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Bill Hersey's

ROPPONGI SWINGS

Just back from Manila where I had a very interesting week. In addition to participating in some of the events the Ministry of Tourism hosted for the 100 young Japanese ladies visiting on a promotional tour, I also helped one of my Japanese business associates audition a couple hundred singers, dancers and transvestites for work at clubs here in Japan. It was fun and, as they say, variety is the spice of life. I'll be talking more about Manila later.

Before leaving, I was able to get together with Mikhail Baryshnikov and some of the dancers here with him for a series of sold-out performances. The group included many of the world's top ballet dancers. Leslie Browne (who I had the opportunity to show around Tokyo several years back when she was here to promote the film "The Turning Point") was with "Misha's" company and we talked about some of the funny experiences she had during her first trip.

Baryshnikov has never been much of a friend to the press and it was quite obvious he wasn't really comfortable at his press conference here. As sometimes happens, the interpreters — who seem more afraid to offend the star than to make a mistake — changed the questions completely or softened them somewhat when translating. When one journalist asked Misha how he felt about the English slogan printed on one of the sponsor's (Alpha Cubic) pamphlet which read "Nijinsky, Nureyev, then Baryshnikov inherited legitism of beauty," he told her he hadn't seen it.

I did talk with Mikhail a few times during his visit and certainly feel he's one of the most talented and versatile dancers in the world. The highlight for me of his company's visit, however, was meeting Elaine Kudo, a beautiful half-Japanese, half-American dancer whose performance with Mikhail in the Sinatra Suite really

excels. The Japan tour was a sort of comeback for Elaine as she hasn't danced for a year since she had a baby.

On July 14th, two dear friends, Australian Ambassador Sir Neil and Lady (Geraldine) Currie, gave a garden party at their home to say *sayonara* to the many many friends they made during their three and a half years here. I dropped by the French Embassy for the Bastille Day celebration first, so did get to the Curries quite late.

Unfortunately, the host, Sir Neil, had to return to Australia on a personal matter, so was unable to be there that evening. Geraldine, as outgoing and capable a person as you'll ever meet anywhere, did a marvelous job of spending time with each of the guests and making sure everyone got to know the other guests and were enjoying themselves.

Guests included Mr. and Mrs. Hidesaburo Shoda, parents of HH Princess Michiko; Hisanaga and Takako Shimazu, she's the youngest daughter of HIM the Emperor, and NTV's energetic President Morihisa Takagi.

Mr. Shoda told me he had twisted his back playing tennis and was "going get to get out of Tokyo and relax for a few days." The Shimazu's son, Yoshi, is home from school in the States and has one of his American classmates visiting. That's been keeping them busy.

Fijian Ambassador Joseph David Gibson told me that the Japanese journalists who recently visited his country were writing some really fine reports on his country and they are looking for more Japanese tourists to Fiji in the near future. I had been invited on the trip but had other commitments. I can't tell you how sorry I am about that. It's a country I really do want to see.

It was a beautiful evening at the Curries. We, of course, were sorry Sir Neil couldn't be there, but know we'll see him

and Geraldine either when they're back here or in their own beautiful country... Australia. The party, by the way, was catered by Shibuya-san who always does a great job.

And I mustn't forget that Chiye Hachisuka asked me to remind everyone that the JAWS Black-and-White Ball will be at the Tokyo Hilton Int'l on Oct. 24.

Miyako Ejiri, President of Dela Corporation, worked with the Cine Saison in Shibuya's Prime Building, in setting up a premiere showing of the film "Kiss of the Spider Woman." The showing was well attended with many familiar faces from the entertainment and fashion world there.

At the reception I talked with Paulo Hargreaves, attending with several people from the Brazilian Embassy; he told me there are plans for a Brazilian Film Festival in Tokyo this fall.

Actor William Hurt, as you know, won the Academy Award for best actor in his portrayal of the gay prisoner in the film. According to a Japanese news report, there is more and more interest in homosexuality in Japan. Recent Japanese productions have included "Bent," "Boys in the Band" and "Torchsong Trilogy," the Toho musical "Le Cage Aux Folles" is playing to SRO audiences at the Imperial Theater and, according to the reporter there, are "over 100 gay bars in Shinjuku alone."

The article went on to say that more and more Japanese women are showing interest in "things gay," and Miyako told me that the majority of customers for "Kiss of The Spider Woman" (which has set a new record high attendance at Cine Saison) have been women.

While we're on that subject, Boy George has made it more difficult for foreign celebrities to get commercials here. After his recent arrest on a narcotics charge, Takara Breweries have canceled the CMs on their



Premiere party for 'Kiss of Spider Woman'

Above: Warner Bros' Alex Ying, Yasuko Suita of Hanae Mori Int'l and Miyako Ejiri, President of the Dela Corp. At left: Tatsuhiko Gotoh, one of the movers behind the first Tokyo Int'l Film Festival, and Miyako. Below: Paulo Hargreaves (he's planning a Brazilian film fest later this year), Lilo Campos, Brazilian Minister-Counsellor Ivan Cannabrava and Maria Lucia de Almeida Ramos of the Brazilian Embassy. Bottom: Toshio Shimizu, President of Cine Saison theater chain, music critic Yasushi Abe and Tadao Suzuki of Suntory.



ROPPONGI SWINGS...Above, left: Three generations of Askews — Gloria, head of Askew Model Agency here; her mother Irene, visiting from London, and her daughter Nicola who works with the agency. They're



all basking in the Greek sun by now. Above, right: Shigeki Fukuda, artist Stephanie Ferretti and her mother Holli, Mainichi Daily News' society scribe; out in Roppongi before Steph's trip back to the States.

products "Jun" and "Takara Can Chu-High" he did with the other members of the Culture Club. From what I hear, that's about a million U.S. bucks down the drain, and probably also means the group will not be allowed back into Japan for concerts or any other reason. Talk about stupidity!

While we were tripping, there were several interesting events we had to miss here in Tokyo. They included a "Vin d'Honneur" July 28th hosted by Peruvian Ambassador Luis J. Machiavello on the occasion of the 165th Anniversary of Peru's

National Independence; a reception the 25th given by Pakistani Ambassador and Mrs. Najmul Saqib Khan for journalists and members of the Pakistani business community, and U.S. Ambassador and Mrs. Mike Mansfield's reception the 29th for their daughter, Anne Marris, visiting here with her daughter Caroline from London.

I did see Mike, Maureen, Anne and Caroline at the reception for and premiere of the Broadway musical "42nd Street" at NHK Hall Aug. 1.

(Continued on Page 8)

Bailey's Week

By James Bailey

Summertime movie fare, Japan style

The summertime movies mentioned in last week's column are not the only ones from local filmmakers. Not by a long shot. Currently showing, or slated to be released soon, are "young idol" features, pics based on comics, animated movies and the latest from one of this country's best new directors. Here's a brief rundown:

Yoshimitsu Morita is a director predictable only in his unpredictability. In the past three years alone, he has directed "Kazoku Game" (The Family Game), a brilliant satire named by *New York Times* film critic Vincent Canby one of the ten best films of '84; "Main Theme," a conventional young-idol love story, and "Sore Kara" (And Then), a meticulous, critically acclaimed period drama. Morita's next, described as a "youth success story," is entitled "Sorobanzuku" (Fond of the Abacus) and stars the—to me, at any rate — inexplicably popular comedy team, Tunnels. According to pre-release publicity, the film is an '80s variation on the popular "sararimanmono" (salaried worker genre) of the early '60s, particularly the so-called "musekinin" (irresponsible) series which starred

Hitoshi Ueki.

Co-produced by ATOZ, Nippon Hosho and, first among equals, Fuji-TV, "Sorobanzuku" is being released by Toho on Aug. 23 with what promises to be the cinematic apotheosis of cute: "Onyanko Club—The Movie." Unless you've been residing on one of Jupiter's moons for the past several months, you know that Onyanko Club is a collection of bedimpled and bepimpled distaff high schoolers so gag-inducingly sweet and innocent as to make you wish for the parole of Richard Speck. Incredibly, this semi-documentary feature has been directed by Masato Harada, the journalist-filmmaker responsible for the very witty "Saraba Eiga Tomo Yo" and the endearing "Wendy."

This isn't the only "idol film" being foisted on unsuspecting moviegoers this summer by Toho. Currently playing at that studio's chain theaters is "Song For U.S.A.," the second feature to star the top-selling, all-male musical septet, Checkers. This time around, the guys with the nerd/spazz stage act come into contact with—tadaaaa!—gaijin, specifically a little black girl and her father,

the latter a formerly famous musician now near-alcoholic.

I note for the record that, in a Toho film released a little over five years ago, a top-selling, all-male musical trio ran into a black man in New York's Washington Square and damned if he didn't turn out to be a once-proficient musician now on the booze-slickened skids. Guess some darky habits never change.

Sharing the bill with "Song For U.S.A." is "Prussian Blue No Shozo" (Prussian Blue Portrait), directed by Hidenori Taga, scripted by Takuya Nishioka and starring yet another all-male musical aggregation, Anzen Chitai. Described as a horror pic, the Kitty Film production concerns the strange goings-on which occur when an elementary school janitor played by Anzen Chitai leader (and high-teen heart-throb) Koji Tamaoki meets an autistic student played by Kaori Takahashi.

From Toei on Aug. 9 comes the sequel to last year's "Be Bop High School," the feature-length slugfest annoying as much for the plentitude of its violence as its phoniness. Invariably emerging from all the

faked fisticuffs involving students at rival high schools were two lads, Hiroshi and Toru, who just as invariably earned squeaky-voiced remonstrances from a female classmate, Kyoko. Our two heroes managed to convince our heroine that fighting was the rightful province of men such as they, with their heavily permed hair, their protruding rib cages and their arms as thick as broom handles.

Because "Be Bop High School" was on the bottom half of a double bill topped by la maxima young idol Hiroko Yakushimaru's smash "Yabanjin No Yo Ni," it was certified a hit, though whether the sequel, "Be Bop High School—Koko Yotaro Elegy" (Elegy of the Slow-Witted High Schooler), will be able to duplicate the success of its progenitor is questionable.

"BBHS II" will share the screen with a feature which is likewise based on a popular comic, this one also concerning high school low jinks.

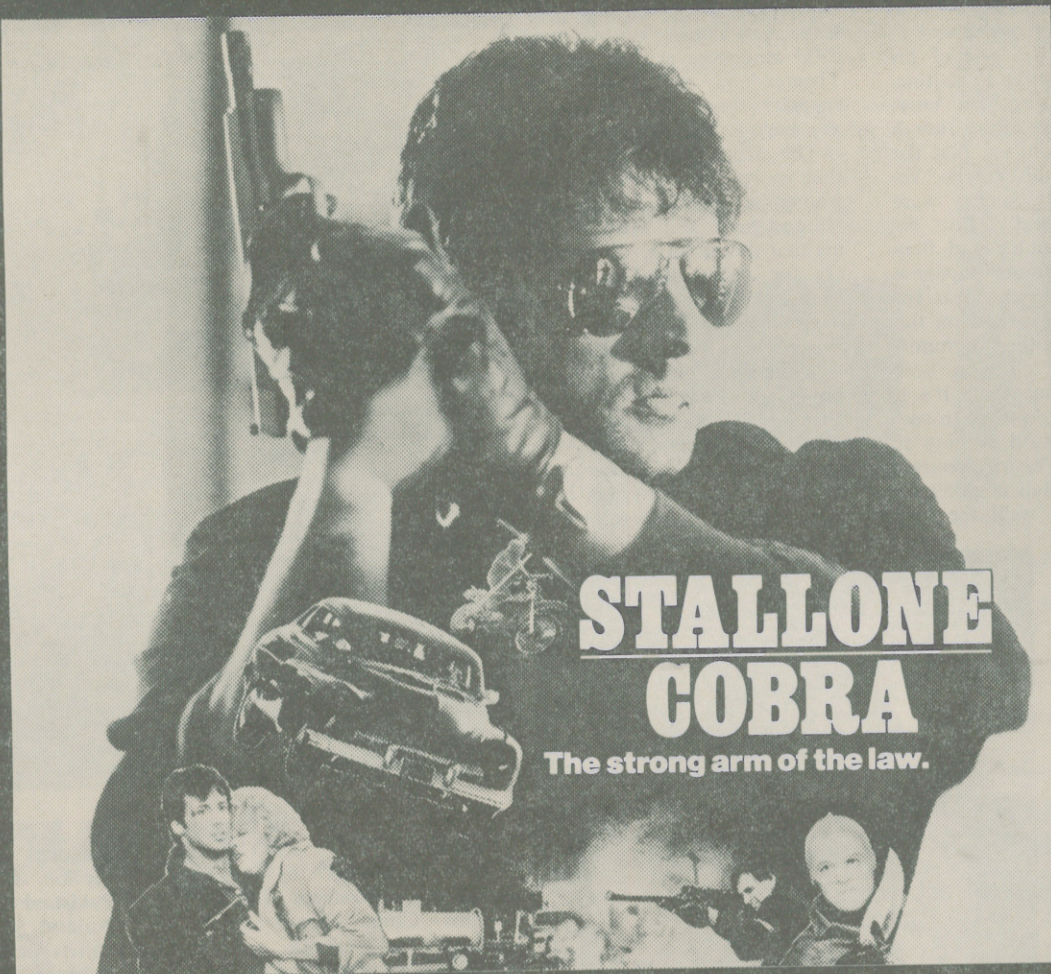
"Be Free" stars Kenji Haga, reigning pretty boy on local TV, as a Jekyll-Hyde teacher with his serious and nasty moments. The lovely Kazue Otoh co-stars; Shinichi Nakada directed.

The Shochiku-Fuji release, "Minami He Hashire Umi No

Michi Wo!" (Run South Along the Sea!), represents a desperate grab for attention by an actor who has never really caught on with the moviegoing public and doesn't appear capable of doing so now. After all, Koichi Iwaki is good-looking instead of cute, well-built instead of cute and 35 years old instead of cute. Iwaki plays an independent cameraman who returns to his native Okinawa, there to avenge the murder of his brother by a *yakuza*. Joining him is his late brother's lover, played by Narumi Yasuda. Opens later this month.

And for the kiddies: Toei will release "Rapyuta," an animated feature from the same director responsible for the box office smash (also animated) "Kaze No Tani No Naushika" (Nausica, Valley of the Wind). An adventure with beaucoup chase scenes, the pic will be released in tandem with "Zoku-Meitantei Holmes" (Famous Detective Holmes—The Continuation), in which Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's renowned characters are animals. And currently showing at selected theaters in Tokyo is "Uindaria," an animated "love fantasy" with queens and princess and married commoners, all with Keene-sized eyes.

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Mr Neil & Lady Currie bid friends sayonara



Above, from left: Lady (Geraldine) Currie, departing wife of the Australian Ambassador, with the parents of HIH Crown Princess Michiko, Fumiko and Hidesaburo Shoda. Kei and Ryoichi Iwamura (Japan Airlines) with Agnes Barker and *The Japan Times'* Jean Pearce. Australian Counsellor Howard Debenham; Kenneth E. Usyak, a teacher at St. Mary's International School, and Joosik Debenham. Far left. Hisanaga and Takako Shimazu; she's HIM the Emperor's youngest daughter. Far right: Lady Currie, Chris McDonald (Rolex) and Chiye Hachi-

suka. In the center: Fijian Ambassador Joseph David Gibson and Paupau New



Guinean Ambassador Joseph Kaal Nombri. Bottom, from left: J.J. Short, Commissioner, Government of Victoria (and President of the Australia Society); Australian First Secretary for Information Paul Molloy; Monika Short, and Australian Counsellor for Energy, and Technology Maurice M. Venning. Lady Currie with Fumiko Ushiba, widow of the late, highly respected Minister of Foreign Affairs Nobuo Ushiba. Katsuhiro Kurata (NTV), Linda Molloy of the Australian Embassy, Mrs. Kurata, NTV President Morihisa Takagi, Lady Currie and Mrs. Takagi.



In & around The Big Mikan, the pretty people make it go



At left: Pop heart-throb Morten Harket of a-ha—the popular rock group so large here — joins a few of his Japanese fans in a boogie at the Lex. At right: Askew models Lucy and Malia help Tania (right) celebrate her birthday in a roaming Roppongi blast.



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Bill Hershey's

PARTY LINE



(Continued from Page 6)

That was a star-studded affair we'll be talking more about later.

Talk about a small world. Last week in the lobby of the Manila Hilton I ran into old chums, Metropolitan Opera stars **Richard Kness** and **Joann Grillo**. They were in Manila to present "The Ambassadors of Opera and Concert Worldwide Ltd." production of "Carmen." The artists were flown in by United Airlines, and the production supported by Philip Morris. Joann and Richard told me they'll be performing in Japan this fall, and we'll let you know more once we get the program.

Just received a postcard from former Italian Ambassador **Marcello Guidi** and his wife **Gioia** who are holidaying in Spain "which is flooded with tourists." The Guidis are posted in Brussels now and send their best to their many friends here.

Also heard from former model **Susie Coelho** who I first met when she was on a special assignment here. Susie, once married to **Sonny Bono** and co-founded Bono's Italian restaurant in L.A., has just started a new venture called **Star Wears**. It's a boutique on fashionable Melrose Avenue that carries nothing but clothing once worn by celebs.

While we're on fashion, have you heard about the jeans vending machines in Paris that distribute ten sizes of Levi's 501 Jeans? Another American product that's become international.

IN TOWN:

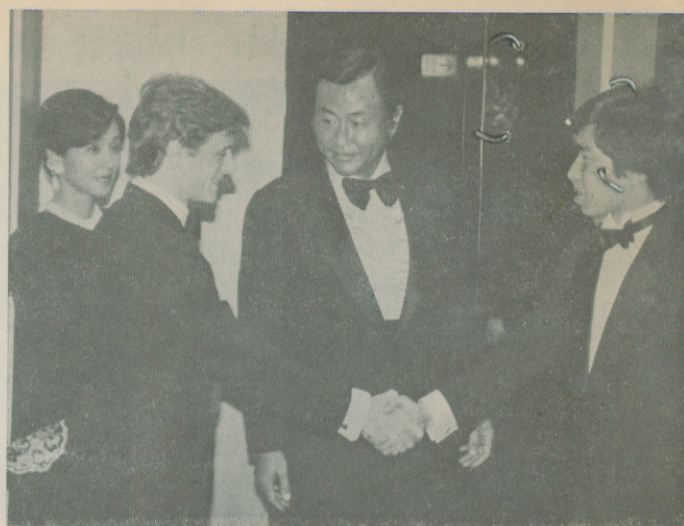
● Super talent, super creative **Jim Henson** of Muppets fame, here to open his exhibition at **GINZA SEIBU**. Jim's TV series "Fraggle Rock" is currently showing on NHK. We had the good fortune of having breakfast with that busy man and will be talking more about him

in an upcoming column.

● One of Brazil's (and the world's) leading musicians and composers, **Antonio Carlos Jobim**. We had the privilege of hearing him at a dinner show at the Capitol Tokyu and, thanks to Tokyoite **Sonia Rossa Nakada**, met him, his family and his band after the show.

● Hawaiian showbiz personality **Michael Qseng** here with "Sam" **Shenkus**, Marketing Director of the fabulous Ala Moana Shopping Mall in Honolulu. If you're in Hawaii, you can hear Michael on 93 SMQ's Morning Show from 5:30 to 10 a.m. daily or see his TV show on Channel 2. Fun people. I wish they could have had a little more time in Tokyo.

● Former Tokyoite **Rolf Mittweg**, back in Japan as Vice President, Far East, for Walt Disney Productions Japan Ltd. We'll be talking more about Rolf in an upcoming column.



Baryshnikov & Company in Tokyo



One of the world's great ballet dancers **Mikhail Baryshnikov** greets **HIH Prince Takamado** at the Capitol Tokyu Hotel with **Haruo Shikanai**, President of Fuji TV, in the center. Mrs. Shikanai is at left. At left: "Misha" Baryshnikov with ballerina **Leslie Browne**; they appeared together in the film "The Turning Point." Below: At the reception honoring the troupe: **Mitsugi Nakajima**, Capitol Tokyu Hotel General Manager; U.S. Ambassador to Japan **Mike Mansfield**; his daughter **Anne Marris**, visiting from London, and **Karl Hoermann**, the hotel's executive chef.



Philip Morris' reception for Alvin Ailey Dancers

Above, left: **Maureen Mansfield**, wife of the American Ambassador, congratulates two of the **Alvin Ailey Dancers** on their spectacular performance. Above, right: **HIH Prince Takamado**, a special guest at the party, joins **Andrew Whist**, Philip Morris' Vice President, International Corporate Affairs, in the tradi-

tional breaking of the *saké* barrel. Below, left: U.S. Counsellor for Public Affairs **Jack Shellenberger** and his niece, **Teraneh Azar**, with **TIH Prince and Princess Takamado**. Below, right: **Richard Scorza**, Deputy Director, Tokyo American Center, with **Ailey Dancer April Berry**.



Above, left: One of the world's top ballet stars, **Cynthia Harvey**. Above, right: Dancers **Gil Boggs** and **Elaine Kudo**.

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