

Ruby Dee Signs For Starring Role In "Roots"

By Jesse H. Walker
Special to the Post

George Massaua Jr., ITT Director of Public Affairs hosted a buffet breakfast Friday for the delegates and their friends attending the NNPA Convention in Cleveland at the Founders II and III. ITT's award-winning children's TV show, "Big Blue Marble," has new series for next season including scuba diving in the British West Indies, wood carving in Kenya and migrant workers in Florida.

Con Edison's Community Relations Department is again distributing tickets for five games of the World Team Tennis NY Apples, in addition to partially sponsoring the telecasts and conducting tennis clinics and, in July, will add new tennis clinics for the Deux Youth Foundation's Green Apples Community Tennis program in Harlem.

A potentially critical survey of the role played by blacks and other minorities in developing and executing entertainment industry promotional and exploitation campaigns has been scheduled by the National Urban League at its convention in Los Angeles' Convention Center. And August 5, a day before the convention opens, a panel of top black actors and actresses is being assembled to take an updated look at "The Black Image In Motion Pictures & Television."

The NAACP is feeling a backlash from alleged anti-semitic statements made by some supporters in the entertainment business. The industry has been smarting over ethnic accusations by the Beverly Hills branch's labor and industry committee about Jews controlling TV and a \$1 billion damage suite accusing 11 major station groups and their local radio and TV outlets of racist programs. Result: Other than Motown and American International Pictures, the recent NAACP Image Awards dinner was virtually boycotted by film, TV and recording industry. Then, at the dinner, Don "Soul Train" Cornelius added fuel to the fire by saying the event's TV blackout was an act of racist discrimination in light of the recent ABC allstar special saluting the State of Israel on the 30th anniversary of its founding. Remember recent industry boycott of Ben luncheon? More backlash likely to come.

Concern has surfaced in the Hollywood board of the Screen Actors Guild that over zealousness in the union's push to improve hiring opportunities for minorities and women may lead to problems in reverse discrimination. Union heads have pointed out that the purpose of the minority and women's committee was to insure equal access to jobs, not to give preferential treatment to one group over another.

In Hollywood, Universal TV

has made first commitment to Writers Guild of America West to participate in its affirmative action program, and will guarantee two additional script commitments of each series above and beyond network orders to help members of minorities to become TV writers. The guild is attempting to negotiate similar compacts with other companies.

Ruby Dee has signed for a starring role in David L. Wolper's "Roots: The Next Generations," to play Alex Haley's grandmother, Queen Haley, a sharecropper whose son attended Cornell Univer-



Ruby Dee
...Gets new role

sity and became a college professor. Already signed for the continuing saga are

George Stanford Brown, Henry Fonda, Lynne Moody, Olivia de Havilland, Richard Thomas and Marc Singer.

Sarah Vaughan, who has been described as "one of the greatest things that has happened to set of vocal chords in the last 50 years," appeared Friday night as part of the Newport Jazz Festival in a Salute to "Sassy" at Carnegie Hall, along with her trio, plus the Thad Jones-Mel Lewis Orchestra. More important, "Sassy" wed Waymon Reed, trumpet player with Count Basie on June 13 in Chicago.

The Universal Jazz Coalition's four-night Salute to Women in Jazz is at the site of the old "Birdland" (now known as Casa Blanca 2), June 26-29, and there's another Jazz Salute to Women during the week of July 3 in the Citicorp Center's Market at Lexington and 53rd Street where they have free concerts beginning at 6 p.m. each evening. Don Elliott Trio appears there week of July 10.

Nancy Wilson has been released from the hospital in Los Angeles where she spent five days for treatment of head injuries suffered in an automobile accident.

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