

# SARAFINA!



## The Music of Liberation

*Sarafina!*, a musical celebration of a group of South African students' resistance to and rebellion against apartheid, will open at Memorial Hall on Tuesday, January 22 at 8:00 p.m. *Sarafina!* comes to UNC directly from Broadway with a cast of 30 actors ages 15 to 25 who sing and dance. Many of them appeared in the world premiere of *Sarafina!* at the Market Theatre in Johannesburg in early 1987.

Conceived, written and directed by Mbongeni Ngema (pronounced bawn ee en-Gay-mah), the noted South African author and musician, the idea to write *Sarafina!* came in 1984 when Winnie Man-

Award. During the run in New York, he met with Hugh Masekela, the South African jazz musician, who happened to be performing there at the time. The two decided to collaborate on the music of *Sarafina!*

The results of their efforts are almost two dozen songs in the *Mbaqanga* tradition, which combines a number of different musical styles, including jazz, rock, rhythm and blues and gospel. The cast is made up of youngsters drawn from all over South Africa. None of the original actors was professional performers when they auditioned — they went through eight months of extensive training

## People, Arts

dela, wife of then jailed African National Congress leader Nelson Mandela, spoke with Mbongeni about doing a show which would celebrate the children of South Africa's townships.

Ngema, who had achieved international fame as one of the co-creators and stars of the play *Woza Albert*, began to develop the idea and saw it as a terrific opportunity to also celebrate the music of the townships—a driving dance music called *Mbaqanga* in Zulu. While working on *Sarafina!*, Ngema first finished the play *Asinamali* which was nominated for a 1987 Tony

to prepare for their stage debut.

The story of *Sarafina!* follows the activities of a class of the Morris Isaacson High School in Soweto, site of the now famous 1976 uprisings which resulted in the deaths of hundreds of children. For an end-of-the-school-year concert, the students decided to put on a play about the day when Nelson Mandela would be released from prison after more than 20 years and the Day of Liberation that is sure to follow.

Tickets are \$25 for the public, \$13 for students, and are available from the Union Box Office.

## Express Yourself... In *Black Ink*

Black Ink invites all students to showcase their talents in a special literary edition of *Black Ink*. We will accept poems, fiction, graphic art and other artistic forms.

### Think Black Ink!



Entries will be accepted until:  
**Monday, February 4, 1991**

## Album Review: Pebbles' *Always*

By Corey Brown  
Staff

Ratings: B-/ C+

L.A. Reid, Babyface, After 7, Johnny Gill, Karyn White, Salt-n-Pepa, and Cherrelle: what do they all have in common? They all worked on Pebbles' second album entitled *Always*. With all of this talent pooled into one it would be quite hard for her to have an average album. The problem is despite all of these artists only a few songs have their own identity.

The strength of this album lies in its ballads. Three in particular come to mind: the newest release, "Love Makes Things Happen," which is a duet with Babyface;

"Always," a duet with Cherrelle (which I believe a dedication to her husband L.A. Reid); and my personal favorite, "Why Do I Believe." After hearing these songs it'll have you thinking about past and present relationships and what you'd give to be with that person.

The diasappointments I had with *Always* were with the quality of uptempo songs. With every artist L.A. and Babyface produces, you can count on meaningful lyrics, but that takes emphasis from beat and rhythms to make you groove. I mean, "Giving You The Benefit" was a hit in the clubs, but it will probably be the last of her dance tunes to get serious rotation. And although Salt-n-Pepa did a good

job to help pump up the song "Backyard," they couldn't overcome the "studio manufactured" beat. That is a major "beef" with L.A. and 'Face -- their inability to produce a "live" sound in their dance songs.

Overall, depending on which way you look at it *Always* is/isn't for you. If you're into the slow-chill witchahoneyjams or if you just want to gaze at the beauty on the cover (Pebbles is fine), this album is definitely near the top of the priorities list. But, if you anticipate an album to keep you dancing all night, you might want to look for a friend and get a dub of it. (I actually got it from my cousin. Thanks Shonda!)