

### PlayMakers To Present Shaw's "Misalliance"

The PlayMakers Repertory Co. presentation of George Bernard Shaw's "Misalliance," scheduled March 1-19, will be directed by guest director Maureen Heffernan. The production will feature guest artists Tobias Andersen and James Pritchett.

For all three, the comedy is remarkable in its timeliness. "Shaw has found universal truths about relationships," said Ms. Heffernan, who directed the PlayMakers production of "Orphans" in 1987. "The play deals with the conflicts between rich and poor, men and women, parents and children, in a way that is thoroughly recognizable to modern audiences."

"These are the themes, dialogues and discussions that we see in our own lives—but they're set in England at the turn of the century, in a class structure different from our own. All of this makes the play quite fascinating," Ms. Heffernan added.

"Misalliance" provides Andersen and Pritchett with an opportunity to play off each other, representing two very different kinds of British men of the period.

Pritchett, who is returning to PlayMakers as a guest artist for the fifth consecutive season, plays the role of Mr. Tarleton, the wealthy owner of Tarleton's Underwear. "Mr. Tarleton represents the aristocracy of trade," Pritchett explained. "He's a linen draper who made good, and he has enough money now to be able to speak his mind. But as the play demonstrates, neither nobility nor money cures the problem of how to deal with one's children."

Andersen, who is making his first appearance with PlayMakers, plays the role of Lord Summerhays, a former colonial governor who typifies the English aristocracy. "Everyone defers to Lord Summerhays even when he doesn't know the answers," Andersen observed. "He has a way of dealing with the world that makes him act like he knows more than he does. But even with all of these advantages, he still doesn't deal well with the new generation."

The PlayMakers presentation of "Misalliance" marks the first production of the play for all three. Ms. Heffernan finds the different levels of meaning in the play especially challenging. "It's exciting to see how much of the comedy in the play comes from serious discussions, and how much serious philosophy comes from the comedy," she explained.

Ms. Heffernan is the founding artistic director of the Unlimited Potential Theatre Company of Very Special Arts in New Jersey, a company of actors with physical disabilities. She is the former artistic director of the George Street Playhouse in New Brunswick, N.J., and has directed productions at theaters around the country.

Pritchett, a native of Lenoir, holds a law degree and a bachelor's degree in dramatic art from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. A New York City resident, he has performed extensively in Broadway and Off-Broadway productions, as well as in regional theaters. His television credits include an Emmy Award in 1978 for his role as Matt Powers on "The Doctors."

Preview performances of "Misalliance" are scheduled Wednesday, March 1, and Friday, March 3; opening night will be Saturday, March 4. Performances will continue Sundays at 2 p.m. and Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8 p.m.

All performances are in the Paul Green Theatre, located on Country Club Road on the UNC-CH campus. For information, call 1-962-1121.



**MUSIC MAKERS**—These music makers are well-known in the industry and music lovers continue to give them their total support during live performances. From left to right, Surface members David Townsend, Bernard Jackson, David Pic Conley; Cheryl Popail Riley; Johnny Kemp; Paul George, Full Force member; Lisa Lisa; Bowlegged Lou, Full Force member; Chena and Ruben Rodriguez, senior vice president Columbia Records Black Music and Jazz.

### Guillaume Reveals Dramatic Side Of Talents In Movie "Lean On Me"

Robert Guillaume—for nine years known and loved by millions as Benson, the television character who rose from being a butler on "Soap" to a lieutenant governor in his own series, "Benson"—now reveals a distinctly dramatic side of his talents by starring with Morgan Freeman and Beverly Todd in the rousing, hugely entertaining new "Lean On Me," the true story of America's most controversial high school principal, Joe Clark.

The film, directed and executive-produced by John G. Avildsen and produced by Norman Twain, will soon be released to theaters around the country by Warner Brothers. Michael Schiffer wrote the screenplay, and the score is by composer Bill Conti of "Rocky" and "The Right Stuff" fame.

In the film, Guillaume plays Dr. Frank Napier, who hires longtime friend and colleague Joe Clark (Morgan Freeman) to the seemingly impossible task of cleaning up one of the toughest schools in America—Eastside High in Paterson, N.J. Throughout Clark's risky tenure, he and Napier clash ideological swords on occasion, but both fight for the same goals—a better education for the school's mostly black and Hispanic students.

Robert Guillaume was raised in a St. Louis ghetto by his grandmother, and he dreamed of becoming the first black tenor at the Metropolitan Opera. "When I first stepped out on a stage," he recalls, "I did so because somebody told me I could sing. I continued because it was the only thing that was challenging me."

This ambition directed him to Washington University, where he studied voice, and then to a theatrical apprenticeship in Cleveland. To support his artistic training, Guillaume worked as a streetcar conductor and postal clerk, but he finally made it to Broadway in the musical version of "Golden Boy" starring Sammy Davis, Jr. and "Porgy and Bess."

Guillaume achieved major recognition in the title role of "Purlie!" and then as Nathan Detroit in the acclaimed all-black revival of "Guys and Dolls"—a performance which earned him a Tony nomination. Guillaume's love of theater brought him back to Broadway in 1985 to reprise "Purlie!" with Sherman Hemsley and Melba Moore.

Of his "Benson" role, Guillaume says, "My whole tenure was to conspicuously stay out of stereotypical, sociological traps. To me, Benson had

to be black, someone the audience didn't feel was trying to be white." Guillaume's vast popularity with audiences is now bringing him back to a new series of his own for ABC, "The Robert Guillaume Show," in which he portrays a marriage counselor.

Over the years, Guillaume has expanded his arena of talent to include producing and performing as a successful singer/entertainer, where he is much in demand at theaters and

nightclubs throughout the United States and Canada. He has also co-starred in the Neil Simon film, "Seems Like Old Times," with Goldie Hawn and Chevy Chase, co-starred opposite Gary Coleman in the telefeatures "The Kid with the Broken Halo" and "The Kid with the 200 IQ" (which he also produced), and is also seen with Robin Givens in the television movie "Penthouse."



ALYSON WILLIAMS

### Powerhouse Vocals Alyson Williams Betting On "Raw"

The all-star matchup on wax of singer extraordinaire Alyson Williams and super producer/manager Russell Simmons has long been a dream deferred. Sure, Russell had Alyson sing the lead on the very first session he ever produced ("Action" by Orange Krush for Prep/Street Records in 1982) and, yes, that was Alyson who was singing backup on records by such Simmons-managed acts as Whodini, Kurtis Blow, and Dr. Jeckyll and Mr. Hyde. Finally, it was indeed Alyson who, cast by Russell, was featured in a series of sizzling duets with each of her male counterparts in Def Jam: Oran "Juice" Jones, Chuck Stanley, and Tashan.

But it has taken until the present moment for Simmons to put the finishing touches on Alyson's Def Jam/Columbia debut, "Raw." Naturally, no one is happier than the project's executive producer. "Raw" has been painstakingly crafted to bear out Russell's most extravagant claims. Side one begins with the gospel-inspired soul of "Just Call My Name," a perfect showcase for Alyson's powerhouse vocals. "We're Gonna Make It" teams up Alyson with the members of Blue Magic, the Philadelphia-based quintet who are best known for their smooth early '70s hits.

The same feeling permeates "Not On the Outside," a tough ballad originally cut by the Moments in 1968, and already revived by Simmons once before, for Alyson's Def Jam labelmate Oran "Juice" Jones, on Juice's "GTO" album.

"I Looked Into Your Eyes," co-produced by Russell and Vinnie Bell, stars Alyson in dual roles: Dionne Warwick-styled pop diva and irresistible Emotions-styled background chorus. "I'm So Glad," a torrid gospel duet, finds Chuck Stanley returning the favor Alyson

did him on "Gonna Make You Mine Tonight," one of the standouts on Chuck's "Finer Things in Life" album (which is also included as a bonus cut on the CD version of "Raw").

Side two commences with the album's title tune. A blistering dance cut, "My Love is So Raw," not only features a rough rap by Rush artist Nikki D ("Don't come into my life/You're not comin' right. I want a man I can see when I turn out the light"), it also spotlights Alyson in a salty mood. "I don't need material things..." she says. "On second thought, bring out the ring!" In the same vein, "On the Rocks" finds Al Cracking: "You were once my thrill, like a fine wine. Now you're just a Pepsi, baby, and that's just not my style."

"Still My Number One" was remixed by Public Enemy's Bill Stephney. "Need Your Lovin'" finds Alyson at her most kittenish. And "Sleep Talk," the first single from "Raw," not only features an amusing spoken cameo by Juice, it was remixed by Hank Shocklee and Eric Sadlery (Stephney's co-conspirators in Public Enemy) for maximum b-boy appeal.

Alyson comes by her astonishing emotional and technical range naturally. The daughter of jazz trumpeter and bandleader Bobby Booker (who worked with Count Basie, Sy Oliver, Cootie Williams and others), Harlem-born Alyson had her earliest training as a dancer, a discipline she pursued beginning at age four. She started singing for fun in high school, but quickly won a lot of professional attention.

By 1982 (after "Action"), Alyson doubled as one-third of the Capital Records' act High Fashion and as one of New York's most in-demand session singers, racking up credits with the Commodores, Melba Moore, and Evelyn "Champagne" King, to name

### Shakespearean Plays May Touch Funnybone

Thirty-seven Shakespearean plays performed by three actors in one evening? Impossible, you say? Not so for these three zany New Vaudevillians who perform drama, comedy, acrobatics and some of the fastest costume changes you are ever likely to witness in Stewart Theatre on Thursday, March 2, at 8 p.m.

Leave your textbook at home and bring your funnybone with you because this is Shakespeare like you have never seen Shakespeare before. "The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (Abridged)" is exactly that—all of the Bard's plays condensed into manic three-man romps of two to 20 minutes each.

The merry trio, Adam Long, Jess Borgeson and Daniel Singer, introduce their theatrical "grand fromage," as they call it, by commenting that it would take 3½ days of constant sitting to view the complete works of Shakespeare, and that's too long. So, they compress the comedies into a single reading, compact the histories into one football game (King Lear is disqualified as a fictional character), and attack the remaining tragedies with a vengeance, all resulting in 60 minutes of nonstop, uproarious comedy.

The members of the Reduced Shakespeare Company consider themselves part of the "New Vaudeville" movement on Broadway popularized by the Flying Karamazov Brothers, Bill Irwin and Pen and Teller. "My favorite thing about New Vaudeville," said Singer in a recent interview with the Los Angeles Times, "is that there's a real sense of audience awareness, of shattering the fourth wall."

So, come and get into the act with these crazy guys as they race through their performance at breakneck speed. "It's clever. It's remarkably silly. It's a great sendup of Shakespeare," said the San Francisco Examiner. Tickets are available at the Center Stage Box Office (737-3104) Monday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 5:45 p.m., where convenient MasterCard and VISA orders are accepted. Tickets may also be purchased (cash only) at Ladd's Book Shop of North Ridge (878-4404) Monday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to 9 p.m., and Sunday, noon until 5 p.m. Individual tickets are available at \$10 for the general public and \$5 for NCSU students. Special accommodations are available for people with special needs.

### Stage One Tours N.C. With "Charlotte's Web"

Touring to North Carolina for the first time, Stage One will perform its production of the play "Charlotte's Web" during two shows in Stewart Theatre on the NCSU campus on Monday, March 11. Based on the modern classic by E.B. White, the play is part of the Center Stage Children's Series.

Set in the 1950s on a small Midwestern farm, "Charlotte's Web" brings to life the fantasy of barnyard animals who speak to each other and to the one human they trust. The story centers around a young pig named Wilbur who learns the meaning of love, friendship and sacrifice when he is befriended by Charlotte, a small gray spider who lives in the doorway of his pen. Through her wit and ingenious web construction, Charlotte saves Wilbur from the slaughterhouse and also makes him a very famous pig. A host of many other colorful animal characters add mischief and fun to this heartwarming tale.

Charlotte, Wilbur and the other animal characters are represented with three-dimensional papier-mache figures inspired by turn-of-the-century antique tin toys. By manipulating them from the outside, the actors give the characters movement, voice and life.

Having received numerous awards for outstanding children's theater as well as having performed in the Kennedy Center's Imagination Celebration in Washington, D.C., Stage One of the Louisville Children's Theatre is an honor to present and should not be

missed. In view of the ACC tournament basketball games on March 11, the performance times have been scheduled for 10 a.m. and noon, prior to the 1:30 p.m. tipoff. The noon show is signed for the hearing impaired. Following both shows, children are invited to a cookies-and-punch party, courtesy of McDonald's, where they can meet the actors and characters in person (recommended ages 5-11).

Tickets are available at the Center Stage Box Office (737-3104) Monday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 5:45 p.m., where convenient VISA and MasterCard orders are accepted. Tickets may also be purchased (cash only) at Ladd's Book Shop of North Ridge (878-4404) Monday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to 9 p.m., and Sunday, noon until 5 p.m. Individual tickets are \$4 each. Special accommodations are available for people with special needs.

### health hints

#### Wash Your Hands of Colds

It's said nothing will cure a cold. That's why it's a good idea to avoid catching one in the first place. Many health experts say the best way to reduce the risk of catching a cold—or spreading colds to others—is through frequent hand washing.

Clinical studies show the virus causing colds contaminates the hands of most sufferers. Hand washing or even rinsing the hands can help break the chain of infection.



**NEW GOALS**—Rhythm and blues singer Howard Hewitt tells Ebony/Jet Showcase host Deborah Crable about his "Once, Twice, Three Times" recording fiasco and his new goals since leaving Shamara. Hewitt is raising two daughters and settling down with performer Nia Peoples.

**NATIONAL SPOKESPERSON**—LeVar Burton is national spokesperson for Library of Congress' Year Of The Young Reader (YOYR). The program was initiated by the center for the Book in the Library of Congress and the Library's Children's Literature Center. Burton will appear in a series of public service announcements nationwide in March.