CELEBRITY ROUNDUP

The Academy Awards — 1988
—Still Too White

By Ida M. Peters

Q. I am having trouble finding tapes of black movies. There is one in particular called "Sophisticated Gents." One of the stars was Robert Hooks.

T.L. WARE
Robbins, ILL.

A. We called Erol's toll free number 1-800-53 EROLS and their computer shows that "Sophisticated Gents" is not on Video tape.

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Q. Help! I am 14 and writing an assignment in school on Oprah Winfrey. Where can I write to her? Thanks for the two books mentioned in your February, 1988 issue.

TIFFANY KENDRICK
Rowland Heights, Calif.

A. You may write the Oprah Winfrey Show, 190 N. State Street, Chicago, ILL. 60601.

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Q. Patti LaBelle is my favorite singer. I would like to know when is her birthday. To settle a bet, I say she is under 50.

R.L. LEWIS
Kansas City, Mo.

A. Patti was born in Philadelphia, Oct. 4, 1944. You win. She's 43.

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Q. Was the Brook Benton who just died in April one of the Peay's from South Carolina? Weren't his biggest hits with Dinah Washington?

PARRIS BLAIR
Baltimore, Md.

A. Brook Benton was born Benjamin Franklin Peay, Sept. 19, 1931 in Camden, S.C. His biggest hits were "It's Just A Matter of Time," 1959; "Baby You Got What It Takes" and "A Rockin' Good Way" with Dinah Washington in 1960; and "Rainy Night In Georgia" and "My Way" in 1970.

Q. I enjoy watching Spencer Christian, the weather man on ABC. We are from the same part of Virginia. Where can I write to him?

MRS. GLADYS JONES
Philadelphia, Pa.

A. Write Spencer Christian at ABC Press Relations, 1330 Avenue of the Americas, New York, N.Y. 10019.

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Q. I want to comment on the recent Academy Awards and the TV Show. The Oscars have consistently ignored black performers so I was electrified when Eddie Murphy spoke up. His comments were right on time when he acidly commented a black is only a winner every 20 years.

J.M.S.
Los Angeles, Calif.

A. We don't often agree with the language Eddie Murphy uses in his stage act but we heartily agree that the prejudice and hidden rascism in Academy Awards should be loudly and clearly condemned. We all owe Eddie our heartfelt thanks.

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Q. Some weeks ago I was looking at "Tony Brown's Journal" and the subject was a book "Four Black President's of the U.S." by I think E.O. Brown. Can you help me?

CHARLES CLARKSON
Charlotte, N.C.

A. The only book we could find near that title was "The Five Negro Presidents: According to What People Said They Were" by Joel Rogers, 1965. You might write Helga M. Rogers, 4975 59th Ave. South, St. Petersburg, Fla. Our library here in Baltimore says their copy is lost.

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Q. Please settle a bet. How many antique, luxury and sports cars does Reggie Jackson own?

MARIA PLAYERS
Washington, D.C.

A. Reggie Jackson is reported to own about 80 autos, the value of which exceeds $2 million.

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Patti LaBelle



Eddie Murphy

All letters should be addressed to DAWN Magazine, 628 N. Eutaw St., Baltimore, Md. 21201. All questions are welcome, but while Dawn cannot provide individual answers, questions of general interest will be used in this column.

Dear Dawn:

In the March issue of Dawn in Celebrity Roundup a reader was complaining about a daily paper story about a controversy about whether the Billie Holiday statue on Pennsylvania Avenue should have one gardenia or two. I am the man in the article. Let me say that it is unfortunate that a young black writer for the daily (Robert Hilson, Jr.) saw fit to fatally disregard the issue of my "Lite the Sites" program, instead of writing about an issue so trite as the gardenias on the statue's head.

The article your reader read is a gross misrepresentation of what I am about. I believe that the statue should be lighted and that's what I did with my own funds. I believe that memorials to our history and culture should be lighted.

Billie could and should be used as an example to young people demonstrating the evils of drugs. Her statue should be revered since it is in commemoration of her achievements as a singer and a great one at that.

BEN PRESTBURY
Baltimore, Md.

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