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AMONG THE STARS
with LEE IVORY

Swinging At The New Hideaway

WHEN WILL THEY wake up? When will the pseudo-hip show business wags wake up to the fact that Oscar Brown, Jr., is one of the most fantastic men in the business?

Sure, they've politely accorded him a comfortable niche in the entertainment scheme of things; they have coolly accepted him into the fold, the clique where it is he who should be doing the accepting.

Oscar Brown, Jr., is a genius of the first rank, but he is a black genius and they have a pretty rough go of it.

This is not to say that Oscar has not achieved things virtually unheard of in his lifetime. No, what I'm saying is that given the proper materials with which to work, there is another completely new and better world that Oscar could, and would, create merely from the magnanimity of his talent.

We can say that he got a raw deal on his first musical effort of note, "Mr. Kicks." If the true story were known, I'm fairly certain that the encumbrances thrust upon Brown would have proven too much for any budding creator.

Suffice it to say that the star of "Kicks" -- Burgess Meredith -- liberal though he may be, talented though he may be, was not the man Oscar Brown, Jr., had in mind when he conceived the production.

IT WOULD have been easy for Oscar Brown, Jr., to revert to lucrative real estate dealings in Chicago, where his father is one of the most successful men in that field. But he didn't.

The pain and torture that has been the lot of Oscar Brown, Jr., is unimaginable. The admiration and accolades that were his for that fabulous revue that played for nearly a year at the Happy Medium in the Windy City, "Joy '66," did nothing to diminish the hurting agony of not being recognized for his work with the once vicious and deadly Blackstone Ranger teengang.

Oscar, along with his charming partner, Jean Pace, took a bunch of gangsters and taught them the joy of using their inherent talents to gain recognition in our present-day society. The Rangers, who had long driven law agencies and social workers out of their minds, took to the theatre like Gale Sayers to a football. "Opportunity, Please Knock" was such a beautiful creation from the mind of Oscar Brown, Jr., that I could not speak to him backstage after the show. I could only cry.

Of course, being a genius is a most thankless thing. Articles published in white-oriented media praised the Blackstone Rangers, but said nothing about Brown. Now he's in California seeking more punishment to his vibrant and creative soul. It's tragic!

See you Among the Stars . . .



"THE FREEDOM SOUNDS" -- appearing nightly at the Hideaway Cocktail Lounge in the Moulin Rouge Hotel offer patrons of the rendezvous the welcome "sound" of musicians who know what they're doing and what pleases the customers most... Grover Mooney, Drums; Willie Perry, Sax; Jimmy McGary, Sax; Paul Bryant, Organ.

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