

# Entertainment

## BILLIE ROWE'S NOTEBOOK

"New Edition Has Explosive Beginnings"

### Thomas Mack Set for New Edition, Shannon Show

N'YORK CITY — Broadway's biggest "untapped" legitimate theatre audience is continually being ignored by show producers, their press agents and advertising agencies. This is an audience that can be counted by the thousands and is right at their doorsteps or within communication reach in more than 50-major cities throughout the width and breadth of this land. All they need to do is to make an aggressive "go after it" though the eyes and ears of the media within the target areas which speak their "language" and enjoy community creditability. B'way cannot survive as a one audience haven. One whose products acceptance or rejection is controlled by the write hand whims, or spoken words, of a few print or electronic critics whose critical phrases seem based on very narrow personal likes and dislikes. Particularly when the subject matter is beyond their living experience.

Though it struck these eyes and ears as a highly entertaining show, "Grind," starring the incredibly talented Ben Vereen, inspired just two "rave" reviews. These were 7-borderlines and fifteen not worthy of pasting on the 'call board.' Most of the critics spread their ink around to smear that portion of the book which pointed up the racism of the 1933 era. Some even attempted to do the ostrich trick and write it off as a thing of the past not worthy of notice in today's "race free" world. Notwithstanding, opening week session for "Grind" was boxoffice healthy with a gross of \$248,492. From this eye/ear vantage, the show, directed by Harold Prince, choreographed by Lester Wilson with some marvelous mood foot moving music by Larry Grossman to embrace easy fitting lyrics out of Ellen Fitzhugh's genius, is exciting entertainment, a spirit lifter and solid ego booster. Lady lead Leilani Jones is beautiful, but then all the girls are sight pleasers. In fact the entire indefatigable case is an indemnification of the total effort. Make your evening; go see "Grind" Vereen and the entire cast

will make you happy you made the trip to the Mark Hellinger Theatre.

WRITE CHATTER — A Lloyds of London underwriter is quoted as saying that superstar Al Jarreau lied about the state of his health before taking out "Non Appearance" coverage in '83. The company, with a worldwide rep for insuring anything, has asked a Federal Court to reject the singer's "miss concert insurance" claim for \$1,004,364. He had to cancel several dates in Sept. '83 before having a tonsillectomy in Oct of the same yr. . . . It is difficult to decide which happening Dr. Gloia E.A. Toote is most excited about. Her recent tee to green adventure with golf legend Alice Marble over the green acres of the Palm Desert Resort, Palm Springs, Ca. or her appointment to the Board of Overseers of the Hoover Institute, Stanford U? . . .

Olivia Ward, talented spouse of NYPD historic top cop, will segue from her emoting in the soap, "All My Children" to screen chores in the Charles Bronson "Death Wish 3" flick. This is the film which allegedly inspired the subway shooting antics of Bernard Goetz. For a while his gunning down of 4-teenagers became a media hipped holiday until, as Police Comm. Ward predicted, Goetz talked himself into a hole and an indictment by a second grand jury. He will soon stand trial for attempted murder . . . Skippy Dismuke, Marion Logan, Doris Mason, Harry Smith and James Landeros will attempt to get all their special friends together in Marion's westside manse to introduce them to Rev. Dr. Wyatt Tee Walker's latest book, "Road to Damascus." It's all about his adventure with Rev. Jesse Jackson to free Lieutenant Goodman . . . Prince is legally seeking \$10,000,000 in punitive damages and a mere \$500,000 profits he claims was held out from his PRN promotion co. by Richard Klotzman, a Maryland based concert promoter. Production companies in Fla., Mich., Mass. and Alaska are parties to the royal action . . . They

That's exactly how it began for five young performers who started singing and dancing in the streets of Boston. Imitating their idols, New Edition not only learned to sing and dance but skyrocketed to national and international fame. Single pop chart hits such as "Candy Girl," the youngsters first hit, became the No. 1 black music single, reported by Billboard, May 14, 1983. This launched a career with numerous hits following, including "Mr. Telephone Man," "Cool It Now" and their latest "Lost in Love."

"The New Edition is a phenomenon whose music appeals to all ages, and a show that will generate community excitement," says Gary Naseef, Promotion and Advertising Consultant for the group's one night performance in Las Vegas.

As if the New Edition were not enough, the promoter has added special guest, Shannon, who topped the charts with her single "Let the Music Play." Shannon who has been singing for as long as she can remember, has a variety of musical styles. Andrew Frierson of the Metropolitan Opera started working with Shannon in 1978, training

her in classical, jazz and pop specialist Bob Geradi. Shannon proves her include, Dennis Moorman, Sammy Davis Jr.'s pianist

found Marion Rogers' sister, Florence Tasker, dead in her apt. in Phila. It appeared that her demise was brought on by natural cause several days before her remains were discovered. WRITE HERE & THERE — TeeVee laugh provoker Robert "Benson" Guillaume has mentioned to a round table of friends that he intends to wed Donna Brown this month. The wondah is, is this the second lady to whom he has pledged his troth and is he divorce-free of the lady who successfully allegedly objected to the wedding planned and announced some time back? . . . Cab Calloway, the very active legend, and daughter Chris were really on in Paris and had to be held over at the Maridian Club until a forced BBC teevee commitment in London moved them across the channel. He's expected



RONALD DEVOE MICHAEL BIVINS  
RICKY BELL RALPH TRESVANT BOBBY BROWN  
New Edition

Music Play," and currently, is riding the charts with her new single "Do You Want to Get Away."

U.T.F.O., the hottest rap band in the country will also appear, "bringing to Las Vegas a rare combination of musical talent," says Naseef who expects a capacity crowd with seating for over 11,000 people.

On Sunday, June 16 at 7:30 p.m. the Thomas & Mack Center will "explode" with the talents of these three names. The show is presented by Southland Concerts in association with Concert Series, Limited and welcomed by KYRK radio. Tickets can be purchased at the Thomas & Mack ticket office, the Las Vegas Athletic Club, Sports Fever, Tower Records, Cinema Cade, Garehimes Music Plus, Nellis Air Force Base, Omni Video, Video Tyme, and on the west side of Las Vegas, Rancho Records and Mail & More. Tickets are priced at \$14.40, \$15.50 and \$16.50.

and pop specialist Bob Geradi. Shannon proves her versatility in the double platinum album "Let the



U.T.F.O. (The Kangol Kid, Doctor Ice and the Educated Rapper) rap their way to the Las Vegas beat. They will appear along with the NEW EDITION and SHANNON at the Thomas & Mack Center, Sunday, June 16, 7:30 p.m.

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we satisfy you

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