

Weekend

The Arts, Leisure, Music, Columns

Broadway Is My Beat

Diahann's role in 'Dynasty' storyline may be altered

By JOEY SASSO
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Observations in covering the NightBeat:

The producers of "Dynasty" are having serious second thoughts about casting **Diahann Carroll** as **Kathleen Beller's** long-lost mother on the prime-time soap.

In fact, producer **Esther Shapiro** reveals, "We are doing a complete rethink on the matter. There is a 99-percent chance that the storyline will not be used."

Notice Shapiro's leaving herself an out -- but whether Diahann is in or out of that portrayal, she's definitely set for a regular berth on the show....

Bill Whitten, costume designer for show-biz superstar **Michael Jackson**, disclosed in an recent interview the evolution of the single-studded glove the entertainer has worn since 1979.

"It evolved from a racquetball glove which only had rhinestones on top to tri-color gloves jet-black gloves," he told me. "On the latest glove, I decided I wanted to cover the entire hand."

Whitten termed the glove idea unique.

"I defy an historian to find it in the fashion history books," he said. "But I am surprised in a way that the glove is leading in public attention over the (glistening white) socks. That's totally new, too...."

It may be old hat for the prime-time soaps, but many fans of ABC's "Webster" sitcom are in for quite a surprise May 4 -- when the show will end its season with a "to-be-continued" cliff-hanger episode. The storyline involves the return of Webster's Uncle **Phillip Ben Vereen**, who'll engage in a legal battle with the **Alex Karras** and **Susan Clark** characters for custody of the child.

Whether it'll be **Emmanuel Lewis'**

video godparents or uncle who win the war -- or whether the show's writers come up with some other solution -- will remain to be seen until the series resumes this fall....

It was a matter of chance that **Johnny Mathis** wound up the happy recipient of "Hold Me Till the Morning Comes" -- a song written by music phenomena **Michael Jackson** and **Paul Anka** -- for his new "The Special Part of Me" album.

Anka reports he and Michael were having a friendly get-together last year when they just happened to start tinkering with song ideas -- and just happened to wind up penning the "Morning" tune.

Jackson, whose record-smashing "Thriller" was already out, wasn't interested in waxing it. Anka's "Walk a Fine Line" platter of last year was already complete.

So when Anka's and Mathis' record producer, **Denny Diante**, found out about the song, he asked for it for Johnny's album. And so goes showbiz deal-making....

Mr. T has taken time out from "The A Team" and his animated series to film "The Toughest Man in the World," to be broadcast next season on CBS. Now in production in Chicago, the made-for-television movie has the burly actor portraying **Bruise Brubaker**, nightclub bouncer and youth-center director....

Former baseball star **Willie Stargell** has been nominated to the Pennsylvania Council of the Arts. Stargell, 43, played 20 years with the Pittsburgh Pirates until his 1982 retirement. Early last year, he read selected works of the **Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.** on a national tour with the Rochester Symphony Orchestra. If his nomination is confirmed by the state senate, Stargell will serve until July 1986....



She's So Unusual

Cyndi Lauper, who's anything but conventional in both her appearance and music, has scored gold records for her album "She's So Unusual" and her single "Girls Just Want To Have Fun." Cyndi's also garnered quite a few black listeners with the extended remix of "Girls Just Want To Have Fun."

Musical Notes

Cities, states petitioning for Jacksons' tour

With the word that the upcoming Jacksons Victory tour, termed by *Time* magazine the biggest in the history of the music industry, will only be able to play 12 cities, several communities have attempted to insure that they are on the Jacksons' itinerary.

The *Boston Herald American* initiated a coupon drive asking its readers to fill out

and send in a special form urging the Jacksons to play Beantown. At last count, the *Herald American's* Mike Lasalandra reported that the paper had collected well over 10,000 coupons and was willing to fly a representative to LA to present the slips of paper to the Jacksons in person.

But Boston was outdone by the tiny town of Ames, Iowa, where students at Iowa State University got 25,000 Iowans to sign a peti-

tion urging the Jacksons to play the state. To give the request extra authority, the students had Iowa state Gov. Terry Branstad write the Jacksons an invitation imploring the Jacksons to play his territory.

Says UPI's Iowa correspondent, Dan Wilinsky, "If the Jacksons actually came, it would be the biggest event in this state since 1979, when we were visited by the Pope."



Clinton: Not just another pretty face.

Spotlight

Whatever happened to George Clinton?

"Back? I didn't know I had gone anywhere?" is the standard response George Clinton gives when queried about his recently-ended two-year absence from the record charts.

But ask George what he has been doing for those two years, and that familiar sheepish grin comes over his face as he reaches into a seemingly bottomless bag of cassettes, randomly selects one and drops it into his portable cassette player. Instantly the room is filled with George's special brand of music and the lyrics belt out "Let me tell you a story about King Nut...."

George Clinton, in case you haven't heard the story, was/is the driving force behind the musical genre "funk," a sound/style that Clinton quietly began to follow back in the late 60s.

Achieving early success both critically (Funkadelic) and commercially (Parliament), Clinton topped the black music charts for the first time in 1967 with Parliament's "(I Wanna) Testify."

By the early 70s, Clinton's funk had shaken off the early predictions of faddishness and, having proven itself as a valid reality in the music industry, needed only block out its share of the market.

By the late 70s, Parliament and Funkadelic were established as the leaders of a popular musical front, which, by that time included a number of spin-offs

from the P-Funk, most notably Bootsy's Rubber Band, The Brides of Funkenstein, Zapp and Parlet. Funk, as a musical form, was definitely on the upswing and everything was "on the one." Clinton was appearing before larger audiences than ever before and selling even more records. The 80s promised to be bigger and brighter and Clinton was enjoying himself.

But then something happened. Just as funk was gaining influence over the industry -- more and more acts were beginning to find success by attempting to imitate or copy outright Clinton's style -- the flow of products from Clinton's organization stopped, complicated by legal hassles which made Clinton's prize group Parliament somehow seem to get "lost."

The absence of Clinton, at a time when his sound had gained its widest popularity, created a particular problem for the newly-awakened funk fan: Where can I get my funk? A number of imitative groups sprang up, but most went as quickly as they came. For those who had really done their homework and developed the skills necessary to be adept at "funkin'," the case of the missing P. Funk (a generic term used to describe the sound Clinton had developed as opposed to simple "funk") had a happy twist in the plot.

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Ask Yolonda

His wife considers flirting an effective way to do business

Dear Yolonda: My wife has a new hobby: openly flirting with men right under my nose.

She recently got a job as a salesperson at a company and thinks the only way to sell her product is to flirt with her male clients. I've seen her hand out her card and tell all kinds of men to call anytime they choose.

Believe me, I'm not over-reacting. She really is going overboard.

I once felt that the way to cut down on her flirting was to let her see me flirting with some women. But that flopped, too. We were at a party a couple of weeks ago and she started batting her eyelashes at some man, so I started talking to his wife. Did my wife get jealous? No. Instead, she suggested we take separate cars next time.

Oh, I should tell you that my wife is very good-

looking. Plus, her excuse for all this is that the more money she makes, the better it is for both of us. What should I do?

T.R.

Dear T.R.: Perhaps you should point out to your wife that her sales techniques lead others to believe she's selling more than her product.

You've also got to get her to think of choices -- either tone down her sales pitch, or face the risk of irreversible



Yolonda

harm to your marriage. Let's hope she chooses the first option.

The Black Elderly

Dear Yolonda: I'm concerned about the plight of senior citizens in this country -- particularly black seniors. I think they're discriminated against. It's as if we take our older people and put them in a closet. Look at the ones who spend their last few years "hollowed" away in convalescent homes. We forget what they went through to get younger blacks to where they are today.

I recently visited a home for seniors not far from my house. One of the attendants mentioned that 70 percent of the residents never got a visitor. The

seniors were placed there and forgotten. Please print this. Maybe some will feel guilty.

S.R.R.

Dear S.R.R.: I agree with you. More attention ought to be given to the role black seniors played --and are playing -- in Black America's development, but trying to make people feel guilty won't do it. Becoming solution-conscious will.

I once visited a church that had a program called Roots and Leaves. This program would send carloads of youngsters to various senior citizen homes. Once there, the youth did chores and ran errands for the seniors. In exchange, the seniors enter-

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