

productions, including the much-praised Broadway play "Purlie Victorious," which he wrote and starred in. "And brown and white. Minority, you ask? Who isn't a minority in this country? All of us, no matter where we come from or what color we are, have a story to tell, and, when you get right down to it, all our stories are pretty much the same. Our aim is to make clear the connections shared by all people. That's what 'With Ossie & Ruby' is all about."

"With 'Ossie & Ruby' was conceived written by Ossie Davis and Ruby Dee. Executive producer is Bob Ray Sanders, producer-director is David Dowe, associate producers are Erica Rogalla and Nora Davis and associate director is Curtis Baker.

## ASHE OF STASHE, AN ACE AT PACE



Tennis great Arthur Ashe took a special two-day "refresher seminar" on financial management at Pace University's Lubin Graduate School of Business. Mr. Ashe, who holds a business degree from UCLA, has moved from the net to the gross and net of the business world. He's in the import-export business, as a shareholder of International Commercial Resources, and also in partnership with Dr. Doug Stein in Stashe, Inc., both N.Y. firms. Mr. Ashe says he was drawn to Pace by Dr. Tony Bonaparte, 'the West Indian-born dean of the Lubin Schools of Business, and the Schools' exceptional training programs for the working professional. At the conclusion of the seminar Mr. Ashe and Dr. Stein received special certificates of participation.

(L. to R.) Dr. Bonaparte; Dr. Stein; Dr. Edward J. Mortola, president, Pace University; Mr. Ashe.

The Lubin Graduate School of Business is the largest in the nation and offers a variety of innovative educational programs for the traditional student, executives and managers. The Lubin Schools of Business are components of Pace University, celebrating its 75th anniversary.

## A PAINTER LOOKS BACK

Because of the overwhelming response from our first article on Vincent D. Smith, which appeared in the November, 1980 issue of National Scene, we are pleased to print Part II of the interview.

*Int:* What is your definition of black art?

*Vinc:* Black art for me is a kind of sociological term. There is such a thing as a black art movement. Painting itself is defined by styles and techniques, and a painter during his career can go through many styles. Romare Bearden is a good example of this.

Even the National Endowment on the arts and Humanities has continued to be elitist.

*Int:* Some critics have suggested that there is a distinction between Afro-Americans working "within the main stream" and those dealing primarily with themes from the black experience. What do you think?

*Vinc:* I know from talking to very well known black artists who are working in the so-called "main stream", that in their work there are certain things, emotional or esthetic, or plastic, that find expression in their work. These things come from the black experience.

There is a lack of serious art criticism and documentation. I know this from a review New York Times art critic, John Canady, wrote about an exhibition of mine in 1973. He wrote, "Maybe at last there is such a thing as a black idiom, a vocabulary, that ties these artists together."

*Int:* The more I talk to artists, the more I get a strong conviction that maybe the truest things I could say about black artists is that they paint, drawing on their own experience as blacks.

*Vinc:* That's true. For ten years I did a series of paintings, watercolors, drawings and collages all relating to the strife during the 60's. I also did an important group of etchings at that time.

*Int:* What led you to go to Africa?

*Vinc:* I was always interested in African art and history. I went to Africa three times, east and west. I wanted to cross rivers where hippos and alligators slumber. I wanted to feel the mystery of walking in ancient civilizations. I wanted to get a feeling of the whole panorama and splendor of Africa. I criss-crossed Ethiopia trying to get deeper into the Biblical presence and past. I wanted to go down into the catacombs of the slave castles. I wanted to walk in the market places, to see the trees, the forest .. to experience the scents and smells of flowers and foods. What a tremendous feeling, like going back in time and space. It was fascinating to watch small children doing carvings in the various villages.

While I was there in 1973 I had an

exhibition of etchings which opened in Nairboi, Kenya, and then traveled to galleries in Arusha and then to Kilimanjaro, Tanzania.

*Int:* Do you see any esthetic elements common to art in Africa and art as practiced primarily by Afro-Americans in this country?

*Vinc:* Oh, yeah. What you have in modern art is a marriage between Africa and the West. Geometric art and cubism and surrealism and expressionism and naturalism and a kind of constructivism are found all over Africa and in African art. In Africa, its art has utilitarian functions. However, because of its geometric complexity, its influence is universal.

Afro-American artists having racial and cultural identification bring a marriage of "soul" and esthetics into their work. Romare Bearden reached a milestone with his fusion of cubistic, Byzantine, European and African images with photo documentary. Yet he stayed true to the black experience. His was a ritual orchestrated in color, form and technique.

Jacob Lawrence had a great exhibition on the African theme when he came back from Nigeria in the early sixties. I also dealt with the African motif when I illustrated the children's book, "Stories from Africa". I followed that with two separate exhibitions. The first was with drawings, pastels, gouache and collage, and the second one was with oil and sand and collage on canvas. Both utilized my African experience as does my recent mural, "Ode to Zimbabwe" at the Crotona Center.

*Int:* Are there any exchange programs going on with Africa and America?

*Vinc:* Yes, there have been some exchanges over the years. Some, for example, have been the first festival in Senegal in 1965, the second festival in Nigeria in 1977, and the African American Institute has continuous exhibitions coming from Africa as well as study tours to Africa. Presently, Peg Alston, the art dealer, is organizing an exhibition in the Ivory Coast in October of 1980.

*Int:* Is there any place where we can see your work?

*Vinc:* Yes, I'm having an exhibition at the Cooper Square Gallery at 36 Third Avenue for the next three weeks.

And some work is also at the Randall Gallery at Madison Ave. and 68th Street.

*Int:* What would you say to young painters right now?

*Vinc:* If you have the motivation and compulsion to paint, and are willing to make the sacrifices, and hang in there, I think you'll be all right. But it's rough!