

Finale lauds Black woman

Tonya Widemon
Staff Writer

The Black's attitude toward his own heritage has metamorphosized greatly in the past 350 years. The Opeyo dancers, BSM gospel choir and Ebony readers interpreted this history through the arts to culminate the Third Annual Black Arts Cultural Festival, Sunday, April 14, in Memorial Hall.

The performers presented an "Exhibition of Progress" with emphasis on the Black woman since the time Blacks were shipped to American from Africa.

The slave woman as servant and nurse taking care of other people's children remains strong and has endured the hardships for decades. The Opeyo dancers portrayed such chores as ironing clothes and rocking white babies to the tune "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot."

During the period from 1875 to 1950, the Black woman was faced with greater tribulation. She was a "free" Negro fending for her family in the best ways possible. Because she was given little opportunity to choose an occupation, most times she was forced to perform the lowly and disreputable tasks of life.

The flesh was an undercover business—and so was the tale of "Ruby Brown," a young and beautiful servant, told by an Ebony reader. One day, Ruby put down her broom and asked herself, "what could a colored girl do in the kitchen of a white woman?" She found a much more profitable business working for white men than she had working in the kitchens of these men's wives.

Black people have expressed the blues in various forms. The blues, much more than an art form, is the expression of attitudes. During this period especially, anything came about to express the loneliness of being Black.

The miserable, low class bar singer, the drunken stupor of a young couple, and an unsympathetic piano player concerned only about his meager business, were portrayed by actors who expressed the sordidness and loneliness of being Black, poor and hopeless.

The performers also interpreted the struggles of the Black woman trying to piece the parts of her jigsaw together. Still the Black woman found herself in distressing family situations. She was often the unwed mother of children whose fathers fled her and his responsibilities. In other cases, she worked so hard for a sense of security, that she often became the overbearing, domineering matriarch, thus emasculating her man.



Margaret Brewington performs with the Opeyo Dancers as a part of the Black Arts Cultural Festival.

The last 20 years have been a time of change for Black people. They have found new and more realistic views of themselves. They have demanded freedom, respect, and opportunities of the rest of the world.

The struggle for integration, the pain and sorrow of fallen leaders were relived by the performers. The wives of Martin Luther King, Medgar Evers, and Malcolm X soliloquized to their dead husbands, remembering them for their undying courage and their efforts for all Black people.

"Oh Freedom," wailed by a gospel soloist expressed the despair that the people have felt and their hope for a better future.

Though Blacks today have new economic and social freedoms and opportunities, the Black woman now has to deal with psychological problems with herself and her man.

She has found that she is losing many of her men to the white women, white values, and white tastes. Performers dramatized the anguish of sisters who try to reason with their men and try to bring them back to the Black heritage and culture.

In spite of her difficulties with her man, the Black woman still wants to stand by his side. An Opeyo dancer expressed an eternal love of the Black woman for her man to the lyrics of "Will You Love Me Tomorrow," sung by a choir soloist.

Four types of Black woman, each of whom plays an important role in the stabilization of the race, were portrayed in the program finale. The Christian woman, a

religious spiritual leader was followed by the angry woman, a leader of the revolutionary spirit. There was the traditional woman, willing to do anything for her man and her counterpart, the new Black woman, more liberal and willing to work with her man, but not behind him.

The directors who pooled the talents of the three arts groups for the final activity of the cultural arts festival included: Herman Mixon, Opeyo Dancers; Joe Knight, Ebony Readers; Lucy Shropshire and Renae Ray, BSM Gospel Choir; Angela Wright, Faye Mitchell and Lucera Blount, BSM Drama Group.



Students gather for an afternoon of food and fun at the annual BSM picnic, one of the final events of Black Arts Cultural Festival.

Dellums: 'Niggers unite'

Annette Morgan
Staff Writer

Congressman Ron Dellums called for the niggers of America to come together and change this country and change the world.

Dellums, a Democrat from Berkeley, Calif., spoke at Memorial Hall Wednesday, April 10, providing the political aspect of the Third Annual Black Arts Cultural Festival.

"You no longer have to be Black to be treated like a nigger," Dellums said. He defined nigger as "anyone whose role in society is defined, circumscribed and controlled by others." A nigger is anyone in society who is a victim in some form. Racism is a niggerizing



Congressman Ron Dellums

New movie based on novel timely with KKK revival

Editor's note: This article reprinted from the Carolina Times, April 13, 1974.

A dozen Klansmen in full regalia showed up in Atlanta last month when a portrait of Dr. Martin Luther King was being added to Georgia's official state gallery in the capitol.

And in Birmingham last week, a 22-year-old Klansman was astonishingly sentenced to 30 years in jail for gunning down a Black minister he did not know.

On a national TV show a while back, a 23-year-old Louisiana collegian who is public information officer for the KKK

told an interviewer that membership in the Klan is on the rise, that the age range of new members is "under 35" and that the Kluxers are stockpiling weapons in preparation for a blood bath through which they expect to return the nation to post-Civil War status quo.

So anybody who has been thinking the KKK had gone away because cross burning and parading have not been common in recent years can just think again. The boys in the bed sheets have simply gone underground, reliable sources declare.

Thus, the new Terence Young film "The Klansman" currently

form, he said.

"Blacks no longer have a monopoly on niggerism. You can be a red nigger, a brown nigger, an ecology nigger, an inmate nigger or a woman nigger," Dellums told the audience. "Thomas Eagleton was a Democratic party nigger. America is a nation of niggers," said Dellums. "It is time for people fighting over crumbs to join in."

Dellums said, "Sexism is another way we niggerize people. Men are human beings so why should we have to carry the burden of being super strong and super male. Until we come to grips with this problem we are in trouble."

"We must fight the niggerizing process of sexism." The glorious moment is when men and women are standing side by side, said Dellums, rather than having women standing behind.

Corruption is a part of politics, Dellums said. "One reason is people are able to buy, sell and pay politicians all the time. There are too many political prostitutes in this country." Dellums stated that he is against private contributions to political campaigns. "This is not representative of democracy."

Dellums said that some progressive reforms are a must and that we must engage in a long range political strategy.

First, we must call for the impeachment of Richard M. Nixon, he said. "If it were in my power to cast all 435 votes I would cast them all," said Dellums. He continued saying, "I am not so naive to think the country would then go down the humanitarian road." One reason for this he said is that President Nixon is only a puppet who dances on a string.

Dellums pointed out, "If I had a choice of impeaching or having him to resign I would prefer to impeach him to show that no one is above the constitution of the United States."

To overcome the corruption of politics, Dellums said we must start with a new set of values. He explained his three basic sets of values as, "Life is the most precious substance on the face of the earth. All human beings have the right to flower and grow. We must accept the responsibility for the world we see."

"We must stand to eradicate injustice and pain. To fight injustice in one place is to fight it in another," Dellums said, "We do not need political prostitutes. We need people with heart and courage, with human values, who are willing to be leaders and assume all the burdens and risks of leadership."

"If we agree that America is a nation of niggers," said Dellums, "then it is time to develop a strategy. We must engage in coalition politics."

Dellums pointed out that niggers outnumber everybody. He said he hoped that one day Middle America would wake up and realize that they are niggers too and join in the fight.

"Black folks are the oldest niggers." We can lead all the non-Black new niggers to change this country and change this world, he said.

"We must start from another base, new values and have a strategy, must be able to bring together the coalition of niggers and each group does not have to lose their integrity."



Joe Knight, president of the Ebony Readers, interpreting a poem during the Black Arts Cultural Festival.

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