

ENTERTAINMENT

BROADWAY BOUND REPORT



by Garland Lee Thompson

"BIRD" FLIES INTO TOWN
Charlie "Yardbird" Parker living on through his music, now reaches us, his fans and devotees, via Clint "Make my day" Eastwood's highly sensitive film adaptation, "Bird," now playing at the Lloyd Cinema, which I saw opening night. If you are a "bird-lover," you can now be a "Bird-watcher" and witness, for the first time on film, the struggle, pain and pleasure of 23 of "Bird's" actual recorded numbers, "played" electronically under music director, Lennie Niehaus, by actor, Forest Whitaker as Charlie "Bird" Parker.

Chan Parker, "Bird's" widow (played powerfully by Diane Venora), was a key consultant on the two hours and 45 minute film that traces "Bird's" short 34 years of bitter-sweet life until his death in March, 1955. One rarely thinks of "Bird" at home with the wife, kids, sitting in front of the TV, or on the road playing in L.A. and one-nighters. This take us off the dusty record labels and album jackets and introduces the person, who showed the "Othello-type flaws" and true character of the man, as it must have been while he was busy, permanently changing the sound of our modern jazz music and personally self-destructing inside and out. America's "only indigenous art form," jazz and "Bird" is now properly documented for history and the world market.

If, like myself, you wondered what it must have been like to be a Black revolutionary jazz music artist in "White America" during the forties and fifties; this is a smookey, murkey, boozey and drug-haunted rendition of the man himself and his music that "everybody" now in the jazz music world, is playing and emulating. His solos are standards now, clubs, like Birdland's on West fifty second Street in New York were named after him and everybody's waiting for his next "incarnation" or successor to appear.

Now here comes actor turned director, Eastwood, and scenarist Joel Oliansky, taking a big chance, evoking the memory of this great "Bird." And what I found fascinating about the film, they portrayed living people, such as Jazz greats, Dizzy Gillespie, as they must have been in those fateful days in the gin joints and cafe society "watering holes" of America and Europe.

I remember a few years ago, standing in front of the Village Vanguard, seeing Dizzy getting out of a car and greeting me warmly before going inside the club for his gig. So, I wonder how he must feel, seeing a young Black actor playing "him" as a struggling Black musician and band leader trying to stay alive, make a living and play his music.

It might be a good case for "the Society to Remove Jazz from the Saloon" mentality, but for the film, "Bird," everything's "coming up roses" right here in the City of Roses. At one point in the film, this audience suddenly started throwing roses at Charlie Parker on stage. He caught one, kissed it and held it high! Check it out, Jazz lovers. "Write on, Bird!"

A STAR IN ARSENIO HALL
Arsenio Hall was the eventual replacement for Joan Rivers on Fox Broadcasting's "Late Show." I almost turned off my TV, but he said something, did something or talked to someone "hot," like Eddie Murphy or gorgeous, intelligent women and look good doing it, so I gave him a "shot" and watch his show.

A temporary gig made him a rising new star. Hall was supposed to just hold down the late-night show while Fox prepared, "The Wilton North Report." A thirteen week non-renewal contract and Hall started to rise in the ratings. Fox blew it! They tried to make a new deal, but Paramount had beaten them "to the punch" and signed him to a two-year contract. This preventing his return to do the "Late Show." Paramount is starting to make full use of its

newest star in its "stable," on new pictures ("Coming To America") and plans for Arsenio's own all new late-night hour talk show.

Now remember, screen fans, Eddie Murphy is "the super hot" property of Paramount. It is with Murphy, his friend and "hand-buddy," that he co-stars with in "Coming To America," a summer '88 box office hit. I met Arsenio at the first press screening and party of "Coming To America," with Eddie Murphy. This enable me to be one of the first of the press in town to write "a scoop" article (June 22nd, 1988) about this new film team of Murphy, Arsenio Hall and Shari Headley.

And now Hall says he's "in big trouble, people will expect so much this time. With 'The Late Show,' nobody cared or counted on me to do very much. I was the underdog then. They let me do anything I wanted, and that's why it worked." "Write on, Arsenio!"

"PAUL ROBESON" RETURNS TO BROADWAY

STARRING AVERY BROOKS
Actor Avery Brooks stars on Broadway in Phillip Hayes Dean's "Paul Robeson," a play with music based on the life of Paul Robeson. It also stars Ernie Scott and if directed by Harold Scott, at the Golden Theatre, on West 45th Street, in New York. This is a six week return to Broadway for "Paul Robeson," that originally opened on Broadway in a production that I saw, featured James Earl Jones. Avery Brooks, who has been seen in hit TV series and film, has received favorable reviews in New York for his performance of "the great black oak tree."

AN UNPRODUCED PLAY BY LANGSTON HUGHES AND ZORA NEALE HURSTON

New York's Lincoln Center Theatre is close to concluding negotiations for the rights to a never-performed play from the 1930's by Langston Hughes and Zora Neale Hurston, "Mule Bone." This play was intended to be the first comedy about Blacks that did not rely on stereotypes. The third act has been published, but not the entire play, according to Geogory Mosher, director. It could open sometime in the winter at the Newhouse at Lincoln Center or the Lyceum Theatre. Only real theatre bluffs would know Langston Hughes also teamed up with German composer, Kurt Weill, and wrote an opera, entitled, "Street Scene," that was produced in New York years ago. If you got that right, you know your theatre history, "Write on, theatre buppies!"



A Celebration Of Love



by Sylvia McDaniel

Meloncon's "Diary" has come and gone but, the controversy still exists. The age old conflict between Black men and Black women is flourishing. **HOW DO YOU LOVE A BLACK WOMAN? HOW DO YOU LOVE A BLACK MAN?**

That is the question today. A dilemma that has proven to be a valid issue in the Black community for the past several years. A topic of discussion for which many books, articles, plays and community forums have examined in hopes of understanding the vivid controversy. Such noted plays on this issue are "The Diary of Black Men and For Colored Girls Only."

Looking beyond the facts and into the Black experience, the consensus of "I heard it" throughout the Black community is that both Black men and Black women have invented various excuses for their love, hate relationship. The growing number of single Black women, single Black mothers and interracial affairs (I've seen mixed affairs especially among Black men in Portland, Oregon) are all results of the senseless combat.

SHAME ON YOU BLACK MAN! SHAME ON YOU BLACK WOMEN!

Have you forgotten that the Black male and Black female experience was the foundation and the survival of the Black race? Yet, through beginning Africa, slavery, and civil rights, something went wrong. The bond between two special soul mates, the Black male and the Black female—the warrior and the warriorette—seem to hold less importance in the 1980's. Although, history has shown that the root of the conflict developed many years ago, we cannot overlook the fact that the negative attitudes and differences expressed between Black men and Black women have become more visible since integration.

The love, hate excuses continue to fester now more than ever.

BLACK MEN DON'T LIKE BLACK WOMEN BECAUSE ... BLACK WOMEN DON'T LIKE BLACK MEN BECAUSE ...

I wonder what is on the minds of Black men and Black women across the country after the recent break-up of Mike Tyson and Robin Givens?

Are Black men saying, "That's how Black women are. All they want is to take a Nig—money!"

Are Black women saying, "That's how Black men are. All they want to do is kick your A—"

What will happen next? Will Michael and Robin continue on

with another Black mate, sharing Black love? Or will they use this as an excuse to hate Black men, to hate Black women? In the near future Barbara "Wa Wa" will probably be the first to expose their new relationships. I'm betting Michael and Robin's new mates will be.

Yet and still, do both Black men and Black women really have valid complaints for disliking each other? Or, are both parties in a round about way trying to say: "I DON'T NEED YOU BLACK MAN," "I DON'T NEED YOU BLACK WOMAN," ANYMORE ...

Unfortunately, we cannot undo what has already taken place. It is up to the Black community as a whole to solve the problem before it totally explodes into destructive combat. Many agree that a resolution is crucial for the survival of a unique culture, Black humankind; Black men and Black women breed Black babies, Black leaders.

To avoid further controversy, however, Black men and Black women should begin by apologizing to each other for the negative attitudes they've shared. Regardless of the road Black people choose as individuals, the universal love shared within the Black male and Black female experience must be acknowledged and never forgotten.

Therefore, for those who want to carry on with Black love, don't be afraid to fight for what may have been lost. Re-ignite the sparks by opening your hearts and utilizing trust. And, don't forget the most valuable law of all, communication. Importantly, take care of those Black babies you birth especially you, Black men.

On the other hand, for those who wish to exercise their freedom of choice, loving outside of the realm, I say more power to you! Everyone has the right to spend their time with whom they darn well please. I am hoping though that Blacks who have involved themselves in interracial relationships have done so out of sincerity, and not because of remorse felt towards their own Black kind. I for one can wholeheartedly understand the necessity of a loving relationship, and refuse to sit at home alone on a Saturday night waiting—but you are still number one in my book, Black man! However, our individual choices should not stop us the next time we pass each other on the street, from saying HELLO, brother or sister, in acknowledgement of the valuable experience we've shared!

We invite those of you who wish to take part in the celebration of Black love, to respond in writing to the **Portland Observer**, in answer to the question of the '80s.

HOW DO YOU LOVE A BLACK WOMAN? HOW DO YOU LOVE A BLACK MAN?

Your written cooperation will hopefully be the beginning of renewed relationships between Black men and Black women in Portland, Oregon. Write: **Portland Observer**, c/o Sylvia McDaniel, 525 N.E. Killingsworth, Portland, OR 97211.



Melba Moore Has A Sweet Obsession

Superstar Melba Moore who has achieved fame in every aspect of entertainment and opened doors for artists such as Freddie Jackson, has proven again that she has a golden ear with a new group — "Sweet Obsession".

Melba saw the talented sisters (Keena, Kimmala, and Michelle Green) from Detroit while hosting the Ohio Valley Music Awards. After seeing their sizzling performance, Melba invited them to meet with the high power Hush Productions management firm in New York. Although the music awards was suppose to be the girls last venture in the music business, they jumped at the chance to meet with the management firm that molded Melba Moore as well as Freddie Jackson's career.

Sweet Obsession's first single, "I'm Gonna Get Over You," from their self-titled debut album is rapidly rising up the music charts. Their impending success has garnered them a song in Tri-star picture's winter release "Iron Eagle II" starring Lou Gossett Jr., as well as joining Freddie Jackson's USA tour as the opening act.

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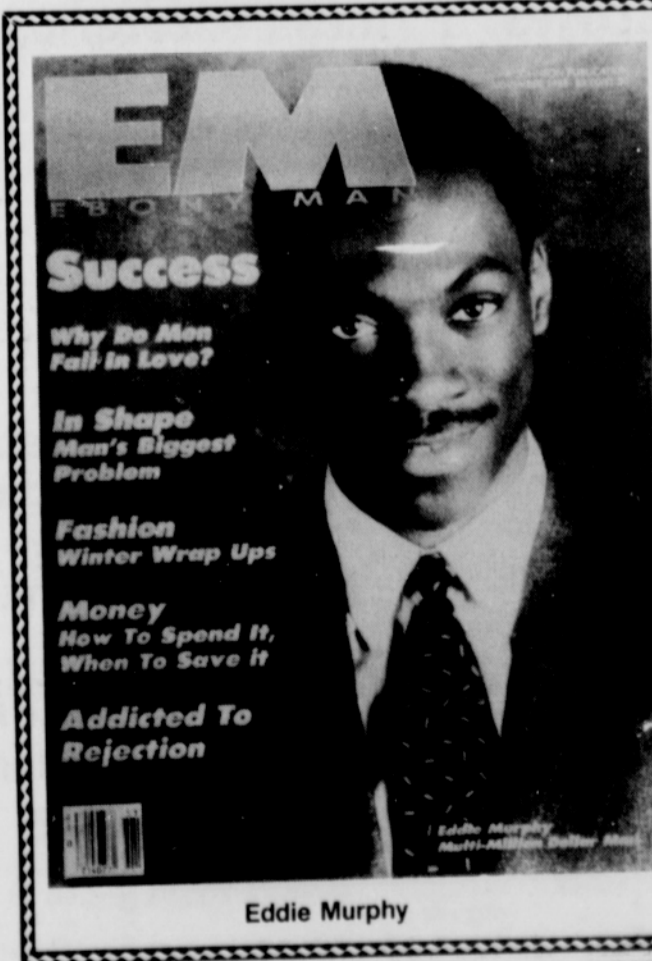
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Eddie Murphy

Million Dollar Man Eddie Murphy In The November 'Ebony Man'

Multi-million dollar man Eddie Murphy searches for love and happiness, plus "Overcoming Barriers To Great Sex," getting out of "Claustrophobic Relationships" and "What Men Look For In A Woman" are featured in the November EM.

Murphy, America's number one box-office star with his current hit, "Coming To America," tells how his real life frustrations in finding a mate parallel those of his movie character, Akeem. "I've had so many instances when I thought I'd found the ideal woman and it turned out not to be," says Murphy. Ready for fatherhood, he says, "I want kids real bad. I'm ready to commit to a child, but I'm not ready to commit to a marriage. With a wife you can't just say 'Hey baby, I need a week alone.' And I'm still at the point where I need a week by myself alot."

Also in the November EM: Some practical methods to use in "Overcoming Barriers To Great Sex," and advice on getting out of "Claustrophobic Relationships" is offered, while several brothers speak out on "What Men Look For In A Woman." Plus, EM examines "Why Men Fall In Love," shows how to keep a lid on your spending habits and tells why finding the right fragrance makes good scents.