

Maynard Ferguson's spirit, notes soaring

By MARY CAMPBELL
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Maynard Ferguson radiates so much enthusiasm when his band is playing that one wonders if it's all real or partly show business.

So one meets Maynard Ferguson to find that out. And in conversations he has enough additional verve and good cheer to cause his listener to walk around with a brighter spirit all day.

A New York Times review of a Newport Jazz Festival concert this summer began, "The brassy glory of Maynard Ferguson's orchestra shone brilliantly." And about the leader it continued, "He heightens anything he plays, even when it is not inherently dramatic, by seeming to almost kiss the last note as he leaps back holding his trumpet triumphantly in the air."

"I'm a performer and I openly know that and enjoy it and think that is part of my art," Ferguson says. "I'm a great lover of audiences and I really enjoy what I do."

"When I teach in the schools, I try to teach them to enjoy as they learn. I get some very serious young people, getting too serious. I think of music as mostly

hooked into joy and pleasure."

Ferguson, born in 1928, has silver hair framing a face with muscles kept boyishly plump by blowing his trumpet. In a short talk, one finds out that he's delighted about all sorts of things, small and great.

Frank Sinatra's lawyer has phoned his manager and asked, "How much for the kid?" and Ferguson, nearing 50, is tickled to be called the kid.

Ferguson was on camera two-and-a-half minutes as the flag lowered and flame was extinguished at the Olympics in Montreal. He, a Canadian, played music written by a Canadian and the whole thing was televised and sent by satellite to an enormous audience.

His last two LPs and last two singles have been the biggest hits of his career. "Primal Scream" hit the pop charts and "Conquistador," which followed it, has sold more than 400,000 copies and is the best-selling big album in years. "Gonna Fly Now," the theme from the movie, "Rocky," was a single hit for Ferguson. In Italy, it was a bigger hit than the version by Bill Conti, the Italian who wrote it, played it on the soundtrack and had the biggest hit with the tune

in the United States.

"Ferguson's new single, 'Star Wars,' is selling well. So are versions by the London Symphony and Mecca.

About his playing, Ferguson says, "I'm probably stronger than ever before." Asked what is the highest note he can hit on the trumpet—and nobody even asks anymore whether anybody else can play as high—Ferguson says, "It's limitless, really. It depends on the day, the need and the inspiration. In the last year and a half, trumpeter Don Ellis says I've added another octave."

But Ferguson, who also is a family man, does not "live" his trumpet. "There are people, if you take the horn away from them, they'd be lost. For me, that horn stays in the case unless I'm involved in writing."

"I do not practice three hours a day. I do a lot of swimming and keep myself in good physical shape. On the road I drink only good wine, and not too much good wine. I do breathing exercises."

Ferguson and Jay Chattaway wrote "Conquistador," which is longer when done on stage than on the album. "Four trumpet solos by four different

guys in the band aren't nearly as effective on an album; it sounds like one trumpet solo. In person, you have the realization of the identities changing and different approaches.

"Conquistador" has a feel of romantic old Spain and it's definitely a showcase for the Ferguson trumpet. Ferguson says he and Chattaway, his record producer, write well together. He, playing a single-note instrument, spins out romantic melodies. Chattaway's contribution, on piano, are vitally important but hard to define, Ferguson says. They work in one room, playing, trading ideas, with a tape recorder running.

Performing used to be fun but making a record was too much like taking an examination in school, Ferguson says. But now that he knows more about recording, he enjoys that too. He records with his own band instead of with a studio band, Ferguson says, because they're so good. Everybody has been with him two years and some for five or six.

But the most important thing, he says, is "the fact the band is not married to any one sound. A new sound is a thrill to everybody. Being involved in a today thing is pleasure and fun and creative as opposed to saying we should do the same old things."

"Our band is based on excitement and feeling young and being today. Not all wine that gets old gets better and that's the way I feel about music."

A new album, to be released in October, his ninth for Columbia, something like his 50th total, will include "Airegin" Ferguson says. "That's Nigeria spelled backwards. It's a Sonny Rollins composition. It's basically the Mike Abeno arrangement from the 'Color Him Wild' album in the early 1960's. We now play it about twice as fast."

"I consider that a vintage arrangement within my book."

Friday TV lineup has some losers

The fall television season is about to unfold, and Journal-News syndicated columnist Paul Henniger delves into series formats and evaluates their chances for success.

Today's column previewing the new TV season is one of a seven-day series.

FRIDAY

8 p.m. NBC — Sanford Arms — (Premiere date Sept. 16). Minus Redd Foxx and Demand Wilson, the

supporting cast of LaWanda Page, Whitman Mayo and others, plus replacement Teddy Wilson, attempt to take over running the hotel with new situations and laughs. An early foreclosure.

8 p.m. CBS — Wonder Woman — (Premiere date Sept. 16). Transplanted from ABC, Leggy Lynda Carter carries on in a new format.

No more dirty Nazis to deal with. She's updated to 1977 and now works for ICIC (Inter-Connected Intelligence Community), and that agency is directly under the President, yes sir!

Lyle Waggoner is around, too, now playing the son of the Air Force man (also Lyle) who worked with WW during World War II on ABC.

CBS is still trying to climb out of third place in this

time slot and might finally make it — to No. 2 behind Donny and Marie.

8 p.m. CBS — Logan's Run — (Premiere date Sept. 16). Science-fiction hour based on the recent MGM movie about life in the 23rd century where the inhabitants must die when they reach age 30.

Two human survivors, played by Gregory Harrison and Heather Menzies, team up with an Android man (Donald Moffat) to find a Utopian future elsewhere.

The popularity of "Star Wars" might provide some support for this well-mounted production. The old Mannix and earlier Mission: Impossible co-production team of Ivan Goff and Ben Roberts is making it.

Television & Radio

RADIO
8:05 p.m. WLW-AM (700) — Reds Baseball. Los Angeles at Cincinnati. Only those who believe in Santa Claus believe the Reds have a chance to catch the Dodgers.

TELEVISION
8 p.m. CBS — "Super Night at Forest Hills" — (SPECIAL). To launch their six-hour, day-long coverage of U.S. Open Tennis competition tomorrow, CBS is hosting a little party for the racket swingers, guests, celebs and everyone planning to spend the day in front of the set.

Sammy Davis Jr., Sandy Duncan and Andy Williams are hosting the affair. Featured in the variety show is that celebrated "inebriate" Foster Brooks, the Keane Brothers, Alan King, Buddy Hackett, Laine Kazan, Ethel Merman and tennis pros Arthur Ashe, Billie Jean King, Tracy Austin, Ilie Nastase, Virginia Wade, Stan Smith and Vitas Gerulaitis.

8 p.m. NBC — "C'mon Saturday" — (SPECIAL). The network competition for Saturday mornings spills into prime time as both NBC and ABC go head 'n' head in puggling the shows lined up this fall in the kid's tv ghetto.

Andrea McCordle (she's "Annie" on Broadway currently), Muhammad Ali (who's finally winding up where a lot of folks think he belongs — in a cartoon script), Leonard Nimoy, Ruth Buzzi and Arte Johnson take part in the comedy and film show to introduce the net's new a.m. fare.

8 p.m. ABC — "Kapitan Kool and the Kongs Present ABC All-Star Saturday" — (SPECIAL). Meanwhile, on ABC, Shaun Cassidy and Parker Stevenson, a.k.a. the Hardy Boys, guest along with the Kapitan and group to preview the network's Saturday morning programming with a string of clips.

All of which makes it tough for a kid who'd like to see what NBC has, too.

9 p.m. CBS — Friday Night Movie. "The Hostage Heart," a TV film that could spring into a series if the numbers are right following this showing, stars Brad Dillman as a heart surgeon, with Loretta Swit, Vic Morrow, Sharon Acker, Stephen Davies, Cameron Mitchell and Belinda J. Montgomery featured.

Plot is based on Gerald Green's novel about a billionaire who, while undergoing a bypass operation, is trapped by terrorists and held as hostage for \$10 million.

9 p.m. NBC — "Miss Black America Contest" — (SPECIAL). For the first time, this 10th annual ceremony becomes a network telecast.

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