

Broadway Is My Beat

Mathis, Williams' New Album Due In July

By Joey Sasso
Special to the Post
Observations in Covering the Night Beat: Diana Ross opened at the Tokyo Hilton to an audience that yelled and screamed and pounded its hands and feet. You might say she was a smash. Diana spotted Mervin LeRoy, one of the all-time famous Hollywood producers, in the audience and made move front and center so she could play to him. And here Mervin thought he was in Japan for just a Toy Manufacturers' Convention. (He's on the board of one of the biggest toy companies). Would it interest you to know that it costs the equivalent of \$250 to get in to see Diana? And that a lot of people are coming back to see her again and again?...

Johnny Mathis, with the success of the single "Too Much, Too Little, Too Late" with Deniece Williams, has recorded a full album with Ms. Williams, "That's What Friends Are For," due for release in July.

The hit single reached No. 1 in the country for several weeks, the highest position of any single in Mathis' career, surprisingly surpassing "Chances Are," "It's Not For Me To Say" and "Wonderful, Wonderful"....

Muhammad Ali, went to Russia, with gloves, but quickly said: "I'm ready to go home. Russia scares me. The people on buses are so serious, they look like they're going to the electric chair. You don't see no luxury." Ali grumbled: "Do they have any rich people here?" Told that the average comrade earns \$200 a month, the fighter began singing, "America! America!"....

"Roots" star Ben Vereen, "in recognition of his friendship for the State of Israel and understanding of the struggles



Donna Summer
...Sexy disco queen
of all people in their quest for freedom, peace and justice," was presented with the Israel Cultural Award by that country's Ambassador to the U.S., Simcha Dinitz. The presentation was made at the Israel Independence Ball in Washington. Previous winners have been Frank Sinatra and Liz Taylor...

The name inked on the baseball glove was "Reggie Jackson." The recipient of the traditional Class Day gift from seniors was Yale president-elect A. Bartlett Giannetti - A Red Sox fan.

"Good Times" star J'anet DuBois feels insecure because Esther Rolle, who is "Mama" in the series, wasn't on the show the past season, J'anet graduated from supporting player to star. But now that Rolle is returning to the series in the fall, J'anet comments: "There's some spookiness in me. I keep thinking we just have 22 minutes to tell a story each week, and those stories are going to have to revolve around Esther, as they did before."...

Inside the Tube: Nancy Wilson, the singer is recovering satisfactorily from head and facial injuries suffered June 12 when she drove her



Deniece Williams
...Has new album
car to a parked vehicle in San Pedro, Calif. but now she faces troubles of another kind. Robert Cramer, the deputy city attorney in San Pedro, said that tests taken after the accident showed that Miss Wilson's blood alcohol reading was slightly above the level allowed by law, and he is charging her with drunken driving. The accident occurred when the singer was driving from the airport after an appearance in New York and a benefit performance in Mississippi...

Sexy disco queen Donna Summer, star of the disco movie, "Thank God It's Friday," is an exciting divorced woman who knows what she wants in a man. "I don't ever intend to share my bed with a dead door," explodes the vivacious 29-year-old singer who gained instant stardom in the U.S. with the song "Love to Love You, Baby." "It's got to be a real live man! It doesn't matter if he has money or anything like that. He can be black, white, Chinese, green or whatever, but he's got to have whatever it takes to tickle my fancy when I meet him. When I first meet a dude, I check him out, and that first impression is important. I talk with him and see where

his mind is, too."

Donna spent eight years in Munich, where she became a singing star, married Austrian Helmut Summer and had a daughter, Mimi, who is 4. She divorced Helmut and returned to the U.S. "It was just totally different fundamental backgrounds. We're still very good friends," she explains. I got off the plane in the U.S. and there was all the frenzy," relates luscious Donna, whose "Love to Love You, Baby" was a hit before she even entered the country. "I didn't understand it, I was shocked and I almost had a nervous breakdown." Three years later Donna has four gold albums and a chronic ulcer because, "I rarely yell or complain. I hold everything in because I think it's really silly to complain in this business if you are to get on with it anyway."...

"The Wiz" star Diana Ross is furious at being snubbed at Yves St. Laurent's Paris fashion show. She was one of his best customers, but no more...

He was first thrust into the public eye as "Billy Dee Williams, jock" - the result of his outstanding portrayal of a football player in the Emmy winning 1971 television movie, "Brian's Song." Then came two plum movie roles as Diana Ross's dream man, in "Lady Sings the Blues" and "Mahogany," and he became known as "Billy Dee Williams, the black Clark Gable."

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