

LAS VEGAS

SHOWGASTE



STRIP HOPPING The dazzling artistry of MISS DAMITA JO, now making her first Vegas appearance in several years, at the Hilton-International Casino Theater, is reminding huge crowds what blues singing is all about. Damita's "shades of the great ladies" (Billie Holiday, Dinah Washington, Sarah Vaughn, etc.) leaves no doubt that the sultry songstress is very much a part of the current crop of memorable lady singers; her "If You Go Away" always a favorite, is only a part of her updated repertoire which includes "Sing a Simple Song of Freedom", "Deep in the Night", "What Did I Have That I Don't Have", "Can't Take My Eyes Off Of You", and a show-to-show changing program of all time jazz, blues and pop standards. Damita Jo, now recording for ABC Dunhill, has a brand new album upcoming...THE TRENTERS, returning to the Flamingo Casino Theater - with JOHNNIE RAY & WAYNE COCHRAN on April 27 - made such a hit with their March mainroom bow (with BOBBY DARIN at the Hilton), the troupe has four more mainroom stints awaiting their availability. After 25 years in the biz, The Treners are another "overnight success" and if you don't think that ain't show biz, just ask SHECKY GREENE, DON RICKLES, B.B. KING and CARROLL O'CONNOR (debuting at the Riviera in June). Dancers, singers, and rock-type musicians are being sought by the AMERICAN JAZZ DANCE COMPANY (San Diego) for a trek to the 1972 WORLD FOLKLORE MUSICAL FESTIVAL in Mexico in June. The Company is the official United States Representative in the Festival and will follow that engagement with a series of performances for the President of Mexico. Director of the troupe, RAOUL APPEL, said rehearsals will begin in mid-May for pre-Festival performances in San Diego and in Los Angeles (June 1). Contact Appel at 714-224-8451 for interviews...Our own

lovely LINE RENAUD (former star of the "Casino de Paris" and producer of such Vegas revues as "FLESH", "LOVE IN" and "THE CRAZY HORSE SALOON REVUE") is a BIG BIG star all over again in her native France. Line just returned to her second home, Las Vegas for a quick two week business trip and heads back to Paris for two months of recording dates (she has her own recording company and production facilities based in Paris for other artists and various American labels, and her own new album "Line Renaud" is already Number 5 on the European charts), a series of television guestings, and preparation on her own tv series. Her "LINE DIRECTE" tv special, recently aired in France was such a triumph, it was chosen as the French entry in the European equivalent of the Emmy Awards competition. Line's special starred JERRY LEWIS and introduced to European audiences, THE OSMOND BROTHERS. Line begged off from a weekly tv series and will do from four to six tv specials instead featuring both European and American stars. The ever-bubbly chanteuse said she'd like to get stars like ROBERT GOULET, BOBBY DARIN, JACK JONES, TRINI LOPEZ, and BILLY ECKSTINE for her upcoming specials - and knowing Line, she probably will! Meantime, Line has not neglected her producer interests and is talking to several Strip hotels about a summer debut of her lavish spectacle "LOVE IN" which played for months at King's Castle.

"ROUND TOWN WE HEAR...that it is all but DEFINITE now for an all new production of "GUYS & DOLLS" to be premiering in June at the Aladdin. Producer-director-BILL COLLINS has been investigating all the possibilities and will be making an "official" announcement shortly. "Minsky's Burlesque" closing at the Aladdin on June 15 is reportedly negotiating a switch to the Fremont Hotel's Fiesta Room...the SAHARA HOTEL's publicity chief LARRY CLOSE says there has been nothing firm about Vice President BUDDY HACKLIT doing a one-show-a-night schedule and off on Saturdays when he returns to the Congo Room on April 29...producer MARK MARDON'S deal for an August production of "SWEET CHARITY" is definitely OUT as far as the Desert Inn Hotel is concerned. Too bad, the show, made a huge Las Vegas and London attraction out of JULIE PROWSE (when it played for six months SRO at

Caesars Palace) who won't be back until October...Speaking of SRO, Hawaii's own superstar DON HO (doing such sensational biz at the Flamingo where he is one of the hotel's TOP DRAWS) has singer-impressionist JIM BAILEY currently working "his" Hawaii base, the Cinerama Polynesian Palace. Bailey who started his phenomenal climb to stardom at the Flamingo Casino Theater, has already been firm to replace Don again when Ho returns to the mainland in October. Bailey's recent one-night concert at the L.A. Music Center - a complete sellout - brought out stars like LANA TURNER, KAY BALLARD, LUCILLE BALL, DEBBIE REYNOLDS, etc., among the enthralled throng...Speaking of Kay Ballard, the enormously popular and much loved comedy favorite, dashed into town for a couple of hours just to see her good pal LARRY STORCH in his stint with SONNY & CHIEF at the Sahara. It's incredible, but true, that the delightful MISS BALLARD hasn't appeared in Las Vegas for more than a year. The Hughes Hotels Entertainment Chief WALTER KANI says he still wants to long-term Kay but hasn't yet firm a pitch to her managers. Kay heads next

to Philadelphia - where she is (especially to the Italians) what MYRON COHEN is to Miami - and a debut at Palumbo's nitery...Kay has almost as many show biz fans as she does tv and cafe followers. LARRY STORCH, SHECKY GREENE, EVE ARDEN, PAUL LYNDE, DORIS DAY, and BILLY DWOLFF top her long list of boosters....

CURRENT & COMING ATTRACTIONS...HUBERT ANN KELLEY is the female member of the hotter than ever THE HUES CORPORATION now at the Circus Circus lounge. KARL RUSSELL and BARNARD ST CLAIR LEE are Hubert's ready-steady male partners. Among the group's late, late show dropper-inners: showfolk from the DEBBIE REYNOLDS SHOW, the DON HO revue, "WONDERFUL WORLD OF BURLESQUE", plus JOHNNIE RAY, THE SEOUL SISTERS, S.O.U.P., and LITTLE ANTHONY & THE IMPERIALS...ROWAN & MARTIN make their Sahara debut on June 25...BOBBY DARIN winds his current Hughes Hotels pact with a four weeker at the Desert Inn opening May 9 with popular JAN MURRAY providing the comedy...Comedian DICK RICHARDS follows BEN BLUE into BARRY ASHTON'S WONDERFUL WORLD OF BURLESQUE at the Silver Slipper, opening May 2, when Ben completes his special limited engagement as headliner...Comedienne JEANNINE BURNIER is making her mainroom debut with headliner PATTI PAGE, now at the Landmark Hotel...ROBERT GOULET and THE ESTABLISHMENT return to the Frontier on June 8...The special one week engagement of "JESUS CHRIST, SUPERSTAR" opens tonight (April 28) at the Hilton International legitimate theater.

WEEKEND WANDERERS...The incomparable SHECKY GREENE and Miss CAROL LAWRENCE at the Riviera...The super Welsh superstar T. JONES at Caesars...Delightful and delicious DEBBIE is at the Desert Inn (REYNOLDS, of course; is there any other???)....

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