

MONTY ALEXANDER

From Page 1C

tening to is his superb technique. He is a highly skilled musician with a dramatic sense of timing and rhythm. His music is light, airy and soothing, yet bouncy and stimulating. And he plays it all. Whatever your tastes, Alexander has something to tickle your fancy.

"I'M A MELTING POT," says Alexander. "I play so many different

kinds of music. I grew up on the island playing a lot of calypso and also a lot of rhythm and blues. And I like all the pop people, like Stevie Wonder, Marvin Gaye.

"The first person I was really impressed with was Nat King Cole, he had such a graceful ease on the instrument. And I liked Errol Garner and Ahmad Jamal. I've never closed my mind to any music."

At 33 Alexander has become one of the most highly respected pianists in the world. He's played with Dizzy Gillespie, Milt Jackson, Quincy Jones, Frank Sinatra and Shelly Manne and appeared at the Monterey, Montreux and San Diego jazz festivals.

"I was born in Kingston, Jamaica," says Alexander. "Nobody else in my family was really a musician but there was an old piano in the house and my mother would fool around with it from time to time. There was always a lot of music around, calypso, latin, what I like to call Caribbean music.

"I started playing on the piano when I was 5 or 6 and I had a piano teacher when I was 7 and a couple more teachers until I was 14, when they really made me dislike classical music, just by the way they were teaching. I didn't like it.

"When I was real young I heard Nat King Cole on the radio and I became fascinated with jazz, people like Louie Armstrong. In school I had a band that played the pop tunes of the time and I used to play things by Bill Doggett and Louie Jordan, rhythm and blues.

"At 17 I left Jamaica with my family and we moved to Miami. I went to a nightclub and sat in one night and the club owner heard me and gave me a gig. I started playing around Miami with all the top musicians and one night I met a man who owned a club in New York and he wanted me to come play for him. That was the bet thing that happened to me, I went to New York and started playing with everybody."

Alexander also started recording, with World Pacific Records, RCA, MGM and most recently on the German MPS label. Last year he cut an album with vibraphonist Milt Jackson and bassist Ray Brown called "Soul Fusion."

"I recently signed with Pablo Records," says Alexander, now bearded, and as always a suave, debonair gentleman. "I had the opportunity to sign with companies where I would have gotten into some electronic music and I was seriously thinking about it.

"But I decided to go with Pablo because of the producer, Norman Granz. I got such good vibrations just being around him and I'll be going into the studio to do my first album for Pablo in two weeks."

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Today's Television

Morning

6:30

10 Eddie Meath: Dick Powers; Dave Wild, Antique Car Show; Robert McNamara; Elizabeth King Durand, Pittsford Colonial Days.

13 Romper Room.

7:00

1:15

24 Two Cents Worth.

1:30

8 (2) Days of Our Lives.

10 (4) World Turns.

21 Electric Company.

2:00

18 (7) (9) One Life to

Petticoat: Matt and Nick wind up behind bars. (R)

21 Old Friends . . .

New Friends: Lesley Frost Ballantine; John Jackson.

9:00

18 (2) (3) James at 16: James plagued by vin-