

Entertainment

BILLIE ROWE'S NOTEBOOK

Now There's A Friend In City Hall

When this portion of the hemisphere was young, unspoiled and not long on the world map of the White explorer, a group of enterprising Dutchmen were deeded Manhattan Islands for \$24 and tips of beads and trinkets. The deal was cut with the enthroned Algonquin Indians. In the chill of a Jan. 1st 1986 afternoon, eyembraced by a well mixed audience afront City Hall, David Norman Dinkins, in his 58th year,

was sworn in as the 24th Borough President of Manhattan by his former law partner Judge Fritz Alexander. The installation ceremonies alone cost several hundred times more dollars than the original sale of the entire island. That calculated with the tab for the two run, primary and general, elections has probably set the original sellers in a state of perpetual motion in their ancestral burial ground.

AT LAST: The total social, political, religious and economic fabric of America

has failed to deal with the full value of Afro-Americans. Frankly some pretty major institutions, including our own, have undercut human progress throughout the world by short switching the mobility of this vital human resource. The elevation to higher office of David Dinkins by the politicians and the voters of N'York City is perhaps the greatest and most significant tribute the Big Apple could pay to the pending inaugural of the national holiday that will add world wide vitality to the immortality of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. He is the city's first Afro-American BeePee in eight years. We believe he will add to the lustre of the office. His words have the sound of dedication

and purpose! Before his peers and public he spoke glowingly and hopefully about his tasks for Manhattan.

To him "Manhattan is the sum of a hundred urban small towns and villages. Here the word takes on a meaning unknown anywhere else. Each has its own niche and colorful history. Each makes a distinct contribution to the whole. Wherein Manhattan leads all others with college degrees, it also leads with high school dropouts. Though the stats have only one car for every three households, the borough is a perpetual traffic jam. The powers of the office of Borough President are enormous and cover the powerful Board of Estimate, th Borough and Pension Boards, appointments to the Board of Education and Community Boards. Such will be used to make Manhattan one. You have a friend in City Hall," he told a cold but warmly cheering and applauding throng, "One," he said, "who will work hard to make Manhattan whole by working with all its parts." Political luminary Basil Paterson emceed and the VIP section glowed with J. Raymond Jones, one of the early strong lights which guided former and present day Afro-American political planners to success. Hulan Jack, who tested the waters and established the ground rules as the first Afro-American president of the Boro. Benjamin Ward, the historic top cop, Federal Judge Constance Baker Motley, who was Manhattan's first and NY's only femme borough prez. She also swore in Council Prez. Andrew Stein, Denny Farrell, the Tammany Hall leader, Judge Harold Stevens and Deputy PD Comm. Wilhelmina Holliday Hayes were the remembered ones in eye-range. Like Mayor Koch said upon taking the oath for the third round: "N'York is the leading city because it is the city of leaders. If you are looking for the top, you cannot top N.Y.C. It's a great city, but the Big Apple does not grow in the Garden of Eden as NYC is not Paradise, never was and never will be. It is not perfection which makes a city great. It is striving to reach perfection which gives

See ROWE, Page 21

A 'One of a Kind' Singer . . .

BOBBY BLAND

To many fans, including his fellow singers, Bobby Bland is one of America's preeminent vocalists in any style of music. By his own definition, he specializes in "blues ballads." Which is to say, even on an upbeat, happy song like "Turn On Your Love Light," there's a tear behind the smile. Bobby Bland is, truly, one of a kind. And he's been recognized as such for well over a quarter of a century.

chauffeur. (This kind of apprenticeship was a not-uncommon way for would-be performers to get an introduction to the business.) During roughly the same period, Bland sang with an ad hoc group called The Beale Streeters, which also included Johnny Ace.

Bobby's first sides were produced by Ike Turner, then living in Memphis and a talent scout for the Los Angeles-based Modern label.



Bobby "Blue" Bland

His new album, *You've Got Me Loving You*, is a strong continuation of the Bland tradition: strong songs, non-gimmicky arrangements, and a vocal delivery that cuts through to the very bone.

Produced by Monk Higgins and Al Bell, the album includes six songs composed by the producers, plus the Brook Benton classic "Looking Back," "Too Bad" by the blues-rock band Point Blank, and a seasonal ballad, "You Are My Christmas" by Renee Marks and Pete Cosie.

Though long identified with the steamy Memphis blues scene, Robert Calvin Bland was born in the small town of Rosemark, Tennessee, on January 27, 1930. He began singing and playing guitar as a youngster, at first influenced by such country bluesmen as Blind Lemon Jefferson.

When his family moved to Memphis in 1944, Bobby became familiar with the smoother urban blues of such locals as Sonny Boy Williamson and B.B. King.

After spending time with a gospel group, The Miniatures, Bobby signed on as B.B. King's valet, later joining Roscoe Gordon as

But it wasn't long until he was spotted in a Houston talent show by local promoter Don Robey, head of Duke Records. Robey signed Bobby to his label; an association that has, through several corporate mergers, brought the singer to his current affiliation with MCA. (ABC Records had purchased Duke in the early '70s; some years later, ABC was purchased by MCA. Bobby Bland is the only artist to have recorded on all three labels in succession.)

Partnered with musical director Joe Scott, Bobby began turning out a series of stunning rhythm and blues singles, the first to chart being 1957's "Farther Up the Road." Since then, he's recorded enough successful singles for any number of "greatest hits" albums, only a few of the best-known being "I Pity the Fool," Charlie Rich's "Who Will the Next Fool Be," "Yield Not to Temptation," "Stormy Monday Blues," "That's the Way Love Is," "Call on Me," "Save Your Love for Me" (covered a few years ago by Kenny Rogers); and, of course, "Turn On Your Love Light."

See BLAND, Page 21

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