

# Entertainment

## KNOCKOUT COMBINATION AT SAHARA

Two of the all-time greatest acts in their respective fields of music have joined forces in the Congo Showroom of the Sahara Hotel and Casino and the result is a dynamic and powerful evening of music, a veritable double feature musical event.

K.C. & The Sunshine Band, one of the hottest pop recording groups since the Beatles, and, speaking of the Beatles, Billy Preston, the man often referred to as the "Fifth Beatle" are starring in 8 p.m. and 12 midnight cocktail shows nightly. It's a great evening of funky, hard-driving musical entertainment.

K.C. & The Sunshine Band are making their debut as a Las Vegas showroom act. And they're proving they can make a Las Vegas showroom rock and dance to their pulsating, infectious and mesmerizing beat.

"We're here to get the folks out of their seats," K.C., actually Florida-born Harry Wayne Casey, says of their

nightclub engagements, "If we're cookin', then everybody's got to dance."

K.C. & The Sunshine Band was originated by Casey and partner Richard Finch who write, produce, and perform their own material. The group has been in great demand for studio recording sessions which cut into their time for tours and concerts. But their monster hits, like "That's The Way (I Like It)" and "Get Down Tonight" have kept them in big demand and earned them the title of "America's number one party band."

Billy Preston holds a unique position in the annals of popular music and stage performing. A child prodigy on his selected instrument, the organ, Billy quite naturally began his musical performing in church and has leaned heavily toward the gospel influence.

But his tours have included stints with such groups as Little Richard, Sam Cooke, Gerry and the Pacemakers, and the



Once in a blue moon there emerges a performer's performer, one whose talents seem to touch every corner and leave no stone unturned. Such a star on the horizon is Ren Woods, the young woman who became an instant familiar face with her portrayal of Fanta in the television movie "Roots."

Born Renee Woods on January 1, 1957 in Chicago, Woods spent her childhood in Portland, Oregon, singing the Chicago blues to green forests and rainy skies. She made her public debut in the second grade when, during the annual talent show, Woods wowed her peers with an old Fontella Bass tune, "The Love Of A Man."

It didn't take Woods long to make the best of a good thing. At age 9, she formed a singing group with some neighbors; the Three Little Souls soon landed a steady gig at a Portland bar. Local talent manager Larry Raphael also enjoyed the act, which appeared at the Cotton Club every weekend for

Beatles. When he debuted on the hit pop music show, "Shindig," his rock 'n' roll career took off and he eventually was labeled as the "fifth Beatle."

## COMPANY ANNOUNCES AUDITIONS

The Southern Nevada Regional Theatre Company is pleased to announce the auditions for the premiere production of *The Crucible*, by Arthur Miller. The play, which is set in Massachusetts in 1692, deals with events during the Salem witch trials.

The production will take place in October, and the auditions are scheduled for the week of August 15th through the 20th. Interested actors and actresses should contact the company offices to schedule audition appointments. The telephone number is 737-7467.

The cast of the show is comprised of 10 men and 10 women, with age ranges of 14 to 70. Featured is a role for one black actress, Tituba, of indeterminate age.



REN WOODS

three years, so he decided to take the Three Little Souls to Hollywood.

As Sunday's Child, the group made appearances on "The Jack Benny Show," on specials with Nipsey Russell and Redd Foxx and with Bob Hope's USO entourage in Vietnam. Sunday's Child split up by the time Woods was 17, but she stayed in Hollywood, doing mostly commercial spots for a living while searching for a chance to showcase her range of talents. Then "The Wiz" came to town; Woods was notified she'd be auditioned for the lead, a full two months before the casting crew arrived in Los Angeles.

From that point, the singer-actress' career went like clockwork. Before "The Wiz" even opened in Los Angeles, Woods landed the part of Fanta (for which she won the People's Choice Award) in the television movie "Roots." She took a two-week break from "Wiz" rehearsals in order to shoot "Roots" in Savannah, Georgia, then it was back to L.A. and San Francisco stages to perform as Dorothy.

When, "Roots" aired across the nation two months after Woods left "The Wiz," her career took off like the Proverbial rocket; suddenly there were numerous appearances on "The Tonight Show" and "The Merv Griffin Show," among others. She landed roles in hit movies such as "9 to 5" "The Jerk" and "Hair".

In March 1982, Woods set out to conquer the recording field as well with Azz Izz, her Chuck Jackson produced Elektra/Asylum debut LP. She delivers the album's eight tunes with such confidence and prowess, though, that listeners may swear she's a well-established R&B/pop artist rather than one just beginning to blossom. Azz Izz is decidedly Ren Woods - happy, easy to like, with a hint of daring.

In the more distant future, Woods would like to harness all her talents for a black musical in the true sense of the word, as well as continue work as an actress, recording artist - and eventually, a film director.

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