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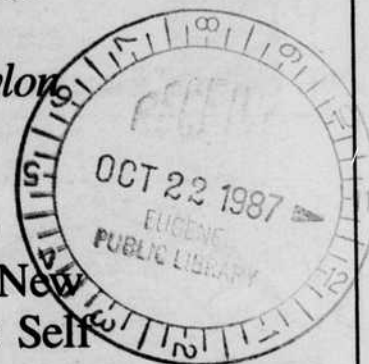
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What's HAPPENING

Guide to Local Arts, Entertainment & Events

INSIDE:

- Citizen panel sets Commissioners' pay
- Jeanne Simon stumps for Paul
- Media Politics, Part II
- FILM: *Good Morning Babylon*
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- DANCE: *Between*
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- The Tree: A Symbol of the Self

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KITARO: Very Joyful Man

by Jim Stiak

Kitaro calls his sound "music that eases the war within." From an old farmhouse in the Japanese Alps, he's recorded almost 20 albums—he's not even sure of the exact number—which have sold millions of copies worldwide. His sweetly soothing synthesizer music has won him a large following among those seeking refuge from the ceaseless din of a coffee-propelled civilization. Midway through his first U.S. tour, he will be performing at the Hult Center on Thursday evening, October 29.

Catching up with international recording stars can be like snaring butterflies in a hurricane. But

at the hour suggested by his PR man, Kitaro was in his room in the Hotel Boulder. Although he speaks an adequate English, most of the interview proceeded through an interpreter, so what follows is, at best, an approximation of his words.

WH: You began playing music in high school?

K: Yes.

WH: What was your first instrument?

K: The guitar.

WH: What kind of music did you play then?

K: Rhythm and blues.

WH: Who were your biggest influences?

K: Otis Redding, and Ben E. King, who did *Stand By Me*.

WH: Who are your favorite musicians now?

A: I don't listen much to other people's music nowadays, I don't know much of the new musicians.

WH: When and how did you start playing the synthesizer?

K: About 11, 12 years ago. I bought one in Japan, but didn't know how to use it. I sort of taught myself. By experimenting and playing, I made the sound of the wave from it, and that inspired me in advancing more with that instrument.

WH: How many instruments do you use now?

K: About 40 synthesizers back at home. I also have traditional Japanese folk instruments. All in my studio, near Mount Fuji.

WH: Since you were raised on a farm and live in the mountains, is touring large cities difficult for you?

K: I've had no trouble in big cities, but being here in Colorado, in the Rocky Mountains, gives me a secure feeling.

WH: Are you homesick?

K: No. I love the United States. I'm looking for a new studio in the United States. I don't know where, but I'm looking for a place. Maybe I will find one this tour.

WH: Will you do more tours after this?

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