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The Black voice. Volume 2, Number 4 January 28, 1972

Madison, Wisconsin: Afro-American Center, the University of Wisconsin-Madison, January 28, 1972

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Volume 2, Number 4

THE

Friday, January 28, 1972

BLACK VOICE

Published by the Afro-American Center, The University of Wisconsin-Madison



NINA SIMONE the High Priestess of Soul will kick off the Second Annual Black Arts Festival in Madison, Wisconsin

at the Field House on Sunday February 6, 1972, at 8 p.m. See story and schedule on the back page.

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Special Issue



The Second Annual Black Arts Festival in Madison, Wisconsin

FEB. 6-11, 1972



by December Fourth Movement

Subject walked into Afro-Center under the pretext of being on special assignment from WHA-TV, to cover the rally scheduled with Mrs. Georgia Jackson, which was postponed until Jan. 8.

After a careful recording of names, faces, and a friendly "glad to meet you", Craig Denning was once again given information supplied by the receptionist, and handed a press release copy for WHA, which he took with the promise of immediate airing.

The man who fits the description, introduced as Craig Denning, was never employed by WHA-TV or radio. He is a special agent for Dane County Police services.

As you read your want-ad, Mr. Denning, or whatever your real name is, please note that in the name of the people, the December Fourth Movement of the Afro-American Center declares you an enemy of the people, a p____, a coward, and a punk.

The U.S.—China People's Friendship Association is an organization of American people working towards strengthening the ties between the peoples of the U.S. and China. Our objectives are:

1. To promote friendship between the people of the United States and China.
2. To work for an end to all U.S. interference in the internal affairs of China. All U.S. armed forces must be removed from Taiwan, an inseparable part of China. The People's Republic of China is the sole legal government representing all the people of China.
3. To advocate the following five principles as the basis of relations between all countries: mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, mutual nonaggression, non-interference in each other's internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit, and peaceful coexistence.
4. To work towards an end to the U.S. Government's imperialist war in Indochina.
5. To promote educational, scientific and cultural exchange and trade that is mutually beneficial to the people of the United States and China.

1. Show Films from China
2. Speaker
3. A Library of Relevant China Material
4. Study Group
5. Newsletter
6. Celebration for U.S.-China People's Friendship

Special efforts are made to develop co-operative relations with grass roots organizations and people in order to bring their resources and initiative into play to help deepen and expand this program of friendship between the people of the United States and China.

A Letter

I greet you. I want to talk to you about a problem that has been preoccupying my mind. This problem is not only mine, but is shared by many other Asian students, particularly Chinese students in the U.S.

If we think of the world as one vast battlefield, it is quite clear that the front is on the home territories of the oppressor, while the rearguard is in the oppressed countries. Why do I say this? Because it is in the oppressor-countries that the sources of evil, such as the military-industrial complex, are to be found. The effects of oppression, however, are felt in the oppressed countries. In the rearguard, although fighting may be very intense, such as in Indo-China, the tactic of the imperialists is sending slaves to fight slaves, sending our black brothers (and white niggers too) to die for the Kennedys, the Johnsons, the Nixons, the Rockefellers, the McNamaras, and the rest of the filthy oppressors. The inevitable victory of our Indo-Chinese comrades still cannot stop forever the unceasing flow of evil emitted by the oppressor-countries. It is only on the front that the oppressed can confront and crush the oppressor. So now we are all involved in the Amerikan front. And you, my Black Brothers and Sisters, are in the vanguard here. You belong to the awakened oppressed masses.

How can this be done; Well, we must understand it is the nature of the oppressor to oppress. He must oppress. So as the Third World countries are liberated one by one, the oppressor will be gradually forced to increase the pressure of exploitation upon the white niggers, who have so far been duped into believing all the bullshit about white superiority, patriotism, etc. At the moment, the national liberation of the Third World countries are of great importance. But in the final analysis, it is here and in other oppressor countries, that the supremely crucial battle for peace must be fought. We must stop the evil at its source, once and for all.

This is the situation as I see it. Brothers, Sisters, you are in the vanguard! You must arm yourselves for a surprise attack. The crucial battle may come anytime. But now, advise us Asian students. Should we go back or should we join you in the struggle here? I await your answer.

Bail for Angela

It's been more than a year now since we began the fight for Angela Davis' constitutional right to bail. As you know, bail was denied Angela last June by Judge Arnason. We appealed this decision in the State Appellate Court and the

We are now in the process of appealing in the Federal District Court (here in Northern California), and are prepared to go to the United State Supreme Court.

FREE ANGELA – BAIL NOW!
NATIONAL UNITED COMMITTEE TO
FREE ANGELA
 Kendra Alexander (for the staff)

Angela Davis has been in jail for more than a year. Yet she has not been convicted of any crime. By law, she is innocent until and unless proven guilty.

It is true that Angela is accused of murder and conspiracy, but there is nothing in California law to prevent her release on bail.

That the daughter of San Jose City Manager Fletcher, accused of participating in the murder of two bank guards in Washington, D.C. was released in the custody of her father with no bail at all?

That Lieutenant William Calley, who was convicted of the murder of 22 Vietnamese civilians, is now walking around an army post like a free man?

The Marin County Probation Department recommended that Angela Davis be released on bail and said that it believed she would not flee the jurisdiction of the court.

Yet last June, Judge Richard Arnason denied bail, and in October his decision was upheld by the California State Supreme Court, not because Angela Davis would flee, but solely for technical legal reasons. What were those reasons?

The California State Constitution (Article I, Section VI) and the California Penal Code (Section 1270) prohibit bail for persons charged with capital offenses only if the proof of guilt is evident or the presumption thereof great.

We believe that this law is in violation of the United States Constitution on its face, and certainly as it has been applied in the case of Angela Davis because

The Judge's decision to deny bail presumes Angela Davis guilty. She is now supposed to prove her innocence in an atmosphere of racist, "law and order" hysteria generated by the highest authorities of government, including the President of the United States who declared Angela to be

This stands justice on its head. It is the prosecution that must prove Angela Guilty. Angela Davis is innocent until and unless she is proven guilty.

There is no "overwhelming" evidence against Angela Davis. In fact there is no direct evidence at all.

Angela Davis is being denied bail for political reasons.

It has been alleged that Angela Davis legally purchased four weapons over a three year period. It is alleged that the guns used in the Black prisoners revolt

He has put her alleged legal ownership of several guns together with her writings, speeches and public legal participation in the movement to expose prison conditions in California and to 'save the soledad brothers from a legal lynching' and out of this has manufactured a supposed conspiracy to murder!

Angela is the victim of a political frame-up. Her real "crime" is that she is a Black woman, a Communist and an intellectual who put her whole self where he ideals were, and came to lead the mass campaign for the Soledad Brothers. That's why she is being framed. A vast campaign has been undertaken to make that frame-up stick and keeping Angela in jail without bail is the keystone of that campaign.



Angela Davis cannot receive proper medical treatment in jail.

Prolonged confinement in a small cell, without windows, without adequate food, and with fresh air only two or possibly three times a week for thirty minutes, has taken its toll. She has lost more than 15 pounds, her eyesight is deteriorating and there is fear that she has glaucoma (a condition which if not promptly treated may lead to blindness), her teeth and gums have been affected, lack of exercise has caused varicose veins.

For the sake of humanity and justice

Join the more than 350,000 other Americans including Mrs. Martin Luther King, Jr., Reverend Ralph Abernathy, Julian Bond, Congresswomen Bella Abzug and Shirley Chisholm, James Baldwin, Jane Fonda, Paul Newman . . .

[illegible]

LOOKING BACK AT FALL SEMESTER 1971

Editorial

IN RETROSPECT

by Ferdinand Fiofori
Black Voice Coordinator

Fall 1971 was a fairly good semester viewing it in retrospect. But it should have been better! It was indeed a quiet semester which was void of campus rioting, and student activism. It was a semester which has brought into the forefront not a new word but new title and usage to University of Wisconsin, Madison students—student apathy. Talk of Madison as an active campus! You only need to go to student parties around the campus and you find every student flat on the floor, not talking to anyone.

Both law enforcement officers and student watchers have started wondering “what ever has happened to . . .” But fingers are pointing, still pointing at students. Yesterday it was “these children are overactive, too aggressive, destructive; beat them and shoot them bang bang and put them in jail; that’s where they belong!”

Today, it is “oh boy, what has happened to these children, they don’t do anything anymore, they don’t even communicate with anybody anymore, the drugs have killed “my” children, there’s no action or reaction from them anymore.” Yes, today has become the Day of the Living Dead! You can’t win them all.

Fall ’71 semester also introduced a merger of all Wisconsin public universities, making President Weaver the overall boss. It is early to test the proverbial statement on Weaver: Uneasy lies the head that wears the crown. Some may have reason to argue that Fall ’71 smester was not at all a good semester. It was a Black brothers and sisters. A semester in which the police refused to honor an invitation to a press conference called by the Afro-American Center to discuss allegations of police hostilities on Blacks in Madison. Things are getting better though—by this I mean police/black relationship in Madison. It is of course too early to ascertain very fruitful results from the communication link that has just been set up between this paper and the City of Madison Police headquarters.

The Fall ’71 semester was also one in which Kwame Salter, director of Afro-American Center was in very high demand. When he was not at the Center, his voice would be heard vibrating from the Black community making speeches and informing the people about the affairs of the day. When he was not on the telephone, brothers and sisters were all around his office trying to find out What’s Happening. According to Kwame, “I loose the chair twice or thrice in a day. Everytime I get up from it to go to the secretary’s room, when I come back someone else is in it, maybe doing a very effective job of running the Center.” This best describes the atmosphere of brotherliness at the Afro-American Center.

And to many who have just received their diplomas, Fall ’71 has been a tired, funky but a very happy semester that has come to an end. Congratulations brothers and sisters. But just one thing this paper will ask of you is, go to the neighborhood, inform and teach your other brothers and sisters, and carry on the good work. Right on Brother!

KWANZA IN PICTURES



SOUL FOOD sampling was also part of the festival.



YOU DON’T necessarily have to be beautiful to attract many people to the display of beautiful African dresses, but the combination of the two really has some charistmatic effect.

photos by T. A. Sneed



TRADING BY BARTER, exchanging of gifts, sales and display of African clothes and crafts were some of the events that took place at the Kwanza Festival in Madison.



THE END OF A GREAT EVENT, Kwanza Festival 1971 is over, but the spirit lingers on all the year round.

THE Success of Kwanza

by Denise Quarles
Black Voice writer

“Kwanzaa” is a Swahili word meaning “First”, the “Beginning”, “First Fruits.” it is an African-inspired holiday which corresponds to the “Yam Festival” held in many parts of Africa today around the harvesting time. At this time of year, our people in Africa come together to make joyful noises, give thanks, and enjoy the blessing of living and acting together for the community. Everyone brings what he grew or made to contribute to the “Karamu” or feast, that takes place during the celebration. Songs are sung, dances danced, food is eaten, and drinks are drank—in a word—life is lived in sheer enjoyment.

The Afro-American Center along with the Wil-Mar Neighborhood Center and the South Madison Neighborhood Center sponsored the Second Annual Kwanzaa Festival here in Madison December 10-12, 1971.

The Celebration brought many black people together from the Madison area: students, parents, businessmen, etc. Friday night’s—Dec. 10—opening ceremony was performed by a group of university students led by Hazel Symonette. During the celebration, Miss Symonette explained the origin of Kwanzaa and what it means for Black Americans.

“Kwanzaa, for the U.S., must not have only a ‘party’ atmosphere but must be a time to share the glories of our cultural heritage. It is a formal time of the year for Black folks coming together . . . sharing thoughts, songs, dance, hopes and desires while MOVING AHEAD TOGETHER! The actual celebration runs 7 days corresponding to one of the 7 values of the Black Value System: Unity, Self-Determination, Collective Work and Responsi-

bility, Co-operative Economics, Purpose, Creativity, and Faith.”

The opening ceremony also included talent, such as songs, poetry, and dance from university and community people alike; a food display with various food samples; and concluding the evening’s activity was music from the Black Haze Band.

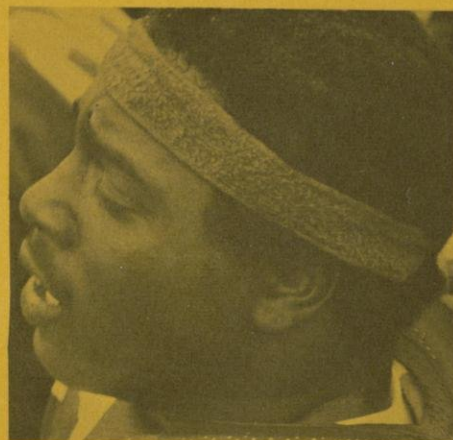
Saturday—Dec. 11—of the festival included exhibits from local Black businesses, fraternity and sorority organizations, and Black Student Unions. These exhibits were at 311 State Street. Another activity which drew a large crowd was the Invitational Basketball Game held that afternoon at the Armory. The winning team was Kappa Alpha Psi fraternity. All participants received their own personal trophy. Robert Hornsby was voted “Most Valuable Player.”

South Madison Neighborhood Center was the center for events Sunday—Dec. 12—and the last day of the festival. A huge Smorgasbord dinner was served, an African imports store from Milwaukee displayed fine African Jewelry, clothing and other African art. They also produced a fashion show and provided live entertainment as the highlight of the day and the closing of the 1971 Kwanzaa Festival.

In Miss Symonette’s words, “Kwanzaa is beautiful and meaningful for U.S. in ushering out the old year and bringing in the new year with promises of a greater future together.” This Kwanzaa was an enlightening experience for most who attended and next Kwanzaa hopes to draw more participation from all groups; students, parents, businessmen and whoever else wishes to join in the celebration.



KWAME SALTER, director of the Afro-American Center. He is either on the telephone giving out information or his office is filled with people trying to find out What’s Happening.



THE FOOTBALL SEASON is over but the good works done by Ferguson the Roadrunner for the Badger Team 1971 are on record.

photo by Ted Johnson



HOMECOMING 1971 attracted local talents also to take part in the ceremony.



photo by T. A. Sneed

DIONE WARWICK the super-star was there to entertain at the Homecoming celebration.

INTRODUCING THE SKIN TO CHILDREN

by Anne Latimer
Black Voice Writer

Brothers and sisters have known a long time that race prejudice is in part the fruit of ignorance. Now the Madison Public School System has acknowledged this fact, and is doing something to alleviate the ignorance. The system has hired Black Human Relations Consultant Marlene Cummings to teach children about racial difference.

Mrs. Cummings is a former nurse with work in psychiatric nursing and a columnist for the Sunday State Journal. She has been visiting the classroom teaching children the facts about the nature of skin color and prejudice for three years now.

She uses three tools in her presentation to young children—a game, a story, and two puppets.

“I play a game and read a story to acquaint the children with the word prejudice and to show how they become that way. I use puppets to introduce them to their skin. I also talk about skin color difference and explain the physiology of skin.”

“But most important,” Mrs. Cummings continued, “is to correct the negative ideas and attitudes these students have about people that are different from them.”

She said that establishing a rapport that will allow the kids to feel comfortable and free to discuss is essential. The charming, smiley Mrs. Cummings has instant charisma with youngsters. Here’s how a typical session with first graders—including charm and all—developed.

GAME

“Good morning boys and girls,” greeted a cheerful voice to the class. “My name is Mrs. Cummings and I’m going to introduce you to your skin. First, let’s carry on a conversation about a word—a very big word. Prejudice.”

“How many of you children know what the word prejudice means,” asked Mrs. Cummings writing the “very big word” on the blackboard. No response. “Okay then, let’s play a game instead.”

“For this game we need three groups. The first two rows will be group 1; all those behind Geri and David will be group 2; and the remaining rows group 3.”

Mrs. Cummings hesitated a bit looking about the children. Her large brown eyes, trimmed in blue eye shadow and mascara, scrutinized the entire room.

“Oh my! I see that two of you won’t be able to play. That little boy with oval shaped eyes can’t play. I know another little boy with oval shaped eyes, and he ruined the game. He pulled all the girls pigtails. I’m sorry,” Mrs. Cummings said, “but you’ll have to sit quietly and watch us play.”

“You can’t play either.” Mrs. Cummings designated a pretty little girl with long, brown hair, blue eyes, and a round face. “Little girls with round faces don’t like to play games. I can tell from looking at her that she doesn’t like playing games.”

Mrs. Cumming stood boldly before the class—even after rejecting two of their classmates—with the same pleasant smile she greeted them. The class seemed disturbed because she left out their classmates. Her bad behavior did not appeal to one youngster and he let her know.

“I don’t think it’s fair to keep them out of the game. You can’t tell what they’ll do by just looking at them. You’re just being prejudiced.”

Round faced Karen looked so unhappy. Mrs. Cummings had hurt her feelings. “Karen, I was pretending that I didn’t want you to play with us. Of course you like to play games and I don’t know that Lennie pulls little girls’ hair. I was playing a games with you and your classmates all along. The name of the game is prejudice and discrimination.”

The class laughed; Lennie and Karen were happy little kids again; and everybody were friends.

After the game, Mrs. Cummings read The Star-Bellied Sneetches by Dr. Seuss

to further illustrate what prejudice and discrimination meant. In the story there are two kinds of sneetches—the star-bellied sneetch and the plained-bellied sneetch. Sneetches are funny-looking tall birds.

The Star-bellied sneetch is prejudiced, and he discriminates against the plain-bellied sneetch. There is no communal association between the two groups at all. Along comes an inventor with a “star-on machine” and all the plain-bellied sneetches become star-bellied sneetches. The inventor then introduces the “star-off machine” and all the star-bellied sneeches want to become plain-bellied sneetches.

Confusion arises. The Star-bellied sneetch doesn’t know what kind of sneetch his neighbor was and the plain-bellied sneetch doesn’t recognize his friend anymore. Now that they can’t distinguish who is who, all the sneetches accept one another and live harmoniously without prejudice and discrimination. The inventor leaves the village a lot richer.

“I know what prejudice means now. It’s when some one thinks he is better than another,” explained a smart one in the center of the room.

“Exactly!” exclaimed Mrs. Cummings. How does one learn to be prejudiced?” An overwhelming response from the first graders:

- thru school
- from teachers
- and kids, too
- watching people is a good way
- from mom and dad
- brothers and sisters

PUPPETS

After the game and story, Mrs. Cummings is confident that the class understands what prejudice and discrimination means. It was time for the puppel show.

Casey and Chipper are two puppets friends of Mrs. Cummings that she uses to show the pupils how people are sometimes discriminated against because of skin color.

Chipper, who is white, called Casey a mud face. “Your skin is black ‘cause you wash in mud.” Casey retaliated. “You’re just like all those kids out there. You’re mean and evil like ‘em, too. Ole pale faced honkie.”

“What do you think causes skin color difference?” asked Mrs. Cummings.

An authoratative voice came from the rear. “Black people stayed to close to the sun.”

“The sun is just as close to white people and your skin is not Black,” said Mrs. Cummings.

- Some other incredible answers were:
- Black people are sunburned
 - Black people were born in different places
 - Black people got suntanned
 - Black people were white when they went to Africa, but came back black
 - Black people were painted that color

Mrs. Cummings tells the children that melanin is what gives skin its color. “The sun is an enemy to skin and melanin is what keeps skin from being sunburned. Everyone has melanin. It is this black pigment that fives your eyes and hair color, also.”

“Everyone has three layers in his skin. If you were to peel off the top layer it would look like a piece of wrinkled wax paper. The first layer is transparent. You can see through it.”

“Little specks of melanin are found in the middle and lower layers of your skin,” explained Mrs. Cummings. “Your skin color depends on the amount of melanin you have in your skin. Light people have very little melanin. Dark people have a lot of melanin.”

Mrs. Cummings pointed out that no skin is truly white. Red and Yellow are inaccurate descriptions of skin color, also. Red originated because Indians painted themselves red for ceremonies and battles. People whose skin appears yellow eat too much carotene rich foods. Correct names for skin are pinkish, beige, light

brown, and dark brown.

Mrs. Cummings chose two children and drew their skin as well as her own on the blackboard.

“Which one of these skin samples is mine.” she asked. “Number 2,” someone blurted out.

“How do you know that sample is mine?”

A shy little girl answered, “because it has more melanin.”

“That’s right,” said Mrs. Cummings. “The darker your skin the more melanin you have in it. Can anyone tell me how we get freckles?”

It was too hard a question for them. Mrs. Cummings answered her own question for them. “If I were to take a dot of my skin, it would be the same color as David’s freckle. A freckle is a mere concentration of melanin.”

Now that the students know about prejudice and discrimination, and what causes skin color, Mrs. Cummings asked them how they think they can stop racism. The class had difficulty coming up with answers.

A chubby little girl stood up and said, “We should all try to love one another.”

Someone suggested that people should try not to think of themselves superior to others.

Mrs. Cummings left the classroom, the kids, and the teacher, but her intriguing

IN HONOR OF BLACK ARTS FESTIVAL

by Charyn Simpson
Black Voice Artist

SECOND ANNUAL BLACK ARTS
FESTIVAL in Madison. See
schedule of events on the back page.



BLACK VOICE IS FREE

The Black Voice which comes out twice a month has a circulation of 2000 copies per issue. It is mailed free of charge to any reader who sends his or here mailing address to: The Black Voice, 935 University Avenue, Madison, Wisconsin 53706. Copies of the Black Voice can also be picked up either at the Afro-American Center or at the Memorial Union, University of Wisconsin-Madison. Also, copies of the paper are usually mailed to many school libraries, and campus organizations in the States of Illinois, California and Wisconsin. So also is the paper sent to the University of the West Indies, St. Augustine, Trinidad, West Indies. This paper welcomes criticism of all kinds. Tell us what we have been writing about that you don’t like or you like; and what you want us to write about. Send a letter or a note to the Editor; we will see what we can do about it.

READ NEXT ISSUE

Read in the next issue of the Black Voice an exciting revelation of a quack who has been gyping Blacks by selling phoney negro history books. For very many weeks now the Black Voice has

questions will linger in their thoughts. They will remember two words. Prejudice and melanin.

The objective of the human relations program in the Madison schools is to help to change negative racial attitudes that children have. Mrs. Cummings said that group prejudices take root early and go deep. Many stereotypes about race and religion cropped up even among the youngest children. With such early beginnings, any fight against prejudice is bound to be a difficult uphill struggle.

Many parents and teachers are eager to bridge religious differences, but ignore the need for discussion of racial differences. Mrs. Cummings said that many teachers and parents do not want her to come to the classroom. They say they have no problem.

Mrs. Cummings feels that the school is second only to the family in shaping a child’s feeling toward other people who share the world with him.

No one would deny the importance of comprehensive factual learning. But today’s children need more for life in the 20th and 21st century. They must learn to understand and respect people—not just “their own kind,” but all kinds. It is in this area of teaching and learning that is frequently found disturbing gaps.

een investigating this quack and how to track him down in Philadelphia. Read about it in the next issue!

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THE BLACK VOICE published by the Afro-American Center, University of Wisconsin-Madison, since December, 1970.

The Significance of Sweetback

review by Burnele Powell

“Sweet Sweetback’s Baad asssss Song” is possibly the most brutal, filthiest, irreverant, and pessimistic look at black America which has been filmed to date. To a large extent it dwells on the negative, glamorizes the degenerate, and evinces a depravity calculated to send the genteel scurrying from their seats, hand-over-mouths, barely able to curse or regurgitate. “Sweet Sweetback” is all of this and possibly a lot worse, but despite (or perhaps because of) it all, “Sweet Sweetback’s Baad asssss Song” is a significant one.

Granted, with a canned story line, Van Peebles could have cowered from the challenge of producing a film which was both entertaining and artistic. As one of the three blacks who have finally been allowed to direct major motion pictures, he could have rested on his past laurels and rationalized that by thinking less as an artist he had succeeded more as a banker. “Shaft,” a Harlem cops-’n-robbers thriller, testifies as to how to create the proverbial silk purse from a pig’s ear. But Van Peebles, however, apparently understands that the artist is not primarily in the business of either making money or of recreating life. The former is the job of bankers and businessmen; the latter is best left to scientists and novice photographers. For the artist, life is merely a depository for symbols which must be taken, hewed, embellished, bent, broken crushed—in short—manipulated as are any other tools in order that the artist’s conception of reality can be manifest.

Note, however, that the reference is to the artist’s conception of reality—not the community’s, nor the Movements, nor the viewer’s—but the independent, personal, individual artist’s conception. It is in this dimension, as an artistic statement, that “Sweet Sweetback” rises to the level of a significant film, while what might best be described as the “Brown” films (punn intended)! have fallen short. Van Peebles’s film, as do all significant works of art, shares two premises which the insignificant Brown films reject. First, the film asserts that the artist must be free to let the composition dictate the symbols which are necessitated for its particular statement. That is to say that for the artist the decision of whether a particular symbol shall or shall not be used, within the context of a work, is an amoral decision. Secondly, the film is significant because it reflects the artist’s commitment to the process of raising culture to the level of art.

For most viewers, it is the amorality of “Sweet Sweetback’s” symbols which is most disturbing. The characterization of the symbols as amoral is insisted on even in the face of shouts from the “starched-backed ladies in white,” that the ravishing of barely pubescent Sweetback by a prostitute, was anything but amoral. The insistence, too, is that the pimping storefront churches, the fags at the hotdog stand, and the slashing of the dogs’ throats reflect Van Peebles’s continuing assertion that the artist’s role is as the manipulator of symbols. He comes not as creator nor moral guardian, but as a surgeon, deftly slicing, folding, and sewing.

It is precisely because of this perspective that Van Peebles is able to “put on,” aggravate, even defile our senses. He is the artist in the act of creation. At the same time, however, it is this agitation from which escapist-oriented black viewers and critics recoil. As Essence Magazine’s Maurice Peterson might lament: “It is a painful reminder that our lives are racked with suffering.” His revulsion is echoed by the sister from Hope, Arkansas, who protested that, “Black people don’t live like that where I come from!”

There is, a common flaw in these attacks whether they are the protestations of the aspiring black middle class, black Marxist bemoaning the need for more class consciousness, or black nationalist arguing that the role of the revolutionary artist is to create only “positive” symbols. The attitudes incorrectly share the assumption that the artist sees himself as their philo-

sophical houseorgan. Such a view of the artist is necessarily premised on the belief that the film is somehow a depiction (or at worse a creator) of reality.

Concededly, blacks do not “live like that” in Hope, Arkansas, nor even in Harlem, with the totality Van Peebles has filmed. But this is beside the point! What we are seeing though Sweetback is not the childhood Sunday school card, replete with haloed disciples and black-lettered moral invocations. This is a collage. It is neither important nor necessary that every sequel in the Kaleidoscope be a true and accurate representation of the way black people actually live. Again, art is not reality! It does not require reality for its sense of truth. We are required is that the work establish a total effect by emphasizing common themes through a recurring juxtaposition of symbols.

McCoy Turner the Musician

by Don Williams
Black Voice Rhythm Analyst

In recent weeks Madison has been experiencing a series of appearances of performing artists of various talents and acclaim. More notably and certainly more appreciated in this haven of rock, pop, and bubble-gum music were those performers in the area of Black Cultural Music (jazz). This reporter had the opportunity to meet some of these artists during their stay and got better acquainted with their works and backgrounds. One of the more interesting interviews was that of Salaimon Saud commonly or better known as Alfred “McCoy” Turner, the pianist who was featured with the late John Coltrane from 1959 to 1965.

In rapping with Brother Saliamon who was presented by Joe Jackson at the Best Steak House during the week of October 26th through the 29th, I gained more insight on him as an individual, on his background, and how it all relates to his music. I began by asking Brother Salaimon how he would define his music; in his reply he stated . . . “I think my music is an expression of me as a person, I feel primarily if a person tries to better himself in life, then that individual reflects whatever he produces. I feel when one listens to my music one should, in a sense, get some sort of insight on me as a man.”

Don: Would you consider your music as having a purpose?

McCoy: I think it has a purpose in a sense that it should mean something to the individual that is playing it. Music should have some meaning; I feel that if it has some meaning to myself, then it will have some meaning to somebody else.

Don: What has been and what are your influences in terms of your music and background?

McCoy: THERE HAVE BEEN A NUMBER OF INFLUENCES IN MY LIFE. Thelonious Monk and my mother influenced me, my mother encouraged me to practice and encouraged me to play, she used to play the piano herself which was also a great encouragement. Other important influences were Bud and Richie Powell. I happen to have met Bud when I was very young and did not meet Thelonious until later, but his music was definitely an inspiration. Byrd (Charlie Parker) and John Coltrane had definite influences on me.

Don: How did you meet Coltrane at such a young age? He was very far into his music. Were you yourself that advanced?

McCoy: I met him through a mutual friend of ours, a composer who had a band at that time. They grew up together and he introduced me to Jack back in the 50’s, I was about 17 at that time. Jim Garrison and Toody Health were playing with Cal

That Van Peebles does this has not seriously been questioned, despite Vincent Conley’s (New York Times, May 9, 1971) attempt to dismiss the film as only a series of montages. Sex, violence, racism, hypocrisy, exploitation, racial solidarity, the life of the ‘bug—they are all graphically a part of Sweetback’s world. It is not merely their presence, however, which rankles the film’s detractors. What disturbs them is Van Peebles’ insistence that they are viewing something more than just the wild fantasies of a cop-killer. Van Peebles insists that we are viewing our own latent psychological urges. Akin to the furor which Wright’s Bigger (Nigger) Thomas touched off two decades ago, the revulsion at Sweetback is not so much at his song (a George Jackson style revolutionary Romanticism), but at Van Peebles’ insistence at baring our race’s bad ass.

Massey’s and we had a chance to work with John during that period.

Don: Would you give us your estimation of John Coltrane as a man and musician?

McCoy: He was a very beautiful man—a very committed man. I think it takes a certain type of person to have an idea of what he wants and go out and accomplish it. If John wanted something musical he pursued it. I think a lot of us have ideas but we don’t have the fortitude; that ability to go ahead and pursue our ideas. I think working under his leadership was beautiful. He never imposed himself on me. I worked with him like a providence.

Don: It is a known fact that you are a Muslim and a part of Islam. What influences does your religion have on your music?

McCoy: Islam has been very influential. Without it I don’t think I would be the person I am or that I would accomplish as much as I have. I feel religion is there to help and not to hold one back. Islam in my life has been an asset—one of the greatest things to happen to me.

Don: How long have you been a Muslim; is it the same form of Islam that the Muslim in the U.S. is practicing?

McCoy: No, it is a different form.

Don: Is it orthodox?

McCoy: Yes, it is and I have been a Muslim since I was 18 and my wife since she was 15.

Don: Was it your wife who attracted you to Islam?

McCoy: Somewhat. Her sister used to sing in a band and in coming in contact with her and a lot of people who were into Islam. Consequently I felt that there was no other life for me but the life of Islam.

Don: Does your religion restrict you in any way? In your career and/or livelihood?

McCoy: No, it does not. One puts restrictions on oneself. There are certain things I have to adhere to but there is no hinderance. It has opened many avenues for me to see, to get a better understanding of life and of me. By being committed and having certain restrictions or disciplines, these factors serve as an asset and not a liability because I began to better myself by putting my mind in a better frame of thought and began to see things much clearer.

Don: Is this similar to the spirituality that came out in the music of Coltrane and other jazz artists in relation to their religion?

McCoy: Yes it is, but I would not say it was Muslim. However, John was a Muslim in practice and he definitely had a strong religious background.

Don: What was Coltrane’s influence?

McCoy: He was influenced by those of us who were Muslim and by me being

Once having rejected the requirements that art needs either to recreate reality or to uplift the viewer, we are prepared to examine Sweetback in a more meaningful sense—as an attempt to raise culture to the level of art.

To say that Sweetback’s odyssey is an attempt to raise black culture to the level of art is to assert simultaneously that there does, in fact, exist a black culture and (despite the Brown middle-class) that the culture at issue is different from white Anglo-Saxon-Jewish culture. It is to assert also that black spiritual/intellectual culture is the essential difference between what blacks are seeing and reacting to in “Sweet Sweetback” and what it is that whites rejected by their conspicuous absence from the film.

to be cont’d next issue

in the band, also, from a lot of people he knew before.

Don: Does the discipline of Islam have any effect on your diet?

McCoy: Yes, I also have certain prayers to perform per day at a certain time. There are many things like studying and performing duties which are the most important criteria in my religion.

Don: What is your estimation of the future of jazz as it is today? Some people think it is a dying art.

McCoy: I would like to deal with the name. I don’t particularly care for the name jazz but, it is an accepted name.

Don: What would be your preference?

McCoy: I would prefer Black Cultural music or African music—Contemporary African or Afro-American music as a better name. I feel this would associate itself with its origin. This music comes from us like the blues does because it emanated from Africa, these titles would associate the music with its origin. Jazz does not suggest anything—it’s just a word which does not belong to anybody. With European people you associate European music, Japanese music with Japanese people. But what is jazz associated with?

Don: Is this the same manner in which we use our slave name, and do you have a name other than McCoy Tyner?

McCoy: Yes, it is, and my name is Salaimon Saud.

Don: Is there any particular meaning to this name?

McCoy: Yes, Salaimon means one who is protected by god or luck. Saud means ascending.

Don: Is there any truth to the rumor that Black cultural musicians are starving? because Black people have not fully accepted it. Then it is not given much air play so it does not create that much employment.

Don: What new releases do you have coming up?

McCoy: I just signed with Mile Stone Recordings.

Don: Is that related to any major corporation?

McCoy: Audio Fidelity

Don: How soon shall this recording be released?

McCoy: It should be out by the first of the year.

Don: Will this recording deal with all new standards?

McCoy: Yes, new sounds and original compositions.

Don: Are all the compositions written by you?

McCoy: Yes.

Don: Where is your next set?

McCoy: LA—Los Angeles

Don: What is the name of the club you will be playing at?

McCoy: Shelly’s Manne Hole

Don: Good Luck!

McCoy: Thanks.

Don: Thank you.

Mc and Don: Straight On!

BLACK ARTS FESTIVAL

NINA THE HIGH PRIESTESS

SIMONE, NINA (Eunice Waymon)—Singer, Pianist, Arranger.

Born in Tyron, North Carolina, 2/21/33. She was the sixth of eight children. Her mother, a housekeeper by day, was also an ordained Methodist minister. Miss Simone started playing piano by ear in 1939, and organ three years later. She took classical piano lessons privately. High school is Asheville, N.C., graduated valedictorian, then studied piano and theory for 1½ years at Julliard School, NYC.

Supported for some time by a "Eunice Waymon Fund" established by the contributions of audiences at her childhood performances, Miss Simone later worked as an accompanist for vocal studies at a Philadelphia studio, gave piano lessons,

and studied at Curtis Institute of Music.

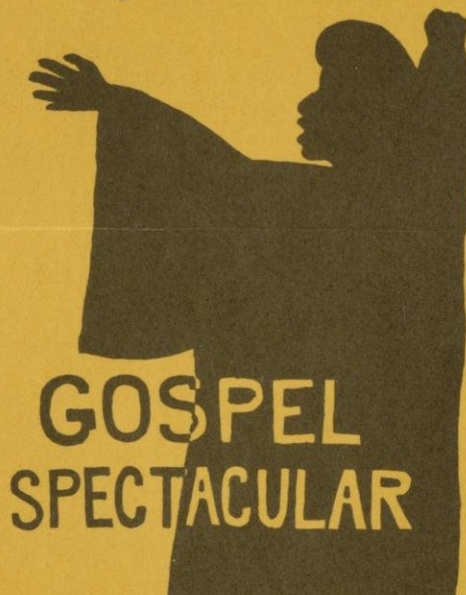
The first job on which she sang in addition to playing was an Atlantic City night club booking in 1954. Within the next couple of years she had started recording, rose swiftly to the best seller lists, and gained national prominence. She was married December 1961 to Andy Stround, then a detective sergeant on NYC police force, now her personal manager.

A gifted musician and songwriter, Nina Simone has a voice with an unusually deep, rich timbre. As John S. Wilson has written, "She evokes and stirs her listeners' emotions more skillfully and in more varied fashion than any other popular singer." Repertoire includes folk, gospel, jazz and popular material.

PURE NINA

"All music is what awakes within us when we are reminded by the instruments; It is not the violins or the clarinets— It is not the beating of the drums— Nor the score of the baritone singing his sweet romanza; nor that of the men's chorus, Nor that of the women's chorus— It is nearer and farther than they.—"

Lovingly,
—Eunice Waymon—(Nina Simone)
Age 12



DON LEE —"Black. Poet. Black poet am I. This should leave little doubt in the minds of anyone as to which is first." Don Lee has written several volumes: **THINK BLACK**; **BLACK PRIDE**; **DON'T CRY, SCREAM**; **WE WALK the WAY of the NEW WORLD** and a critique, **DYNAMITE VOICES: NEW BLACK POETS of the 1960's**. Lee is presently commuting each week from his teaching assignment at Howard University to Chicago where he serves as editor of Third World Press.

Comrades!

The Afro-American Center presents its second annual Black Arts Festival, February 6, 1972. Nina Simone will open the Festival on Sunday evening, February 6, in the UW Fieldhouse.

We are asking all the Black high school students in Madison to participate. We have a limited amount of discount tickets for the February 6 concert. The discount price for the tickets is \$2.50.

In Wisconsin where there is little to no exposure to the outstanding contributions of Black in the Arts, we anticipate that you will greatly benefit from this experience. It will give you the opportunity to see, hear, and in some instances, interact with Black performers of both local and national stature. Also, this would give you the opportunity to be exposed to the university campus.

With this in mind, we are exploring the possibility of having a preorientation conference for high school students that would

be held on February 6. This conference would give students the opportunity to begin developing a positive attitude toward going to college. The focus would be on such things as academic preparation, skills development, sources of money and housing. We hope that such a conference would be directly in line with your efforts to get oriented to the university campus. For this reason, we hope that you will join us not only for the February 6 concert, but also for the other events that will be held during the week.

Our 2nd Annual Black Arts Festival is a tribute to the late Lorraine Hansbury, author of the much acclaimed play, "To Be Young, Gifted and Black." We feel it especially appropriate that Sister Nina Simone open the Festival, as it was Nina who sang "Young, Gifted and Black"—waking us to the full meaning of what it is to be young, gifted, and most of all, Black.



GWENDOLYN BROOKS—Pulitzer Prize-winner. Poet Laureate of Illinois, recipient of innumerable national awards and honors. Among her many books are: **SELECTED POEMS**; **IN THE MECCA**; **MAUD MARTHA**; **BRONZEVILLE BOYS & GIRLS**; **RIOT and FAMILY PICTURES**. She has edited **JUMP BAD**, an anthology of new Chicago writings, introduced a unique form, "verse-journalism" and is editor of **THE BLACK POSITION**, a magazine of essays.



THE SECOND ANNUAL BLACK ARTS FESTIVAL

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Sunday, Feb. 6, 1972

PURE NINA

Nina Simone in concert
8 p.m. at the UW Fieldhouse
Tickets: General Admission 3.00 at UW Box Office

Discount Tickets \$2.50 at
Afro-American Center

Monday, Feb. 7

ART EXHIBITION

Black Artists Exhibition opens with a reception at 4:30 p.m. at the UW Union South. Exhibition dates are Feb. 7 - 25. Works by John Biggers, Ralph Arnold, Charles White, and others.

No admission

DRAMA PLUS . . .

The Afro Cultural Theatre of Milwaukee presents a night of drama, dance, and music by the Zoi Mu Band—8 p.m. in A-1 Gordon Commons—Admission: \$1.00 at door

Tuesday, Feb. 8

R.A.T./RHYTHMS

An all night session of contemporary dance, jazz, and soul. Featuring the UW Revolutionary Arts Theatre, The Jazz Ensemble, the Don Morrow Trio, and others.—8 p.m. at A-2 Gordon Commons—Admission: \$1.00 at door

Wednesday, Feb. 9

POETRY

Readings by Pulitzer Prize-winning poetess Gwendolyn Brooks and Don L. Lee. Also, the Black Poetic Messengers.—8 p.m. at A-1 Gordon Commons—Admission: \$1.00 at door

Thursday, Feb. 10

GOSPEL SPECTACULAR

From Milwaukee: Christian Liberty Baptist Church, St. John's C.M.E. Church, Greater Galilee Baptist Church, Providence Baptist Church, and the New Hope Tabernacle. From Racine: Wayman A.M.E. Church. Sponsored by Pepsi-Cola Co.—8 p.m. in the UW Memorial Union Theatre—Tickets: \$1.00 at Union Box Office

GOSPEL SPECTACULAR

participants

Wayman A.M.E.
Racine
Christian Liberty Baptist
Milwaukee
Greater Galilee Baptist
Milwaukee
Providence Baptist
Milwaukee
St. John's C.M.E.
Milwaukee
New Hope Tabernacle
Milwaukee

There will be several arts and crafts displays with goods to be sold. Other items which can be purchased will be Nikki Giovanni's new album, **TRUTH IS ON ITS WAY**, along with Don L. Lee's album, **RAPPN' AND READN'**. Books which will be available include such authors as Gwendolyn Brooks, Nikki Giovanni, Etheridge Knight, Don L. Lee, Dudley Randall, Sonia Sanchez, Amiri Baraka (Le Roi Jones), Ebon Dooley, Sam Greenlee, Carolyn Rodgers, and many more. There will also be a wide assortment of posters—many by Omar Llama, the artist responsible for his rare collection of artists which includes John Coltrane.