

Arts and Entertainment

107.7 FM Rocks The Socks Off Foxy 99.1 FM

By Roger A. Harris

The radio airwaves of Fayetteville proper have become the unwitting battlefield for a war between its two most popular radio stations: stalwart Foxy 99.1 FM and young upstart Flava 107.7 FM. To say that 107.7 FM has had a powerful impact on Foxy 99.1 FM's listening audience is an understatement. Word of their existence has spread like wildfire, virtually overnight, and most significantly, by word of mouth. Not only has Foxy 99.1 FM had to recently modify their format (playing more "hardcore" raps, etc.), but for the first time in recent memory, they have actually gone on air to ask their listening audience what they can do to make their format better. Were these changes coincidence, or was Foxy 99.1 FM reacting to the shockwave of new "flava" that was suddenly in the ear and on the mind of more than just a few of their former listeners? When a giant wakes with a scream, I want to find out what his nightmare was about, so I decided to go pay a little visit to 107.7 FM, the new kids on the block, to see if they also heard the scream.

Managing Director Gene Hanrahan got right to the point. He explained that he chose Fayetteville as a new location because its urban format programming (Foxy 99.1 FM) was weak and could be exploited. "What was on the airwaves was a stale, conservative, and boring format. What wasn't on the airwaves was what most of the kids were listening to or wanted to hear. We feel that we're addressing a community need that's not being totally fulfilled by Foxy." Gene feels strongly that "urban music is no longer considered 'for blacks only' because all ethnic groups are listening to it. Urban music is bringing our youth together in a way that [Martin Luther] King only dreamed of. Black, White, and Indian kids are coming together and sharing a common ground, the music. Maybe it will be able to succeed where politics has failed them." Hanrahan's plan of attack was very simple: target a small market (Fayetteville), provide dynamic programming, make their ad rates affordable to local/national businesses, and most importantly, "provide that personal touch... let the community know that we really care."

Hanrahan's first objective was to form an elite assemblage of the most creative, aggressive, and visionary program directors in the business to put the "Flava" in Fayetteville's ear. In comes Program Director Al Stone and Assistant Program Director Don Reed. Not only are both men highly accomplished in their field, but they also know (through time and experience) the heart and soul of Fayetteville. Chicago born Al Stone grew up in Fayetteville and holds a degree in broadcasting from the Columbia School of Broadcasting in Washington, D.C., while Don Reed has been rocking Fayetteville airwaves since the seventies, becoming a local celebrity/legend in the process. It's their special combination of knowledge, experience, and of feeling the pulse of Fayetteville that has local audiences crossing over, tuning in, and competitors shaking their heads. Smiling, Hanrahan chimes that "You don't make good program directors, you find them, and there aren't many good ones out there. I'm very lucky to have two of the best in the business. Any success that we have or will experience is due to Al and Don. They know the business and more importantly, they know Fayetteville."

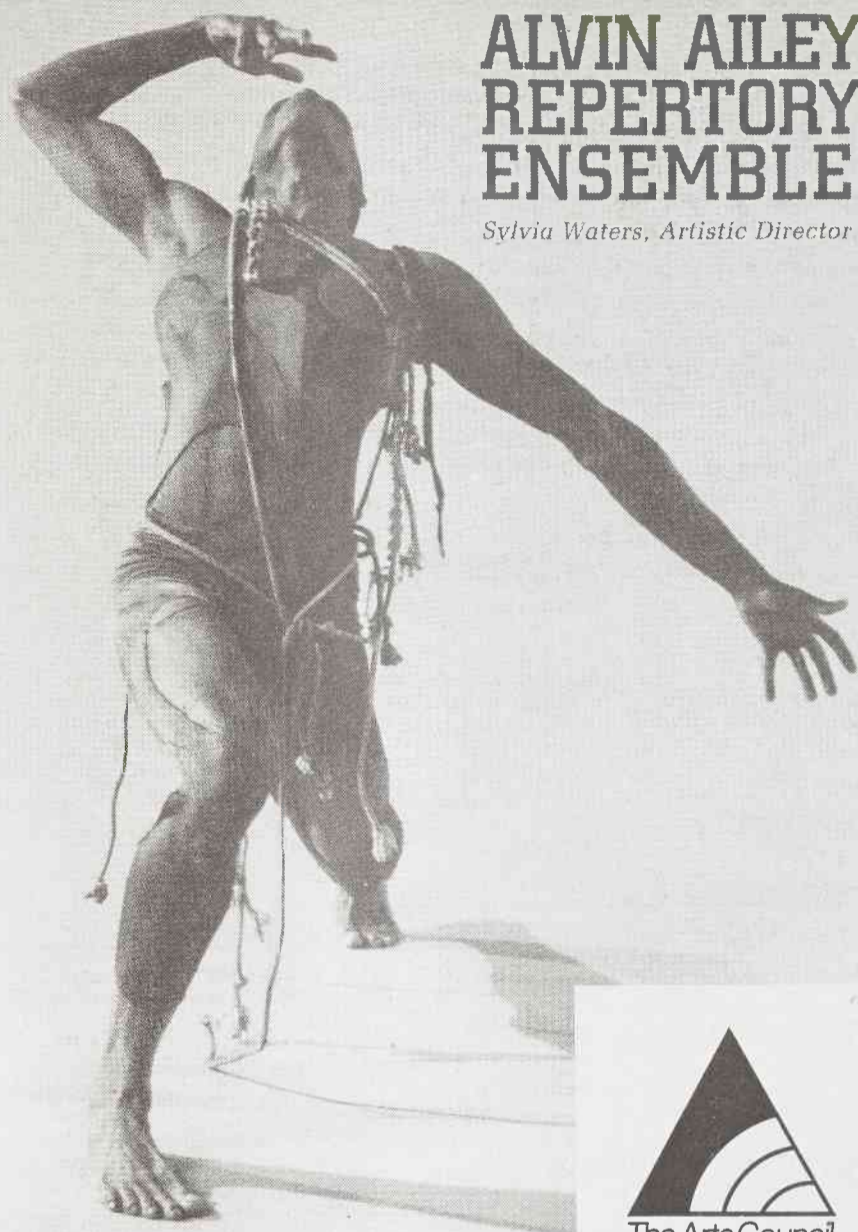
It's that personal touch that comes through the speaker as you listen to 107.7 FM: they truly know and care for Fayetteville. On Thanksgiving day while most people were either snuggled up to a hot dinner, enjoying special friends, or watching the games on T.V., Al and Gene were in the cold and long into the night delivering dinners to the less fortunate. In all, fourteen families were provided food and clothes, and this Christmas, fourteen more families were the happy and fortunate recipients of food, clothes, and toys provided by 107.7 FM. Al Stone relates "we want Fayetteville to know that we really care. That we're not just here to take, but also to give back with love." There's a certain "realness" in his tone that makes his meaning all the more clear to me: it's the little things done by those who care that always seem to go unsaid, but never unnoticed or unappreciated by those that are helped. It's time the word got out about "the Flava"—they care.

107.7 FM also supports local up-and-coming groups by giving their projects air play so that they can develop a local following (the lifeblood to success and the major difference between discovery and anonymity). FSU's very own Jeff Anderson (a.k.a. Uzi-D) was one of the first local acts to benefit from this exposure. Result: his single "What Was On Your Mind?" sold out at the local music stores in which it was distributed. Uzi-

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ALVIN AILEY REPERTORY ENSEMBLE

Sylvia Waters, Artistic Director



The Arts Council
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FAYETTEVILLE STATE UNIVERSITY SEABROOK AUDITORIUM

Sunday, February 19, 1995
7:30 P.M.

General Admission: \$10.00
High School/College Students W/ID \$5.00
Students Under 15 years of age \$3.00
FSU Students W/ID \$3.00

For Further Information Call (910) 486-1203/1204.

Alvin Ailey created the Repertory Ensemble in 1974 to showcase the talents of the most exceptional students from his American Dance Center. Under the artistic direction of Sylvia Waters, a former principal dancer with the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, the Repertory Ensemble is today one of the most extraordinary young dance companies in America.

Building on its already stirring repertoire, this year the Ensemble adds new works by master choreographer Alvin Ailey, this year the Ensemble adds new works by Eleo Pomare and Kathy Posin.

In addition to the performances on its 1994-95 National Tour, the Ensemble will bring the art of dance to individual communities through residencies, outreach programs, master classes and lecture/demonstrations.

Come join in all the exuberance, passion and spirit that is Ailey, and witness the future stars of American dance.

The dance troupe will perform at Fayetteville State's J.W. Seabrook Auditorium on Sunday, February 19, 1995 at 7:30 in the evening. General admission is \$10; tickets for college and high school students with I.D., as well as students under 15, are \$5. For more information, call Pam Smith of FSU's Lyceum Committee at (910)-486-1203.