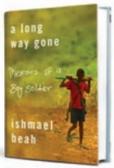


Boy soldier
In his memoir, *A Long Way Gone*, Ishmael Beah recounts the horrific teen years he spent fighting in the Sierra Leone civil war | **D7**



The Arts

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By Aaron Beck
THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH

Few singers reach the limelight. Fewer remain there with grace for half a century. Nancy Wilson, who will turn 70 on Tuesday, has done both.

The Chillicothe-born, Columbus-bred vocalist and grandmother of four has devoted almost as much time to recording and performing as she has to philanthropic pursuits.

And when she isn't helping organizations such as the International Association of Jazz Educators or the Jazz Masters Program of the National Endowment for the Arts, she is hosting *Jazz Profiles* on National Public Radio.

On March 6, the 1954 West High School graduate will speak in Wilberforce at Central State University in honor of its 120th anniversary this year.

Wilson spent one semester at the school before joining Rusty Bryant's Carolyn Club Band in 1956.

"I wasn't there but a minute," she said. "I had a scholarship, but the work was calling and I thought someone else could use that scholarship."

From the home in Yucca Valley, just east of Los Angeles, that she shares with her husband of 33 years, the Rev. Wiley Burton, Wilson talked about her win last Sunday at the Grammy Awards (best jazz vocal album, for *Turned to Blue*), a memorable incident at the Apollo Theater and, of course, her years in Columbus.

Q: How do you define a good song?

A: Well, I'm not a musician, but I have great ears. It's the story.

A song I recorded on this last CD, *Old Folks* — it could be about this soldier who was at Gettysburg, or it could be about my great-grandmother who smoked a corncob pipe.

It was a way of paying tribute to my ancestors, my people. It's *the story*.

Q: When you hear the word Chillicothe, what comes to mind?

A: All of my mom's people. When I go to Chillicothe, I stop by and see everyone who's still there. My

See **NANCY** Page **D2**

An enduring 'old soul' NANCY WILSON

still enjoying success at almost 70



The jazz great and Grammy winner

Her favorites

In the past five decades, Nancy Wilson has released more than 60 albums. "I've been very proud of my selection of material all these years," she says. Asked to name her five favorites, she exercised the prerogative of a star — and selected six:

- ▶ *Lush Life* (Blue Note, 1967)
- ▶ *Nancy Wilson/Cannonball Adderley* (Capitol, 1962): "Who had any idea it would be the No. 1 collaboration album of all time?"
- ▶ *R.S.V.P.: Rare Songs, Very Personal* (MCG Jazz, 2004) and *Turned to Blue* (2006): "It's a tie. *Turned to Blue* is just as good as *R.S.V.P.* It's produced just as well."
- ▶ *Hello Young Lovers* (Capitol, 1962): "There's some of that stuff that is so good."
- ▶ *Love, Nancy* (Columbia, 1994)



INTERMISSION



Elvis Presley in the 1970s

A little teddy bear

Susan Anton remembers the night she met Elvis Presley. In the 1970s, the 20-something Anton — starring through tonight in the touring *All Shook Up* at the Palace Theatre — was singing in a hotel show in Las Vegas.

She attended a Tom Jones concert one night when Presley joined Jones for the finale.

Afterward, Anton was invited to accompany Presley to his penthouse apartment in the Las Vegas Hilton.

"He was so sweet," she said. "That's what struck me the most."

Presley then asked Anton to enter his bedroom.

"I thought: 'Oh, my God. The big superstar is going to make the play for the big, naive girl,'" she recalled.

He didn't make a pass, though. Instead, he read a favorite passage from the best-selling *The Prophet* by Khalil Gibran.

"He signed it, gave it to me and wished me a good life," she said.

In retrospect, Anton views Presley as a prisoner of his fame.

"That, and his roots in gospel music and the church, fueled his desire to seek out more knowledge about the world and self-realization."

— Michael Grossberg
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Not-so-taxing house

Now that ABC has aired the episode of *Extreme Makeover: Home Edition* that salutes Sept. 11 hero and Whitehall resident Jason Thomas, viewers have an unanswered question:

How will the great new home affect real-estate taxes in the neighborhood?

As it turns out, not by much. "Basically, the neighbors have nothing to be concerned about," said Franklin County Auditor Joe Testa. "This house is very unusual for its neighborhood. That means it really kind of stands alone."

"Now, if it becomes a more attractive neighborhood — 'Hey, that's really neat; I want to live next to it' — then, yes, their value will increase. But it takes several years and a lot of sales to demonstrate that values should go up."

"One house doesn't change the market around it."

— Tim Feran
tferan@dispatch.com

Free cookies with each ticket

Kyle Gass — the guy next to Jack Black in the two-man rock band Tenacious D — admits he doesn't know much about marketing.

Still, after the movie *Tenacious D: The Pick of Destiny* didn't set box offices afire during its opening weekend last year, the guitarist cultivated a few ideas.

During a recent chat from Los Angeles, he shared the main one. "There's a saying out here that nobody knows anything," Gass said. "My theory is our fans were too stoned to know when opening weekend was."

— Aaron Beck
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Ranks of distinction

In the acknowledgments of his 1999 historical novel, *Dreamland*, Kevin Baker writes of a hope that readers will amuse themselves "sniffing out the real, unnamed historical personages I have snuck in the narrative."

Despite the fun, why the subterfuge?

"Oh, just to see who's paying attention, I suppose," Baker replied. "And it's so clumsy and awful to simply announce them."

"My wife and I saw some historical movie in which a character actually introduced himself as 'Pvt. Ernest Hemingway, sir!'"

"For the next week, we kept making up new ones: 'Sgt. Dorothy Parker, sir! Cpl. Edna St. Vincent Millay!'"

— Bill Eichenberger
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ARTBEAT

Passing of creative giants gives pause

The death of Gian Carlo Menotti, the Italian-American opera composer and legendary impresario of Spoleto festivals on two continents, on Feb. 1 marked the end of an era in classical arts.

Was Menotti the last of the 20th-century giants who dominated American composition and performance in music and dance? It seems that way.

The end began in 1990, when the great composers Aaron Copland and Leonard Bernstein died within three months of each other. Both created distinctly American music that has become part of our psyche.

Copland's *Appalachian Spring*, *Billy the Kid*, *Rodeo* and *Fanfare for a Common Man* define "American." Bernstein's *Candide* and *West Side Story* broke new ground in opera and musical theater and made American art



BARBARA ZUCK

Bernstein set a standard on symphony-orchestra podiums unequaled by any other American maestro. In scintillating, unforgettable performances with the New York Philharmonic and Vienna Philharmonic, he gave new meaning to some of the greatest works in symphonic literature.

Through his televised *Young*

out of old European stories.

Copland proselytized for American contemporary music; gathering a generation of aspiring composers around him, he helped forge their careers.

People's Concerts (tapes of which have recently been reissued), he built interest in and understanding of a complex art form.

Bernstein and Copland aren't the only giants gone:

- John Cage, the avant-garde composer who created his own definition of music, died in 1992.
- Morton Gould, another Americanist composer, died in 1996, just two years after guest-conducting the Columbus Symphony Orchestra.
- Lou Harrison, the experimental composer, died in 2003 on his way to Columbus, where he was to be the featured artist at the Ohio State University Contemporary Music Festival.
- Robert Shaw, the great choral conductor, died in 1999.
- Virgil Thomson, the Pulitzer

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'THE NUMBER 23'

Mystical figure interests actor

By Cindy Pearlman
NEW YORK TIMES SYNDICATE

In the mood for something new, Jim Carrey seems especially receptive to all things "23."

The actor stars in *The Number 23*, a thriller that will open, appropriately, on Feb. 23.

Carrey plays Walter, a suburban father and dogcatcher leading a normal life until the day his wife (Virginia Madsen) buys a strange book, written anonymously, about the number 23.

Suddenly their lives start falling apart, careening into mayhem and murder.

Walter even looks different from any previous Carrey character, with long, dark hair and a large, creepy, gothic tattoo.

Actually, he says, the idea isn't so different



Jim Carrey

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