

Arts & ENTERTAINMENT

An Interview With Cool Runnings, Leon And Rawle D. Lewis



BY DAN BELLE

Last Thursday, September 25, I had an opportunity to interview two of the principal actors who were in Disney's new release Cool Runnings.

What follows is a combination of their comments and a synopsis of their view regarding the movie and

Trinidad. He works primarily in theater, however his other acting film credit was in the movie The Attitude.

The central character is Deryle Bannock whose personality attracts and glorifies the other three bobsled members. The cast is ultimately the process of ensemble acting, very simi-

lar to the Five Hearts where the characters are fully realized.

The story line of "Cool Runnings" deals with the aspirations of a group of athletes who wish to participate in a sport both foreign and alien to their relative environment it is a tale of perseverance and in the end the triumph of the human spirit. Along with their own tenacity and the help of their coach Irv (John Canady) they attain their goal, and in doing so entertain the audience with a lot of humor and wit.

Portland Observer: The characters in the movie being primarily African Caribbean, how do you view these parts as a step in the progression of Black movies.

Leon: I view it as an experiment in diversity. In a lot of ways it is a branching out. Because some Black filmmaking makes depicting ourselves on screen more regularly than we have before. So now the problem is that we are depicted in the same type of movie...inner city struggle, violence and drug use. Things like that. This does not en-

compass the behavior of our entire people.

So when a film like this which is extremely positive in every way. Maybe as positive a film that has been made in the last 10 years. We get a chance to see Blacks in a very positive role, portrayed in very different ways. It has absolutely hardly any violence, no illegal drug use, and no scenes in jail.

My character who is the central character has a wife, and is boat ski teacher and even though my dad is dead my dad is everything to me. I try to fulfill a dream he had. We don't get to see things like that. We don't get the roles like our white counter parts.

Portland Observer: What do you think about Disney picking up after it was dropped by Columbia when Sony bought it?

Rawle D. Lewis: I think not only Disney but other film companies are exploring new frontiers. They realize when people of color see themselves on the screen they realize that it is a big market. As far as this film is concerned it has a universal appeal. There are four Black male leads in it who get a chance to play heroes. If I can just comment a little bit about this...not to take away from any of the films that are out now. There seldom are any films where we are heroes. To have four in one movie is a great feat...it's sort of being a part of film history.

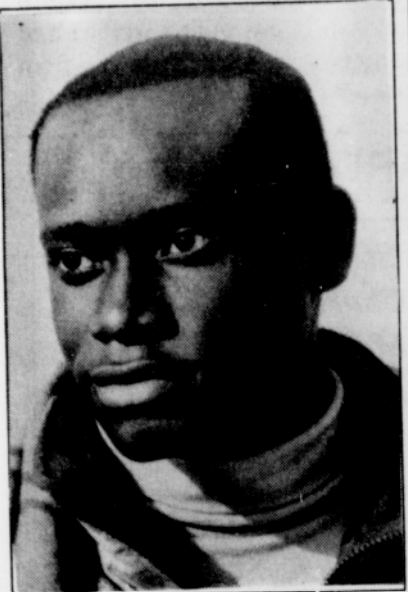
And me being from the island Caribbean myself, in a sense parallels what people of African descent must do. Because we as a people tend to separate ourselves from one another and from one another's country.

Like...say come from the Caribbean--you're not black, or African against African American.

In a sense the movie is about four characters and how they come together. It's what we have to do as a people.

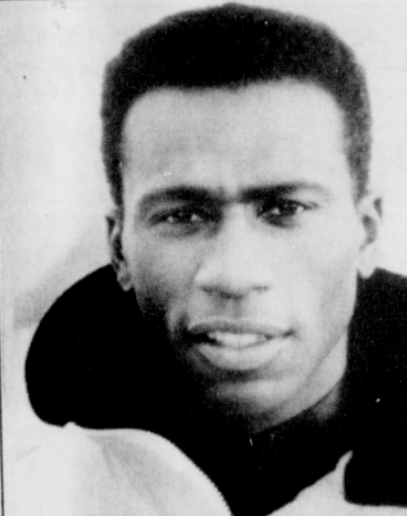
Portland Observer: In other words it serves as a metaphor.

Rawle D. Lewis: Exactly.



Rawle D. Lewis as Junior Bevil

the film industry in general. Leon plays Deryle Bannock the central character who despite misfortune in pre-olympic trial fails to qualify in track decides to pursue an Olympic berth in bobsledding for Jamaica. Leon



Leon as Deryle Bannock

portrayed J.T. in the 60's soul group drama The Five Heartbeats. Most recently he may be seen in Sylvester Stallone's summer release Cliff Hanger. Rawle D. Lewis plays Junior Bevil. Lewis was born in Claxton Bay Trinidad. He works primarily in the-

KMHD
FM 89.1

KMHD Night Schedule

Sept. 9	Andrei Kitaev 7:30 PM Tall Jazz Trio *3:30 PM (Two Sets)
Sept 16	Kelly Broadway/Dan Faehnle Duo Mary Kadderly Quartet
Sept 23	Nancy Cady Quartet Dick Berk Jazz Adoption Agency
Sept 30	Tony Mason Roy Rogers
Oct 7	Andrei Kitaev Tom Grant's Weird Willie Band
OCT 14	Kelly Broadway/Dan Faehnle Duo Dennis Springer Band
Oct 21	Scroggins/Depriest Ron Steen Trio
OCT 28	Nancy Cady Quartet Samba De Torres
Nov 4	Andrei Kitaev Shirley Nanette Quartet
Nov 11	Scroggins/Depriest Randy Cannon Quartet
Nov 25	Andrei Kitaev Gordon Lee Quartet

KBOO-FM

90.7 FM PORTLAND

1968 25 YEARS OF COMMUNITY RADIO 1993

CHECK OUT THE MOST ECLECTIC PROGRAMS ON YOUR DIAL:

Folk • Blues • Jazz • Bluegrass • Soul • Reggae • Latin • Public Affairs •
Women's Programming • Local Music • Classical • World Music • Alternative Rock •
Spiritual • African • Spoken Arts • Live Event Coverage • Live Music •
New Music • Interviews • And much, much more...Tune In!

For a FREE Program Guide of listings and information
Call: (503) 231-8032

**WINNER--Portland Music Association Crystal Award 1992--
OUTSTANDING RADIO STATION**

New & used books
on Business, Music,
& African-American
Studies

**POWELL'S
CITY OF BOOKS**

9 AM- 11 PM Monday through Saturday
9 AM- 9 PM Sundays
Used books bought every day till 8:30 PM
On the #20 Bus line • One hour free parking
1005 West Burnside Street
228-4651

YOU THINK THIS GUY'S PUTTING PRESSURE ON OUR KIDS? YOU'D BETTER HOPE SO.

Ed spent his teenage years around gangs, drugs, and prison. When he decided to turn his life around, United Way was there. Today, he's following a positive path, and influencing the kids in our schools to join him.

KEEP ON GIVING. IT JUST KEEPS ON HELPING. UNITED WAY.

Public service by Gettel Advertising. Photographs by Steve Baskin.

"IT'S ONE OF THE YEAR'S BEST FAMILY FILMS; INSPIRING, HEARTWARMING, AND VERY, VERY FUNNY."
—Jim Swejda, KNX RADIO

"AN ACTION-PACKED GOLD-MEDAL WINNER FOR FAMILY FUN."
—Susan Granger, CRN & AMERICAN MOVIE CLASSICS

JAMAICAN BOBSLEDDERS?

A Comedy Inspired by the True Story of the First Jamaican Olympic Bobsled Team.

Disney's COOL RUNNINGS

WALT DISNEY PICTURES PRESENTS "COOL RUNNINGS" DAWN STEEL PRODUCED BY JON TURTELTAUB
STARRING LEON • DOUG E. DOUG • RAWLE D. LEWIS • MALIK YOBA • JOHN CANDY
MUSIC BY HANS ZIMMER COSTUME DESIGNER CHRISTOPHER MELEDANDRI
EDITED BY SUSAN B. LANDAU
EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS LYNN SIEFERT, MICHAEL RITCHEE PRODUCED BY LYNN SIEFERT, TOMMY SWERDLOW, MICHAEL GOLDBERG
DIRECTED BY JON TURTELTAUB

CLACKAMAS CINEMAS 248-6985	EVERGREEN PARKWAY 7 778-8068	3RD LEVEL FOOD COURT LLOYD MALL CINEMAS 335-3795
MALL 205 248-6978	ROSE MOYER 778-8068	WASHINGTON SQUARE 248-6980

Starts Friday, October 1.

The School Of Oregon Ballet Theatre Accepts 270 Students For Fall Term

Oregon Ballet Theatre Artistic Director James Canfield announced that 270 students, out of 325 candidates have been accepted for the School of Oregon Ballet Theatre's 1993-94 session. Students have been placed in classes ranging from Creative Movement to Ballet levels I through V for both boys and girls. For the first time, auditions were offered for admittance to the school in an exciting change in the mission of the School of Oregon Ballet Theatre. Mr. Canfield stated that "the purpose of the School is to offer the pursuit of excellence in dance training to produce pre-professional dancers of the highest calibre and to increase the community's awareness of dance."

In other School news, Oregon Ballet Theatre welcomes Haydee Gutierrez, who has served as a guest instructor for the School of OBT's Summer Workshop the last three years, as the new School Director. Ms. Gutierrez brings a wealth of experience as a performer, instructor and administrator to the position. Most recently she served as owner and director of the Classical Ballet Center of Tampa, developing many of her students into professional dancers, teachers and choreographers for major dance companies throughout the world.

Joining Ms. Gutierrez are returning instructors Frederic Locke, Meg Potter, Elena Carter, Many Wubbold and Kembe Staley.

In addition to classes given through the School of Oregon Ballet Theatre, the Company offers education programs specifically designed to enable socio-economically disadvantaged children to pursue the study of dance. The Creative Movement Outreach Program, initiated in 1989 at one Head Start center, now reaches nearly 700 economically disadvantaged and physically challenged children in 22 facilities throughout the metropolitan area. Sustained through contributions and grants, the program helps develop motor skills, self-esteem and confidence in young children who face formidable social, economic, physical, and emotional challenges. Project FIND (Find and Inspire New Dancers) is targeted toward elementary schools with a high percentage of "Chapter I" students, principally inner-city schools in north, northeast and southeast Portland. Utilizing OBT instructors and other local dance artists, the program provides children with instruction in dance styles ranging from ballet to contemporary, African, flamenco, improvisational, hip-hop, traditional Japanese, and jazz, through in-school residencies.

For information on the School of Oregon Ballet Theatre, call (503)227-6890. For more information on Oregon Ballet Theatre's educational outreach programs contact Sandra Baldwin at (503)227-0977.