

Entertainment

Top of the Pop and Soul Charts

VANDROSS AND LaBELLE BOTH TO APPEAR AT CAESARS UNDER THE STARS

The June 1 summer opener for the Caesars Palace Concerts Under the Stars series might be billed as a super soul spectacular—but that is only half the story with singers like Luther Vandross and Patti LaBelle.

These vocal superstars have worked for years in the music industry to finally claim top spots among their peers and certainly with their millions of fans as pop superstars as well as great soul vocalists.

Born in New York City and raised in Lower Manhattan's Alfred E. Smith Housing Project, Vandross had early musical inclinations which were strongly encouraged by his family and especially by his mother, who had him taking piano lessons at age three.

But it's the female singers who motivate Vandross and inspire his musical talents. Aretha Franklin, Diana Ross and Dionne Warwick were his idols growing up as a teenager. And it was a dream come true for Vandross to later write and produce for both Franklin and Warwick.

His own first solo album, *Never Too Much*, launched Luther's career into stardom. *Never Too Much* remained on the charts for 84 weeks and earned Vandross two 1981 Grammy nominations for "Best Male R&B Vocal Performance" and "Best New Artist."

His most recent release, "Busy Body," features Vandross' well-known talent for composing love ballads that can bring tears to any-

one's eyes as well as his ear for sweet musical arrangements.

Appearing the same night under the stars at Caesars Palace will be Patti LaBelle, who has worked long and hard during her rise to the top of the album charts. LaBelle believes that in the midst of her 25th year in show business, she is better today than ever and that her career is still going stronger.

Born in West Philadelphia, LaBelle was raised by her mother and grew up living a normal teenage life: singing in the glee club, running track and performing in school plays.

Patti was in her late teens when she teamed up with Cindy Birdsong (who later became one of the Supremes) to form a "girl-group" called the

Ordettes. She sang with several "girl-groups" over the next few years, but never received the air play that she deserved for such a popular concert performer.

In the late 70's, after giving birth to her son, Zuri, LaBelle embarked on a solo career that soared into the 80's. She recorded the albums *Released* and *The Spirit's In Me* and gained the critics' respect. Since then, LaBelle has received nothing but accolades from both reviewers and music lovers alike.

Tickets for the 9 p.m. outdoor concert are on sale now. Prices are \$15 and \$17.50. Phone the Caesars Palace Special Events Ticket Office (800) 634-6698 or (702) 731-7865.

Las Vegas Included:

Jacksons kick off tour in Ky.

LOS ANGELES—Superstar Michael Jackson and his singing brothers will begin their multimillion-dollar summer concert tour in Lexington, Ky., on June 22, promoter Don King announced Monday.

No other concert dates were disclosed pending a news conference next week.

But Katherine Jackson, matriarch of the family, said the "Victory" tour will include stops in New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, Detroit, Cleveland, Atlanta and Washington, D.C.

"We hope our new shows will please our fans as much as my sons will enjoy performing for them," Mrs. Jackson said.

King said the tour

JAZZ MONTH PROGRAMS

* Jazz Picnic, presented by the Las Vegas Jazz Society as part of Jazz Month celebration; Lorenzi Park, noon to 6 p.m., Sunday, May 27; featuring the Carl

"would gross somewhere in the \$50 million to \$60 million range. And it could go upwards. It depends on how much they want to perform."



King also reaffirmed that Las Vegas would be included in the schedule and would take place at the Silver Bowl sometime during the month of September.

Saunders Sextet, the Larry Schlect Quintet, the Bruce Harper Big Band and the Las Vegas Jazz Society Quintet. Free.

BILLIE ROWE'S NOTEBOOK

HOT BEEF TOSSED KOOL JAZZ PROMOTER'S WAY

N'YORK CITY—As we told you the last time around, Panama Francis, leader of the Savoy Sultans, the biggest little band on the sharps and flats go'round, has a beef cookin' for George Wein, father of the Newport Jazz Festival. Currently it's better known as The Kool Jazz Festival and is just about to sound off another summer. Panama, back from a six-wks run in Fla., made a hospital stop here to check his health, but not before pen'ing the following beef with George. And I quote him.

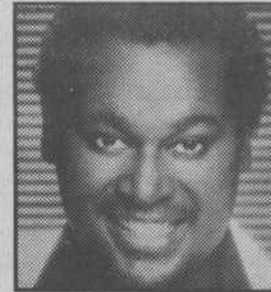
"Hello George: Received a telephone call Apr. 10 from the Buffalo Jazz Society. They wanted to book the Savoy Sultans thru June. They were also concerned about the Int'l. Jazz Festival being sponsored by the Molsen Beer Brewery in

Canada. The event will feature 20 groups from around the world, but not one Black band among them. When they were asked why, they were told that Black musicians were not interested in playing swing and traditional jazz. So they were not invited. You know as well as I do that this is an outright lie. Now I know why, even with the background and success the Savoy Sultans enjoy every place they play, I could not understand why they were not invited to some of the festivals.

"Ten years ago I told some Black musicians that I could see the handwriting on the wall. I told them that we were being eliminated in a subtle manner. I told them that after the demise of Duke Ellington, Count Basie and Lionel Hampton, the

See ROWE, Page 10

Concerts UNDER THE STARS



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