

# Entertainment

## Wheeler's Music Reflects Her Life

If art and music (and by association, music makers) reflect life, if music is the microcosm of life's macrocosm, it's hardly surprising that a good portion of what passes for music these days is constituted around "minimizing the risk" or playing it safe, sticking to the tired-and-tested formulas and rehashing old ideas. Which is why Caron Wheeler's latest work, *Beach of the War Goddess* stands out, a testament to the innovative, creative force that has propelled this unique artist to a new level of expression.

Lyrical bold and musically adventurous, Wheeler's much-awaited new solo project comes almost three years after the release of her critically-acclaimed UK Black solo debut. "It's a tribal funky kind of record and it reflects what's going inside me. The first album initiated people into where I'm coming from but I don't know that it had the substance of grooves that this one has," she said.

Recorded in New York, London, Los Angeles, and Jamaica, "Beach of the War Goddess" features 13 Wheeler compositions and writing collaborations and a cover of the Jimi Hendrix classic, "Wind Cries Mary" and was produced by a range of exceptional producers including Jimmy Jam & Terry Lewis, Jazzy B. (of Soul II Soul), the group with whom Wheeler came to prominence in 1989), Mikie Bennett (Maxi Priest, Shabba Ranks), plus relative newcomers Derek Johnson (who worked on

Wheeler's previous album), Keith Crouch, Heavy Love and Jimi Randolph. Wheeler was the album's co-executive producer and was also responsible for production on four highlight cuts ("Respect To The Mother," "Soul Street," "Lite As A Feather," and "Father") as well as co-producing four of the set's fourteen tracks.

"The album reflects the last two, three years when I've undergone a good deal of personal spiritual growth," says Wheeler. "I think it's important to express what you're experiencing and then, by writing about what you're dealing with, using the music to empower others."

Stepping out and talking about issues that were the stuff of everyday living is the theme for much of



Caron Wheeler

"Beach of the War Goddess."

The title track is Wheeler's vehicle for sharing her thoughts in the aftermath of the riots in L.A. (which was her home base at the time). "The jarring reality that African people have never been welcomed in Western societies unless it suited Western purposes, that there's always a hope that things will be different but then seeing what happened after Rodney King in the U.S. and wondering if it ever will be different. Being black is a day-to-day situation you can't take your black off when you go out and deal with people. The song "Beach Of The War Goddess" is about the life of the black woman today, about a quest for your highest potential."

Using an exciting musical

fusion of African rhythms, reggae, British/Black funk grooves and R&B shadings, Wheeler uses her latest work to lyrically address subjects of substance. The "world music" feel of "Father" exemplifies the musical hybrid Wheeler creates throughout the album, addressing itself to the plight of the black family, with so many young black men incarcerated or dealing with drugs and other situations that leave children in the care of single parents. "We need to start rebuilding the black family. Behavior patterns have been passed down, we need to break the vicious circle and "Father" is all about that, about stopping the black race in Western society from being an endangered species..."

## Tina Turner to Receive Essence Award

On April 30, Tina Turner will receive the prestigious 1993 Essence Award during a nationally televised ceremony. The awards honor the outstanding achievements of African-American women.

Turner joins a stellar group of women also chosen as recipients:

Rosa Parks, Lena Horne, Aretha Franklin, Gail Devers, "Sweet" Alice Harris, Corla Wilson Hawkins and Senator Carol Moseley Braun. The ceremonies, to be hosted by Patti-LaBelle and Danny Glover, will be broadcast on May 29th on CBS.

1993 has already been an exciting year for Turner. In addition to receiving the Essence Award, she was a Grammy Award nominee in the Best Female R&B Vocal Performance category for her version of "Bitch is Back" from the *Two Rooms* album. Turner, Elton John and Bernie Taupin's *Blue* (Virgin

will release "Tina," the soundtrack to the Disney feature film about Turner's life entitled "Tina: What's Love Got To Do With It?" The album features rerecorded versions of earlier classics and several new songs, pointing the way towards Turner's musical future.

## 3rd Annual Jazz Jam Coming April 10

The 3rd annual Triad All-Star Jazz Jam brings together the finest jazz musicians in the area for one night on April 10 at 8 p.m. in the Stevens Center, 405 W. Fourth St.

The jazz jam showcases the great diversity of styles and musical traditions found in jazz. The

best jazz this city has to offer. The featured musicians perform throughout the United States, Europe and Asia, as well as in their own home town. As a group, they fuse together the swing of the blues with the electricity of fusion and the explosive rhythms of bebop for one



Galvin Crisp

zens. On the night of the performance, all tickets are \$12.

The performance is supported

by a grant from the Arts Council of Winston-Salem and Forsyth County's annual United Arts Fund Drive.

## ARTS REACH



By REGGIE JOHNSON

evening's activities offer a "who's who" of regional performers including Keith Byrd, Galvin Crisp, Charlie Culbreath, Gregg Hyslop, James Houlick, Melva Housing, Matt Kendrick, Steve Kirkman, Federico Pivetta, Janice Price, Herbert Stephens and James Ervin Stowe.

Unique in the concept of bringing such talent together on one stage, the event promises to provide

unforgettable night.

The Arts Council brings the jazz jam back to the Stevens Center as part of the "Something for Everyone" series.

Tickets are on sale at the Stevens Center or by calling 721-1946. Tickets are \$12 in advance and \$10 for students and senior citi-

## "At The River I Stand" Marks King's Assassination

The assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. in Memphis, Tenn., is a tragedy with which virtually every American is familiar. However, the events leading up to this tragedy are little known. The 1968 Memphis sanitation strike, which brought King to the city, is one of the great dramas of the civil rights movement. "At the River I Stand," a one-hour documentary airing Friday

at 10 p.m. on public television, is the first broadcast exploration into the specifics of the sanitation strike. The program, narrated by actor Paul Winfield, will contain archival film footage and contemporary interviews.

The 65-day strike challenged the effectiveness of King's nonviolent philosophy and became the testing ground for the new and controversial

direction for the Poor People's Campaign, which merged civil rights issues with broader economic concerns. King decided to become personally involved in the strike because he believed it was the concrete expression of his social philosophy.

A major theme of the story of organized labor versus municipal authorities, of disobedience

versus civil law, poverty versus privilege, black versus white. On another level, it is highly personal story of individual sacrifice and bravery, for the walkout of 1300 sanitation workers in February 1968 occurred in Memphis despite the arduous efforts of many people on both sides of the struggle to find a solution to the problem before violence erupted.

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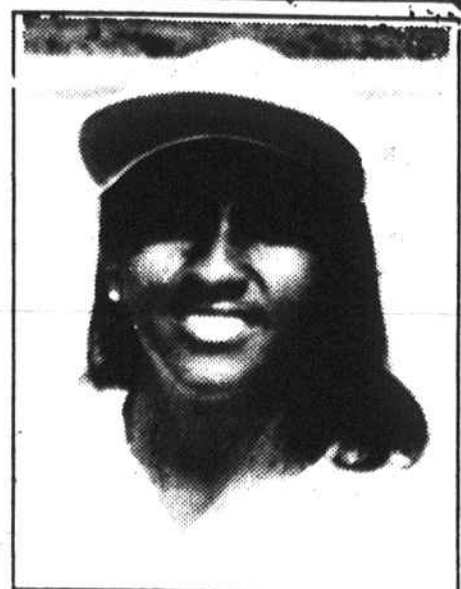
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