

# BEMA on CUE

December 2006

Black Entertainment & Music Association



**Unsung Heroes Souvenir Book**  
Art by Brother Luke/  
Cover Design by Rubin Benson

## BEMA CELEBRATES OUR HEROES



Bob Lott, President of BEMA, Philadelphia Councilwoman Marian Tasco, and Gary Shepherd of 3FM Productions and host of "Up Close and Personal", present Billy Dee Williams the BEMA Standard of Excellence Award and a City of Philadelphia Citation at the BEMA Unsung Hero Awards Event.

**THE BLACK ENTERTAINMENT & MUSIC ASSOCIATION (BEMA)** presented its **"First Annual Unsung Heroes Awards Series"**, on Thursday evening, November 9<sup>th</sup>, 2006. **BEMA**, honoring and saluting some of the living legends, pioneers, and veterans of the Entertainment & Music industries.

The **"Unsung Heroes Awards Series"**, is dedicated to honoring and documenting those visionaries and pioneering field agents and executives of Record Promotions, Marketing, Merchandising, and Distribution by sharing their legacy of achievements with the world. The featured honorees were: **Buddy Dee, Jack Wellmon, Harry Coombs, Weldon McDougal, III, Al Edmondson, Bruce Webb, Daniel Burnside, Harold Burnside (deceased), Henry "Lightnin" Neal, Varnell Johnson, and Ronald "Gabby" Patterson.**

Special awards went to **Dr. Jacqueline Swift**, BMA/TSOP and **Mr. Bunny Sigler**, songwriter, producer and singer extraordinaire. Special guest awardee, **Mr. Billy Dee Williams** received the **BEMA Standard of Excellence Award** from actor **Clifton Davis**, along with a **citation from the City of Philadelphia**, presented by **City Councilwoman Marian Tasco**. **Kenny Gamble** presented the **Gamble and Huff Producer's Award** to **Michael McArthur and Jerome Hipps** of **Mama's Boys**.

**BEMA** also honored **Chubby Checker**, recording artist. Performances included **Bunny Sigler, T. Conway and the Revelations, Shirley Slaughter** and more.

Some of the presenters and attendees included: **Kenny Gamble** of **Gamble and Huff Productions**, **Joe Tarsia** of **Sigma Sound**, **Billy Paul** (Me and Mrs Jones), **Joe "Butterball" Tamburro** from **WDAS-FM**, **Kal Rudman** of **Monday Morning Quarterback**, **Bishop David Evans** from **Bethany Baptist Church, Lindenwold, New Jersey**, and almost two hundred other very special guests.



Roger Mays, Gary Shepherd, Jimmy "Hollywood" Brooks, Billy Paul, Harry Coombs, Kenny Gamble, Bunny Sigler, T. Life and T. Conway help to honor Henry "Lightnin" Neal (seated).



Gary Shepherd and Billy Dee Williams  
 "Up Close and Personal" in the  
 Philadelphia International Records Studio

**UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL**, the TV show, deals with entertainers across the spectrum of music, film, theater, and TV, featuring veterans as well as new kids on the block. The one hour television show takes viewers behind the curtain and gets "up close & personal" with stars one-on-one.

The series is hosted by long time radio personality **Gary Shepherd**. **Billy Dee Williams** was the second featured guest in an "Inside The Actors Studio" style interview before a live audience at the legendary Philadelphia International Studios. The careers of the **O'Jays**, **Harold Melvin and the Bluenotes**, **Teddy Pendergrass**, **Patti LaBelle**, among many other R&B legends were born under the production genius of Rock 'n Roll Hall of Fame producers **Kenny Gamble** and **Leon Huff** at their PIR studios. The first program featured Dr. Funkenstein himself, **George Clinton**.



The production team: John Foley, Jackie McNichols and Bob Lott with Billy Dee Williams at Philadelphia International Records

## BMA to BEMA

In 1979, the **Black Music Association (BMA)** was organized and opened offices in Philadelphia with its purpose being to "Preserve, Protect and Perpetuate" the artistry of Black Music around the world.

**Kenny Gamble and Edward Wright** understood basic facts about the music and entertainment arts industry. Their intention then became how and through what method could the Black entertainment community continually and aggressively participate in the marketplace and garner an equitable economic position for its members. BMA became the conduit that was charged with the responsibility for gaining power, influence and wealth for the artistry of Black Music and its community members.

The Greater Philadelphia Chapter of the Black Music Association, has spawned a new high powered organization called **BEMA, The Black Entertainment & Music Association**.



Clifton Davis, actor, and Chuck Gamble of Philadelphia International Records at the Unsung Heroes Event



Kenny Gamble, Chubby Checker and Billy Dee Williams at the Unsung Heroes Event in November 2006

Photos by Ron Allen

## BEMA IS...

**The Black Entertainment and Music Association (BEMA)**, is a not-for-profit professional membership organization dedicated to the advancement, enrichment, and recognition of Black Entertainment and Black Music in all of its forms. **BEMA** is committed to the development of educational, mentoring, and support programs; networking opportunities, and the creation of alliances that will assist our members in achieving their personal and professional goals.

**BEMA** will promote the positive image of all its members, and require a standard of conduct representative of the virtue and nature of our craft, and our by-laws.

**BEMA**, will be an advocate and networking organization with its mission to "Preserve, Protect & Perpetuate Black Entertainment & Music". As a membership based organization, a new energy is propelling this drive to create a viable force to speak to the issues of this millennium within the music industry. **BEMA** will focus on supporting existing trade associations within the region, and network with companies and organizations that deliver results to music industry associates. Membership benefits will accrue as Education, Networking Opportunities, Industry Service discounts and Advocacy Services.

To become a BEMA member, contact the office below or go to the BEMA website: [www.bemanow.org](http://www.bemanow.org).



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