

ENTERTAINMENT

HAPPENINGS

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COVER GIRL MARLENA SHAW ON ROAD TO STARDOM

Marlena Shaw, the cover girl and subject of a major profile in the May issue of *Playboy* magazine, would be pursuing her career teaching handicapped children were it not for Count Basie. She was attending college in New York when the Count heard her sing and signed her to tour with his band.

She has since recorded several albums that attracted a small but loyal following. Until now. Her new album, *Take A Bite*, has shot right off the charts and is destined to propel this lovely, multi-talented jazz vocalist to the stardom she deserves. Ms. Shaw is a native of Las Vegas and is a Libra.

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THE LAND WHERE THE BLUES BEGAN

"Bad luck is killin' me..." says Joe Savage. But there's also the optimism and the trust of Walter Brown when he says, "God's takin' care of me, 'cause I should have been dead 40 years ago."

Chatmon, Savage and Brown, along with other Mississippians, lament the bad luck, the hard times, the lost love, the loneliness and the deprivation that spawned the struggle that shaped their lives, inspiring the unique music style called the blues.

Their music and their stories are presented in "The Land Where the Blues Began." Produced by the Mississippi Center for Educational Television in cooperation with producer/folklorist Alan Lomax of Columbia University, the hour-long program provides "a platform to the creators of this vital folk culture." It can be seen at 5:00 p.m., Saturday, May 10th on Channel 10.

The documentary listens to the penitentiary field "hollers," which the inmates sang not only for diversion while they performed their field duties at Parchman, but also to create a common beat to help them work in unison; viewers will visit St. James Baptist Church to hear the Rev. Caesar Smith's relentless, fiery sermon; and viewers will be introduced to the special mirth of bar room poets like Johnny Brooks as he shares the lively tale of "The Signifying Monkey." Also, men tell of their lively times on the Mississippi River steamboats, and they tell of life in the levee camps while the Mississippi River levees were being built.



Several Mississippians share the contributions they have made to the blues scene by performing their songs and relating old stories and memories in "The Land Where the Blues Began." Included are, upper left, Jack Owens and, upper right, Sam Chatmon. Pictured in lower photo, left to right, are Bud Spires, producer/folklorist Alan Lomax and Jack Owens. "The Land Where the Blues Began" is a production of the Mississippi Center for Educational Television.



These Black pioneers from Mississippi are Lonnie Pitchford, Napoleon Strickland, Clyde Maxwell, Beatrice Maxwell, Lucius Smith, Bud Spires, Jack Owens, Walter Brown, Eugene Powell, Sam Chatmon, Wilbert Puckett, J.T. Tucker, George Johnson, Joe Savage, William S. Hart, Bill Gordon, Belton Sutherland, the Rev. Caesar Smith, James Hall and Johnny Brooks.

All of these artists share with the audience the contributions they have made to the blues by performing their songs and relating stories and memories, demonstrating in the singing and the telling that they "have been there."

"The Land Where the Blues Began" was photographed and edited by John M. Bishop and was researched and developed by Worth Long. Project coordinator was Paula Tadlock.

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