

ENTERTAINMENT



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BILLY ROWE'S NOTEBOOK

WANTED: An all-races symphony orchestra to become the first in the U.S. Also, a black Arturo Toscanini or a Leonard Bernstein to be come a baton wielder of renown. Pay is good. A federal agency, the National Endowment for the Arts has just announced that \$150,000, 000 in grants have been approved for 121 duly registered symphony orchestras and a hatful of other cultural programs throughout the land. That is a lot of money. And it is being awarded to an all-white cast of symphonists and others. Only 150 of an estimated 20,000 musicians are black and can hardly be seen in the shadows of the orchestra pits. Whoever forms these groups is in obvious violation of Title 6 of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 which prohibits discrimination on account of race, color or national origin, especially when they receive Federal funds. The fact that few blacks are in the national orchestra pits is now under study of the enforcement arm of the U.S. Department of Justice. They will want to know why black musicians are being deprived of jobs in the long-hair field. Eyebrows are being raised because in the field of music no one can shine black shoes. They have won virtually every honor in rhapsody ---blues, jazz, disco, hard rock, soft rock, and any form of popular music but nothing in Philharmonia, U.S.A.

The facts were drawn after an exhaustive series of interviews in New York, Washington and San Francisco. The ugly fact emerged: Symphony orchestra pits are a no black land. On this subject, few would permit the use of their names. We tried John Wesel, the Endowment's director in the New York Regional Office. It was like trying to find Livingston in Africa. His phone was answered by a voice who proclaimed the premises were actually the 'Office of Arms Control,' a disarmament agency. We would not be disarmed. So we persisted on to Washington!

The administration of Federally-subsidized programs is big business. In New York there are free outdoor concerts in Central Park during the Summer. Cincinnati has a mini-festival in addition to its vaunted symphony orchestra. Brooklyn has 'in school' instructional programs, a half dozen cities have concerts for the handicapped, Boston has a 'music resources' project to train future symphonists and so on. Big business? Uncle Sam doles out more than \$150 mil and consumes almost \$10 mil to administer this far-flung enterprise. All of that is all taxpayer's money -- black and white. Endowment has ten field offices throughout the U.S. with directors, assistants and a whole supporting retinue. So when millions are being 'granted' to support these activities, additional millions are raised in matching funds because of their inherent goodness. With all that money floating, a watchdog should not be in the doghouse but at the forefront yowling and yelping when there are transgressions.

Last go-round in this two-part series we told you that Endowment itself has come to recognize the existence of the unequal distribution of Federal funds. Almost all of it is going to white orchestras and allied activities. So Endowment Chairman Livingston Biddle ordered the recent creation of a special office of Minority Concern and placed a black, Gordon Braithwaith in charge. He admitted: 'We are going to enforce compliance of orchestra leaders to the end that they hire more blacks.' The mood was echoed by Mrs. June Harrison, a black person from Maryland who answered to the title, EEOC direc-

tor of the Endowment agency. She gave it to us in spades. Only last Friday she dispatched 'a first draft' to the Dept. of Justice outlining requirements for 'funding' and 'compliance reviews affecting every orchestra in the country.' When ork leaders say they are not discriminating, 'we don't take them at their word any longer.'

Mrs. Harrison readily acknowledged that past Endowment grants were 'shoddily' administered ---'we will now take any measure to effectuate compliance with procedures for minority employment.' The Justice Department, she added, is fully aware that each orchestra management is required to fill out a form which is in effect a signed agreement that it will comply with regulations when applying for a grant.

Signatures are required under this preamble: 'No person in the United States shall on the grounds of race, color or national origin be excluded from participation in the funding program when denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subject to discrimination, under any program or activity for which the applicant received Federal financial assistance... and (applicant) hereby gives assurance that it will immediately take any measures to effectuate the agreement.'

The 'forms' have been filled in the past and dispatched to the Endowment office where presumably they would be approved as a matter of form. 'No longer will we take them at their word,' she said. A typical complaint from an unemployed musician seeking a symphony berth has been forwarded to Justice. Blacks and other minorities are becoming increasingly aware that they too belong in the pit. Mrs. Harrison blunted our appraisal of the disproportionate ratio of blacks in such orchestras. We suggested perhaps there weren't enough black musicians to draw from because instruments are expensive and hard to come by.

'Looka here, Mister,' she said. 'I have four children and all of them play an instrument.' She was referring to Tonia, 12, violin and Flute; Marilyn, cello; Sonja, flute and Tyrone, trumpet. 'And if that's not enough, I myself play piano and clarinet,' she laughed. Well, well and well, we said, 'you could almost fill an orchestra.' 'No,' she replied. 'we would need a drummer boy.'...STAY LOOSE.

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Aug. 16 thru Aug. 22 - Cher
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Indefinite - Razzle Dazzle
- Frontier** 702-734-0110
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August 30 thru Sept. 5 - Lola Falana/Foster Brooks
Sept. 6 thru September 19 - Steve & Edyie/Morty Gunty
Sept. 20 thru Sept. 29 - Roy Clark
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Dinner Show 8 P.M. - Late Show Midnight
Now thru Aug. 1 - Mac Davis
- Riviera** 702-734-5110
Dinner Show 8 P.M. - Late Show Midnight
Now thru
July 26 thru Aug. 8 - Bob Newhart/Bernadette Peters
Aug. 9 - Aug. 22 - Shirley MacLaine/Lettermen
Aug. 23 thru Sept. 5 - Glen Campbell/Bernadette Peters
Sept. 6 thru Sept. 12 - Steve Martin
- Sahara** 702-737-2111
Dinner Show 8 P.M. - Late Show Midnight
Now thru July 25 - Charo/Sonny Bono
July 26 thru Aug. 1 - Dom Deluise
Aug. 2 thru Aug. 8 - Helen Reddy (Dinner Show Only)
Aug. 9 thru Aug. 15 - Don Rickles/Carole Kai
Aug. 16 thru Aug. 22 - Jerry Lewis/Joey Heatherton
Aug. 23 thru Aug. 29 - Jerry Lewis (Dinner Show Only)
Aug. 23 thru Aug. 29 - Buddy Hackett/Jack Jones (Midnight Show Only)
Aug. 30 thru Sept. 2 - Helen Reddy
Sept. 3 thru Sept. 5 - Open
Sept. 6 thru Sept. 12 - Dom Deluise
Sept. 13 thru Sept. 20 - Tennessee Ernie Ford/Skiles & Henderson (Dinner Show Only)
Sept. 13 thru Sept. 20 - Buddy Hackett/Peter Marshall (Midnight Show Only)
Sept. 21 & 22 - Johnny Carson
Sept. 23 thru Oct. 3 - Flip Wilson/Joey Heatherton
Oct. 4 thru Oct. 17 - Don Rickles
Oct. 18 thru Nov. 1 - Charo
Nov. 2 & 3 - Johnny Carson
Nov. 4 thru Nov. 14 - Jerry Lewis/Diahann Carroll (Dinner Show Only)
Nov. 4 thru Nov. 14 - Buddy Hackett/Peter Marshall (Midnight Show Only)
Nov. 15 thru Nov. 28 - Don Rickles
- Sands** 702-733-5000
Now thru July 31 - Shecky Greene
Aug. 1 thru Aug. 14 - Tony Bennett
Aug. 15 thru Aug. 28 - Open
Aug. 29 thru Sept. 11 - Dionne Warwick
Sept. 12 thru Sept. 25 - Shecky Greene
- Silver Slipper** 702-734-1212
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- Silverbird** 702-735-4111
9 P.M. and Midnight
Now thru July 24 - Tina Turner & Jackie Gayle
July 25 thru Aug. 21 - "IPI TOMBI" (African Musical)
Aug. 22 thru Sept. 4 - The Roger Miller Show
Sept. 5 thru Sept. 25 - Freddy Fender/George "Goober" Lindsay
Lindsay, Dark Tuesdays
- Landmark** 702-733-1110
Redd Foxx - Sun., Tues., Thurs., Midnight: Fri. & Sat. 11 P.M. & 2:30 A.M.
- Las Vegas Hilton** (702) 732-5111
Dinner Show 8 P.M. - Late Show Midnight
Now thru July 23 - Liberace/Marco Valenti
July 24 thru Aug. 6 - Bill Cosby/Doug Henning
Aug. 7 thru Aug. 20 - Lou Rawls
Aug. 21 thru Sept. 3 - Paul Anka

ENTERTAINMENT



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