Angelou exposes the soul

By SHERIDAN HILL Managing Editor

Make no excuses that would allow you to miss Maya Angelou's musical which is world-premiering this week in Winston-Salem. Get out of a meeting, send the kids to the neighbor's (take them if they're feenagers or older) hock your jewplry if you must, but get yourself down to the Arts Council Theatre might.

Precious few performances (Sept. 10-15 only) remain of Angelou's production, which explores and celebrates the soul in a rare combination of song, poetry, dance and theatre.

And Still I Rise will satisfy the most demanding appetite for entertainment and touch the heart with its profundity.

It's about being human. It's about looking back on your life, remembering your childhood; days when you were small and the world was large "and the sky was dark and sweet like licorice, and the stars were marshmallows."

The central characters, who are about to meet their maker, are played by Ja'net DuBois of Good Times fame, Clifton Davis, star of television's Amen, and Larry Leon

Hamlin, who plays the gatekeeper.

The three, along with ten highly talented performers including members of the North Carolina Black Repertory Theatre, boldly expose the pain and the glory of being African-American, Pow,

Pow; Life Doesn't Frighten Me At All; Now Ain't We Bad; reminisce romantic passion, Oh, To Be Young and Happy. Memory of Love. and, before it's all over, they Get Right With God.

Hamlin, founder of both the North Carolina Black Repertory Theatre and the National Black Theatre Festival, has once again successfully stretched his energy and talent: he serves as production manager and assistant casting director as well as a key figure in the production.

the stage presence of the seasoned professional she is. She has also developed her abilities as a singer and dancer for this part.

Davis proves himself a talented dancer and singer as well as a firstclass actor. As the young Zebediah,

To be a member of this audience is to join the cast in a celebration of life, and a triumphant statement of individuality, which Angelou puts forth with clarity and power: "people see one small side of me, and they think they know



(L-R) Larry Leon Hamiln, Ja'net DuBois, and Clifton Davis, the principal players in the musical, were exhuberant as they took a curtain call Sunday.

Dubois plays the 70-year-old Davis is sensuous and vivacious, Annabelle with a powerful sense of moving with tremendous grace; as the character's inner direction, and the elderly man, he is cranky and humorous.

> The statements about women are powerful: "Nature can turn a baby to a female . . . But only a woman can make herself a woman. And once she's a woman, the whole world knows who she is."

Angelou's nowfamous poem of the same name.

You may write me down in history with your bitter, twisted lies

You may trod me in the very dirt But still, like dust, I'll rise.

me: they don't know me."

Hamlin says he hopes to clear \$20,000 from the production: proceeds will benefit the 1993 National Black Theatre Festival.

Other members of this tremendously talented cast and crewinclude: Dauna L. Brown of Greensboro; Michael A. Coward of Washington, N.C; Robin Stamps Doby of Greensboro; Lawrence Evans of Mississippi; Matema Hadi of Oakland, California: John Henry Heath of Winston-Salem: Junious "Lenny" Leak of Greensboro. Robin Littlejohn of Winstonwas derived from Salem; Carlotta of Winston-Salem, and Kenneth Mallette.

> Defoy Glenn of Michigan is the assistant director, Laurin de Teige Poydras of Louisiana is the music director, Mabel Robinson of Savannah, Ga. is the choreographer, Angela Simpson Holloway of Hampton, Virginia is the stage manager, John L. Bright is the sound engineer, and Arthur M. Reese is the sceneographer.

(L-R) Carlotta, Dauna L. Brown, and Larry Leon Hamlin Join the rest of the cast to sing God's praise in the closing song, Thank You Lord.

Angelou on play: 'I'm over the moon

Yesterday, Maya Angelou took time out of a busy week to answer questions about the world premiere of And Still I Rise.

Chronicle: Are you pleased with the show?

Angelou: I 'm over the moon. It's a sell-out: that's exciting. It's wonderful to see people trying to get tickets and being turned away. That's thrilling.

It means a lot to me, just what people get from the play. I talked tp my own pastor, who said that he felt that every couple ought to see And Still I Rise, just to see how they have to go through certain experiences together and some experiences alone. Certain spiritual people say this is a gift from God.

The president of the university (Wake Forest) and my colleagues feel it's a gift to the city and to this state. It means a lot to

me to feel that everybody, black dust, I'll rise." and white, see a connection for themselves in the play. I couldn't ask for more. I wouldn't know how to ask for more.

Chronicle: How is it that And Still I Rise became the one poem you developed into a full play?

Angelou: The poem for years has had its own life. It's amazing. I hear it in some of the strangest places. There's a mostly men's college in Indiana, and 90 percent of student body is white, and a few years ago the senior class took as their motto for the year, And Still I Rise. So there were these huge chaps (athletes) walking around with bulging pectorals, and across their chests were the words And Still I Rise.

In airports, little black children come up to me and say, "Hi, Maya," and quote it, "you can trod me in the very dirt, but still, like

That's the essence of the human spirit; no matter what happens to us, somehow miraculously we rise.

Chronicle: The songs in the production are a big hit. Had you written songs before?

Angelou: I have written songs for B.B.King, with Quincy Jones, and I had a song performed by Roberta Flack, And So It Goes, that was number seven on the

Chronicle: Did you have difficulty getting this script into production on Broadway?

Angelou: I had the avenue open to produce it on Broadway 12 years ago, but didn't agree with the terms and put the script way in a dresser drawer. I did another version of it off-Broadway, but it

UBRA (9/23 - 10/22): Trade magazines offer helpful hints to face and overcome competition through technology. Read carefully, take notes

and request additional information.

SCORPIO (10/23 - 11/21): Persistence will pay off in job pursuit terviews will go well. Be conservative in dress and mannerisms. Surprise and family with good news.

SAGITTARIUS (11/22 - 12/21): down your pace. Stand up for what you believe in and you will triumph. Rus don't walk.

CAPRICORN (12/22 - 1/19): Take care of affairs of the heart. Eithe see way to resolve conflicts or sever ties and seek new companion. Keep emo

tions at bay when making decision. AQUARIUS (1/20 - 2/18) Will begin to see significant other in realistic light. What friends and family had professed earlier will start to come

vitamins and precautionary methods.

has just sat in a drawer for 12 years.

I can't speak to the difficulties of getting work performed, because I have earned and been given a name which will open doors, but to be young and black - to be young, gifted and black - is very hard. All of us, black white, native American, Hispanic, Asian, should reach into the community and help the young person realize the dream, once we've made a little bit of an indentation.

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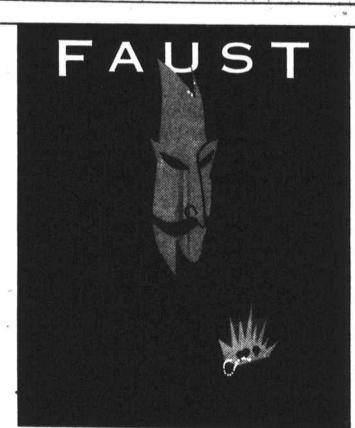
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Blood in the Face - Tuesday, September 15 - 7:30 p.m.



The Southeastern Center for Contemporary Art (SECCA) continues its film/video series entitled See for Yourself. The series generates questions about dominant culture values. Blood in the Face is a compelling, darkly humorous look at the radical right in America. Wake Forest Professor of Sociology, Dr. Ian Taplin will lead the question and answer session afterwards. Recommended for mature audiences.

Admission

\$2 - SECCA members students and senior adults

Purchase a film ticket and see the Annie Leibovitz 1970-1990 and Joyce Scott exhibitions for free. Galleries will be open prior to the film's screening.

Southeastern Center for Contemporary Art 750 Marguerite Drive Winston-Salem, NC 27106 (919) 725-1904



Week of September 6, 1992 ARSES (3/21 - 4/19):

Focus on friends, hopes, wishes, money and love. You'll get just about everything you want. Assume position of thing you want. Assur

TAURUS (4/20 - 5/20): Be careful not to try and accomp nuch at once. Do one project at a time.

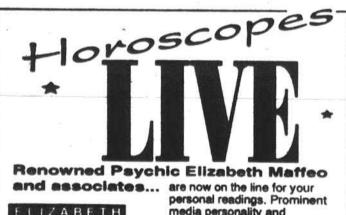
GEMINE (5/21 - 6/20): Treat gravely serious situation with air of humor, light-heartedness. Your attitude will break the ice and ease tense nature

CANCER (6/21 - 7/22): Offer praise and reinfo

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