

G.L.C.'s SPRING FESTIVAL

THE evening of black contemporary music promoted by Identity Management (Donovan Nelson) for the GLC turned out eventually to be an incredible success. The event was staged at the Royal Festival Hall on the South Bank, I doubt a better location could have been found for the tumultuous crowd.

The evening was a culmination of the events held at GLC's Spring Festival which coincided with the GLC's anti-racist year campaign. I must congratulate the GLC too for providing splendid entertainment. The evening started exactly on time at 7.30 with an unnamed movement from the Black Dance Theatre Company of London. The group were precise and well co-ordinated but had nothing new or exciting to offer the excitable audience.

Following the dance troupe we were extremely well entertained by Janet Kay, Carol Thompson and Winston Reedy. All 3 singers appeared to give their absolute maximum to the audience and each person sang a selection of 3 songs which left one feeling satisfied and not bored. Winston Reedy provided the most energetic act by continually hopping and jumping around the stage. We were then treated to a song by an unnamed

breathless singer from the Winston Reedy band.

Garry Wilmot the compere for the evening caused a very mixed reaction. One of his opening jokes happened to be "I've had 3 shocks today, (1) I saw a train (2) I saw a white porter and (3) both were moving". Needless to say the audience were divided about whether to laugh or to shout insults at him whilst reminding him that 1984 is GLC's anti-racist year. Eventually he angered a large percentage of the audience by rendering an excellent impression of an Indian gentleman. Sadly from then on Garry Wilmot was definitely not the "flavour of the month".

Second Image are probably the best multi-talented band on the scene. They changed their melodies from break-dancing funk to "rub-a-dub" reggae. Virtually all the group were excellent on the vocals as well as being maestros on their musical instruments.

By 9:45 the show was running late and the Royal Festival Hall staff were becoming visibly agitated. I got the impression that they had not hosted an all black show before and I could hear the Ushers muttering away and complaining about the amount of overtime they

would be required to work.

Torso, an all male black dance group were introduced by Gail Grier (of "Impossible" fame). Gary Wilmot continued to extract jeers from the semi-hostile audience. The climax of the evening was the stunning



● Winston Reedy

performance of the Weather Girls. What a duo! These incredibly large ladies gave us a show and a half. They literally did as they remained on stage for 1 hour 20 minutes and even appeared in four totally different gowns. They took us through a 'history' of their own life story including jazz, gospel, soul and disco. In fact each costume represented one era. The exciting finale featured some hunky muscle bound men who appeared with the mock rain.

All in all the Weather Girls made everyone's evening.

For their penultimate song the whole of the Royal Festival Hall was standing, clapping and dancing. Even the grumpy Ushers were seen to be tapping the odd foot or two.

I had the privilege to meet Parminder Veer, an asian lady who had organised the whole event and the Spring Festival. May I extend my congratulations to her and to Identity's management and above all to the GLC for staging an enjoyable and unique event.



● Janet Kay

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