

SHORT TAKES

'Batman' wraps

"Batman Returns," the Tim Burton-directed sequel to the summer 1989 release, wrapped production yesterday. Warner Bros. began filming the film, executive produced by Jon Peters and Peter Guber. Sept. 5 films are set for a June 19 release.

The trailer, which runs more than two minutes, and the one-sheet for the pic, were unveiled Wednesday during Warner Bros. luncheon at the Westin Las Vegas. Both will be released today in more than 5,000 theaters.

Prince will receive the Heritage Award for career achievement and Janet Jackson will be honored with the Sammy Davis Jr. entertainer of the year trophy at the sixth annual Soul Train Awards, set for March 10 at the Shrine Auditorium. Luther Vandross, Patti LaBelle, Wil Smith and Vanessa Williams will host the event.

More recipients of Golden Angel Awards from the Excellence in Media group have been announced, including producer Arnold Shapiro, exec Robert Miller and Dennis Woodson, singer-composer Debby Estim and actor Brian Bloom. Gavin and Patti Mael lead will be inducted into the Hall of Communications Galaxy of Fame, along with a posthumous induction for Michael Landon.

Among the presenters will be Roy Rogers and Dale Evans, Rhonda Fleming and Donna Douglas. The awards will be passed out Thursday at the Beverly Regent Hotel.

Open auditions for 'Meteor'

Robert Townsend will conduct an open audition in Los Angeles tomorrow for his upcoming MGM feature, "The Meteor Man," African American girls and boys who look between 6 and 8 years old are invited to come to the Crossroads Theatre on West 43rd Place, east of

Chreshaw and north of Vernon from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

More on 'JFK'

Oliver Stone, Norman Mailer, Nora Ephron and Edward Jay Epstein will speak on "Hollywood and History: The Debate Over JFK" March 7 at Town Hall in New York City, in a forum sponsored by the Nation Institute and the Columbia University Center for American Culture Studies, in association with the Writers Guild of America East.

The Equal Employment Opportunities Committee of the American Federation of Television & Radio Artists and the Screen Actors Guild will host a seminar, "The Black Performer: Establishing a Successful Career," in commemoration of Black History Month. The panel discussion, to be held Monday at the Directors Guild Theater, will feature Roscoe Lee Browne, Beah Richards, Helen Martin, Dr. William Marshall and Julius Harris. Jaki Brown will moderate. Because of limited seating, only those who have preregistered will be admitted.

Colleen Harkins, longtime communications head for the Cable Television Administration and Marketing Society, is leaving that Alexandria, Va.-based organization to set up her own public relations firm specializing in cable TV. ProPR Harkins' first client will be CTAM.

The New York chapter of the National Academy of Television Arts & Sciences and New York U.'s School of Continuing Education will co-sponsor a 10-week lecture series on "The Business of Television." Seminars will be held 9 a.m.-4 p.m. every Saturday from March 7 to May 16.

Composer Eddie Lawrence Manson has been chosen Intl. Man of the Year by the Intl. Biographical Centre in Cambridge, England. He was chosen for his accomplishments in music, which have included 24 Chos and five Venice Film Festival medals.

Sony buys Dylan

Sony Music Intl. announced that the company has acquired the Bob Dylan song catalog outside North America. The catalog was previously administered by Warner Chappell Music.

Capitol recording artist Hammer announced his 1992 "Two Legit" tour, beginning April 1 in Virginia. No Los Angeles dates have been set. Opening will be Motown's Boyz II Men and Oaktown 5'5"7, latter on Hammer's own Bust It label.

BMG Enterprises has pacted with Los Angeles-based Discovery Music to distribute and market children's audio and video product under the new BMG Kidz banner. Discovery's offerings include the "Magic Series," which licenses contemporary and traditional lullabies from Brahms to the Beatles performed by singer Joanne Bartels.

Pamela Browne, formerly a producer for ABC News' "PrimeTime Live" and "World News Tonight With Peter Jennings," has been named exec producer of the new Warner Bros. late night syndie talk-show strip, "Nighttalk With Jane Whitney." Browne assisted in developing the program, which will make its debut March 30.

"Crook and Chase," the Nashville Network's entertainment news and information program, will air live from a new set and in an expanded format starting March 30. The former half-hour, hosted by Lorraine Crook and Charlie Chase, will now be an hour long and include more interviews, using

remotes from the show's own KU-band truck. The program is in its seventh year on the network.

Group W Prods. has cleared the new Vicki Lawrence talker on WPIX-TV, New York, bringing the total clearance level for "Vicki" to 65% of the country, including eight of the top 10 markets.

PGA's Mason noms

The Publicists Guild of America has nominated five publicists for the Les Mason Award. The nominees are: unit publicist Vic Heutsch, Shirley Krinos, publicity director for Warner Bros. Studios facilities, Arlene Ludwig, publicity director for Disney/Touchstone Hollywood Pictures, Jim Mahoney, president of Mahoney Communications Inc., and John Strauss, president of Communications Inc. The winner will be announced during the 29th annual PGA awards luncheon on Friday, March 27, at the Universal Sheraton.

The Writers Guild will host a panel discussion on Wednesday on "How to Write Strong Roles for Women." Participants include Diane English ("Murphy, Brown"), Linda Bloodworth-Thomason ("Designing Women"), "Evening Shade," Cynthia Cidre ("Killing in a Small Town"), "The Mamba Kings," Rocci Chatfield ("Dangerous Women"), Carolyn Shelby and Christopher Ames ("Class Action") and John Bensusan ("Whisper Kills"). Topics include why some of the strongest female characters today are seen in television but not feature film and if advertisers and audiences accept a

Murphy Brown" who is not funny. It begins at 7 p.m.

Equity board nominees

Five candidates have been nominated for principal, three-year terms on the Western Advisory Board of Actors' Equity Assn. They are: John Gato, Albert Lord, Marcia Ridd, Marc Jordan and M. Rossi.

Carol Swarbrick has been nominated for a one-year principal term while Bruce Nelson has been nominated for a three-year chorus position.

Other nominations may be made to writing by petition of 15 members in good standing. It must be delivered to George Ives, Western regional director, no later than 5 p.m. Feb. 28.

Whoopi for ACEs

Whoopi Goldberg will emcee the 42nd Annual American Cinema Editors awards at the Beverly Hilton March 21. Presenters include Billy Wilder, Jack Fierman and John Frankenheimer.

A seminar on marketing and distributing independent films will be held Feb. 25 at the Miramar Sheraton Hotel at 7:50 p.m. Agfa Corp. and Coopers & Lybrand are the co-sponsors. Panelists include Triton Pictures president Jonathan Dana, Miramax Films senior VP & general sales manager Marc Halperin, Bingham Ray, co-chair of October Films, Sandra Rich, president of New Line Marketing, and Seth M. Wilkinson, consultant to F.R.S. Media.

Minority scribes honored

Five ethnic minority scribes have been chosen as winners in the 2-year-old Ethnic Minority Screenwriters Development & Promotional Program of the Writers Workshop, along with one finalist.

Winners are Shari Bailey of Los Angeles for "Dannie," Lawrence James Lujan of New Mexico for "Nation," Leroy Meadows of Los Angeles for "Tyler's Theory," Darrin Oura of Los Angeles for "Down Five," and Megan Timothy of Zimbabwe for "The Flight of the Falcon."

Chuck Cummins of Decatur, Ga., is a finalist for "The Judas Trick." Winners receive a \$500 cash award at an award ceremony to be

held at 7:50 p.m. March 12 at the Pacific Design Center.

Scenes from each of the screenplays will be read by professional actors.

Program is funded by Los Angeles City Cultural Affairs Dept. and Walt Disney Studios, and is sponsored by the Writers Workshop, formerly known as the American Film Institute Alumni Assn. Writers Workshop.

Since the program's inception in January 1990, eight winners have received contracts with major studios and production companies, including Jeremy Lew, who received \$750,000 and a three-year contract with the Disney Studio for his screenplay "Sessions."

Turtle named Rocket Video pilot

Jon Turtle has been named president of Rocket Video, a unit of newly formed Rocket Pictures, founded by former Atlantic topper Tom Coleman.

Turtle will handle acquisitions, co-productions and vid marketing for the label, which will be distributed by MCA/Universal Home Video.

Plans are to release a monthly slate of Rocket pix and acquired product to the vid marketplace.


Before joining Rocket, Turtle was senior VP of film production

and acquisition at Media Home Entertainment.

He also served as executive producer on "The Perfect Bride" and "Nightmare on Elm Street 5: The Dream Child," co-producer on "I Come in Peace" and associate producer on "High Spirits."

Prior to joining MHE in 1987, Turtle was VP of Martin Ransohoff's Albacore Prods. and previously had been director of acquisitions for National Subscription Television.

—Marc Berman



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