

Entertainment

BILLIE ROWE'S NOTEBOOK

Hard Questions? No Soft Answers Accepted!

N'YORK CITY — Boss you have been in this business a long time so I have some hard questions to throw your way. I am going to tell you up front that no soft answers are acceptable! Why is it that when some major corps run contests and programs, aimed at our market they fail to place support advertising in the Afro-American press or radio. In all the years I have been "write handing" with you, only a few companies go all out to put their dollars where their affirmative action is. In the past few weeks all manner of enticements to Afro-American consumers have crossed this desk seeking free column space with no mention of advertising or public relations budgetary legs for them to stand on. Could it be

that some of these Harvard, Yale or Wharton MBA's know so little, or have so small regards, for and about us that they allow Black parasites to talk them into supporting activities on a shoestring budget that is unable to tie-in the full monetary reinforcement necessary for insured success?

Now let's not put all the fault on outsiders for even though a slew of our organizations, businesses and individuals get substantial funding for programs and ventures, they too forget the Afro-American Press and the many well equipped Black public relations firms throughout the country. How many times are we asked to R.S.V.P. to an ofay agency that's collecting \$50,000 to \$75,000 fees for handling something of ours? Let me

count the many. One major nat'l org., just out of a historic event, hired a white DeeCee P.R. firm to handle the affair who knew nothing about the subject or the people, but had to let it go in the middle of the drive due to a shortage of cash. Not only does this show a blatant disregard for our own industry, but self as well because as you always say, "to have faith in your own kind is to have faith in yourself." Maybe your readers would like to voice an opinion on this problem.

JOYFUL NOISE - While Gov. Cuomo's man, Tony Spencer and Mayor Koch's guy, James Harding, 3rd were busy handing proclamations to Vy Higginsen to mark the 1000th ann'y performance, "Mama I Want to Sing," neither had a mumbling word of encouragement about the City's attempt to move the show out of its home at the Heckscher. "Right now we're leasing just month to month, so I've put the matter in the hands of a higher power," she said. "Mama"

will hit the road again comes March with flings in Philly, DeeCee and points West and South. The cast is currently in the recording studio putting the finishing voices on the official "cast album." The tab for the pre-show cocktails and hors d'oeuvres was picked up by API. That ad rep's honchos, Don Roberts, Arthur Ralph and Carl Jackson were the charming hosts. Others on the insight level were former TeeVee "Fame" luminary Erica Gimple, NBC's Rolanda Watts and Nat'l Black Net's Bob Law. Also

comic/activist, and expected new diet king, Dick Gregory, delineator Shannon and clean as a whistle "soap's," "Another World," Pamela Kay . . . You have another nice letter from show biz pioneer Eva Jessye. Her remembered friends can now reach her at the U. of Michigan, Ann Arbor. She spent her 91st b'day in Atlanta, where you are now, and they gave her quite a party at Pascal's motel . . . Ward AME Church for conceiving the idea of "Room For One More," the church's adoption and foster program for hard-to-place youngsters. As an outgrowth of this yearly event L.A. Mayor Tom Bradley, along with Pasadena's William Bogaard and Santa Monica's Christine Reed, have simultaneously named the third week of February "Black Adoption Week" in their fair cities . . . "Langston Hughes: The Dream Keeper" has completed principle photography under the eye of award winning documentary director St. Clair Bourne. Using locations throughout the U.S., Paris, and Darkar, Segegal, the film features appearances by James Baldwin, Amiri Baraka, Hon. Leopold Senghor, former president of Senegal, and Gwendolyn Brooks. It will also include performances by Max Roach, Novella Nelson and choreographer Dianne McIntyre. Produced by the N.Y. Center for Visual History as part of their "Voices and Visions" film series which spotlights the tradition of American poetry, "Hughes" will be aired over PBS stations and in the United Kingdom later this year . . . It's been real for NANCY's write in for Billy Rowe . . . Syndicated

CCCC Theatre To Present "Night Mother"

"Night, Mother," Marsha Norman's Pulitzer prize-winning drama, directed by Brian Strom, opens February 14 at Clark County Community College Theatre. Evening performances are February 14, 15, 20, 21 and 22 at 8 p.m., and there will be a Saturday matinee February 22 at 2 p.m.

Following the February 20 performance, a unique experience is offered to theatregoers. After the show, the audience will have an opportunity to meet with the director and cast, and participate in an informal discussion.

"Night, Mother" focuses on a single night in the home of Jessie Cates and her mother, Thelma, played by Karen McKenney and Kathryn Sandy O'Brien. Jessie has decided that the only positive thing she can do with her life is to end it.

Karen McKenney and Kathryn Sandy O'Brien are both familiar faces in the theatre community. They are accomplished actresses and directors.

McKenney directed the Rainbow Company's productions of "The Wiz," "Charlotte's Web," and co-directed "Oliver!" She also played Anna McKenzie in their production of "Odd Man Out." Even though McKenney has never appeared in any CCCC production, she choreographed "Company" and is the mime in the CCCC commercial.

O'Brien, on the other hand, has appeared in several CCCC productions, including "Beyond Therapy," "Company" and "A Couple White Chicks Sitting Around Talking." She also was in the Las Vegas Little Theatre's productions of "Talking With" and "Chapter Two." O'Brien's directing credits include: LVL's "Crimes of the Heart" and "Play On."

"The thing that is exciting about the show is that it offers good roles for two actresses," says Strom. "The characters are revealed to us in very intimate terms, requiring that the actors be completely honest."

General admission is \$6 and students and seniors are

\$4 for Friday and Saturday night performances. Thursday night and Saturday matinee performances are \$5 for general admission and \$3 for students and seniors.

Clark County Community College Theatre is located at 3200 East Cheyenne Avenue. For further information or reservations, please call 643-9188.

"Night, Mother" is recommended for mature audiences.

Actor Lou Gossett Honored By Ward AME Church

"Room For One More," an organization of the Ward AME Church, pastored by the Rev. Frank D. Reid, III, has named Academy Award-winning actor Louis Gossett, Jr. as a man who has made "room for one more" in his life and in his home.

Gossett recently read of the plight of Sharron Anthony Jones, a homeless St. Louis youngster, and came to his aid.



Lou Gossett

In announcing the selection of Gossett, who won an Oscar for his role in "An Officer and a Gentleman," Rev. Reid declared:

"In the tradition of the Black community, Mr. Gossett has demonstrated there is always a spoonful of soup left in the pot."

"Room For One More," Ward AME's parent adoptions group which is chaired by Jackie Walker, will hold its annual "Black Adoption Week" activities from Feb. 17 to 23. Mayor Tom Bradley and the mayors of Pasadena, Lynwood, Culver City, Santa Monica, Compton and Inglewood will declare this period as "Black Adoption Week" in their respective cities.

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