



Errol Hammond

And Leonie: wife, mother of four, actress, radio and television personality, Leonie Forbes-Amiel has been in theatre for the past seventeen years, ever since leaving school. Early in the sixties, when she was in England on a scholarship to RADA, she danced in television shows, as well as in various Caribbean concerts at the Albert Hall. She used to sing, too. But it is as an actress and broadcaster that Leonie is known now. In 1966 she began to produce and present women's and children's programmes on the Jamaica Broadcasting Corporation — and she had her own television show as well before going off from 1968 to 1970 to live in Australia (where her husband was on a Commonwealth scholarship). In Australia she did everything — radio, television, repertory. Since coming back to Jamaica two years ago she has been busier — five plays in one year alone — apart from a full time job in broadcasting.

As I was talking to her about this article she was dressing for a production of "Moon on a Rainbow Shawl" a play by the Trinidadian, Errol John, in which she plays a mother in a household worn by poverty and despair; a far cry from the Titania she played earlier in the year in "A Midsummer Night's Dream". She was remarking how much "Dream" and "The Taming of the Shrew", in which she also starred a year ago, were enjoyed by the villagers who flocked to see both plays when they were premiered in Montego Bay. "They seemed to dig Shakespeare much more than the so-called sophisticated Kingston audiences; it was amazing".