



THE ENTERTAINMENT SEEN

By Ken Covington

Act One

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The House That Berry Built

"Hey, man, not like that! You are supposed to take two steps back, spin to the right and clap twice, then slide left." "Alright, alright, alright. I got it now, but when I saw them on the Ed Sullivan Show last night, they slid to the right!" "Yea, well, which way did you watch your TV. Did you sit in front like regular folks where the steps are backwards, or do y'all watch the back of your TV!" The boys howl in laughter, some even fall against the wall weak from gut-wrenching guffaws that seem to bounce off every wall in the tiny school bathroom where today, in front of the mirror, they have suddenly become the Temptations.

Does this sound familiar? I'm sure it must, because all over the country all little boys and girls were imitating either the Temptations and The Supremes; or Smokey, Stevie Wonder or Martha and the Vandellas during the 60's and 70's: the golden age of the baby boomers.

Motown is responsible for treating the world to some of the finest Black entertainment ever known. Richard Pryor, Grover Washington, Jr., Marvin Gaye, and Lionel Richie are among the golden list of names from Motown that shaped the very direction and status of R&B music in the world today.

In the mid-70's when Hollywood was cranking out the Black exploitation films, Berry Gordy produced a modern masterpiece called "Lady Sings the Blues" that showed the rest of the nation that Blacks can act and produce quality films and quality roles and role models; another first for Blacks via Motown.

When you think of the top names in music today, among them are Diana Ross and Micael Jackson, both of whom are no longer with Motown but owe an awful lot to the genius of Berry Gordy. As I mentioned earlier, in the mid-70's when Berry Gordy was producing "Lady Sings the Blues", he moved his whole operation from Detroit, the Motor City, to Los Angeles, "the plastic paradise", and so ended the real golden age of the Motown Sound.

Don't get me wrong. Many good things still flowed from the "house that Berry built": movies like "Mohogany", "The Wiz", and "The Last Dragon"; new artists like Bobby Nunn, Finis Henderson, De Barge and even Star Search winner Sam Harris.

Motown is no longer "The Sound of Young America", but by no means is it a thing of the past. Everyone can't be on top forever; it's just not meant to be that way. But never before and never again will there be a period and a company that touched the hearts and minds of the whole world and changed the image of the African-American. The nearest I can come to it is Dr. Martin Luther King, and Martin came from God.

How many times can we turn on the TV or radio and hear background music from the golden age of Motown; how many Motown Revues will there be; and how many more plays and stories will be written about the magic that flowed from the "house that Berry built"? The question will not be answerable until the end of time. Until then, Berry, here's to you!

French Music for Violin & Piano

Violinist Pierre d'Archembeau and pianist Christopher Schindler will present an evening of chamber music by French composers at 8 p.m. Friday, July 24, at the Old Church. Admission to the recital is \$5.00 general and \$4.00 students and seniors, tickets at the door. The program will feature music by Faure, Debussy and Messiaen. For more information, call the Old Church, 222-2031. The Old Church is located at 1422 S.W. 11th, on the Northeast corner of S.W. 11th & Clay.

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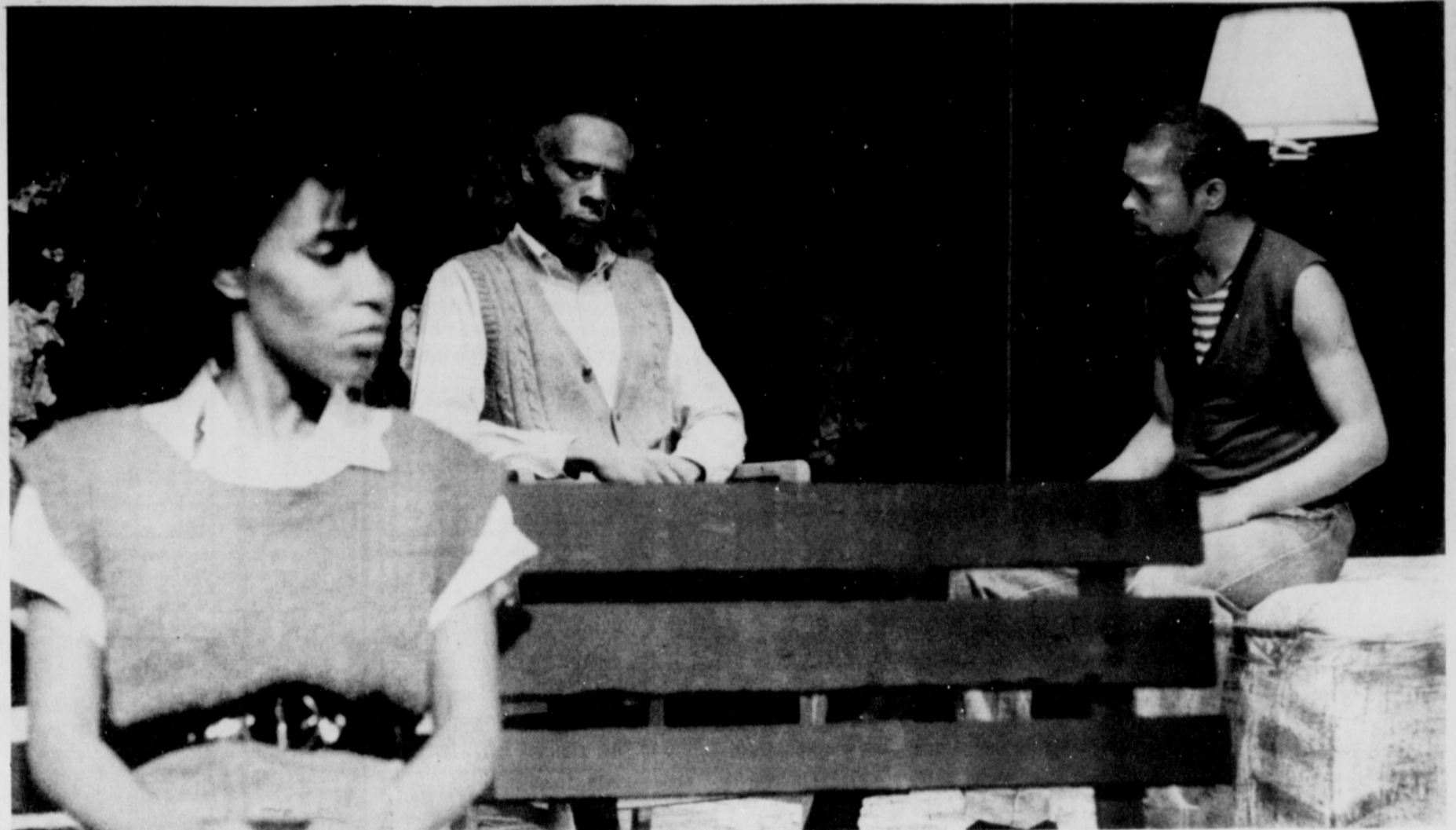
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Alea (Julie Serquinia) sits stage-front while Rusty (Neal Thomas) and his son, Val (Henry Melson), discuss how he (Val) should deal with the results of his actions in the play "Split Second". The play, directed by Michael J. Grant, is being performed by PassinArt: A Theater Company at the Interstate Firehouse Cultural Center Friday, Saturday and Sunday through July 26, 1987.

Photo by Richard J. Brown

Ben Linder Memorial Fund Folk Dance

A benefit Folk Dance will be held July 24, 1987 from 7 - 10 p.m. at the Garden Home Recreation Center, 7475 S.W. Oleson Road, Portland, Oregon. The proceeds from this benefit dance will help continue Ben's humanitarian work in Nicaragua.

There will be folk dancing with experienced leaders as well as Nicaraguan slides and information. Refreshments will be served. There is a suggested donation of \$4.00, which is tax deductible.

This event is sponsored by the West Hills Unitarian Fellowship's Social Concerns Committee and the Portland Corinto Sister City Association.

For more information, contact Garden Home Recreation Center, 244-1101.

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