs" March 12 to March 21 at the college center theatre. Tickets are $5. For details call 522-1269.

'A Streetcar Named Desire'

The Bureau of Parks and Recreation-Cultural Arts Program is presenting the Catjaws Theatre Company in "A Streetcar Named Desire" at Greenspring Middle School, 4701 Greenspring Ave. at 7 p.m. on March 6 and 7. The show is a benefit for the Cultural Arts Program. Tickets are $6 for general admission and $4 for senior citizens and students. There will be a matinee at 2 p.m. on Saturday, March 7. For more details call 396-0932.

'The Dining Room'

The U.M.B.C. theatre department is presenting "The Dining Room" Thursday, March 5 through Sunday, March 15 in the U.M.B.C. Theatre. Tickets are $6 for general admission and $4 for students and senior citizens. Call 455-2476 for more information.

"Oedipus Rex"

"Oedipus Rex" will be presented at Catonsville Community College for three consecutive weeks. Showtimes are at 8 p.m. and tickets are $4 for general admission and $2 for senior citizens and children. For reservations call 455-4508.

'Love's Labor's Lost'

The University Theatre at The University of Maryland, College Park is presenting Shapespeare's "Love Labor's Lost starting Saturday February 28 and running through March 7. Tickets are $7 for the general public and $5.50 for students and senior citizens. Call 454-2201 weekdays from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. for details.

1840 House

The Baltimore City Life Museum and the Baltimore School for the Arts are presenting "Steps in Time: Scenes from 1840 Baltimore" through May 23. Performances are scheduled Tuesday through Friday at 12:30 p.m. for tours and school groups only and Saturdays at noon, 1, 2 and 3 p.m. for the general public. Call 396-3279 for further details.

'Baby'

Dundalk Community College is presenting the musical "Baby" opening Friday, February 27 and running weekends through March 8. Showtimes are 8 p.m. Friday and Saturday and 3 p.m. on Sunday. Tickets are $7 for general admission, and $6 for senior citizens and $4 for students. For more information call 522-5667.

EXHIBITS

Gallery 409 in the Eubie Blake Cultural Center, 409 N. Charles St. features "Six Women Artists," and exhibit of six Washington, D.C. artists. Opening reception is Thursday, March 5 at 6 p.m. and the exhibit will run March 6 thru March 29. For more information call 396-1300.

DANCE

'Path' dance company

Path, the resident dance company of Peabody Institute, will feature a weekend of dance on March 6 and 7 at 8 p.m. The performances will be held at Goucher College's Kraushaar Auditorium. Tickets are $10 for general admission and $5 for students and senior citizens. For more details call 337-6333.

EVENTS FOR CHILDREN

Kite Making

A kite workshop will be held at Cloisters Children's Museum on March 8 at 1 p.m. Workshops take place at ½-hour intervals from 1 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. There is a $1 materials fee. Admission to the museum is $2 for adults and children over two; $1.50 for senior citizens and free to all members. For more details call 823-2550.

'Rumpelstiltskin'

The Pumpkin Theatre, a performing arts series for children ages four through eleven, is presenting "Rumpelstiltskin' March 6 through March 15. Tickets are $5 and reservations are necessary. For further information call 467-6484.

Film Festival

The Woodlawn Library is hosting a Saturday afternoon film festival on Saturday, March 7 at 1:30 p.m. Admission is free. For more information call 265-7766.

Enoch Pratt Free Library

Monday, March 9

Waverly Branch, 400 East 33rd Street: Film — "Winnie the Pooh and a Day for Eeyore," 10 a.m.

Wednesday, March 11

Central Pratt Library, Wheeler Auditorium, 400 Cathedral Street: Films — "Paddle to the Sea" and "Storm Boy," 3:30 p.m.

Friday, March 13

Brooklyn Branch, 300 East Patapsco Avenue: Film — "Beyond Words: Animal Communication," 1 p.m.

Saturday, March 14

Central Pratt Library, Wheeler Auditorium, 400 Cathedral Street: Films — "Teddy Bear's Ballroom Trip," "The Red Balloon," and "Windy Day," 11 a.m.

SPECIAL EVENTS

'The Magical Fashion Event'

Travis Winkey and Company is hosting the 7th International Designers Show — In Person on Sunday, March 8 at the Palladium, 2900 Liberty Heights Ave. Tickets are $15. For more information call 225-7755.

8K Run

The first annual Meyers Pavilion 8K run will be held on Sunday, March 8 beginning at 9 a.m. The run will begin from the Meyers Soccer Pavilion, 4300 West Bay Ave. in Brooklyn. Entry fee is $8. For more information and to obtain an official entry form, call 882-5455 or 396-3782.

'Expressions 7'

The Baltimore School for the Arts is hosting its annual evening called "Expressions 7." Guests can demonstrate their artistic abilities, and receive lessons from School for the Arts students and faculty. For more information call 277-2222.

Operation Sail

Five vessels of the NATO Standing Naval Force Atlantic will be on display in the Inner Harbor. Ships will be open to the public on March 7, 8, 9 from 1:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. The fleet departs March 12.

To have your event listed, send information at least 2 weeks in advance to:

Happenings This Week
c/o AFRO-AMERICAN
Newspapers
628 N. Eutaw St.
Balto., MD 21201

'Cats' meows in a charming way

By Bob Matthews

"Cats," meowed its way into the Lyric Theatre this week, where it will remain for a 4-week run. And if you expect to see conventional musical theatre—forget it.

This production is a glorious exercise in the fantasy world of music and dance, with no coherent plot, and very little connecting one scene to the next.

And therein lies the charm of the play, for the vignettes are told in song, rather than the spoken word, with production values which shimmer from the opening light blasts, to the closing ascension to that great litterbox in the sky, amidst appropriate pomp and song.

Since "Cats" has played continuously, on Broadway and with several road companies, it is assumed that the theatre-going public is aware of the musical and some of the details.

We make this assumption since more than 2.5 million in advance sales was racked up for this presentation, guaranteeing practically a sold-out run.

There are some remaining seats, however, according toi publicist Wayne Nickel, but they are moving fast, and the SRO sign may be hoisted sooner than you realize.

In brief, the play "Cats" is the musical rendition of some of the poems written by T.S. Eliot in the "Old Possum's Book of Practical Cats" which was published in 1939.

Unless you are familiar with the works of Eliot, understanding some of the names and titles will be difficult. You have to deal with things such as the Jellicle Ball, the Old Gumbie Cat, Old Deuteronomy and Gowltiger's Last Stand along with Skimbleshanks.

Not to worry. The sheer spectacle of the production allows total employment of the proceedings, despite these could-be shortcomings.

The singing voices and dancing in this version is simply stunning. There are no bad voices heard, and the dancing could be classed as classical ballet with modern overtones.

And, there is a definite attempt to get the audience involved in the production. The "cats" patrol the aisles with regularity, unfortunately, there is no center aisle at the Lyric, which rather diminishes the effectiveness of the ploy.

There is no curtain, since in the original production, the set extended over the apron. And during intermission, the audience was allowed to visit onstage, where one of the characters, Old Deuteronomy, remained in place.

Might sound a bit of warning, for when the announcement says the show will resume in 2 minutes—that's exactly when it does, despite the stragglers sauntering back to their seats.

The company will be in place through March 28 at the Lyric Opera House. For additional information, (301) 625-1400.

The weekly entertainment guide for the Baltimore area. Published by the AFRO-AMERICAN NEWSPAPERS group.

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Baltimore, Maryland 21203
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Another point of view on 'Shaka Zulu'

By Trudy Steele

February is set aside as Black History Month and some view it as a time when only positive things about blacks should be reviewed. History is not a chronicle of all good or all bad. It is a mixture of both.

Each year, we see pictures of calendars of the great Kings of Africa. This year through Channel 45, (WBFF-TV) we were able to travel through the life of one of the celebrated kings, Shaka in the film "Shaka Zulu."

Shaka was an illegitimate child and because of that his family suffered countless cruelties and were exiled.

There is a parallel plot of revenge that still holds true in contemporary times. That is, Shaka was treated so badly by his father and kindred that his greatness was destroyed by the revenge that he harbored in his heart.

Shaka's exceedingly great potential as a leader of the Zulu people turned into death and destruction for him as well as his people.

The familiar statement, "there is some good in the worst of us and some bad in the best of us," is a fitting description for Shaka. He believed that an empire was imagined before becoming a reality.

He was an intelligent, powerful king and a military tactitian and he instituted a new method of fighting. The removal of sandals enabled his warriors to travel the terrain much faster.

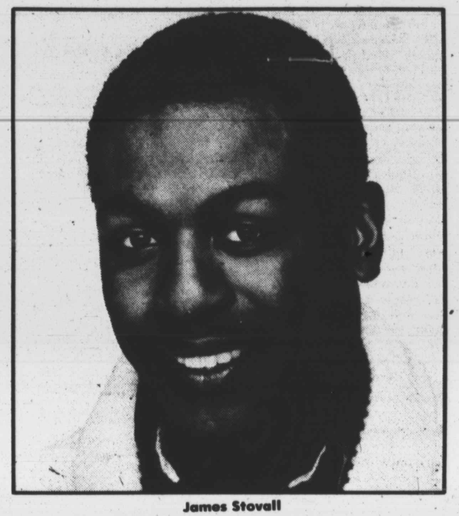
He introduced shorter weapons and larger shields to cover the fighters' entire bodies.

He organized his troops into four combat units, attacking the enemy from the east, west, north and south until they were com-

Continued on page 4

Three Baltimoreans star on Broadway

Starting this week is a three-part series on three Baltimoreans, James Stovall, Andre DeShields and Tranzana Beverly, who are currently appearing on Broadway at the same time. Part I features James Stovall, who is starring in "Sweet Charity."



James Stovall

By Ida Peters

James (Jimmy) Stovall, 27, credits the late Hal Holden, Morgan State University's Joseph Eubanks, Debbie Allen, Uta Hagen, Wendell Whalum of Morehouse College, the Peabody Conservatory of Music and his mother, Ella Stovall for where he is today . . . starring on Broadway as Big Daddy Johann Sebastian Brubeck at the Minskoff Theatre at 45th and Broadway.

"Sweet Charity" is the Bob Fosse musical that won four Tony Awards in 1986 with Debbie Allen. She has been replaced by Ann Reinking of "A Chorus Line" fame and the cast remains the same except for Stovall who joined the cast in November.

Stovall joins a select few of the Baltimore celebrities who have had starring roles on Broadway. And . . . three Baltimoreans are currently starring only blocks apart.

Andre DeShields opened in "Stardust" at the Biltmore February 19 and Tranzana Beverly on March 1, in "Death and the King's Horseman" at Lincoln Center.

Other Baltimoreans were Clarence Muse (1889-1978) co-founder Lafayette Players in "Porgy," "Run Little Chillum;" Avon Long (1910-1980) "Shuffle Along," "Porgy and Bess," "Bubbling Brown Sugar;" Cab Calloway, (1907 -) in "Hello Dolly," and Eubie Blake (1883-1983) who wrote, co-produced and starred in "Shuffle Along" in 1921. Blake also did the score for "Bubbling Brown Sugar" (1976) and the score for "Eubie."

The Baltimore connection played a heavy role in these greasts' lives . . . Clarence Muse, who graduated from old Douglass High School, then the Colored High on Pennsylvania Avenue, credits his music teacher, the late great Llewelyn Wilson; Avon Long and Calloway credit Nellie Buchanan of Douglass High School's Mask and Wig Club and Cab also credits his music teacher, Mrs. Ruth McAbee. Eubie Blake was ahead of his time and Peabody wouldn't accept him.

But James Stovall was blessed with having Ella Stovall as his mother and his first music teacher. She has been head of the Music Department at Carver High School for seven years and in the Baltimore School System for 27 years.

His father, James Stovall, Sr. is retired from the Department of Labor in D.C. Two years ago he received his Master's Degree from Howard University School of Divinity and is now Assistant Minister at their home church, First Baptist Church on Caroline Street in East Baltimore.

"Sweet Charity" is a love story about Charity Hope Valentine (Ann Reinking) a kind-hearted dance-hall hostess. She is looking for the right man who will take her out of the dance hall, won't steal her money and love her forever . . . even have a baby.

She meets up with what looks like a good prospect (Stovall) in an elevator at the 92nd Street Y and they end up at the Rhythm of Life Church.

Jimmy started playing Bid Daddy in December, 1986 when Irving Lee, who originated the role, left the cast. Stovall landed the role through director-choreographer Bob Fosse.

He was a standby in "Fosse's Big Deal," a short-lived show that ran on Broadway last Spring and closed in June.

Stovall attended Gwynns Falls Elementary School and the Gilman School where he was a member of the Glee Club and president of their drama club.

He took singing under Redmond Finney and Robert Merrill. He spent ten years in piano and composition at Peabody Conservatory of Music.

Backstage in his private dressing room, Stovall told us he met Debbie Allen when she was a student at Howard University when she came to Morgan State University to teach in Joseph Eubanks' Urban Musical Theater. She was his first dance coach and he, was about 12.

He played in Eubanks' "Billy No Name" and at Center Stage in "The Me Nobody Knows."

He attended Morehouse College in Atlanta where he has only seven hours more to go for his degree. He traveled with the Morehouse Choir and sang for President Jimmy Carter at the White House. He worked with the Just Us Theater and for the past three years, directed "Black Nativity" at Christmas.

He had the role of the Undertaker in "Porgy and Bess" when the opera was performed by the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra under Robert Shaw.

Stovall has sung the role of Rigoletto in "Rigoletto;" played Nathan in "The Medgar Ever's Story" and did the Damn Yankees Tour with Dick Van Dyke.

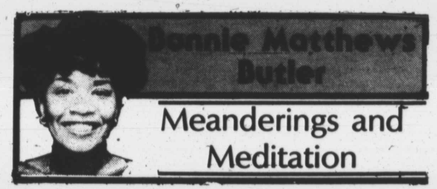
In late 1986 he performed the role of Levi T. Slade in a workshop production of "The Dream Team" by Richard Wesley (he wrote Sidney Poitier's "Let's Do It Again") at the Goodspeed Opera House. It's about early black baseball players and stars Cleavon Derricks.

It has a large cast and backers are getting it ready for Broadway. Baltimoreans may get to see it early at a pre - Broadway tryout at the Lyric Theatre.

As to whether he had made any changes in the role of Big Daddy, Stovall says the costume is the same but he has added black leather jeans and an African Kufi hat.

The 5'11" actor - singer stays fit for his seven performances a week by working out, swimming and riding his bike. In his free time he directs a church choir. The Devoe Street Baptist Church in Brooklyn at the 11 a.m. service. He still works at the piano, composing and arranging.

Part II — Backstage With Andre de Shields in "Stardust".



Some weeks it just doesn't pay to get out of bed. Last week, when I wrote the column about leaving the name of the favorite barmaid out of the paper, I figured I'd do another one to make up for the error.

Then, I wrote another column and got the name wrong. So, my apologies to our favorite barmaid of 1986 — **Gloria "Gigi" Jackson.**

* * *

"To Woo or not to Woo?", that is the $64,000 question.

For those of you who want to "Woo," then you must check out the newest nightspot, The Saloon on Baltimore Street in Union Square.

Everybody's favorite bartender, **Will "Woo" Faison,** is back doing what he does best — pouring his famous potent portables for all to admire and enjoy.

"Woo," as he is affectionately known by the many who had crowded the bar during his heyday at The Ritz Nightclub, was in rare form the night we happened by the night spot. (To prove Woo's fame, another nightclub owner was there drinking his famous drinks).

The Saloon is styled in art deco with lots of glass, wood beams and brass.

Montford "Juno" Brown and his partner **George Brown** say that this club (bar) will carry on the tradition set forth by the Ritz.

"This club is the third generation," Juno told us. And he's right, for once inside the place, you immediately get the feeling that you've been here before—and had a ball.

The Saloon, which has only been open for four weeks, promises to be the kind of place one can go without having to worry about being in a "meet market." We'll keep you posted.

* * *

Don't forget the big **Travis Winkey** extravaganza coming this Sunday (March 8) at the Palladium.

Billed as "In Person — The Magical Fashion Event" and having attended previous shows by Travis and Company, I can honestly say that you're in for a really good time at this event.

Plus, Travis will be showing fashions by national and international designers with proceeds going to help sponsor a student majoring in fashion design.

Tickets to the event are $15 and we suggest you make a point to be there. You won't be disappointed.

* * *

I was outraged at the treatment of patrons using the Shake And Bake Center on Pennsylvania Ave. When I went there to attend an affair hosted by "The Pack."

After I was greeted by the sponsors of the event and got ready to go into the rink area, I was told, in the nastiest tone imaginable, that I had to be frisked and searched before I could enter the area.

To add insult to injury, two policemen who were on guard duty, joked about the necessity of these actions.

After I had settled down, I called the manager of the place, Mildred Waker, who informed me that this was necessary because of the guns, knives and other paraphernalia the patrons try to sneak in.

She then went on to tell me about the new changes occurring at Shake And Bake and invited me back to see them. I will, and I'll let you know the results.

In the meantime, whatever happened to treating people like adults and not animals? It may surprise you.