

Arts & ENTERTAINMENT

Ray Charles

The Genius Of Soul

It's a term that for nearly a half century has described the work of one artist--Ray Charles. A man whose talent, style and sheer generosity of spirit has sparked some of the best and most enduring sounds in the whole range of American music, Ray is a true original. That much is history.

But, with Ray Charles, history is always in the making, and his new Warner Bros. Records release, *My World*, continues that tradition. Ten exhilarating selections, with the apt inclusion of Paul Simon's *Still Crazy After All These Years*, are transformed by the master's touch. From the propulsive, and socially relevant, title track to the quintessential Ray Charles ballad, *If I Could, My World* stands with the best work of his long and illustrious career.

Produced by Richard Perry, *My World* hosts an all-star line-up of supporting players including, among the many, Eric Clapton, Mavis Staples and Billy Preston. The result is an album that showcases the timeless artistry of this living legend, even as it makes a case for his continued impact on the state of music today. In a recent interview, Ray Charles talked about the making of *My World*, his place in history and other subjects.

Q: You do a lot of performing. Do you get more satisfaction out of being on stage or in the studio?

A: That's like talking about apples and oranges. When you're recording it's a different groove, a different mood, a different atmosphere. You're trying to please yourself, that's all. When you walk out on stage in a concert, the people expect you to be what they know you to be, what they've heard you to be.



Q: A whole new generation is coming to know you through your commercial endorsements. Are you comfortable with that?

A: Very much so. I've been very fortunate in my career to be associated with quality products. I've picked the commercials I've done. It's nice to do business with companies that are well respected, that don't spare any expense in making something that folks are going to get excited about. Those Pepsi commercials are entertaining.

That's why people remember them.

Q: Is there anything you feel you'd still like to accomplish in your career?

A: I've been fortunate. I've done all the things Ray Charles can do. If some youngster comes up and asks me how I played something, I'd be happy to pass it along. But for me, I've done just about everything I've wanted to do. I had my own big band, which I have always wanted. I have recorded with some of the greatest musicians of my time.

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Funded in part by Metropolitan Arts Commission & Oregon Arts Commission.

A Portland Repertory Theater production at the Winningstad Theater. Tickets: 224-4491 or any Ticketmaster outlet. March 25-April 3. Group discounts available.

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MOVIE REVIEWS

A FAR OFF PLACE/TRAIL MIX-UP: (KIDDIE FAIR) In the backlands of Africa, where two European children face reality and must grow-up in the process. Their parents are nature conservationists. They are there to save the animals from the African people who are being paid to kill them.

It is actually the Europeans that brutally murder the children's parents. This leaves the young people to find some way out of the bush.

An element of danger is introduced when the kids discover that the men who have murdered their parents are now looking for them. Betrayal sweeps through the movie when the girl finds out that her father's best friend is the mastermind behind the elephant slander for their ivory tusks and her new orphan status.

So how does an African born European girl and her American born European male friend walk across the Serengeti? Its like walking from New York to Florida in the summertime. Well, they enlist the aid of an African Bushman; complete with a clicking sound for a name.

What is the first thing the Bushman does. He teaches the boy to kill, of course. To kill for food. Africans have been doing this for centuries. It's just now taboo. Now they are supposed to buy from the Europeans. The Bushman must explain that it's okay to kill when it's for food only. But the question is, did the Bushman permission from the Europeans, if not, it cant possibly be OKAY.

The beauty of Africa is dramatized by the picturesque colors and scenery of a land that has been described as the birth place of all mankind.

This is a movie adults should see too. It

is relaxing, because there are no crude references or illustrations of sex or profanity. There is violence in two scenes. One the killing of the elephants and two the murder of the parents. But the scenes were in good taste.

Do the kids make it? Come on, this is a Disney film. Ill give you one guess.

Now, **TRAIL MIX-UP** is a different story. In the tradition of cartoons, Trail Mix-Up picks up all the violence it possibly can. Not that I counted, but I do believe the poor bunny died approximately every 30 seconds with kids laughing at his death each time. What are we telling our kids? A Far Off Place is worth the **FULL PRICE**. You're going to pay for your kids when ever you go. Suffer through Trail Mix-Up, and A Far Off Place will be well is worth it.

CB4- Im not one for Rap and I doubt I would have gone for entertainment purposes only. But it wasnt as unentertaining as I thought it would be. Of course it's audience is teenagers as is the target market for Rap itself.

Warning, the theater will be full of bopping heads and off tune singing, especially when CB4's hit song

Sweat on My Balls, gets going. You also may be kicked a couple of times in the back and assaulted by disrupting chit chat. This film is on the same caliber as the House Party series. Except House Party discusses safe sex. CB4 discusses and illustrates sex in the most crude way possible without getting an X rating.

So whats the movie about. Mainly sex. But there is a premise to this. CB4 is the abbreviated name of Cell Block 4 where the real Gusto goes after Albert (Chris Rock) of Saturday Night Live inadvertently assists the cops in arresting the club



owner, who is a gangster and drug dealer. Gusto is played by Charlie Murphy, Eddie's older brother.

With Gusto safely in jail. Albert and his iddle class friends decide to take on Gustos persona and the group becomes CB4. As CB4, they visit the outside of the local motel with a rap groupie. CB4 becomes rich, famous and angers a Sacramento politician.

To CB4, the politician is just a nuisance. Their real worry is Gusto who has just escape from jail.

Without the interruptions of the teenagers, the movie could be called entertaining. The only way to forgo the disturbances is to wait for the **RENTAL**.

The Portland Observer

INVITES YOU AND A GUEST TO SEE AN UPCOMING WALT DISNEY PICTURES' RELEASE

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