

## SPECTRUM IN BLUE - SOFTOUCH

Detroit in the Sixties was an exciting environment to grow up in for four teenage girls with budding interests in music. The members of SofTouch, Fantasy's glamorous new vocal group, didn't know each other then. But Opal Jones, Paula Denson, Candice Ghant, and Alicia Ingram had one thing in common: close contact with the vibrant, thriving Motown sound of the Supremes, Marvin Gaye, the Temptations, Martha and the Vandellas, the Miracles, Stevie Wonder, the Spinners, the Marvelettes, and so many others. Opal, Paula, Candi, and Alicia would catch local appearances by these artists every chance they could, which was quite often.

"It gave Detroiters sort of a feeling of being proud to have that type of industry there-besides the cars," recalls Opal, who serves as group spokes-

Three members of what was to become SofTouch found themselves working for Motown in various capacities before they were out of their teens. Opal wrote songs that were published but never released. Candi also worked as songwriter and sang with a group called The Difference Between that was signed to Motown but never got off the ground. Alicia did background sessions there and, likewise, sang with a Motown group called The Chosen Few that went nowhere.

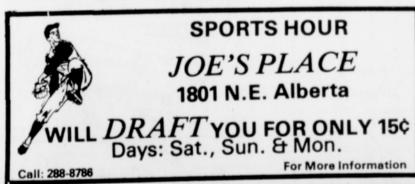
The thread that runs from their Motown days to the present is producer Henry Cosby, best known for his work with Stevie Wonder. He recognized the girls' talents while they worked individually at the Detroit company and kept in touch after they formed SofTouch in 1974.

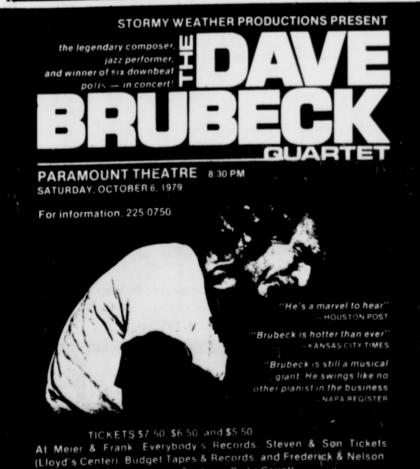
"Each individual projects a different sound," says Opal. Candi's sugarcoated soprano leads on Comin' Back for More (the initial 45 release), One Million Years, and Please Be True. Paula's strong gospel-imbued voice is featured on the disco updating of the Four Tops' oldie, Standing in the Shadows of Love, as well as on Be My Fortune Teller, Good Love Gone, and the Isley Brothers' It's Your Thing. Opal, who describes her own voice as "sweet and funky," sings lead on the Supremes' classic My World Is Empty Without You. All monologues are handled by Alicia.

Alicia also sang with a group called the Dabanars. The other members, Thelma Hopkins and Joyce Vincent, later becme Dawn of Tony Orlando fame.

"Musically, Detroit is now pretty much dead," Opal explains. "After Motown left, it just seemed like the whole city started to deteriorate like there was nothing else there-no more excitement."

SofTouch relocated in Los Angeles last October. "We felt that the opportunities as far as the recording business was concerned, would be more accessible to us as a group," Opal says.





Associate Producer, Burke Garrett

## Community Calendar

Humboldt Neighborhood Association, neighborhood clean-up October 16th. Picnic with Piedmont Association on September 29th at 1:00, Peninsula Park. Bring lunch; coffee and punch provided.

Women's role in the development of Africa will be the subject of a Thursday evening class, 6:40-9:20 p.m., Women's Studies Certificate Program, Harder House, PSU, 229-3516. African women have always been at the core of their society's development. This course will examine the historical roles of African women and focus on their contributions to the social, economic, political and cultural development of Africa. Women's achievements and problems will also

NAACP Political Action Committee will sponsor a workshop on the 1980 Census-North Branch Library-512 N. Killingsworth, September 27th, 7:00 p.m. Lewis Drake from the Seattle office Bureau of Census will speak on the census and recent Black population studies. Robert Phillips is chairman of the Political Action Committee.

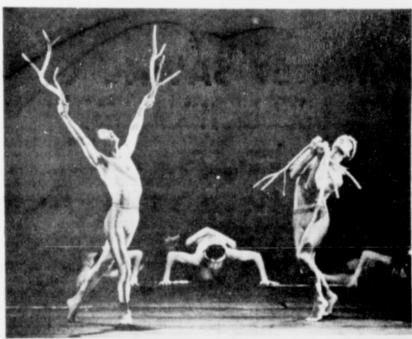
Eckankar, A Way of Life presents: Open discussion group for the first and third Sunday of this month, 2:00-3:00 p.m. No charge. Introductory lecture and film will be held the second Tuesday and fourth Friday of this month. No charge. All events are at Portland Eckankar Center, 1111 S.W. Alder. For more information call 228-3863.

Community Dance Services (CDS), a dance and fitness program offered by Portland State University, is accepting registrations for fall term, including persons interested in a special session for older adults. The CDS program offers non-credit classes in Jazz Dance I and II for three different age levels at the PSU Health and Physical Education Building. The weekly classes begin September 24th and run through December 7th. Registration must be completed by October 1st. Exercise and Jazz Dance for the older adult, Thursday, 6:30-7:30 p.m. All classes are \$20 for the term except the Wednesday, Adult Jazz II class which is \$25. Students may register at the time of the first class and should come dressed in exercise clothes. For information, contact the PSU Dance Program, 229-4401.

The Firehouse Theater will open its 14th season with The Man in the Dog Suit. Albert Beich and William H. Wrights gently hilarious comedy of personal rebellion. Directed by Florine E. Weiss, Friday and Saturday evenings, October 29th-November 24th, 8:30 p.m. curtain. Admission \$3.50—Season Tickets and Group Tickets available. The Firehouse Theater is located at 1436 S.W. Montgomery. For reservations call 248-4737.

The Portland section of the National Council of Negro Women extends an invitation to women in the community to attend a Membership Drive Tea on Sunday, September 23rd at the home of Mrs. Rosie Lee Douglas, 4510 N.E. Mallory, Portland, from 2:00 until 5:00 p.m. President is Mrs. Betty J. Stephens. The theme of this year's event is "Tea of Yesteryear" featuring foods we all remember.

Some 3,000 8-10-year old boys will get their first introduction to the wonderful world of Cub Scouting Thursday, September 20th-School Night for Cub Scouting in the 15-county Columbia Pacific Council, Boy Scouts of America. Doors of participating schools will be unlocked at 7:30 p.m. to boys and their parents who are invited to come and meet representatives of local Cub Scout packs. They will discuss the program, register boys, and enlist adult leaders and sponsors. Boys are welcome to join Cub Scouts at any time during the year, but those who sign up September 20th will be "in at the beginning" on activities planned throughout the year.



Members of the Hisako Ozawa Modern Dance Company of Sapporo, Japan, are seen in their award-winning presentation, "Chi-Nomi-Shiri" (We pray for the mountain). The dance, choreographed by company founder Hisako Ozawa, is a modern dance interpretation of a legend of the ancient Ainu culture of Japan's Hokkaido. The Ozawa Modern Dance Company makes its only Western U.S. appearance at Portland's Civic Auditorium at 8:15 p.m., Sunday, October 7th. Tickets, at \$5 and \$6, are available at the major ticket outlets. The company's visit to Portland is sponsored by the Portland-Sapporo Sister City Association, the Mayor's Office, Portland State University, and Reed College.

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THE KINGSTON PRESENTS

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