This Weekend

BALTIMORE

The Arena Players mark their 36th and Renaissance Season with the Gala Opening of "Jazz-bo Brown" on Friday, Sept. 23, 801 McCulloh St., at 7 :30 p.m. Call (301) 728-6500 for tickets and details.

Autumn Equinox 1988 — A Tribute to George Jackson and Coltrane, featuring the William Goffigan Ensemble, among others, takes place on Sunday, Sept. 25 from 2 p.m.-7 p.m. at the Booker T. Washington School auditorium, 1300 Madison St.

Lifesongs '88 — A Concert to Benefit HERO and the Fight Against AIDS, featuring Roberta Flack, Michael Feinstein, and The Nylons, will take place Sunday, Sept. 25 at 8 p.m. at the Lyric Opera House. Call (301) 685-5086 for info.

Song stylist Teri Thornton and friends, featuring Doug Lawrence, Tenor; Reuben Brown, Piano; Keter Betts, Bass; and Bertell Knox, Drums, will perform on Sunday, Sept. 25, 1988 at 5 p.m. at Coppin State College, Tawes Center Ballroom, 2500 W. North Ave., Baltimore, BYOB, Call (301) 945-2266 for more info.

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Capital City Jazz festival showcases the first "Jazz-An American National Treasure" concert and awards ceremony and the D.C premiere of "Bird," the Clint Eastwood produced film study of jazz great Charlie Parker. Headline artists include Benny Carter, Kenny Burrell, Hank Crawford, Roy Haynes and the list goes on. Running from Thursday, Sept. 22 through Saturday, October 1, the Fest takes place at a variety of venues throughout the city.

Come and hear African Folktales (Storytelling) on Saturday, Sept 24 at 1 p.m. at the National Museum of African Art, Lecture Hall, second level, 950 Independence Ave. S.W.

JOE WILLIAMS

The Reggae Fest with Frankie Paul, Leroy Sibbles, Ini Kamoze, Don Carlos, Tiger and others at RFK Stadium parking lot, Saturday and Sunday, Sept. 24 and 25.

Singer Johnny Kemp ("Just Got Paid") can be seen at various places around town on Thursday, Sept. 22 in D.C. and on Friday, Sept. 23 in B'more, Kemp's latest hit is "Dancing With Myself."

Singer Joe Williams will be at Blues Alley. Georgetown on Tuesday, Sept. 27 through Sunday. October 2. Located at 1073 Wisconsin Ave. N.W., call (201) 337-4141 for info.

Coming Soon

BALTIMORE

LEGENDS II, presented by The Jazz Heritage Foundation of Baltimore, Inc., the second of the Legends of Jazz Concert Series, features the New York Legends of Jazz All-Stars in their first Baltimore Appearance with Jimmy Heath, Tenor Sax; Jackie McLean, Alto Sax; Slide Hampton, Trombone; Hank Jones, Piano; Rufus Reid, Bass; Art Taylor, Drums, on Saturday, October 1 at 8 p.m. at the University Center Ballroom, U.M.B.C., 501 Wilkens Ave., Catonsville, Md. For ticket information, call (301) 455-3458.

NANCY WILSON

* * *

Nancy Wilson will appear at Blues Alley, Baltimore, 1225 Cathedral St. from Tuesday, October 4 through Sunday, October 9. Call (301) 837-2288.

WASHINGTON

Sarah Vaughn performs at Blues Alley, Georgetown, 1073 Wisconsin Ave., N.W., from Tuesday, Oct. 4 through Sunday, Oct. 9. Call (202) 4141 for info.

* * *

The stunning soprano Jessye Norman will be in concert Wednesday, October 5 at 8:30 p.m. at Kennedy Center Concert Hall. Call (202) 857-0900 for tickets and information.

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D.C. Reggae Fest

By Olive Vassell
AFRO Staff Writer.

Reggae music, the trademark of the Caribbean Island of Jamaica is now a staple part of Washington's musical diet, as local businessman and entrepreneur, Rick Hillock knows.

For seven years Hillock brought Reggae to the District, often at his own expense, organizing a free gathering of musicians and entertainers in local parks.

"I want to keep the West Indian culture alive. A lot of people have negative images of Jamaicans, but we do have good things to offer," said Hillock, a 24-year Washington resident.

This year Hillock has organized a two-day extravaganza featuring prominent reggae artist from Jamaica, Britain, and the U.S. including, Frankie Paul, Leroy Sibbles and Ini Kamoze.

Tickets for the shows to be held on Sept. 24 and 25 are available from all Ticket Center outlets and any West Indian stores. Advance admission is $8 per day, or $10 per day at the door.

For more information contact, Rick Hillock at The West Indian Record Mart at 700 Columbia Road, N.W. or call (202) 232-8226.

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Robert Flack—The 'Consumate Performer'

By Penny S. Demps

Roberta Flack, the popular successful musician/songstress who has surpassed the test of time with flying colors, is headed for Baltimore this weekend to participate in "LIFESONGS '88 — A Concert to Benefit HERO and the Fight Against AIDS," on Sunday, September 25 at 8 p.m. in the Lyric Opera House.

By far the largest AIDS benefit ever to be held in Baltimore, the goal of LIFESONGS is to raise $150,000 to support the fight against the deadly disease. A variety of ticket prices are available and a special place in the program will recognize those who have died of AIDS. For information about the concert or a memorial listing, please call (301) 685-1230.

Roberta Flack wanted to be an integral part of this fundraiser because she truly feels that black people, as a whole, are not yet attuned to the widespread devastation that AIDS can and has wreaked itself upon the black race. She too, knows that someone has to care enough to be willing to "educate" the people, her people, all people, to bring about an awareness, to cultivate an on-going concern about the hazards, problems and most importantly, the prevention of this world-wide disease. Therefore, she gladly donated her time and energy.

A soror of Delta Sigma Theta and a graduate of Howard University, Roberta Flack's early life was filled with music and song. At a mere 13, she won second place honors with her performance of a Scarlatti sonata in a state-wide contest for black students.

Teaching piano and music through a necessity that grew into love, Roberta realized that maybe she could inspire the black inner-city school kids she faced, to set free their hidden natural talents and shape their musical abilities. Although at times her high hopes dimmed, Flack's professional music career had begun to take shape. Her first songs (1968-69) "First Time Ever I Saw Your Face," "Reverend Lee," "Do What You Gotta Do," and "Just Like A Woman" still remain all-time favorites.

Born in North Carolina, but raised just outside of Arlington, Virginia, Roberta Flack has managed to keep "in-touch" and "down-to-earth." A personable, but private individual, she relaxes in her few moments of spare time by playing video games (millipede is her favorite) and rehearsing on her piano. And although she loves being surrounded by people, she still tends to shy away from the thought of marriage.

However, at the sake of sounding like a personal ad, she will admit to looking forward to meeting a strong, honest loyal black man who is ready, willing and most of all, able to engage in a solid, meaningful relationship.

In January of 1989, the musical superstar will embark on an Official Tour, her first in many years. This tour no doubt will be to promote her newest album "OASIS," of which she is executive producer. Excited by her latest work, Roberta explains that "OASIS" is an 'honest' album, filled with wonderful rhythmic quality, and ethnic color tinged with a slight Mozambican flavor. She collaborated with Maya Angelou, and Ashford & Simpson among many other notables to find just the right material. One cut, "Brazil," was penned totally by Flack.

Before her tour, however, Ms. Flack's life continues to brim over with work projects and worthwhile commitments. Recently back from performances in Brazil and Chile, she will soon be on her way to Seattle, Washington and Hawaii for another benefit.

Next year, another album "still in the can," as they say, will surface. Tentatively entitled "Miss Melody and the Uptown Harlem Stompers," it should prove to be another quality burst of enthusiasm.

So how does one categorize such an artist? Since she knows her earliest influences came from gospel and since then has enjoyed the many avenues offered, including classical, pop, jazz and everywhere in between, Roberta Flack balks at being put into any one category. And well she should, call her with no holes barred and all due respect — "The consumate musician."

ROBERTA FLACK — Versatile and vivacious

Vocalist Teri Thornton to open Left Bank fall season

A newly rediscovered velvet voice of jazz makes its Left Bank debut at its opening fall 1988 concert. Teri Thornton, a vocal sensation of the 1960's, will be the featured performer at the Sunday concert on September 25. Backing Ms. Thornton will be Doug Lawrence on tenor sax, Reuben Brown, piano, Keter Betts, bass and Bertell Knox, drums.

The concert will commence at 5 p.m. in the Tawes Center Ballroom of Coppin State College, 2500 West North Avenue, Baltimore.

The affair will be BYOB & E — Bring Your Own Bottle and Everything. Set-ups will be available for purchase as will beer and wine. Parking is free, plentiful and safe.

For advance tickets, contact Sparky's Cleaners, 4721 Liberty Heights Avenue; Leon Manker at 945-4376; Eunice Fash at 276-8415 after 6 p.m.; or, any Left Bank Jazz Society member. For concert information, call the Jazzline at (301) 945-2266.

* * * * *

Called "the best kept secret in jazz," Teri Thornton began her career in Detroit in the late 1950s. She was initially inspired by Sarah Vaughn to pursue a career as a jazz singer. Other influences included Lena Horne, Judy Garland and Joan Sutherland.

TERI THORNTON

Her first professional engagement was in Cleveland at the famed Ebony Club, and for the next ten years she performed almost constantly. She has sung in famous New York venues from the Apollo Theater to Carnegie Hall, and has performed worldwide from Canada to Australia.

Her career has included recording contracts with Columbia Records and appearances on **The Tonight Show** (three times in one month), the **Mike Douglas Show** and the **Merv Griffin Show.** Teri hit the top of the charts with the 1962 tune, "Somewhere In The Night," the theme from the TV show, **The Naked City.** That same year she was nominated for the **PLAYBOY Jazz Poll** as an "outstanding jazz artist of the year."

She also has a flair for composing as well as playing. Some of her songs have been recorded by such artists as Al Hirt, O.C. Smith and Mel Torme.

After a career as active as this, it is surprising to realize that she left a promising singing career to devote more than ten years to raising three children.

Now that she is performing once again, she seems as strong as ever. Just this summer, one reviewer said of Thornton, "The intervening years haven't diminished her talent. She has a big voice, warm and pliable, just right for the torch songs and bluesy ballads she and a fine group led by pianist Reuben Brown perform."

This is a bit of a different act for Left Bank, but a change of pace is always welcome, especially for someone with the excellent credentials of Teri Thornton. Left Bank patrons are in for a truly surprising and rare treat. Don't miss this one!