

# Was Sidney Poitier in that movie?

ASK DICK KLEINER



DICK KLEINER

Q. My husband and I have a bet about a Sidney Poitier movie. Did he play in a movie called "To Sir, With Love," about a blind girl? — E.P. Houston.

Q. I need to know the name of the movie in the '60s with Sidney Poitier. It was about a blind girl he helped. — B.A.C., Westover, W.Va.

A. "A Patch of Blue" (1965), with Sidney Poitier and the late Elizabeth Hartman, was the one about the blind girl. But Poitier was also in "To Sir, With Love" (1967), which had nothing to do with blindness. He played a teacher in that one.

Q. Would it be possible to find out who sings on the commercial for Tott's Champagne? She has an operatic voice. My husband just loves her voice. — Mrs. R.S., Seabrook, Texas.

A. That "operatic voice" happens to be the property of one of the greatest sopranos of our era, Kiri Te Kanawa of New Zealand. And, incidentally, the aria you hear on that commercial is

all you can about him and how long he has been a carpenter. — A.A., Mountain Home, Ariz.

A. Norm Abram has been a professional carpenter for 17 years. His father was a carpenter before him. Abram began his TV work when he did some carpentry for a producer. One thing led to another, and another thing led to a career.

Q. Recently, we had a discussion about two Bing Crosby movies, "Holiday Inn" and "White Christmas." I know Vera-Ellen and Rosemary Clooney were in "White Christmas," but were either or both of them also in "Holiday Inn"? — I.J., Vineland, N.J.

A. No. "Holiday Inn" had Bing Crosby, Fred Astaire — and Marjorie Reynolds, as the girl they both were chasing. The other one was Virginia Dale.



Sidney Poitier Bing Crosby

part of "O Mio Babbino Caro," from Puccini's opera "Gianni Schicci." You can hear it on a CBS record called "Puccini Heroines."

Q. I enjoy watching Norm Abram on "This Old House." Please tell me

(Send your questions to: Ask Dick Kleiner, c/o Newspaper Enterprise Association, 200 Park Ave., New York, N.Y. 10166. Due to the volume of mail, personal replies cannot be provided.)

# 'Fame' star seeks fame as a singer

VIDEO BEAT



ETHLIE ANN VARE

Oh, dear. Another TV star pretending to be a pop singer. And in this case, the TV star who's putting out a record played a singer for years.

But wait. Billy Hufsey, who played singer/dancer Christopher Donlon on "Fame," turns out to be a singer who was only pretending to be an actor.

"I've been a musician since I was 5," says Hufsey, now 30. "I picked up the drums when I was 5, then the piano and the saxophone and the trumpet. And when I came out here, I was going to be in a band. Then I got a movie. Then I got another movie. Then I got 'Fame'."

"I was going to do a record right after 'Fame.' But I did seven television shows, a movie of the week ... then I got a role in 'Days of Our Lives.' Now I'm just going to do this."

"This" is Hufsey's first record, an R&B dance ditty called "Contagious"

on the independent Vision label. An album is due in June, with a tour to follow.

For a German/Irish boy from Ohio, Hufsey sounds a lot like Kool & the Gang on his debut disc.

"I'm not hard rock, just because I have long hair and earrings," he says.



Billy Hufsey

"Actually, the music I enjoy doing most is ballads, like Seals & Crofts or Bread. But you can't get a record deal singing that kind of music any more."

Even so, Hufsey's deal isn't the biggest. Vision is too small to buy him a video first time out, and it doesn't

have an army of promotion and marketing personnel to back the release. Still, he's happy to have it.

"You know, 99 percent of people never work again after a big series like 'Fame.' I'm real lucky. Look at the people from 'Laverne & Shirley,' or 'Eight is Enough,' or 'MASH' — see any of them working?"

If making good with a debut on an independent label is bucking the odds, Hufsey is used to bucking the odds. "I came out here from Cleveland, wasn't in the union, didn't have representation, was not even an actor. And I auditioned for a movie from an advertisement in Dramalogue (an industry trade newspaper) and I got the role."

"People think, 'Oh, you gotta know somebody.' I didn't know anybody. People think, 'I can't go to Hollywood. I'm nobody's son's brother's uncle's aunt.' People say, 'I can't do it, I can't do it.' Well, if you say you can't do it, you're probably right. You can't."

The phrase "I can't" is apparently not in Hufsey's vocabulary. "I'm a perfectionist," he says. "When I started dancing, I wanted to go from three pirouettes on Monday to 10 on Thursday. My legs took a lot of punishment!"

"Now, if I do a performance, I'll get a tape of that performance and I'll watch it about 2,000 times and pick it apart. And next time I do it, it'll be 2,000 times better."

Currently studying at Hollywood's Vocal Institute of Technology and continuing to pick himself apart, Hufsey has every expectation of reaching the top in pop music. And if he doesn't, that's OK too.

"Hey, I'm making a halfway decent living and doing what I want to do," he says. "I could be on an assembly line, punching holes in my fingers."

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## DATE BOOK

May 13, 1989

Today is the 133rd day of 1989 and the 54th day of spring.

TODAY'S HISTORY: On this day in 1985, the Philadelphia police dropped a bomb on a house held by a besieged radical group, starting a fire that killed 11 people and destroyed 61 homes.

TODAY'S BIRTHDAYS: Georges Braque (1882), Joe Louis (1914), Beatrice Arthur (1926), Clive Barnes (1926), Stevie Wonder (1950).

TODAY'S QUOTE: "I don't see why people want new plays all the time. What would happen to concerts if people wanted new music all the time?" — Clive Barnes

TODAY'S MOON: Day after first quarter (May 12).

TODAY'S BARBS BY PHIL PASTORET Remember when "Sue" was a girl's name, and not an order to your lawyer to get busy on your problem?

Will power is what an aging and affluent relative has over the rest of the family.

May 14, 1989

Today is Mother's Day, the 134th day of 1989 and the 15th day of spring.

TODAY'S HISTORY: On this day in 1942, the United States became the first country to recognize the state of Israel.

TODAY'S BIRTHDAYS: Otto Klemperer (1885), Bobby Darin (1938), George Lucas (1944), David Byrne (1952).

TODAY'S QUOTE: "Same as it ever was" (song lyric) — David Byrne.

TODAY'S MOON: Between first quarter (May 12) and full moon (May 20).

TODAY'S BARBS BY PHIL PASTORET Our minister says none of his parishioners are more prayerful than the golfers who beseech providence to give them a sunny day.

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## Face In The Crowd



Take a close look; you may be a winner. If the face indicated by the arrow is yours, you're the lucky winner of a pair of Georgetown Cinemas courtesy passes. Call us at 877-2201 or 877-8822 or drop in at The Herald, 45 Guelph St., Georgetown to claim your prize. If you're not a winner this week, keep on looking. Next week it may be your turn to win.

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