



LOVE SONGS—No one sings about love quite like Capitol Recording artist Melba Moore who can take us on a journey exploring the many moods of love as showcased in one of her albums "I'm In Love." Melba is one of the hottest recording artists today with inspiring music and explosive talents.

Cleavon Little Helps Support Black Theater

NEW YORK, N.Y. (AP)—Actor Cleavon Little put his money where his mouth is at a star-studded benefit to support black theater.

Little, star of Mel Brooks' riotous film "Blazing Saddles," and the Broadway play "I'm Not Rappaport," drew the winning raffle ticket Monday night at a midtown restaurant, then pulled out a check for \$200.

"It's just something important that I think needs to be done, hopefully to encourage other people," said Little.

He added that too often people enjoy themselves at benefits without thinking about how they can help others.

"I was overwhelmed. People just don't pull out checks," said South African trumpeter Hugh Masekela, co-author of "Sarafina!," a play about children in his homeland currently showing at Broadway's Cort Theater.

"If more people did that, black theater would fly," he added.

The benefit was staged to help the Roger Furman Theatre, which bills itself as the city's oldest black not-for-profit theater.

The cast of "Sarafina!," which was nominated for five Tonys this year, performed at the gathering. They were joined by Anna Maria Horsford, one of the stars of the NBC sitcom, "Amen," and Rosalind Cash, a movie and theater actress with a recurring role on "The Cosby Show," spinoff, "A Different World."

Annual Reggae Sunsplash Set For Jamaica

MONTEGO BAY, Jamaica—Reggae music fans planning to attend the 11th annual Reggae Sunsplash, the world's largest outdoor reggae festival, may take advantage of the four- to seven-day packages at the all-inclusive SeaGarden Beach Resort in Montego Bay.

Jamaica's best-known musical event, Reggae Sunsplash, will take place Aug. 15-20 at Bob Marley Centre, less than 10 minutes from SeaGarden. The festival attracts renowned performers and spectators from around the world. Among the artists appearing this year are Dennis Brown, Gregory Isaacs, Toots and the Maytals, Yellow Man, Sophia George, Freddie McGregor and Josie Wales.

SeaGarden Beach Resort is offering four-day/three-night packages priced from \$327 to \$338 per person, based on double occupancy. Five days/four nights range from \$436 to \$452; six days/five nights from \$545 to \$565; and seven days/six nights from \$654 to \$678. They include deluxe accommodations; airport/resort transfers; three meals daily; complimentary beverages and snacks; water sports and recreational activities; and all taxes and gratuities.



Freezing changes some flavors: the potency of onion flavor decreases; that of spices and garlic increases.



SHOWING OFF—Expose' will show off the collective and Carowinds Paladium. Appearing with Expose' will be Pretty individual talents of group members Jeannette Jurado, Gioia Bruno and Ann Curless in concert August 13 at 8 p.m.

Producing, Directing Artists Punk-Funk King Finds New Domain

AURORA, N.Y. (AP)—Rick James, the self-professed King of Punk-Funk Rock, calls his latest album "Wonderful," with good reason.

"That's the way I feel since I've been off Motown," said James, referring to the legendary recording label which released the string of singles—"You and I," "Super Freak I," "Cold-Blooded"—that catapulted James to superstardom during the past 10 years.

The release of "Wonderful" last month on Warner Bros. Records marks a new phase in his career. He said his fans will hear "a joy in it that I haven't had for years."

The parting was not amicable; Motown is suing James for not fulfilling his contracts with them, and James is suing Motown, claiming the company owes him money and never gave a proper accounting of his royalties.

Motown "denies all of that 1,000 percent," said company attorney Mark Gottridge. James denies the charges Motown has made against him.

"They're trying to say I'm in violation of a contract, which I'm not," said James, adding that he had finished and delivered both his own final LP for Motown and a third LP by the group he produces, the Mary Jane



RICK JAMES
King of Funk

"They [Motown] never totally understood what I was trying to do, where I was trying to come from with my music. For the whole 10 years it was a constant battle in me trying to acquaint them with what I wanted to say..."

Rick James

"It's just a very happy album," said James, who is known for his risqué lyrics, throbbing dance rhythms and long, curly hair.

"With so many years of unhappiness with Motown, so many of my albums after 'Street Songs,' which was my biggest album, were kind of downhill as far as the ambience and the joy because I really wasn't feeling a lot," he said. "On this album, I kind of got it all back."

James has severed his 10-year relationship with Motown: "They just didn't allow me to have the freedom that I needed to really make the kind of records and do the kinds of things in the industry that I wanted to do."

Working at Motown, which produced such stars as the Jacksons, the Supremes, Stevie Wonder, Smokey Robinson and the Miracles, the Temptations and the Four Tops, was initially invigorating for James.

Then the tension between the sexually graphic themes coursing through much of his work and Motown's traditionally conservative approach to pop music began getting to him.

"They never totally understood what I was trying to do, where I was trying to come from with my music," he said. "For the whole 10 years, it was a constant battle in me trying to acquaint them with what I wanted to say and how I wanted to say it."

Girls.

During the past three years, James has spent much of his time producing both the artists in his stable—the Mary Jane Girls, Val Young and Process and the Doo-Rags—and others, including comedian Eddie Murphy and his successful single, "Party All the Time."

He also says that during that time, he's been free of a cocaine addiction that he feels was a serious threat to his life.

"There was a bad period in my life some years ago when I got into a serious cocaine habit, \$10,000 to \$15,000 a week," said James. "I didn't really see it. My lawyers and accountants and friends really saw it before I did. They saw that my usage of coke was getting to be a million-dollar-a-year habit. I didn't see it until I went into rehab and I didn't understand it until I got out."

James said he got caught up in living the "bad boy" persona he had cultivated.

"There was a time when I was just trying to live the image wholeheartedly; I wasn't thinking about the person, James Jackson," he said. "I mean, Rick James was just a man-made image, the image I created. Just trying to live Rick James almost killed me." He was born James A. Johnson, Jr., on Buffalo's rough East Side 39 years ago.

Realizing A Vision

Rapper Carves Out Own Territory

If making it in the ultra-competitive world of rap these days depends on a combination of style and content, a balance of groove and attitude, then Raheem Bashawn has got the goods. At the age of 17, the Houston-based rapper has carved out a territory all his own—because Raheem is not just another rapper, but a rap vigilante.

For a clue, just check out a verse or two of the title cut from Raheem's debut A&M album, titled—that's right—"The Vigilante." "I'm rap's gladiator/I'll make the speakers smoke/Call me a leader, like Attila/Son, I ain't no joke!" Raheem says. "I'm tough like Al Pacino, Mike Tyson and Darth Vader." Starting to get the message? Raheem has taken the law of rap into his own hands. Rap pretenders are hereby forewarned: as long as the Vigilante is around, lameness will not be tolerated.

Born in Trenton, N.J., where he lived with his grandmother, Raheem began rapping at age nine, inspired by the Sugar Hill Gang. Three years later, he relocated to Houston to live with his mother, and now, eight years after he began rapping, Raheem (a childhood name, given to him by his uncle) is on top of his game.

It's apparent from the opening tune, "Dance Floor," that the

Raheem style is a departure from most rappers, in one thing, the tracks depend not only on rap and rhythm, but on music and melody. Naming Kraftwerk, the German

high-tech, but I liked it, and thought maybe I could use it. So we both came to the conclusion that we were gonna mix the two sounds together.

"The thing is, if a rapper comes out

"I'm trying to mix hard-core lyrics with high-tech music, and create a new type of sound. You can never say that you invented a style of rap..."

synth pioneers, as a prime influence, Raheem explains, "I'm trying to mix hard-core lyrics with high-tech music, and create a new type of sound, okay? Now you can never say that you invented a style of rap, 'cause there's always somebody else out there doing the same thing not the same words, but the same style—but musically, I'm trying to do something different by mixing these two elements together."

Karl Stephenson, a fellow Rap-A-Lot (Raheem's Texas label) artist who composed and produced "The Vigilante's" dense music tracks, helped Raheem realize his vision. "We hooked up and got to talkin,'" Raheem recalls. "I let him know what I was doing, and he made a couple of beats for me that sounded good—it was kinda hip-hop and kinda

with more music, it'll turn more people onto rap. I mean, after so many years of just drum beat, turntable and hi-hat, it gets boring. If you put music with those elements, you'll have something that [more people] can get into."

As for his vigilante persona, Raheem has a definite purpose. As he explains it, "I was with the Ghetto Boys [a Houston rap crew] at one time. We performed with LL [Cool J] at a 'Just Say No' rap, and he dissed us. I mean, he dissed us real bad. Ice T was another one who dissed us; you know, they all said, 'Well, they're from Texas, they ain't about nothin'." So therefore, when I went solo, I decided that I was gonna go after LL, and all the others that was dissin' us. So there it is: I'm a vigilante."

Still, while Raheem may be on a definite revenge kick, he's not into rating the other rappers, a practice favored by Kool Moe Dee and others. "I ain't out to rate nobody, and say

Expose' To Reveal Collective Talent

CHARLOTTE—Summer concerts at Carowinds in August will feature the refreshing Miami beat of Expose, the laid-back music of James Taylor, the remarkable pop music sounds of Tiffany and a free concert by contemporary gospel artist Larnelle Harris.

On Saturday, Aug. 13, at 8 p.m., Expose will fill the Carowinds Paladium with the appealing blend of dance grooves and Latin sizzle that has become their trademark.

Expose's debut album, "Exposure," shows off the collective and individual talents of group members Jeannette Jurado, Gioia Bruno and Ann Curless, who take turns expertly handling lead vocals.

Their first 12-inch single, "Point of No Return," reached the No. 1 spot on Billboard's Dance Chart and then went on to be named "Dance Record of the year." Other hit singles, including "Exposed to Love," "Come Go with Me," and "I Know You Know," to name a few, brought even more fans out onto the dance floor and have gained Expose a broad-based national following.

Appearing with Expose at the Paladium on Aug. 13 will be Pretty Poison. One of America's premier singer/songwriters, James Taylor will appear in a sold-out concert at the Carowinds Paladium on Sunday, Aug. 14, at 7 p.m. All tickets for the James Taylor concert have been sold and there will be no additional tickets available on the day of the concert.

On Saturday, Aug. 27, contemporary gospel artist Larnelle Harris will treat Carowinds Paladium guests to inspirational music in a free concert at 4 p.m. The concert is free to Carowinds guests and no Paladium ticket is required. Seating for this concert will be on a first-come, first-served basis.

Tiffany, whose hit single, "I Think We're Alone Now," has rocketed into the U.S. top five, will rock the Carowinds Paladium on Sunday, Aug. 28, at 7 p.m.

Tiffany's huge success was paved by a high-visibility series of shows at shopping malls across America and a concert series with the Jets that took her to schools coast to coast.

Her age aside, 16-year-old Tiffany has proven herself a remarkable new star on the pop music horizon and her debut album, "Tiffany," captures her still evolving talent with hits like "I Saw Her Standing There," "Could've Been," and "Spanish Eyes."

Appearing with Tiffany at Carowinds on Aug. 28 will be the New Kids on the Block who will mix up a potent batch of danceable R&B, pop and rock for Paladium guests.

This incredibly talented group from Boston, whose members were discovered in a city-wide talent search for five fellows under 18 who could sing, rap, dance and had unique personalities, offers a wide selection of hits from its second album, "Hangin' Tough."

SLAPSTIX
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NATURAL CAUSES



RAHEEM

who's good and who's bad. I'm just here to hold my title. I stay up to date, you know; I mean, every other rapper is trying to hold their position and make names for themselves, so I ain't fallin' behind. But I'm lettin' 'em know there's a limit to it. My whole album ain't just talkin' about what I can do and what I'm gonna do and all that."

Eddie Murphy Responds To Film Critics

NEW YORK, N.Y. (AP)—Eddie Murphy took out a three-page advertisement in a Brooklyn newspaper to respond to criticism that his new movie makes fun of black life, the weekly said last week.

The City Sun published a column by Armond White in its July 6 issue that said "Coming to America" was full of "ethnic self-loathing and humiliation."

"Coming to America" is not a satire with the point that the black community has to get its act together. The film is simply making fun of black life," he wrote.

White said that for Murphy, "the very idea of black politics or the political expression of black pride is absurd."

The tabloid, which has a largely black readership, released excerpts of Murphy's response. In a letter addressed to the public, Murphy recounted White's remarks and then concluded, "I found the lack of charity on the part of this black man for

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