

Close-Up

Buppies: Historical bonds and BMWs

By ROBIN BARKSDALE
Chronicle Staff Writer

If you dashed back into your condo this morning to retrieve your Rolex watch before rushing off to your downtown office suite, then there is a good chance that you belong to that new set of black Americans designated as "Buppies."

Buppies, a catchphrase for a distinct new set of black urban professionals, have appeared along with a cousin phenomenon, Yuppies (young urban

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-- Thayer W. Staples IV

professionals). However, Buppies are not to be confused with their white counterparts, and, just to make sure, a writer has published a guide for these young black professionals.

While the word "Buppie" hasn't quite found its way into Mr. Webster's dictionary, Thayer William Staples IV and his wife, Katherine McMillan Staples, have released an official "Buppie Handbook" which outlines how Buppies look, think and act.

In the book's introduction, Staples calls his book

"a tongue-in-cheek look at black people who have managed to get ... and hold on to, a piece of the American Dream." While he admits that the book is intended as a humorous peek at a new mindset of young black people, Staples wants to make one thing perfectly clear.

"Buppies are not Yuppies in blackface," Staples says firmly. "The media has tried to say that Buppies are just Yuppies in blackface. Well, I say, 'No.' Nobody gave us any money. No one made us progressive. We had to work for it -- our parents suffered for it. I point out that unlike Yuppies, Buppies have a tie to their history, a tie to the civil rights movement -- they owe somebody for where they are. They still go to church, and they are still members of the NAACP."

Staples explains the distinction further by noting that Yuppies are "just concerned with being conspicuous. Yuppies indulge in 'conspicuous consumption.' They buy to be seen. We buy because it's a good value."

By Staples' observation, it is not difficult to determine if a person has joined the ranks of Buppiedom. First of all, he says, Buppies never leave home without their Rolex watches.

The conscientious Buppie drives a BMW ("the ultimate driving machine"), which is equipped with a Dolby Sound tape deck and a telephone.

Buppies, Staples says, are people who got "whippins, but are teaching their children to cooperate,"



Author Staples: Black urban professionals still have strong ties to their culture (photo by James Parker).

and no self-respecting Buppie, the book explains, would ever be caught without Perrier in the "fridge."

And just how does Staples have so much knowledge about and insight into "Buppiedom"?

He is, by his own, unashamed admission, a true Buppie.

"I was a Buppie before there was a Buppie," says Staples, dressed stylishly in a tailored suit and tie, immediately calling to mind the attire described in Please see page A13

Social Notes

Humming receives diploma, completes year at conservatory

Amadi Hummings, a 16-year-old violinist, recently received his high school diploma from the North Carolina School of the Arts during graduation ceremonies held May 31 at the Stevens Center.

Hummings also completed a year of study at the New England Conservatory in Boston. During that time he also finished his last year of high school credits through a correspondence course with the University of Indiana.

At the conservatory, Hummings studied under Dr. Marcus Thompson, who received his DMA from the Julliard School. Thompson is one of only a few black musicians on the faculty of



Amadi Hummings

a major conservatory.

Hummings was also a participating artist at the 35th anniversary celebration of the Epstein Fine Arts Fund of the Boys' Clubs of America. The program, which was attended by more than

1,000 Boys' Clubs board and staff members, was held at the Topatio Cliffs Hotel in Phoenix, Ariz.

Dinah Shore, a member of the clubs' national board of directors, was the host of the show.



Dr. Sharon Browne, a member of the Michigan Cooperative Extension Service team, observes a group of Winston-Salem 4-H'ers at work.

Michigan 4-H group tours Forsyth County

A group of Cooperative Extension employees from Michigan participated in a day-long tour of Forsyth County on Thursday, May 22.

The group was part of an exchange program between the North Carolina A&T State University Extension Program and the Cooperative Extension Service in Michigan. The visit was suggested by the Michigan group in preparation for an international trip.

"They wanted to get themselves into an agricultural and rural community environ-

ment that was different from Michigan and would be helpful for their international experience in July," said Dr. John O'Sullivan, tour coordinator and farm management and marketing specialist at A&T.

Bill Mills, one of the group's members, noted in a report to Dr. Dalton McAfee, extension assistant administrator, that the field staff seemed committed to the success of the extension program, and the programs in the county depend heavily on the staff's commitment.

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About Town

Scott Joplin's 'Treemonisha' opera set for Twin City debut

By ROBIN BARKSDALE
Chronicle Staff Writer

A Charlotte-based theater company will bring one of ragtime musician/composer Scott Joplin's operas to Winston-Salem in June.

The opera, "Treemonisha," is sponsored by GM Productions of Charlotte and will be presented at the Stevens Center June 13 to 15.

Joplin is well-known for his ragtime musical compositions and his pioneering efforts in the area of grand opera.

"Treemonisha" was written by Joplin in 1907, but because Joplin was black he was unable to find a publisher and producer for his work.

The opera is set at a plantation in Texas-Arkansas country. The year is 1886.

The estate has been left to a former slave named Ned. Other



William Moize

newly freed black families live on the estate and believe in "conjuring."

The three-act opera centers

around the child that Ned and his wife find under a tree on their property and name Treemonisha.

Joplin published the piano-vocal himself and in 1915 presented an informal audition of the score at a rehearsal hall in Harlem.

Joplin died in 1917, and "Treemonisha" was not discovered until his collected works were published in 1971.

The public received its first true exposure to the opera in Atlanta in 1972, when it was produced by the music department of Morehouse College with the Atlanta Symphony.

GM Productions Inc. is a fine arts organization dedicated to the preservation, mainstreaming and developing of minority arts and artists. It is the only black theater company in Charlotte and one of

only five in the state of North Carolina.

The conductor for the Winston-Salem performance will be Charles Darden, who has served as guest conductor for the Dance Theatre of Harlem, the Royal Danish Orchestra, the Cleveland Philharmonic, Den Norske Opera, the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, the San Francisco Chamber Orchestra and the North Carolina Symphony Orchestra.

Elizabeth Peeler Graham, a native of North Carolina, will sing the title role in the production.

A graduate of the North Carolina School of the Arts, she holds a doctorate from Florida State University.

Dr. Graham made her professional debut in the Tony Award. Please see page A12

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

FRIDAY, JUNE 6

• The Forsyth Piecers and Quilters Guild will hold "A Carolina Galaxy of Quilts" at the Fine Arts Center on the campus of Salem College from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. The exhibition will also be presented June 7 from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. and June 8 from noon to 6 p.m. There will be a lecture at 1 p.m. on Saturday by Georgia Bonesteel. Admission will be charged. For more information call 768-9690.

SATURDAY, JUNE 7

• Triad area historically black college alumni will hold a rummage sale from 8 a.m. to noon in the East Winston Shopping Center's lower parking lot. Alumni from Howard, North Carolina Central, Bennett, A&T and WSSU will use the proceeds to fund scholarships to their respective schools. For more information call 770-5000.

SUNDAY, JUNE 8

• The Winston Triad Lupus Chapter will meet at 2:30 p.m. at Highland Presbyterian Church's activity building for a support group meeting, a television videotape presentation and a social. The session is free and open to the public. For more information call 768-1493.

• Progressive Lodge No. 310, AASRFM, will hold its annual St. John's Day festivities beginning at 2:15 p.m. Participating lodges and chapters will include Mount Moriah Lodge No. 168, Ruth Chapter No. 533 and Elizabeth Chapter No. 310. The parade will begin at 3006 N. Patterson Ave. at 2:15 p.m. The program will begin at 3 p.m. James Boone, 33rd degree, and Arthur Enoch, 33rd degree, will be at the program. For more information call 785-0162.

MONDAY, JUNE 9

• The Winston-Salem State University Arts for Tots Project will hold a summer trial piano program on Mondays and Wednesdays through July 11. The program is for youth and adults who want to determine if they have an interest in studying piano. Dr. Faustina Holman and other area musicians will be involved in the program. Times will be announced. For more information call 784-1935.

TUESDAY, JUNE 10

• Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Forsyth County will hold the organization's monthly orientation for volunteers at 7 p.m. The meeting will be held at 610 Coliseum Drive. For more information call 724-7993.

• The La Leche League of Winston-Salem will meet at 7:30 p.m. at 1239 S. Hawthorne Road. This month's topic is "The Art of Breastfeeding and Overcoming Difficulties." For more information call 768-1447.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 11

• The Forsyth County Genealogical Society will meet at 7 p.m. in the auditorium of the public library, 660 W. Fifth St. Mrs. Jerry Brinegar will speak on the subject of "Oral History."

THURSDAY, JUNE 12

• The "Pink Broomstick" Mastectomy Support Group will meet at 10:30 a.m. at the YWCA on Glade Street. Dr. Lee Simstein will speak on "Breast Surgery: Stages of Healing." The program is sponsored by Forsyth Cancer Service and is free. For more information call 725-7421.

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