



Posing prior to the "Wattstax" premiere in Los Angeles is the film's director, Mel Stuart, comic Richard Pryor, who was a guest star in the film, singer Melba Moore and Stax Board Chairman Al Bell, who was co-executive producer of the film. "Wattstax" will play next at the Alameda Theatre.

## "Wattstax" premieres in Los Angeles

Searchlights scanned the heavens pointing to the direction in which a galaxy of new film starts was to be launched. This was a gala affair, the most exciting event since the Academy Awards last year. It was the world premiere of "Wattstax" held earlier this year at the Ahmanson Theatre in the Los Angeles Music Center.

The luxurious theatre was filled with Stax recording artists, television and motion picture stars and people from the Watts community. And for the first time in Hollywood history, every element of our society was represented on the guest list and they were all exposed to a profound and stirring depiction of Black life as it really is.

The Wattstax film is loosely based on a seven-hour concert given for the benefit of the Watts community last August. The Stax/Wolper production is being distributed by Columbia Pictures and has already opened in Los Angeles, Chicago, New York and Washington.

On that warm Sunday night in Hollywood, it all began. Greg Morris, star of "Mission Impossible", greeted guests and in his role as emcee, interviewed celebrities. Such luminaries as Zsa Zsa Gabor, Rona Barrett, Sonny and Cher, Jim Brown, Redd Foxx, Hugh O'Brien, Lonne Elder, Melba Moore, Cicely Tyson and Bernie Casey were all there.

There had been 32 Stax artists who performed in the Wattstax '72 concert and Isaac Hayes, the Bar-Kays, Carla and Rufus Thomas and Johnnie Taylor arrived to view their contributions to the film.

Then, there were also national figures like Roy Innis of CORE and local dignitaries like Councilman Tom Bradley of Los Angeles. Among the more popular guests however, was comic Richard Pryor with cornrowed hair and leather suit. His role as commentator in the film is unique and beyond description. Overall, as the experience of Black life is relatively new to film, so "Wattstax" is also a unique experience. Not a feature, and not a documentary, the film epitomizes a new form, organic in nature and growing, as Black culture has, from the circumstances of Black life in America. Indeed, the audience had the opportunity to laugh, cry, shout, stomp and above all, feel pride in the accomplishments of Stax Films and Wolper Pictures.

Following the premiere, Johnnie Taylor hosted the out-of-town guests in a party at his Marina del Rey penthouse. Artists and executives, including Stax Organizational board chairman Al Bell, were there sharing words of happiness. The party was the perfect ending to a momentous event, from the sumptuous banquet to the magnificent view of Holly-

## Drama classes ready

Spring term Portland Community College will offer two drama classes designed to meet everyone's interest whether performer or an appreciative member of the audience.

"Fundamentals of Acting" is for those who wish to develop performing and producing skills. The class is offered Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, 10 a.m. to 12 noon followed by a two-hour laboratory session.

The "Appreciation of Drama" class will present readings of Brecht's "Good Woman of Setzuan," Miller's "Death of a Salesman," and two American musicals, "My Fair Lady" and "Hair." "Appreciation of Drama" requires no memorization. It will be offered Tuesday and Thursday from 10 to 11:30 a.m.

Both classes will meet in PCC's Little Theatre at the Sylvania center.

For more information contact Roy Stave at PCC, 244-6111.



Tamara Dobson's curvaceous body and athletic prowess serve her well in the exciting action sequences of "Cleopatra Jones", the Warner Bros. picture in which she stars. Competing in a motorcycle hill climb and using karate on gangsters are just two of the physical talents she displays in the film.

## 'Cleopatra' star special

Tamara Dobson is no ordinary person. One glance at the beauty of her cover girl face and the regal bearing of her shapely 6'2" figure is enough to convince anyone of that fact.

As the star of "Cleopatra Jones" she plays a screen heroine of extraordinary attributes as movie fans will see when the Warner Brothers picture is released this summer.

However, there are other things about Tamara that prove how exceptional she is... things less obvious and more personal.

If she were merely an ordinary person she might well have settled for what life had to offer her in the Baltimore ghetto where she was born. After finishing public schools, Tamara received her degree in fashion illustration at the Maryland Institute of Art.

"I also have my license for beauty culture," Tamara explains. "I know the business quite well and know how to handle the books. I have my own's license, too, and operate a shop with my mother."

"But I decided there was something else, something more that I wanted."

The determination to act on this decision is one of the many qualities that sets her apart from ordinary individuals.

Although she knew she could always go back to beauty culture or could use

her education as a fashion illustrator, Tamara never once looked back after shaking the dust of Baltimore from her feet.

"But even as I moved into new areas, met new people, learned new concepts of life, I found the story was always the same - 'You're still Black, my dear.'"

"But I held onto that and used it as my own tool. That's how I got this role. Because many Black girls who get to be models become very white in that they forget where they came from. I always remember where I came from, who I am, and why I'm here."

"So being a model helped me educate myself as far as acting is concerned. It helped me further my education as far as fencing, and my speech, all those things - the theatre, the ballet, music and concerts - These experiences helped me fulfill myself as a person."

And that person is certainly no humdrum, ordinary person. The excitement Tamara generates on the screen in the title role of "Cleopatra Jones" is what Hollywood once called "star quality".

Ordinary people don't have it. "Cleopatra Jones" is being directed by Jack Starrett and produced by William Tennant for Warner Bros. from an original screenplay by Tennant, Max Julien and Sheldon Keller.

## Soul Stuff

by Joey Saxso

### OBSERVATIONS IN COVERING THE NIGHT BEAT:

A new version of "The Harlem Globetrotters Popcorn Machine" kicks off a big CBS night of specials March 16th, followed by Lily Tomlin and Ed Sullivan. Public reaction will decide if the famed basketball team will be a fall series with weekly songs, dances and comedy skits. If you're a Globetrotters fan, now's the time to write CBS and register your vote...

Muhammad Ali may soon be giving Jim Brown and other Super Black hero stars a run for their money. He's on the verge of signing a contract with Warner Brothers for a new detective flick to start filming in the late winter...

The whisper from Hollywood this week concerns a well-known actress who supposedly has been off in Europe doing some location shooting, which turned out to be a cover up for the fact that she was pregnant by a man other than her well-known husband...

That was Al Green, Bobby Womack, Sarah Vaughan and the Harry Belafontes cheering Aris San at Sirocco the other nite. They toasted each other with Teacher's Scotch to celebrate a forthcoming event...

Record-breaker: The all-time record for the number of performances in one week by a Broadway show has been established by the musical, "Don't Bother Me, I Can't Cope". It played five shows at NAACP benefits in Indianapolis, and then returned to Broadway to play six more, for a total of 11...

Incidentally, Micki Grant, who wrote the lyrics and music for "Don't Bother Me, I Can't Cope", and is also featured in it, returned to the TV soap opera, "Another World", in her role of lawyer Peggy Nolan. She was on that show six years before leaving in October for the play...

It's rare when you find a native New York entertainer starring in a New York spot. That's the case of Jules Podell's Copacabana where exciting songstress Melba Moore is headlining. She'll be welcoming neighbors and tourists there through March 14th...

King Floyd, Chimneyville recording artist, has released his newest effort entitled, "Think About It". Floyd is best known for his past million selling success, "Groove Me", which became a gold hit of the past. He also released a tune last year which placed high on the national charts entitled,

Joe Tex and Leah Miller married and are awaiting an infant. He's the soul singer whose square monicker is Joe Hazlet...

Another fall series to anticipate, possibly with more enthusiasm than most of the others announced, is one based on the TV movie called "Four Devils". Sammy Davis is set to star, and the co-star might be Chris Lee of British horror-film fame...

Donnie Warwick, who has been working toward getting her master's degree in music and who is expecting her second child soon, has confided to friends that she plans to retire from performing when she gets her degree! The singer, who is one of Las Vegas' top draws, says that she wants to teach music to children...

Hubby Bill Elliott is a regular on the "Bridget and Bernie" TV series...

Godfrey Cambridge is finally ready to go back to work - and is all over his physical problems. And he's 150 pounds lighter. That is what the man said, 150 pounds! But it took him almost a year to lose it, and he ended up in a hospital for a couple of months!...

Cicely Tyson, who is just great in "Sounder" and has already picked up a couple of acting prizes for it - and is expected to be nominated for an Oscar - is really coming down hard on the Black exploitation movies. She's of the opinion that the films are harmful to the very Blacks that they are supposed to help. Needless to say, she will not be appearing in one of them, no matter how much money she's offered...

Diana Ross, former Supreme, is counting her chances for best actress awards coming up. Some people say that her role in "Lady Sings the Blues" was fantastic. Rumor has it that she plans another movie already. Her singing seems to have taken a back seat to the acting bit. Diana, who's had two babies in two years, says she won't quit until she's had six more. Needless to say, Diana's just crazy about kids...

On the "Mannix" TV show, Gail Fisher and series star Mike Connors seldom see eye to eye on anything, either on or off camera...

"Woman Don't Go Astray". Currently preparing for a national tour, Floyd has been acclaimed throughout the country as "a great showman", and his recording success gives strength to his shows. Floyd is also in the process of finishing his latest album, and he hopes to have it released by spring.

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## Artist displays work

A collection of drawings by former Portland resident Harold Jacobs will be on display in Portland State University's White Gallery beginning March 5. The exhibit, "Ligre Suite", will hang the entire month.

The 11 drawings are owned by Arlene Schnitzer of the Fountain Gallery. Completed in 1970, they are drawn with numerous mediums (charcoal, pencil, oils, etc.)

Jacobs studied at New York University and on a Fulbright Scholarship at the Sorbonne in Paris. The

former Portland Museum Art School instructor is currently on the faculty of Moore College in Philadelphia.

Jacobs' paintings and drawings have been exhibited in Paris and throughout the United States. His most recent one-man exhibitions were in Museo de Arte de Ponce, Puerto Rico; the Vanderlip Gallery, Philadelphia; and Gimpel and Weitzenhoffer Ltd., New York.

Jacobs says his art work seeks to "affirm what I care about most deeply as a person."

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