

# American Musical Awards Never Cease To Amaze Me

Every time I watch the American Musical Awards, I never cease to be amazed. Unfortunately, that amazement isn't usually in the positive frame. As a matter of fact there was only one time when I felt an artist deserved the abundance of awards that were heaped upon him and that was when Michael Jackson won hands down with the album "Thriller."

The other times, I'm usually upset that those who select awards can never see past certain groups or individuals. Frankly, any child at the age of 10, after having seen the AMA a couple of times can predict who the winner will be each successive year. Yes, it's really that simple. And sometimes I think so are the minds of those who pass over the clearly talented to select the "AMA regulars."

Point in fact, if Kool and the Gang is up for an award, the odds are overwhelmingly favorable that they will get it. Sure, Kool is a good group. But did they really deserve to beat out Cameo who rocked everyone with "Word Up?" But if you've seen any of the past AMA, you would know that Kool and the Gang is an "AMA regular."

Another AMA regular is Stevie Wonder. But this year, he didn't have a song that really stole the hearts of America. So what in the world was there for the AMA select to do? Why, just substitute their newest inductee to the "AMA regulars Hall of Fame" and overlook some of the other talented performers. And who is that "outrageous" performer? Why, it's none other than Lionel Richie. Richie became an "AMA regular" the year after Michael Jackson got his due recognition. The next year was Lionel Richie's and as he said it himself, it was "outrageous."

But this year was different. Even the viewing audience didn't know that another induction to the AMA regular Hall of Fame would occur before their very eyes. This was the year of Whitney Houston. Monday night, Whitney walked away with "Favorite Soul/R&B Single Video", "Favorite Pop/Rock Album", "Favorite Soul/R&B Album", "Favorite Soul/R&B Female Artist" and "Favorite Pop/Rock Female Artist." All of this for an album that made its debut in 1985.

If, for those of you who watched the AMA, sensed that Whitney truly seemed shock, you can believe that she was. I don't doubt Whitney's talent as a songstress, but was she really deserving of all of that? I think not, especially considering the fact that she was up against, what I consider, one of the hottest female performers today and that is Janet Jackson.

Oh, Janet did garner two awards. She received "Favorite Female Soul/R&B Video" and "Favorite R&B Soul Single". But personally, I feel she was robbed of a number of awards.

Maybe I don't understand how the system works. When is the cut off date for an album to be con-

## ENTERTAINING THOUGHTS



WITH LORETTA MANAGO

sidered? Is it that as long as it was playing at some point in time in 1986, then it can be used in Award programs such as the AMA? If that's the case, I still think Janet was robbed. Stack up "Saving All My Love For You", "How Will I Know", "The Greatest Love Of Love" against "Nasty", "Control", "What Have You Done For Me Lately" and "When I Think Of You."

But that's all the griping I'm going to do. I was gratified to see Billy Ocean get "Favorite Pop/Rock Single" and "Favorite Pop/Rock Album". Even in the "Favorite Soul/R&B Female Artist" I was astonished to see Patti LaBelle and Anita Baker even receive a nomination. To my knowledge, it was a definitely a first for Patti and she has long paid her dues.

Lionel Richie, who was presently touring in Australia received "Favorite Pop/Rock Single", "Favorite Male Soul/R&B Male Video", "Favorite Male Soul/R&B Artist" and "Favorite Pop/Rock Male Artist."

Receiving their first award was New Edition, a young, vibrant group who won "Favorite Soul/R&B Group".

And for those of you who didn't count, Diana Ross changed nine times in three hours.

### EVENING OF LOVE

"An Evening of Love" will be held at the J.B. Diamond Club, 2638 Statesville Avenue on Sunday, February 15 from 5 p.m. until 8 p.m. The festive occasion will feature the Michael Porter Band and include refreshments, door prizes and a champagne fountain.

A souvenir booklet will display Valentine greetings, love poems or Valentine business ads and you can place your expression by calling Sylvia Grier during the evening at 332-0662 no later than February 6.

In honor of Black History Month, donations will be made to the Afro-American Cultural Center, the Anita Stroud Foundation and the Housing Authority Scholarship Fund.

Donations to the evening of love are \$8.

### BLACK CULTURAL FEST

The black Cultural Festival, sponsored by the City of Charlotte's Neighborhood Centers De-

partment will be held on Saturday, February 7 from 10:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. at the Greenville Center, 1330 Spring Street. The theme of this year's festival is "In Celebration of Black Family Achievements."

The day long event includes an opening ceremony featuring Dr. Clifford Jones, pastor of Friendship Missionary Baptist Church as the keynote speaker and dialogues on issues facing the black family in the 1980s. The festival features Afro-American Art, entertainment by the Johnson C. Smith University Choir, the Children of the Sun Choir of UNCC, the Michael Porter Trio and storytelling by the Public Library for the children. There will be demonstrations on how to prepare African dishes and McDonald's Cafeteria will have "soul food" on sale. For more information call 336-3054.

### BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Thoughts often turn to love when February comes, but February is also the month long-recognized as Black History Month. The North Branch Library will be getting its program off with the February Flicks series to be shown Tuesdays, February 3, 10, 17 and 24 at 4 p.m. "Dad and Me", an honest picture of black middle-class family life, and of seven-year-old Darrett's warm relationship with his father gets the program underway. All programs are free and open to the public. For more information call 336-2882.

### AFRICAN STORIES

Angela Simpson, owner of the Undercover Book Source at 115 East Boulevard, which specializes in Afro-American literature will present a program of African stories for the whole family at the West Boulevard branch of the public library, 2157 W. Blvd. at 6:30 p.m., Wednesday, February 4. Ms. Simpson will also show examples of African crafts. The program is open to the public and is free. For more information call 373-1050.

### ARTITUDE ADJUSTMENT

Dan Gottlieb's, head of the Mint Museum's exhibitions staff will be the featured speaker as Artitude Adjustment returns from its holiday hiatus on Friday, January 30, from 5:30-7:30

### BLACK CELEBRATION

In a special celebration of black family achievements, sponsored by the Neighborhood Centers Department, essays written on "The Roles of the Black Family in Shaping of American History" will be presented. Dr. Clifford Jones, pastor of Friendship Missionary Baptist Church will be the guest speaker. B.J. Harrison of Channel 9 will be the mistress of ceremony. The program will take place Saturday, February 7 from 10:30 a.m.-6 p.m. Contact Bill Hamlin at 336-3054 for more information.

### OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS

The Original Carolina Gospel Singers featuring lead singer, LaVerne Spears will be performing "What A Fellowship" and "Say Yes," when "Opportunity Knocks" will air on Sunday, February 1 at 5:30 p.m. on channel 42.

### AMERICAN PLAYHOUSE

For a dramatic evening, watch the "American Playhouse" special, "The Wide Net." This play which is set in the 1930s in Mississippi centers around a young couple's problems that disrupt the entire town. Barry Tubb and Josef Sommer star in this program that airs on channel 42 at 9 p.m., Monday, February 2.

### EYES ON THE PRIZE

The second part of "Eyes on the Prize" - "Ain't Scared Of Your Jails" will be airing Wednesday, February 4 on channels 58 and 42 at 9 p.m. This segment concentrates on the college students who take an increasingly active role in the civil rights movement. The students create their own voice within the movement from the formation of SNCC.

### LYCEUM PROGRAM

Beatrice Nivens, the renowned columnist and author of the much acclaimed, "The Black Woman's Career Guide" will be a guest speaker on the campus, Wednesday, February 4.

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