



# Urban Arts' Cultural Discovery -- that we might be a blessing to others

Most of us can identify a special talent or skill we may have early in life. There is an old saying which we apply to one very special outreach program produced by Urban Arts. Through Cultural Discovery, we attempt to share very special skills and talents with those who may be unable to participate in activities targeting mainstream society. "We are blessed, that we might be a blessing to others." Cultural Discovery, based on the premise that the arts are for everyone, use the arts to provide a unique forum for persons with special needs to allow them to express their creativity, feelings, and to identify positive self esteem. The program brings the arts to special members of our population including handicapped, convalescent, the homeless, and older adults.

Standing alone as the only arts program which addresses the needs of these populations, Cultural Discovery serves over ten centers and schools in the Forsyth County area which pro-

vide care for these special populations have been identified as being handicapped in more ways than one. The homeless may be handicapped by society; many convalescent and older adults are often handicapped by diseases such as Parkinson's or Alzheimer's; handicapped adults and children may be emotionally, physically or hearing or visually impaired; and, there are the mentally impaired with problems ranging from educable or trainable to autistic or profoundly mentally impaired. Yet, all of these special members of our community share one handicap. That is, they are overlooked by the mainstream of society.

Cultural Discovery is the community outreach arts program which reaches this overlooked populace by providing arts activities specifically designed to meet the special needs of its participants. Each site is given a different arts activity each visit. Programming includes performances, art therapy, field trips, visual arts pro-

jects, creative music and drama activities and projects. These activities

those less fortunate than themselves. The Cultural Discovery program has

tion and scheduling.

It is time to mention a few upcoming events. Holiday Expo, the art exhibition for minority and grassroots artists is gearing up to put plans in motion. Any artist who qualifies in the Triad area is invited to apply in a timely manner in order to be included in this year's exhibition. Traditionally held from December through January and held in the Milton Rhodes Gallery of the Sawtooth Building, Holiday Expo is an opportunity for local artists to compete for awards and share their talent with the general public. Please contact our offices as soon as possible, the deadline is near.

Appearing in the 1989 Black Theater Festival, and brought back by popular demand in last February's presentation of "Do Lord Remember Me", Jomandi Productions will again return on February 2, 1991 presented by Urban Arts of the Arts Council Inc. in "Queenie". Mark your calendar now, and watch this column for

more details. Last year's production of "Do Lord" was a sellout. Don't miss this one!

And the fabulous Betty Carter will be appearing in our very own Stevens Center on April 27 as part of the 1990-91 season. Presented by Urban Arts, Ms. Carter has been recognized as one of the best female jazz vocalists of our time. She has been compared to artists as the great Ella Fitzgerald, Sarah Vaughn and Carmen McRae. Following her worldwide appearances with the Lionel Hampton Band, she went on to greater heights developing her career as a soloist. Consistently receiving critical acclaim, Betty Carter will render an evening of jazz vocalization to be remembered for a long time to come.

Tickets are \$12 for adults, and \$10 for students and seniors. This one, too, will go fast!

Reggie Johnson is the executive director for Urban Arts of the Arts Council Inc.

## ARTS REACH

By REGGIE JOHNSON



provide a noncompetitive forum for children, youth and adults with special needs which allows them to develop artistic expression and creative problem-solving skills. The outcome is that these populations develop skills which can be useful in other aspects of their lives. The challenge presented to both participants and those leading the activities also delivers many rewards. Volunteers, instructors and performers who may teach self-esteem through the arts receive gratification through helping

drawn interest from any qualified individuals throughout the community, but also has received support from local arts organizations which assist in coordinating special activities as a part of the program. This year's program once again is seeking individuals who wish to volunteer as performers, teaching artists, craftspeople who are interested in being a part of such a rewarding activity. Anyone interested in sharing their "blessing" should contact Sandra Toney at Urban Arts' offices, 722-5293 for further informa-

## 'Growing UP' highlights youth in public housing

Most of us over the age of 31 are mighty glad that we don't have to grow up in the nineties. I can't tell you the number of times I have heard older folk say, "I sure am glad I don't have to try and raise my children during these trying times." Its enough to drive you crazy.

That was the backdrop for Saturday night's special program entitled "Growing up in the Nineties," hosted by WXII news anchor Denise Franklin.

The half-hour program presented an insightful look into some of the difficulties and challenges faced not only by the children today but also by their parents.

Well obviously, you can't cover all that in a half-hour but you can give the audience something to think about. And that's what "Growing Up" did.

Although the program did present a few of the well known negative statistics affecting the life and health of the citizens of North Carolina, "Growing up in the Nineties" was not about despair. It was really about small victories with the promise of greater rewards.

Saturday's program presented a very positive, hopeful, and promising look at youngsters and their parents who are coping and thriving -- even in the midst of some pretty tough

everybody there carry a gun?

Well, give credit to reporter Anthony Wilson who took a deeper look to find a young man who may one day turn out to be a modern day

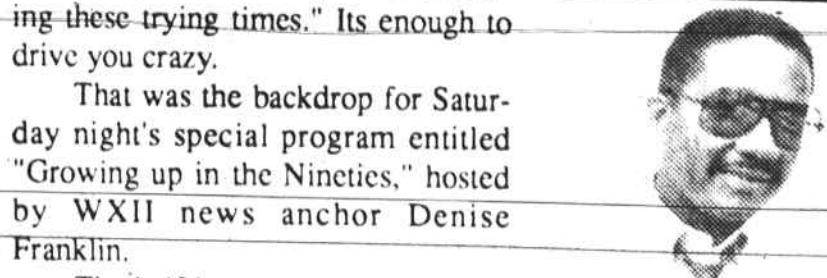
say and the way they said it was revealing -- indeed if young viewers saw or heard anything, I hope that they heard the comments of Donald Snow who offered this one bit of advice: "If you can't read, write and spell, there ain't much you are going to be able to do in this world. Stay in school and off the streets!"

There were other heroes like 13-year-old D.J. Chisolm who attends Cook Middle School and, for five days a week, volunteers in a children's center working with handicapped children. He was wonderful.

And how about the young cheerleader, Katy Fry, who presented a true profile of courage, and the diligence of two students who scored perfect marks on the SAT exams.

Local media, both electronic and print, tend to focus on what a good friend calls the proverbial "two percent club" that perennial group of individuals who no matter what, always manage to find a way to make life miserable for the rest of us.

It was good to see the local folks at WXII take the time to focus on the other 98 percent of us!



## ON THE AVANT-GARDE

By TANG NIVRI

times.

A lot has been written and said about a place called Happy Hill Gardens, especially lately. I don't know the people who live there and frankly the only thing that I, like so many others have ever heard about the place, is that it is a drug infested, crime-ridden, and violent public housing area.

But I will tell you that I have always felt that there must be people there who, still, despite the pressures, are trying to do the right thing. Course, that's always been the case. But where are they? Why aren't they being shown or written about? Does

Horatio Alger, a youngster named Rico Sutherland, an aspiring businessman.

Sure, as "Growing Up" pointed out, there are young people who live in that area who are having to pay the price for succumbing to peer pressures -- for making the wrong decisions.

But for every one of them, there were many more like Rico Sutherland, standing just as tall as they could, maintaining their own sense of dignity, pride and self-determination.

Growing up also focused on some of the young people who didn't do the right thing, what they had to

## Columnist gets dose of rap group's mouth disease

Why is the 2 Live Crew controversy more an issue of censorship and/or racism as opposed to respect? Well I don't think I was prepared for the answer I got (half of which I can't

negative references to women are damaging. (Why denigrate women at all?)

More disturbing is that it is more and more acceptable. So much so, that

lessness. First by slaveowners, and then by horny white men (who, while seeing them in much the same manner Luther projects in his music), had their way with them, as their men stood helplessly by. Today, much like black on black crime, it's black on black psychological assault. (As to the ludicrous cries of racism? C'mon Luther, those are the healthy cries of appalled citizens.) And we must remember that when a race of people demeans its own women (perpetuating the cycle of broken families), history has shown that that race will not stand.

What's even sadder is those who don't even see the parallels. Like fellow rapper Queen Latifah, who, while supporting Campbell in his fight against censorship, added that there were some women who fit Campbell references. Of course, this gets back to Barry White's key issue of black women respecting each other... Perhaps Flavor Flav (of Public Enemy

fame) couldn't have put it better when he said "there's a big point people are missing with all this dissin', instead of fighting each other, we should be kissing"... Besides, we get dangerously off course when we make Luther Campbell the whole problem. He is, rather, a symptom. The real problem is the way we see ourselves... By the way: Flavor Flav has a solo album coming out next spring. It's called "Lifestyles of the Rich and Flav"... Next week: It's back to the lighter side of reporting behind the scenes.

Lisa Collins is a free-lance writer and syndicated columnist based in Los Angeles. She has written more than 200 articles on a variety of issues for a number of national publications from Essence to Design magazines. Her background in the field of entertainment reporting is extensive, featuring cover stories and interviews with the likes of Richard Pryor, Michael Jackson, and Prince.



## BEHIND THE SCENES

By LISA COLLINS

print) when I posed the question to Luther Campbell backstage at the recent MTV Music Video Awards. My colleague, Lee Bailey (of Radio Scope) whispered "maybe he got so upset because the question was coming from a black woman." Fact is, the room applauded Campbell's departure, which was preceded by a whole slew of curse words, as he charged, "where were the sisters before 2 Live Crew came around? They walked by all those porno flicks and magazines to grab one f---ing 2 Live Crew tape out of the whole rack, with Dice Clay and Eddie Murphy, and say okay we're gonna f---k with them because that's a black ass company. And what they do is ridicule us and use us for some s--- that's been burning in the back woods all their lives. F---k this."

Campbell's actions show that this whole controversy is really getting to him. People like Spike Lee are calling him ignorant, and Minister Farkhan reportedly called him "a disgrace to the black community" while addressing a Miami crowd (with Campbell present). Fact is, Campbell's

an all new girls rap group "Bitches With Problems" is being primed to debut on CBS Records. And get this, the title of their song is "Two Minute \_\_\_" (Guess what goes in the blank.) Another group has just produced a rap tune called "We want to \_\_\_ Wake Your Daughter Up."

So why single out Campbell? Because rappers like BBD, who fall just short of the like in their lyrics, know better than to project it as their image. This is Campbell's biggest mistake. The tragedy, as witnessed backstage, is he can't help it. It's what he's all about. Fact is, controversy, not talent, got Campbell where he is. As to his defense of voluntarily sticking his own albums, stickers didn't stop our youth from hearing his "Me So Horny" smash which received a great deal of radio airplay. And it wasn't adults singing these tunes, but kids, most of them young girls, who didn't fully understand the implications.

As to where were the sisters, the history of black women in America has been riddled with rape (both physically and psychologically), and help-

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**☆ ASTRO-DESTINY ☆**

- ☆ **ARIES** Mar. 21 - Apr. 19 Proceeding without full knowledge of the situation can be downright foolish and disastrous.
- ☆ **TAURUS** Apr. 20 - May 20 Your sense of well being is increased by the joy that your visits to a sick friend brings. He is touched by your concern.
- ☆ **GEMINI** May 21 - June 20 Guard your tongue! Gemini folks should think much before they speak. It can save embarrassment.
- ☆ **CANCER** June 21 - July 22 Community projects are something that demand your attention. Complaining is not always the answer.
- ☆ **LEO** July 23 - Aug. 22 Your family problems are beginning to snow you under. There really is nothing to be accomplished by worrying. Things will right themselves.
- ☆ **VIRGO** Aug. 23 - Sept. 22 The fascinating acquaintance you met can easily become a most important part of your life.
- ☆ **LIBRA** Sept. 23 - Oct. 22 The transactions in real estate take a good deal of your time this week. Beware of shady deals.
- ☆ **SCORPIO** Oct. 23 - Nov. 21 Your judgement can be faulty. Compliments should be held to a minimum. Flowery words sometime can backfire.
- ☆ **SAGITTARIUS** Nov. 22 - Dec. 21 The problem that is giving you concern can be solved and patience is the key in this case.
- ☆ **CAPRICORN** Dec. 22 - Jan. 19 There has been much concern over a family problem. It can be solved if you take the time to look at both sides.
- ☆ **AQUARIUS** Jan. 20 - Feb. 18 Big money windfalls and the chance to gain through associates take up much of the time now.
- ☆ **PISCES** Feb. 19 - Mar. 20 Your charm proves a winner. Things go well for you this week. Don't neglect things, however.

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