



ENTERTAINMENT



Broadway Bound Report

by Garland Lee Thompson

SIX NEW PLAYS AND MUSICAL SELECTED FOR PRESENTATION BY AT&T: ONSTAGE AT SEVEN LEADING AMERICAN THEATRES

"The AT&T New Plays for the Nineties Project," 35 Theatres Submitted Proposals

AT&T has selected six new plays and musical for mainstage presentation by AT&T OnStage, its national theatre program, and will provide production grants totalling \$300,000 to seven leading American theatres, along with advertising, marketing, and public relations/promotion support.

The new works were chosen from proposals submitted by 35 theatres through

Frank Silvera Writers' Workshop for a number of years in the seventeen years since this writer founded the Workshop in New York for development of new playwrights and the theatre.

The other selected plays and producing organizations are as follows:

- * "Search and Destroy" by Howard Korder -- South Coast Repertory Theatre of California.

- * "Square One" by Steve Tesich -- Second Stage Theatre of New York.

- * "Johnny Pye and the Foolkiller," a musical by Mark St. Germain and Randy Courts -- George Street Playhouse of New Jersey.



Elain Graham, LaTanya Richardson and Marie Thomas (left to right) in a scene from the Manhattan Theatre Club production of Richard Wesley's "THE TALENTED TENTH."

"The AT&T New Plays for the Nineties Project," a first-time special initiative designed by AT&T to identify new plays and musicals for presentation under its AT&T OnStage program.

One of the plays selected by the AT&T OnStage program is "The Talented Tenth" by Richard Wesley--Manhattan Theatre Club of New York. At the November 20, 1989, 17th Annual AUDELCO Black Theatre Recognition Awards in New York, this new play won seven AUDELCO Awards for Best Play, Best Dramatic Production, Best Actress, Best Supporting Actress, etc.

"The Talented Tenth," is the latest play by Richard Wesley, who has been writing primarily for film and television in recent years ("Uptown Saturday Night," "Let's Do It Again" and "Native Son," etc.) His last play to reach Broadway in New York was "The Mighty Gents," which this writer first produced Off-Off Broadway in 1977, under the title of "The Last Street Play," for the Frank Silvera Writers' Workshop. Both the Workshop and the Eugene O'Neill Playwrights' Center were given credit for assisting the development of that powerful Richard Wesley play.

Richard Wesley is a founding member and was on the board of directors of the

- * "Each day Dies With Sleep" by Jose Rivera -- a joint production of Circle Repertory Company of New York and Berkeley Repertory of California.

- * "Once on This Island," a new musical with words by Lynn Ahrens, music by Stephen Flaherty and choreography by Graciela Daniele -- Playwrights Horizons of New York.

AT&T is delighted to announce the selection of these exciting new plays and exemplary theatre organizations," commented Marilyn Laurie, AT&T Senior Vice President, Public Relations. "We are proud to continue our role of leadership in the presentation of exciting new works. Our commitment to theatre is an extension of our belief that new ideas are vital to the growth of our ever-changing world." Write on, AT&T.

An advisory committee of distinguished members of the theatre community who assisted in the selection process included Cora Cahan, producer/choreographer; Graciela Daniele, Choreographer/director; William Finn, composer/lyricist; Albert Innaurato, playwright; Harold Prince, director/producer; and Harold Scott, director.

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BEHIND-THE-SCENES
by Lisa Collins

Warner Bros. Bash Welcomes Quincy Jones Back To The Block--Quincy Jones just can't lose with his latest recording attempt--"Back On The Block," partly due to his music, but mostly due to the incredible crew of friends he enlisted to back him up on the project. Many of them--Luther VanDross, Andrae & Sandra Crouch, Sarah Vaughn, Herbie Hancock, Take Six, Siedah Garrett, were on hand along with Quincy for a grand reception recently thrown on his behalf in Los Angeles. As if the list of those who came out wasn't impressive enough, others who backed him up on the project included Ray Charles, Kool Moe Dee, Miles Davis, George Duke, James Ingram, Ella Fitzgerald, Barry White, Al Jarreau, Big Daddy Kane, Chaka Khan, Al B. Sure, and Bobby McFerrin... Ironically, it was back in 1981 that Jones agreed to do the album for Warners, which was conceived as a followup to "The Dude." Obviously, he got a little sidetracked... Everyone is still talking about the great time that was had by all attending the **glitzy premiere party for "Harlem Nights."** There was Debbie Allen, fresh from her "Pollyanna" triumph for Disney) on hand with her hubby Norm Nixon, Herbie Hancock (who scored the film), Jasmine Guy, Henry Winkler, Jackee, Whitney Houston, Mike Tyson, Vanessa Williams, "magic" Johnson, Berlinda Tolbert. Noticeably absent was **scene stealer Della Reese**, who had been unable to attend due to a scheduled run at the Fairmont Hotel in Chicago. When asked how it was to work with "Harlem Night's" big guns, Reese had this to say. "How could you not enjoy getting up in the morning knowing that you would work with Eddie Murphy, Richard Pryor, Redd Foxx, Arsenio Hall, you know... all of these people live to make you laugh, and they did." Reese, who portrays the foul-mouthed, yet up-standing madame, conferred with the over 100 members of her Universal Foundation for Better Living, after accepting the role. Today, an ordained minister, she says "the role was wonderful because this lady had many layers to her. That was interesting to do. She was a madame, but she was a woman who was very proud of her work... and a lady that demanded respect." Reese, who had taken a great deal of time off, is "ready to go back to work. I want to be able to practice my art, and also to obey what I feel God has asked me to do. I don't see why I can't have the best of both worlds. I don't believe you can't have everything." Come January, she begins work on a TV series for Paramount.

Jackson Lends Magic Touch For Vegas Crowds--Superstar Michael Jackson is getting down to Vegas quite a bit lately, but not because he's performing. In fact, he's been contracted to put together "The Jackson Attraction" for the newly opened \$630 million Mirage Hotel. It's the first such attraction for Jackson since his "Captain EO" spectacular for Disney. Not much is known about the project--a custom-made, special effects display, slated to open in the summer of 1990, except that it will be big.

Round Two For Todd Bridges--Actor Todd Bridges will be retried on a felony assault charge stemming from the Feb. 2nd shooting of a convicted drug dealer. Bridges, 24, was acquitted of attempted murder and voluntary manslaughter charges, and after spending nine months in jail, is free on \$25,000 bail. A mistrial was declared on the remaining charge of assault with a deadly weapon after jurors deadlocked. Bridges, who is now engaged, hopes to get back to acting soon.

In Short: Jim Brown is back in front of the cameras with "Crack House," which centers around one teenager's willingness to fight back against neighborhood gangs. The movie also stars Richard Roundtree... Black filmmaker Euzhan Palcy ("A Dry White Season") was chosen by Glamour Magazine as one of 12 "Women of the Year."... Next Week: Find out why you haven't been hearing much from Al B. Sure.

True Worship



TRUE WORSHIP--Ray Tellis, Dion Perryman, Linda Abel, Brian Foxworth, (left to right), Ronald Harrison, Wade Weakly and Maryetta Collier (top row, left to right).

By Dante Che

True Worship, a local based gospel group. The group makes stirring and moving spiritual music and effects those who are young and alike. True Worship is composed of 12 members who range in age from 18 to 35, seven who are musicians and five vocalists.

The main movers in the band are Darnell Tellis and Ronald Harrison Darnell indicated that True Worship evolved from his association with Aida Reed who is no longer a performer in the group, but still contributes material to them. Having started with these two original members the group has now evolved to 12 members. The name True Worship is derived from the title of one of Reed's compositions.

True Worship has existed in various forms since February of 1986.

Recently they have played with such locally known artists as Curtis Salgado.

The ever changing complexion of the group has them rehearsing right now, preparing for an opportunity to perform.

Their performances in that environment is evidence of a true spiritual experience.

Darnell Tellis, band leader for the group brings a wealth of musical experience and knowledge to the group. He envisions moving up the ladder in the gospel music arena and is actively seeking avenues to present True Worship's message.

The group plays a diverse range of spiritual music ranging from traditional to contemporary.

It is timely that during the commemoration of the birth of Jesus Christ that a new voice is being added to the Praises in his name.

To those in the Christian community you would be well advised to contact Mr. Tellis via the Portland Observer so you and your brethren can join True Worship in musical fellowship.

Lady Day at Emerson's Bar & Grill Held-Over

The Portland Civic Theater has extended the play "Lady Day at Emerson's Bar and Grill" two additional weeks due to popularity of sold out audiences. The play will run through Dec. 30, with show time at 8:00 p.m., Thurs., Fri., Sat., and Sunday at 7:00 p.m.

The play is a true story about the life of the great, legendary jazz singer Billy Holiday in the last year of her life 4 months before her death in 1959. The starring role is filled by Jeanette Russell Brown portraying Billie Holiday. Billie Larkin, keyboard player of organ and piano, also recording artist of the late '60s plays Jimmy Powers. The play is filled with humor, songs talking of events of her life and sadness.

For ticket information call 266-3048, 1530 S.W. Yamhill, Portland.



Jeanette Russell Brown 'Actress' Lady Day at Emerson's Bar & Grill

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