

Weekend

The Arts, Leisure, Music, Columns

Broadway Is My Beat

Reid: Many disdain drugs

By JOEY SASSO
Syndicated Columnist

Observations in covering the Night Beat: Television actor **Tim Reid** told a Senate panel recently that Hollywood is trying to clean up its act in regard to the use of drugs.

"Though our industry has gained a reputation of being engulfed in drug abuse, I would like to assure this committee that many of us in the industry disdain Hollywood's glamorization of drug use and have accepted a responsibility to do what we can to prevent our industry's glamorization of drug use," said Reid, who plays Downtown Brown, an undercover policeman, on the television show "Simon and Simon."

Reid, who formerly played radio disc jockey Venus Flytrap on the television series "WKRP in Cincinnati," testified on behalf of the Entertainment Industries Council Inc. before the Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations.

"We believe that our industry is the most powerful influencer on public opinion," Reid said. "Given this stature, we further believe that those of us in the entertainment business that are drug-free have a significant contribution to make to our nation's war on drugs."

Stevie Wonder is working around the clock in England, rushing from the concert stage to the studio, to finish recording his score for **Gene Wilder's** "The Woman in Red." Wilder tells me the Orion movie will feature nine Wonder-ful compositions, some of which Stevie will sing solo and some with **Dionne Warwick**.

"He's already delivered five," says Gene, who serves as both "Woman in Red" director and co-star (with **Gilda Radner**). "Two are in transit."

Getting Wonder to lend his talents remains a wonder to Wilder. "The only other picture he's ever worked on was 'The Secret Life of Plants,'" says Gene. "I showed a rough cut of the movie to Dionne Warwick about three months ago. She asked if I'd like Stevie to screen it. He sat next to me and talked about the film, then called me a few days later and said he had written two songs for the movie. Then he wrote another. Then he said he wanted to write more. He left for his tour of Europe and booked studio space there and recorded all night -- sometimes for 36-40 hours at a stretch."



Vanity's Back

On her new Motown LP, she calls herself a "Wild Animal." With her past group, she sold close to 500,000 albums and was praised by the **Los Angeles Times** for "imagination, wit and understated virtuosity." But who is this mysterious vixen? It's **Vanity** -- formerly of **Vanity 6** -- who has been quietly working for the last six months on her first solo album.

For the project, **Vanity** has recruited **Bill Wolfer**, producer of

Shalamar's "Dancing In The Sheets," who's known for his keyboard work with **Stevie Wonder** and the **Jacksons**. Says **Vanity**, "I come up with a title and a feel for a song. I give it to **Bill**, and he comes up with a rhythm track. Then I write the melody and the lyrics." How do other male musicians feel about **Wolfer's** collaboration with **Vanity**? Probably jealous.

Wonder's "The Woman in Red" is scheduled to hit record shops July 30. On Aug. 17, **Wilder's** picture of the same name will be released....

A womp, bama looma, a ram, bam, boon -- **Little Richard** has filed a \$115 million suit against three music companies, claiming he's been cheated out of royalties on some of his biggest hits, dating back to 1955.

Richard's talking about great American classics, featuring lyrics that will live forever, such as "Tutti Frutti," "Long Tall Sally," "Lucille" and "Bama Lama Bama Loo."

The whole thing's pretty complicated, but **Richard's** lawyer, **Pollock**, says the gist of the matter is: "The money he should have received

from the writing of these songs has been going to the music publishers and has been stopping there. He has never seen anything from that."

Named as defendants were **Specialty Records Inc.**, **STV Music Corp.** and **Venice Music**. And, just for the record, **Little Richard's** real name is **Richard Penniman**....

Lionel Richie, who's written an endless string of hits he's performed with the **Commodores** and as a solo, recently shared his philosophy on his success as a tunesmith. "Sometime, when you find the right song, you know it," he said. "Because, first of all, it pops out like it's been there for the last hundred years. In fact, I can give you a little phrase that was taught to me early in my

songwriting career by **Norman Woodfield**:

"There are two types of writers: great tune writers and great songwriters. Tunes are here today and gone tomorrow. Songs are here forever."

Robert Guillaume adamantly denies reports that he'll be tying the knot with **CBS-TV** producer **Donna Brown** in August. He says he has no plans for marriage to her -- or anyone else -- and can't understand how the rumors got started. This isn't the first time the "Benson" star has been the subject of such rumors -- although the last time he couldn't disown having fueled them.



Spotlight

'Needless to say, I'm still in love with women!'

Special To The Chronicle

I think I've had a test," says soul balladeer **Teddy Pendergrass** of the tragic automobile accident that interrupted his career two years ago. "Everything is brighter to me now. I think I'm here for a reason, and that is to continue to bring forth good feelings in my music. If one must judge how I'm doing, let me talk to them through 'Love Language.'"

"Love Language" is **Teddy's** ninth solo album, his first since the accident, and his debut on a new label, **Elektra Asylum Records**.

"If I were not doing fine, the music could not come across as it does," he says. "As a person when I need to meet a challenge, I hurdle it

through music, and this hasn't changed these past two years. I've done a lot of things in my career and I plan to do a lot more.

"This record meant a lot more to me personally and professionally, but even more on a personal level than other albums I've done. There was so much love and emotion this time; nothing else mattered around me while I was recording it."

Each of "Love Language's" predecessors was transformed by **Pendergrass** into a singer's showcase and his new work is no exception, from the subtle, sensitive songs and arrangements, to the simple elegance of the production by **Michael Masser** (and **Luther Vandross** on "You're My Choice Tonight").

"There's been such an outpouring of feeling

from everyone over the last couple of years, and I want to give back that sensitivity the best way I know," **Pendergrass** says. "I'm not singing the same music now at age 34 that I did at 21. Over these last two years, my attitude toward life and love, and my appreciation of both, has moved to a more subtle level.

"Legend" is a word misused as often as "love"; **Pendergrass** is one of the few in contemporary American music who rightfully connect to both. He started earning them early:

"I began singing when I was two. It took me a long time to realize you got paid for it! It was the sheer enjoyment of doing it that I was doing it for."

Pendergrass: "Everything is brighter to me now."

Please see page B6

Ask Yolonda

More thoughts on the spread of sexually transmitted diseases

By YOLONDA GAYLES
Syndicated Columnist

I thought I'd write in and comment on the column, "How to Prevent Sexual Diseases." I, like the man who wrote the letter, have avoided the problem by tempering my sexual appetite. I get to know the young lady very well before becoming "involved." Furthermore, I never date more than one young lady at a time. Evidently, my method works because I've never had a problem along this line.

Kalib

Dear Kalib: The majority of the replies I received align with yours. Still, readers tell me that knowing their partner well does not always deter awkward situations. As an example of what I'm referring to, read the next letter.

Dear Yolonda: Some readers are going to write in and tell you that the way to avoid sexual diseases is to abstain from sex until you know your partner well. I'm writing in to say that that won't always help.

I found myself attracted to a man on my job. We started going to lunch together, and eventually we started dating. In fact, we dated for about seven months. During all this time of "heavy petting" we never went "all the way."



Yolonda

What was running through my mind was that I was finally dating a man who respected me for who and what I am.

Finally, after leading me on for what seemed like an eternity, he told me that he didn't have sex because he gets "genital hives," and they look like herpes.

Genital hives, my eye! I told him that I appreciated his honesty, but please, "don't call me, I'll call you."

Michelle

Dear Michelle: Hold on. There is such a thing as genital hives. Additionally, it still sounds as though he did have respect for you. After all, he didn't have to tell you about the hives.

Dear Yolonda: I know a man who has sex with many different people (he even likes orgies), and to prevent himself from picking up a disease or an infection, he takes antibiotics as if they were vitamins. He tells me that he takes an antibiotic every day. This seems dangerous. Is it?

Ed

Dear Ed: It is. A medical authority advised me that the indiscriminate use of antibiotics is no way to inoculate against sexually transmitted infections or diseases. In the first place, antibiotics don't treat every sexually transmitted disease. Then, too, your body's natural defense system would react by developing a resistance to that form of antibiotic.

Please see page B6