

TTI Update

Caribbean Teen Wins International Crown

by Nadine Michelle Shaw

Renee Michelle Solomon, a budding, 15-year-old opera singer representing Trinidad and Tobago, was crowned *Hal Jackson's Talented Teens International 1999*. The competition, which celebrated its 29th year, was held at the beautiful Reichhold Center for the Performing Arts in the United States Virgin Islands. Thirty-five of the world's "most talented and intelligent teens" representing such places as Holland, Nigeria and Panama along with teens from across the United States competed for educational scholarships, the opportunity for extensive travel, and, naturally, the international and national exposure associated with being crowned *Miss Hal Jackson's Talented Teen International*.

In addition to preparing vigorously for the preliminary and final competition, the young ladies, along with their state and country directors, enjoyed a fun-filled week in and around St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands where they attended numerous cultural, social and civic events, many of which were held in honor of the 1999 Talented Teen contestants. The week's events culminated in a preliminary competition, which was held at the luxurious Marriott Frenchmen's Reef. There, the thirty-

five national and international representatives were judged in three categories: *Personality and Achievement, Appearance* and *Performing Talent*. The ten young ladies receiving the highest total points from the preliminary phase were then named the top ten finalists for the final competition.

This year's theme was "*The Talented Teens Travel To A World of Fantasy*". The show opened with a star-studded production number in which
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Renee Solomon, Miss 1999 HJTTI with Mr. Hal Jackson



Scholarship Content's
Top 10 Winners in the
U.S. Virgin Islands

Connecticut
Karessa Hardy, 17

Eritrea
Leah Haileab, 17

Illinois
Keanna O'Quinn, 17

Louisiana
Michelle Hector, 16

New Jersey
Kelly Freeman, 15

St. Kitts & Nevis
Akilah Byron, 17

Texas
Satta Musa, 16

Trinidad & Tobago
Renee Solomon, 15

Virginia
Bianca Hicks, 17

Washington
Alpha Mengistu, 15

Winter 1999/2000

A Snapshot of Our 1999 HJTTI Winners



*The Official Newsletter
of Future Stars*

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The 1999 winner of Hal Jackson's Talented Teens International scholarship competition is 15-year-old Renee Solomon, an exceptional opera singer, from St. Anns, Trinidad. Renee took a page from the play "Porgy & Bess" and won the International title by singing "Summertime." Renee's favorite subject in school is Literature because she loves reading about the past, writing fiction and seeing how other people express themselves. She would like to attend Juilliard in New York City and major in Voice and Art because she wants to be an opera singer or fashion designer. Renee would like to be remembered as someone who took time out to care about others while striving to use the talents that God has ordained upon her. Miss Trinidad & Tobago has won a \$5,000 scholarship to the college of her choice, trips to England, the U. S. Virgin Islands, and St. Martin as well as other gifts and prizes.

The first runner-up Kelly Freeman, a 15-year-old from Jersey City, New Jersey captured the judges' hearts with her exceptional acting talent by performing a moving self composed piece about hate and her interpretation of Maya Angelou's "And Still I Rise." Kelly's favorite subject is World History because it has enhanced her thinking capabilities. She plans to attend Harvard Law School to major in Corporate Law and pursue a career as a successful lawyer. Kelly entered this contest because she thought it would be a good opportunity to expand her horizons. She says she has learned a great deal of discipline, poise, and grace and how to communicate with others. Miss New Jersey has won a \$2,000 scholarship to the college of her choice.

Miss Akilah Byron, a 17-year-old steel pan instrumentalist from Basseterre, St. Kitts won third place by playing "a medley of songs entitled "One Love" and "Wide World" while standing up and on her back. Computer Science has grabbed Akilah's attention because it is a gateway to her goal of attending Miami State University and majoring in Computer Programming with a minor in Performing Arts. She says with the world becoming a global village, technological skills are essential. She entered the contest because she thought it would be the greatest opportunity for her to meet people of different cultures and to be able to display her various talents. Miss St. Kitts & Nevis has won a \$1,500 scholarship to the college of her choice.

The third runner up is 17 year old Bianca Hicks from Norfolk, Virginia. Bianca played her rendition of "Amazing Grace" on the steel pans which brought the audience to its feet. Bianca's favorite subjects are Engineering, Chemistry, Math and Spanish. She wants to attend the University of Virginia where she will pursue a degree in Computer Information Sciences. A highly active teenager, Bianca is a member of the Girls' Soccer Team, the Upward Bound Program, the Urban Arts Center Ensemble and volunteers at the Art Atrium Gallery. Miss Virginia has won a \$1,000 scholarship to the college of her choice.

Last but certainly not least is Karessa Hardy, a 17-year-old gospel singer from Bridgeport, Connecticut the fourth runner up. Karessa performed an awe-inspiring rendition of "Soon I Will Be Done". She really enjoys history because her teacher taught more than time periods and dates. He taught reasons, causes and results. Karessa looks forward to attending Lincoln University in Pennsylvania where she will major in music. Her ultimate goal is to become a Music Teacher. By entering this competition she has learned to never close the door on opportunity and that hard work produces success. Miss Connecticut has won a \$500 scholarship.



Our 1999 Talented Teens International winner, Renee Solomon, visited England and France. She is pictured here near the Eiffel Tower in Paris where she took in the many sites of the "City of Lights".

Miss HJTTI Visits Europe

by Debi B. Jackson

Renee Solomon, the 15 year old 1999 winner of Hal Jackson's Talented Teens International Scholarship Competition, took her first official trip 25 days after winning her crown. She boarded a plane in Port of Spain, Trinidad, her home town, and landed at Heathrow airport in England. She was met at the airport by her official chaperon for this trip, Tonya Bolling along with Tiffany Jones and this writer.

Our first full day was spent riding around London on top of a double decker bus and seeing some of the sights like Trafalgar Square with its beautiful fountain and enormous lions; the Tower Bridge, which everyone thinks is the London Bridge; Westminster Abbey where Shakespeare and other luminaries are buried; St. Paul's Cathedral where Prince Charles married Lady Di; the Houses of Parliament and, of course, Big Ben. That evening Mr. Jackson was on hand when we all went to see the play of Renee's choice "Beauty & The Beast". Renee wanted to see this particular musical because she anticipates portraying Belle when her school puts on the play. Upon entering the theatre, Renee relayed to us that this was the first time she had been in a theatre to see a play. Since our Talented Teen Queen is an aspiring opera

singer, we are sure she will see many theatres in her lifetime.

The second day Mr. Jackson joined Renee as she continued the tour of London. We took in more sights and then headed over to 96.9 Choice FM, a radio station owned and operated by one of Mr. Jackson's associates, Mr. Patrick Berry. Choice FM recently moved to a new location just down the street from London Bridge. We were given a grand tour of the station which is situated in a 5 story building by George K, an on air personality and great friend. The radio station takes up 3 stories of the building and is very secure with cameras in all of its studios, hallways and offices. George interviewed Renee, Hal and myself while Tonya shot videos. George invited us to join him on Monday at the Frog and Firkin Pub where he

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The Virgin Islands Daily News Talented Teens Star Power

Talented Contest A Colorful Evening of Music and Fun for 1,500

by Annette Raimer

A vibrant showcase of teen-age girls from the U. S. and the Caribbean entertained an audience of more than 1,500 people at the 1999 Hal Jackson's Talented Teens International Contest held Saturday night at the Reichhold Center.

A fantasy dream came true for Renee Solomon, 15, of Trinidad and Tobago, who won the \$5,000 scholarship and an opportunity for success in the entertainment industry.



Nakiya Mathis, Miss HJTTI 1998, opened the World of Fantasy in the Virgin Islands for the Talented Teens

"Her talent was a polished performance," said attorney Tregenza Roach, a judge at the contest.

Solomon's polished performance was her rendition of "Summertime" from the movie Porgy and Bess.

Five finalists were picked from the ten finalists selected at Friday night's

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Thanks A Bunch To All Talented Teens International Participants

Thanks to all who attended and participated in the 29th annual Hal Jackson's Talented Teens International Scholarship Competition. We had a wonderful time in the U. S. Virgin Islands. A large thank you goes out to Ms. Claire Roker, International Coordinator and USVI HJTTI Director, who hosted the 29th annual event. Thank you to all the State and Country Directors who brought exceptional talent to the contest. The talent of the contestants were outstanding which made for a very competitive affair. We thank all the parents of the contestants who allowed their daughters to enter our contest. Thank you to the Directors who gave gifts to Hal and Debi Jackson during the week as well as the night of the Finals. Thank you to the HJTTI Directors and HJTTI Contestants who brought gifts to give to the other contestants. A very special thank you goes to **American Airlines**, the official airline sponsor of HJTTI, who gave our organization exceptional rates so that everyone could travel to the sun, sand and surf of St. Thomas.



The 1999 Directors of HJTTI came from around the world to the 29th annual competition held in St. Thomas, in the U. S. Virgin Islands. We are looking forward to our annual HJTTI Family Reunion July 23 - 30, 2000 in NYC.

Welcome To Our New HJTTI Directors

An enormous welcome goes out to our new HJTTI State & Country Directors. We are always seeking new HJTTI Directors in many areas across the country and around the world. If you know of an individual or organization who may be interested, please tell them to contact us on our website - www.TalentedTeens.Org, write us at: HJTTI, 1230 Park Avenue, New York, NY 10128, call us at 212-592-0413 or fax us at 212-722-4576.

Mona Harrigan - Anguilla
Rubina Collier - Honolulu, Hawaii
Reginald Woods - Gainesville, Florida
Kimberly Johnson - Dearborn, Michigan
Vilma Farrar - Las Vegas, Nevada
Vitalina Soto - Puerto Rico
Yvonne Mahape - Capetown, South Africa

Our 1999 HJTTI Shining Stars



Above are the 1999 contestants of the Hal Jackson's Talented Teens International Competition. Down front and center is Nikiya Mathis, Miss HJTTI 1998. Due to her academic achievements Nakiya is currently attending Temple University on a full scholarship. If you are a 13 - 17 year old talented young lady, you may be eligible to enter the 2000 competition. If you know of a talented young lady or are interested in running a competition in your area contact us at: Hal Jackson's Talented Teens International, 1230 Park Avenue, New York, NY 10128. For information call 212-592-0413, fax 212-722-4576 or e-mail us at HJTeens@aol.com. Visit our web site at TalentedTeens.org. The next competition will take place on Saturday, July 29,2000 at the Apollo Theatre in New York City.

Who will capture the 2000 HJTT International Crown?

The Urban Network - November 12, 1999

Hal Jackson's 60th Anniversary Dinner A Smashing Success!

By Graham Armstrong

Industry luminaries turned out in grand style to celebrate the 60th anniversary of broadcasting icon Hal Jackson. After a VIP cocktail reception, dinner guests moved to the world famous Rainbow Room atop Rockefeller Center to dine on a fabulous dinner featuring petite rack of lamb and risotto.



Hal is surrounded with love from Dr. Bob Lee, Renee Solomon, David Dinkins and Debi Jackson

The guest list included a variety of noteworthy invitees from various walks of life, including public service, the political arena, and the largest contingency from the entertainment spectrum. On hand were Mrs. Debi B. Jackson, Hal's beautiful wife, Jane Jackson-Harley, Hal's daughter, her son Gene Harley (WVAZ-FM - Chicago Sales Manager), Jewell Jackson McCabe (Chairperson, National Coalition of 100 Black Women), Sherri Culpepper, and Lee Keith (Friends of Trinidad & Tobago), Robert "Kool" Bell (Kool & The Gang), Ashford & Simpson, Isaac Hayes, Cynthia Horner, Earl "The Pearl" Monroe, Ken Webb, Vaughn Harper, Percy Sutton, Pierre "Pepe" Sutton, Mike Bernardo, Sylvia Rhone, Richard Nash, Kedar Massenberg, Doug Banks and Dee Dee McGuire, Manny Bella, Sandra Sullivan, Jodi Williams, Jean Riggins, Mike Horton, Varnell Johnson, Carol Cruikshank, Bob Law, James and Karen Thomas-Boyce, Sharon Heyward, Charles Warfield, Vinny and Anita Brown, Helen Little, Dave Allen, Cynthia Johnson, Dr. Bob Lee, former Mayor David Dinkins, Kernie Anderson, Tonya Byrd-Wilson, Bobby Jay and Joey Bonner.



Ashford & Simpson



Robert "Kool" Bell & Isaac Hayes

CBS' Ed Bradley acted as master of ceremonies and kept the program moving along with the greatest of finesse. Program speakers included Suzanne de Passe, Ahmet Ertegun, Percy Sutton and Hal Jackson, Jr. President Clinton addressed the audience (via a pre-recorded video presentation) and spoke

of the many accomplishments achieved by Hal. The response by the crowd was of resounding approval.

Entertainment was top-shelf as well, as we were treated with performances by the Cyrus Chestnut Trio, WBSL's

Jeff Fox and his orchestra, Renee Solomon, Ms. Hal Jackson's Talented Teen International 1999 from Trinidad, Jon Lucien, Yolanda Adams and the night-capper, Motown Legend Smokey Robinson wowing the crowd with a stunning hour-long-plus set of hits, most self-penned for The Temptations, The Miracles and himself.



Elektra recording artist Yolanda Adams literally blew the audience away with her incredible voice



Mr. Smokey Robinson

Let me tell you that Smokey and his orchestra, his long time rhythm section that features the sweet, sweeping notes of guitarist/composer Marv Tarplin, plus a dozen-member string section, were on top of their game. The audience hooted, hollered and sung along to all their Smokey favorites. Amid the early portion of the show, Smokey paused to speak about Hal Jackson, a man he called "Dad" and "more im-

portantly, my friend."

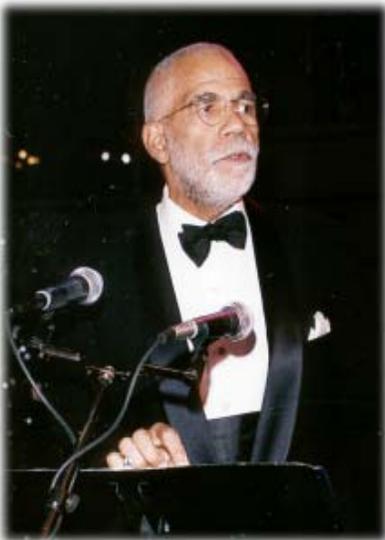
Yes, the Big Apple was the place to be last Wednesday, November 3, 1999. All basked in the glow of love and admiration bestowed on living legend and as Percy Sutton so eloquently stated, "an icon," Mr. Hal Jackson. It was truly a night that I will never forget.

Caribbean Life – November 16, 1999

Hal Jackson Celebrates 60 Years in “The House That Jack Built”

Compiled by Michelle Marshall

It's official: radio pioneer Hal Jackson has just celebrated 60 years of broadcast leadership, and a cadre of supporters turned out at Rainbow Cipriani on November 3 to celebrate his contributions to the industry.



Ed Bradley hosted the entire event

One of the founding fathers of radio, Hal Jackson was the first African-American inducted into the Broadcast Hall of Fame as well as the Radio Hall of Fame. The familiar voice of “Hal Jackson’s Sunday Classics” on WBLS in New York City, Hal is known as The Host That Loves You The Most.

A number of high-profile politicians passed

along congratulatory messages, including President Bill Clinton, Representative Charles Rangel (D-New York), Senator Frank Lautenberg (D-New Jersey), former New York Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan, Newark Mayor Sharpe James, former New York Mayor David Dinkins, Senator Robert Torricelli (D-New Jersey), Bronx Borough President Fernando Ferrer, Brooklyn Borough President Howard Golden, Manhattan Borough President C. Virginia Fields, New Jersey Governor Christine Todd Whitman.

The gala event was hosted by veteran newsman and “60 Minutes” Senior Correspondent, Ed Bradley. A myriad of industry notables paid tribute to Jackson, including Smokey Robinson, Stevie Wonder, Suzanne de Passe, Percy Sutton, Berry Gordy, Tito Puente, Quincy Jones, and Kool & the Gang, whose message to Jackson was: “Congratulations on 60 years of keeping the funk alive.”

Proceeds from the gala event were donated to furthering the programs of the Youth Development Foundation, Inc., and toward the continuation of a scholarship at Howard University.

“Ever since I was Little Stevie Wonder,” the beloved singer expressed, “I’ve known the man with the big heart –

Hal Jackson. Time has only made his heart to grow bigger and his love to spread further. I salute you, Mr. Jackson, with much love and respect.”

“Hal, there is something about you that makes us all feel better, want to do better and be better. Thank you, for always taking the high road, for being a class act and a cool guy,” commented Suzanne de Passe, Chairwoman and CEO of de Passe Entertainment.

Percy Sutton, Chairman Emeritus of Inner City Broadcasting had this high praise for veteran broadcaster: “Were there no Hal Jackson, there would be no Inner City Broadcasting Corporation!”

“Long before the success of Motown,” remarked Berry Gordy, now the Chairman and CEO of West Grand Media, “you were my friend. You helped me in ways I could not help myself. Always consistent, always positive and adventurous, you are a true pioneer.”

Sharing a glimpse of how Jackson touched his life, early in his own illustrious broadcasting career, host Ed Bradley said: “In the old days of radio, when it was almost totally segregated, there was an informal school of broadcasting. It meant one person who was on the air helped and taught one person who wanted to be on the air. Hal Jackson helped Del Shields and Del taught me.”

Summing up the prevailing sentiment, salsa king Tito Puente expressed his gratitude and best wishes to the guest of honor. “Thanks for all the good music you have provided New York City,” Puente said, “Let’s hope you give us another 60 years of the same.”

Ever up to the challenge, Jackson proudly noted, “I’ve enjoyed every day in every year in every decade.”

And with 60 years of professional experience to back up every word, Jackson advised his supporters to “remember, it’s nice to be important, but more important to be nice.”



Here’s To You Mr. Jackson!

Caribbean Teen Wins International Crown

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the contestants wore costumes and clothing which depicted their fantasy destination. Many chose such far away places



Each of the 1999 HJTTI winners have won scholarships

as Egypt, Japan and Hawaii while others, surprisingly, chose to remain in their respective states and countries and invite others to travel to the place they call home. The show, which was hosted by Dr. Bob Lee from WBLS in New York and Robert Luke from 105 JAMZ in St. Thomas, both well-known on-air personalities in their respective markets, and included a guest performance by Epic recording artist, *Uncle Sam*. The show also included a moving poetic and video tribute to the late Michelle Thomas. Michelle Thomas, known to many as Myra from *Family Matters* and Justine from *The Cosby Show*, died last year from a rare form of stomach cancer. Michelle began her acting career as a Talented Teen from New Jersey who later went on to win the 1983 International crown in Jamaica. To further pay homage to this talented young entertainer, the 1999 Talented Teen contestants dedicated their dance production number to the “**Fantasy & Travels**” of Thomas. The dance production number, choreographed and staged by Leslie Dockery, which featured the 1998 International Queen, Nakiya Mathis from Elizabeth, New Jersey, had the audience bopping their heads, clapping their hands and stomping their feet to a creative medley of popular R&B tunes.

Broadcasting pioneer Hal Jackson,

who is celebrating 60 years in broadcasting this year, created the competition 29 years ago with the intention of providing greater entertainment opportunities and exposure for young teenage women of color as well as “Inspiring Leadership for the Future”. The competition has since been instrumental in the entertainment careers of several well-known and highly represented artists including Jada Pinkett-Smith (“*Set It Off*” and “*Woo*”); the late

Michelle Thomas (“*Young and the Restless*”, “*Family Matters*”, “*The Cosby Show*”); Tai Jiminez (former principle dancer with Dance Theatre of Harlem); Rosalind Brown (former New York state contestant now appearing in the Broadway musical, “*Footloose*”); Sheryl Lee Ralph (“*Moesha*” and “*Sophisticated Ladies*”); Sondra Bonitto (former Massachusetts contestant now appearing in the Broadway production of “*Ragtime*”); and singing sensation, CeCe Penniston (A&M Recording Artist) just to name a few.

While the scholarship competition is open to all ethnic groups, the scholarship program focuses primarily on the artistic and personal development of teenage women of color. Through their involvement with *Hal Jackson’s Talented Teens International*, the young women ultimately develop self-discipline, heightened self-esteem and gain self-respect, all of which are essential qualities for successful young women of today.

Renee Solomon, a humble and extremely talented high school student from St. Ann’s, Trinidad, will enjoy an exciting and busy year. In addition to a \$5,000 educational scholarship, she will travel to London, England, to experience, firsthand, West Indian Carnival courtesy of American Airlines. Solomon



Tiffany Walker, Miss HJTTI 1996 and Nikiya Mathis, Miss HJTTI 1998 perform at Preliminary Competition

will also visit St. Croix, U.S.V.I. courtesy of *Talented Unlimited, Inc.* and St. Martin, courtesy of the St. Martin Tourist Board. Her final official destination will be next year when she visits New York City for the 30th anniversary of Hal Jackson’s Talented Teen International Competition. There, Solomon will relinquish her crown to the “*new millenium*” Talented Teen.

The 1999 winners were: First runner-up, Kelly Freeman, a 15-year-old actress representing **New Jersey**; Second runner-up was 17-year-old, Akilah Byron, a steel pan player from **St. Kitts and Nevis**; Bianca Hicks, Miss **Virginia**, also a 17 year old and a steel pan player, placed third; and Karessa Hardy, a 17-year-old gospel vocalist from the insurance state, **Connecticut**, came in fourth. The top ten finalists included representatives from **Illinois, Eritrea, Louisiana, Texas** and **Washington**. A total of \$10,000 was awarded to the top five finalists to be utilized for their educational endeavors.

Hal Jackson’s Talented Teens International is a scholarship competition open to young teenage women between the ages of 13 and 17 with a performing talent. For more information about the program or sponsorship, write to: *Hal Jackson’s Talented Teens International*, 1230 Park Avenue, New York, New York 10128 or call 212-592-0413.

Talented Contest A Colorful Evening of Music and Fun for 1,500

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Akilah Byron, Miss St. Kitts & Nevis, 17, wants to travel to Africa

elimination. They were Solomon; Akilah Byron, 17, of St. Kitts and Nevis; Bianca Hicks, 17, of Virginia, who stunned the audience with steel pan renditions; Kelly Freeman, 14, of New Jersey; and Karessa Hardy, 17, of Connecticut with their acting and singing.

Nikiya Mathis, the 1998 winner, gave



Miss Virginia, 17 year old Bianca Hicks fancitizes traveling to Japan

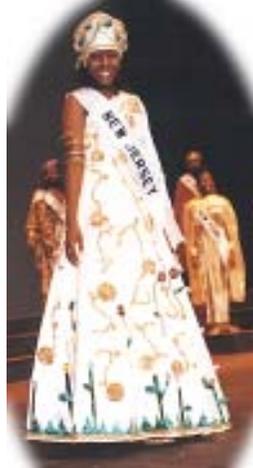
a repeat of her outstanding performance titled, "A Tribute to Paul Robeson."

The contestants performed a medley of song and dance, choreographed by Leslie R. Dockery, in tribute to the memory of 1984 winner, the late Michelle Thomas, who starred on the

television sitcoms "Family Matters," "The Cosby Show" and "The Young and the Restless."

"I can feel Michelle's presence right here tonight," said Dockery, who gave tearful remarks on the loss of the talented actress and former talented teen.

The contest has been a spring board for such well-known and entertainers as



You can find 15 year old Miss NJ, Kelly Freeman, in the Garden of Eden

Michelle Thomas, Jada Pinkett Smith, Sheryl Lee Ralph, Vanessa Williams, and CeCe Peniston.

While the scholarship competition is open to all races, it focuses on the artistic



Renee Solomon, 15 year old Miss T&T wants to travel down the Nile in Egypt

and creative development of minority women. Legendary broadcaster Hal Jackson created the competition 29 years ago to provide greater entertainment opportunities and exposure for women of color.

"This is a nice way for different cultures to share our differences, I feel good that some girls get a chance to evolve this way," said Danielle O'Bryan who attended with her grandfather Addie Ottley.

"The show is beautiful and exciting."



Miss Connecticut, 17 year old Karessa Hardy, would love to travel to...you guessed it, Hawaii

said Lt. Gov. Gerard Luz James II who gave an on-stage welcome to the participants, the production team and Hal and Debi Jackson. Other recognized guests in the audience were Cynthia Horner, executive editor of Right On! Magazine, Senator David Jones and Pamela Richards, assistant commissioner of Tourism. Radio personalities Robert Luke and Dr. Bob Lee were masters of ceremonies.

Girls between the ages of 13 and 17 with a performing talent are eligible to enter the 30th annual Hal Jackson's Talented Teens International contest. They can write to: HJTII at 1230 Park Avenue, New York, NY 10128.

Miss HJTTI Visits Europe

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would be broadcasting live from the site of Carnival. But we had other plans for our queen.

When we left the station we headed back to our hotel, Le Meridien Piccadilly, which is located near Piccadilly Circus. That evening we walked around Leicester Square and Renee decided that she wanted to see "West Side Story." So off we went for another evening at the theatre. It was a little strange watching a play set on the west side of New York and listening to actors with English accents. But Renee really enjoyed the music and the story line.

The next day we were up early and on our way to the beautiful countryside of England to visit Stonehenge and Bath. Stonehenge is the oldest known monument in Europe. Parts of these stones go back 5,000 years. It is still not known if this monument was used as a temple, brought there by extra terrestrials or is an astronomical calendar. It's something like the pyramids - how did they get there and who built it? After the visit to Stonehenge, Renee was driven to Bath, a city built in a natural amphitheater of steep hills by the Romans. She visited the ancient Roman hot and cold baths built over 1,900 years ago. Renee was amazed to see water still bubbling from underground hot springs.

Day four was the reason why Renee went to England and that was to experience Nottinghill Carnival. We got a late start due to jet lag but once awake and fed, we were ready to explore the Nottinghill area of London. When I say we got started late, it was about 12:00 noon. By the time we got in the area near carnival it was crowded. We were on a mission to experience carnival and find the Frog and Firkin Pub where Choice FM was broadcasting live. In order to be a part of carnival you have to purchase a whistle so that you can make lots of noise. That done, we were on our way. Now we had to get a map so that we wouldn't get lost. Done. Off we went into the madness.

As soon as we got close to the music Renee kept saying "It feels like home. I know this music. Trinidad is here in London!" It was loud and very crowded but somehow we all stayed together. A little harried at times but together. Renee danced, blew her whistle, sang, met people from Grenada, Antigua, England



Mr. Jackson took his beauty to see "Beauty & The Beast" in London

and of course, Trinidad. We jumped into one band and danced like crazy, sang some more, and exchanged good times with people from Brazil, Barbados and Latin America. It really was fun but it was getting too crowded so after about 3 hours we headed back to the sanctuary of our hotel.

Oh, by the way, we did find the Choice FM broadcast on Ladbroke Grove up on a large balcony overlooking the parade route. The perfect spot for a radio broadcast during the frenzy of Nottinghill Carnival in London.

Our last full day in Europe found Renee rising early to leave for a day trip to Paris, France via the Eurostar. The train travels at speeds reaching almost 200 miles per hour. It takes approximately three hours to get to Paris from England through the chunnel, a tunnel under the English Channel. Our Talented Teen Queen missed most of the train trip. You see, Renee had to rise at 5:00 a.m. in order to catch a 6:30 a.m. train. So she found the ride relaxing and took advantage

of the down time to catch 40 winks.

Upon arrival in Paris, Vincent, our tour guide, met us at the train station, got us situated on a glass enclosed double decker bus and gave us a fabulous tour of Paris, the "City of Lights". He presented us with a true feeling of the Parisian way of life. Renee saw many sidewalk cafes, high fashion boutiques, crossed the Seine River to the left bank and saw Notre Dame Cathedral. She road up the Champs-Elysees toward the Arch of Triumph, erected for Napolian and turned her attention toward the Eiffel Tower where we made a stop for photographs. It is evident the French have deep respect for their 2,000 year history and the restoration and up keep of their national monuments. After lunch we started our strolling tour of the Grand Louvre. It is the largest museum in the world which was actually a palace where Louis the XIV once lived. This place is huge! Did I say this place is large? It's really big. Get the picture?

The Mona Lisa, painted by Leonardo da Vinci, is a mystical lady whose eyes followed our enchanted talented teen queen during her visit through the English paintings portion of the Louvre. This highly popular painting is protected from the elements in a room which is cooler than most of the rooms in the museum and is placed behind glass. Renee left Mona and then visited another alluring lady, Venus de Milo which resides in a wing of the Louvre dedicated to Greek antiquities.

Renee felt that Paris is an amazing city. As stated earlier, this was her first official trip as the winner of HJTTI. London was the first large city she visited, Paris was her second. She experienced her first plays in legitimate theater houses; miles and miles of manicured countryside during our excursions outside of London to the lovely countryside. When she traveled to the U. S. Virgin Islands to participate in the contest, it was her first airplane

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They're Not Only Talented, They're Smart Too!

Hadiya C. J. Claxton, Miss St. Kitts & Nevis HJTIT 1996 & Miss Congeniality, of Bird Rock, St. Kitts, graduated from Spelman College in Atlanta, Georgia, with a Bachelor of Arts degree in French, Summa Cum Laude. She is a member of the Phi Beta Kappa Honor Society, and the Phi Beta Delta Honor Society for International Scholars. Hadiya graduated second in her graduating class of 349 students and made St. Kitts proud as she opened a ceremony that was officiated by the top five students in Spelman College. Hadiya started attending Harvard Law School in September 1999 going directly into the Dr. of Laws program. Congratulations Hadiya!

Nikiya Mathis, Miss HJTIT 1998, who hails from Elizabeth, New Jersey, entered Temple University in September 1998. She has been a very busy lady. Nikiya has maintained a minimum 3.6 average and has, therefore, made the Dean's List during her first two semesters of college. Because Nikiya is an outstanding student with "exceptional leadership ability" she has been chosen by faculty to join the Student Ambassador Program. The Student Ambassador Program works with the Admissions & Dean's Offices and assists in recruiting prospective students to Temple University. Keep up the great work Nikiya. We are all very proud of your accomplishments.

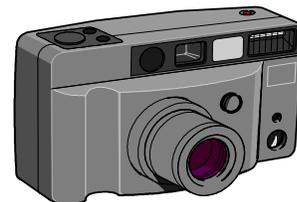
Renee Solomon, Miss HJTIT 1999, who lives in Trinidad, was invited to the home of the President of Trinidad & Tobago, His Honor A. N. R. Robinson, along with other government officials and dignitaries to meet His Royal Highness, Prince Charles of England during a banquet on February 22, 2000. In conversation with the Prince of Wales, our Reigning Queen spoke about her aspiration to become an opera singer.

The 30th annual Hal Jackson's TTI Scholarship Contest will be held in New York from July 23 - 30, 2000, Saturday, July 29th at the Apollo Theatre

Renee's Travels

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ride. While in London she experienced her first people mover in the airport, and her first revolving door at Le Meridian Hotel. Renee and other Talented Teens Contestants are experiencing a lot of firsts thanks to all of our dedicated TTI Directors and our official corporate sponsors. We must thank American Airlines for air transportation and opening the world to many teenagers as the official airline for the 1999 Hal Jackson Talented Teen International Scholarship Competition.



Did you lose a camera during the week's activities in St. Thomas? If you can identify it, the camera is yours. Please Call Us at 212-592-0413 and Claim It!

Fund Raiser for the Youth Development Foundation, Inc.

Our HJTTI Directors are encouraged to assist in raising funds for the Youth Development Foundation by selling Hal Jackson's 60th Anniversary Commemorative CDs.

Incentive for the HJTTI Family

The top 5 HJTTI Family Members selling 100 CDs or more at a price of (U.S.) \$10.00 per CD will receive an official Hal Jackson's 60th Anniversary Commemorative Jacket, will be placed on the Hal Jackson's Sunday Classics CD Mailing List, and will receive a minimum of 12 CDs over the next year courtesy of 107.5 WBLS-FM and the Hal Jackson's Sunday Classics Radio Show.

Listeners of the Hal Jackson's Sunday Classics are currently receiving some of the following cds:

- Smokey Robinson** - *Intimate*
- Yolanda Adams** - *Mountain High... Valley Low*
- Brian McKnight** - *Back At One*
- The Best Man Soundtrack**
- Barry White** - *Staying Power*
- Chico DeBarge** - *The Game*
- Maceo Parker** - *Funk Overload*
- D'Angelo** - *Voodoo*
- Joe Sample** - *The Song Lives On*

When you send in the names of individuals who have purchased cds from you, their names will go in for a grand prize drawing of a Hal Jackson's 60th Anniversary Commemorative Jacket and the opportunity of being placed on the Sunday Classics CD Mailing List where they will receive a minimum of 12 CDs within a year.

Some of the songs on the Hal Jackson's Sunday Classics cd are:

- Papa Was A Rolling Stone - **The Temptations**
- Mr. Bojangles - **Sammy Davis, Jr.**
- Get On The Good Foot - **James Brown**
- At Last - **Etta James**
- What's Going On - **Marvin Gaye**
- Celebration - **Kool & The Gang**

If you are interested, please call Debi Jackson to place your order at 212-592-0413, fax us at 212-722-4576, or E-Mail us at HJTeens@aol.com.

HJTTI Contest Dates & Locations

We are asked constantly when and where are HJTTI competitions held. Here is a listing of locations with the Director's name and anticipated date. If you are in the area, stop by for a fantastic show.

- Alabama - Carol Cheatham - TBA
- Anguilla - Mona Harrigan - 5/27/00
- Antigua - Gilbert Laudat - 3/00
- Arizona - Yvonne Rose - TBA
- Arkansas - Marilyn Hill - 6/10/00
- Bahamas - H. Annie Russell - 5/7/00
- British Virgin Islands - Luce Hodge-Smith - 5/27/00
- California - Divita Dutton - 5/27/00
- Connecticut - Margie Evans - 5/20/00
- District of Columbia - Jane Harley - 6/24/00
- Florida - Reginald Woods - TBA
- Georgia - Tasha M. Dixon - 11/6/99
- Ghana - Kwaku Agyeman - TBA
- Hawaii - Rubina Collier - TBA
- Holland - Claire Proctor - TBA
- Illinois - Verda Rogers - 5/20/00
- Indiana - Verda Rogers - TBA
- Maryland - Pinnie Ross - 6/4/00
- Michigan - Kimberly L. Johnson - TBA
- Minnesota - CeLois Steele - TBA
- Missouri - Merdean Gales - 6/11/00
- Nevada - Vilma Farrar - TBA
- New Jersey - Susan Warren - 6/17/00
- New York - Flora Haynes - 5/20/00
- North Carolina - Pearl Marshall - 5/28/00
- Ohio - Shirley Andrews - TBA
- Oklahoma - Lecia Swain - 3/00
- Puerto Rico - Vitalina Soto - TBA
- St. Kitts & Nevis - L. Louvina Maynard - TBA
- South Africa - Yvonne Mahape - 11/31/99
- South Carolina - Wilhelmina P. Johnson - 6/10/00
- Texas - Mildred Haughton - 5/28/00
- Trinidad & Tobago - Ann Marie James - 5/12/00
- U. S. Virgin Islands - Claire Roker - 5/13/00
- Virginia - Anne Scarbrough - TBA
- Washington - C. Maxine Jenkins - 4/9/00
- West Virginia - Nina Chandler - TBA