

ENTERTAINMENT

• MUSIC • CONCERT UPDATES • THEATRE • ART • DANCE • LOCAL ENTERTAINERS •

B Section

THE CHARLOTTE POST - Thursday, December 3, 1987

Page 1B

Nancy Nelson: At The Apollo

By Loretta Richardson
Post Staff Writer

The Apollo Theatre in New York has earned its reputation at making stars. Nancy Nelson hopes to be one of them, at least the next time she performs at the Apollo.

Her first appearance on "Amateur Night At The Apollo" aired recently on channel 18. Amateur Night at the Apollo can be seen on Saturdays at midnight.

Nancy flew to New York where she auditioned for a spot on amateur night almost two weeks ago.

"I only got three notes out when Cecil Holmes, the man conducting the auditions said, 'Stop, right there!' I thought I had been axed! But he liked me."

Along with 29 others, Nancy performed before an audience from the Bronx. These were their judges.

Nancy fared well. She placed fifth. 10 competitors didn't do so well. They were booted off the stage.

"It's (Apollo) a rough place," emphasized Nancy.

After the performance was over, Nancy mentioned that she was approached by persons in the entertainment industry who commented on her voice and told her that had she not sung an original tune she probably would have placed higher.

Those comments have Nancy considering trying the Apollo again. "This time, though, I will be singing somebody else's song."

For the tryouts Nancy sang an original tune, "In My Heart", co-written by Thomas Jackson and her husband, Ron Henderson.

It was "In My Heart" that landed her a spot at the Apollo.

Thomas Jackson had Lavinia Cochran, a promoter at CBS listening to his work. And one of the tunes she was listening to was "In My Heart". When she heard my voice Thomas said Lavinia wanted to know if he knew who the female singing the song was. I later found out that Lavinia had first heard my voice on a song of Barry Duke's, a protégé of Ron's and had been trying to locate me every since she heard Duke's song.



Nancy Nelson
...In The Studio

Photo By Calvin Ferguson

Nancy said that a meeting was scheduled for the next day after the initial contact was made. "Lavinia had me to sing with the tape so that she could be sure that it was really me."

From there, the audition for the Apollo was set up.

Now Nancy is back in Charlotte and back doing studio work. That's what she has been doing for the past three years when a group that she and Ron formed, True Color folded.

"I was commissioned by Studio East to do copy cat work."

Like many famous singers, Nancy began singing in the church. For a short period she sang with John Coltrane Jr. where she gained her first studio experience. Later came Living Color and then True Color. Unable to pinpoint her style,

Nancy modestly revealed that she ranges from Patti LaBelle to Anita Baker. And each day, at least for an hour she takes time off to listen to material Ron has written and arranged.

"I've been singing all my life. When I look at a video I say to myself 'Boy, I can do that. I often tell myself 'What can she do that I can't or what does she have that I don't.'"

"What I want is the recording contracts, the albums and the tours. I think that I have earned it, considering what I've been through."

Don't be surprised if you see Nancy on the Apollo stage again. She likes to win and she knows that if she's good enough, hanging in the balance is a possible recording contract. And that's something she craves as desperately as her need to sing.

T. J. Reddy's Exhibit Opens Friday



T. J. Reddy

The Afro-American Cultural Center (AACC) is pleased to announce the opening of "Genealogy Revisited: 1980-1987," an exhibit of recent painting by local artist T. J. Reddy. The exhibit will be on display from December 4 through December 30.

Reddy's paintings involve a technique and style that reflects African and Caribbean influences on his work. His folk-like images are universal in scope and



mosaic in design. They combine nature scenes, reflecting his

deep concern for the environment and what he refers to as "human ecology."



He is influenced not only by his constant studies, but also by the works of Romare Bearden, Jacob Lawrence, and the Jamaican Intuitive painter John Dunkley. He is a student of the Harlem Renaissance, a cultural era of the 1920's.

Born in Savannah, Georgia, Reddy is a graduate of the University of North Carolina at Charlotte.

Klugh/Benson Collaboration Even Better Live

By Loretta Richardson
Post Staff Writer

Putting the extraordinary talents of Earl Klugh and George Benson together on was a feat d'accomplishment. To have the masters of their craft, together on stage in concert was even more stupendous, verging on the edge of incredulity.

But it happened and for those who were in attendance at Owens Auditorium last weekend, this was the place to be.

When the two hour George Benson/Earl Klugh set opened, the two guitarists jammed playing a number from their new lp "Collaboration".

Then Klugh took center stage, plucking and strumming easily, soothingly on his acoustic guitar.

Seranading the audience, Klugh masterfully presented songs, familiar and unfamiliar, "Wishful Thinking", "Cabo Frio" and a yet untitled tune that spotlighted the talents of the keyboardist.

Throughout his performance, interruptions of approving applause were the norm.

Then came Benson. While

Klugh had indeed warmed up the audience with his laid back style, Benson was primed for the throw down. He and Benson played the mostly instrumental version of "Livin' Inside Your Love" with some occasional scattling from Benson.

Like Klugh, Benson took center stage, thrilling a near capacity crowd with songs that accelerated his rise to popularity, "Masquerade," "The Greatest Love Of All", which brought the crowd to its feet, "You Make Me Shiver", "In Your Eyes" and "Turn Your Love Around".

Rejoining Benson, Klugh returned to the stage, where both musicians began playing numbers from the "Collaboration" album.

After playing one of the snazziest cuts from the lp, Klugh and Benson left the stage, only to return when an ecstatic audience cried for more and to perform "On Broadway".

And on this number, even the drummer, Lenny White garnered a well-deserved standing ovation.

This is one collaboration that works well on wax and even better live.



Lou Rawls

USO Tour To Feature Lou Rawls

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Actor John Forsythe will be the Master of Ceremonies, and singer Lou Rawls and comedian Norm Crosby will be the featured entertainers at the "USO Christmas Tour in Washington" dinner, a December 9 black-tie gala to benefit the World USO, which serves nearly five million U.S. military personnel and their families around the world. The event will be held at Washington's Grand Hyatt hotel.

The announcement was made by the Entertainment Chairman of the gala, Michael J. Roarty, executive vice president and director of marketing for Anheuser-Busch, Inc. Roarty is also a member of the World USO Board of Governors.

"Since the first USO Christmas Tour in 1941, hundreds of U.S. entertainers have given their time and talents to help our American servicemen," Roarty said. "The fine entertainers who will perform at the 'USO Christmas Tour in Washington' are representative of the quality of those USO performers of the past."

Forsythe, best known for his current role on ABC-TV's "Dynasty" program, is also the "voice of the USO" on the organization's radio and television advertising campaign. Forsythe is also well known for his voice-only performances as Charlie on "Charlie's Angels," and as a spokesman for Michelob beer.

Lou Rawls' classic songs like "You'll Never Find (Another Love Like Mine)," "Natural Man" and "Lady Love" have become American standards and have led to one platinum and six gold albums, plus a gold single. He has also won four Grammys.

As a spokesman for Budweiser beer, Rawls began his association with Anheuser-Busch in 1976. As Honorary Chairman of the United Negro College Fund, Rawls organized the Budweiser-supported "Lou Rawls Parade of Stars Telethon" in 1979, an annual event that has raised more than \$40 million for 41 private, historically black colleges.

The comedic master of the malaprop, Norm Crosby is best known for his most entertaining use of the English language.

Prince Bounces Back With "Sign o' The Times"

Special To The Post
Reprinted From
Rolling Stone

After the abrupt sinking of "Under the Cherry Moon," the movie "Sign o' the Times" has come along to restore Prince's luster as a formidable big-screen presence. Moreover, along with the double album that shares its name, the film blows away the haze of his last two LPs, "Parade" and "Around the World in a Day," and demonstrates that Prince is still one of rock's most compelling performers and boldest visionaries. "Sign o' the Times" is a first-rate concert film that captures Prince and a crack ten-piece band (including the redoubtable Sheila E. on drums) at the top of their form. The thirteen tunes in the film were culled from concert appearances in Holland and a performance at Prince's Paisley Park studio, in Minneapolis, with a good bit of overdubbing added to juice the sound up even further. Still, all the playing -- especially Prince's blazing excursions on guitar -- is joyous and rich in feeling.

Despite the inherent limitations of concert films, "Sign o' the Times" is conceptually strong and visually riveting. The musical performances are linked by stylized vignettes that combine street grit and freaky surrealism to dramatize a live triangle involving Prince, a male background vocalist, and the lasciviously erotic female singer Cat - who is aptly summed up at one point in the proceedings as "a sweet, sticky thing." Admitted-

ly, the story line is loose at best. But the theatrical pieces - which take place on a neon-lit film noir set derived from the hallucinogenic "Sign o' the Times" album cover - effectively evoke the interwoven themes of love, lust and spiritual questing embedded in Prince's songs.

After an opening skit that depicts the tension between possessiveness and trust in relationships, Prince stands center stage enveloped in smoke and cranks up a brittle vision of "Sign o' the Times." As Prince, deadpan, sings his apocalyptic tale of AIDS, drug abuse and violence, Cat stands enshrouded in mist on a pedestal behind him, echoing his movements in a grim choreography that binds them as soul mates amid the wreckage of modern life. After the band marches onto the stage, each member carrying a drum and rapping out a martial beat to close "Sign," the mood lifts with a swinging version of "Play in the Sunshine." Prince repairs to the piano for a brief rendition of "Little Red Corvette" before tearing up the James Brown homage "Housequake" with a series of splits, knee bends and twirls.

The next suite of songs constitutes the dramatic heart of the show. Prince and Cat turn in a steamy duet in the soul ballad "Slow Love," and after Cat has a falling-out with her other boyfriend, Prince romps through a horn-charged take on the irresistible "I Could Never Take the Place of Your Man." Cat's lubricious writhing prompts Prince to reconsider that position,

however, and a burning "Hot Thing" ensues, during which Prince strips Cat down to a yellow bikini and the duo engage in a salacious bump and grind.

Following a lengthy version of Charlie Parker's "Now's the Time" that served as an instrumental showcase for the band, Prince and Cat exchange fantasy segments. Prince is shown backstage in a reverie that dissolves into the "U Got the Look" video, and then Cat falls asleep

NCNB Begins First Notes Of 1988 Music Competition

CHARLOTTE -- Young Tar Heel musicians will compete soon for prizes totaling \$24,000 in North Carolina School of the Arts scholarships.

The first notes of the NCNB 1988 Music Competition will sound February 20 with regional auditions in Fayetteville, Marion, Wilson, Winston-Salem, Charlotte, Wilmington, Edenton and Hendersonville.

Regional winners will be invited to the finals on March 8 at NCNB Performance Place in Charlotte's Spirit Square.

First prize is a \$12,000 scholarship to the North Carolina School of the Arts in Winston-Salem. The winner receives \$3,000 annually for up to four years of study.

The second place contestant wins a four-year scholarship to the School of the Arts valued at \$8,000. Third prize is a \$4,000,

four-year scholarship. In its eighth consecutive year, the Music Competition is sponsored by NCNB National Bank in cooperation with the School of Music of the North Carolina School of the Arts.

Competition is open to North Carolina residents who are at least 14 and will not be older than 20 at the time of the finals. Entrants must not be enrolled as a music major at a North Carolina college or university.

The contest is open for strings, winds, brass, percussion, harp, piano, classical guitar and voice. Applications are available through music teachers or by writing Ms. Shelby Graham, NCNB Corp., T22-1, Charlotte, N.C., 28255.

The Music Competition is part of NCNB's continuing support of

the arts, which includes a corporate art collection, traveling art exhibits and various performances.

The North Carolina School of the Arts is part of the University of North Carolina. In addition to music, the school offers instruction in drama, dance, design and production. It has a full academic program.

The school awards the bachelor of music degree, the college level performance diploma and the North Carolina high school diploma.

NCNB National Bank is a subsidiary of Charlotte-based NCNB Corp., a \$27.9 billion holding company that owns banks in six southeastern states.