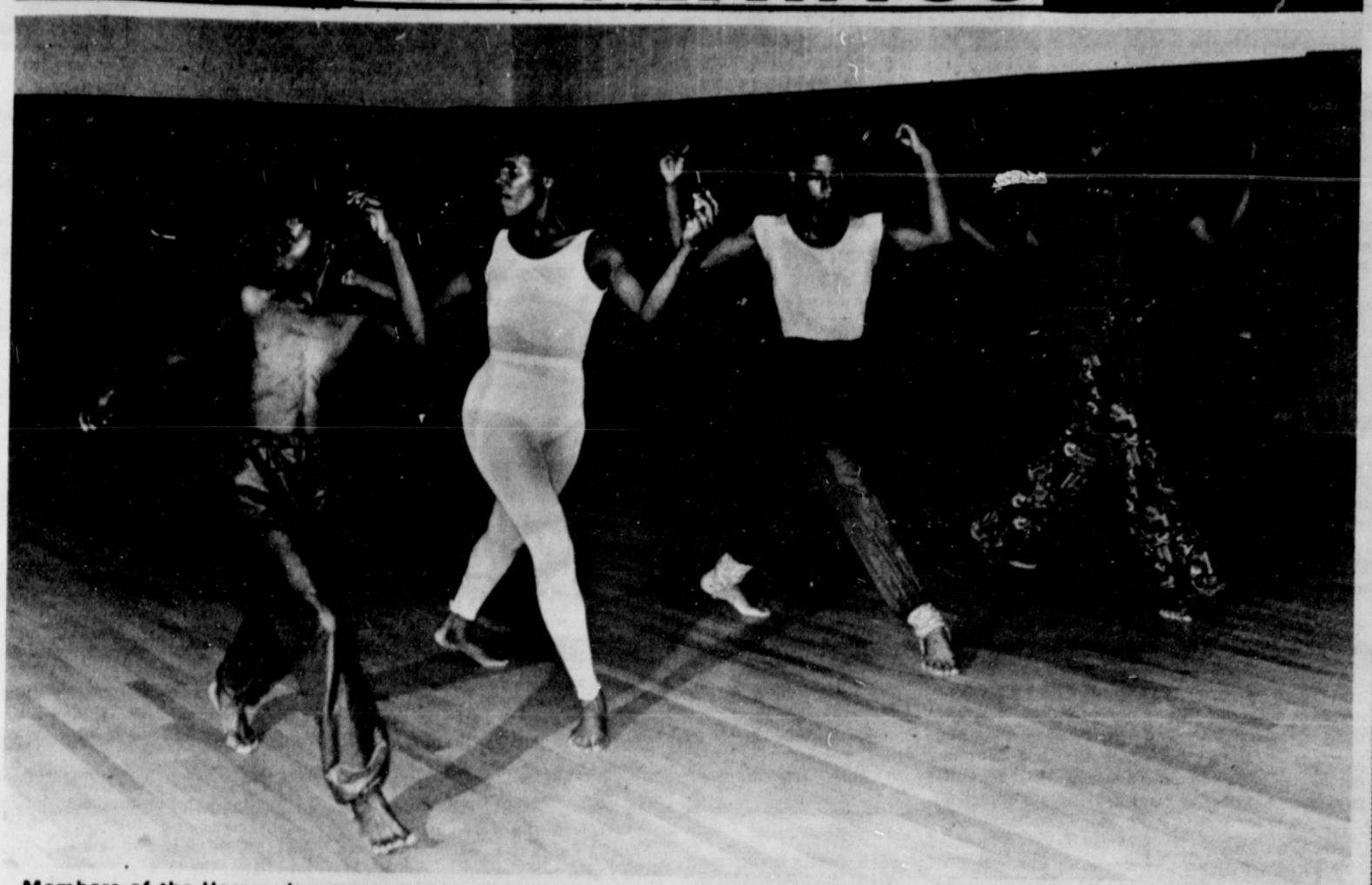
ENTERTAINMENT **HAPPENINGS** ENTERTAINMENT



Members of the Herera dance troupe practice one of their routines. From left to right: Eddie Reese; Allyson Spencer; Reyburn Brown, and Bobby Fouther, artistic director.

(Photo: Richard J. Brown)

Our Renaissance

by Lanita Duke
Grassroot News Service

Grassroot News N.W.—Cultural renaissance in the Northwest will never be of the magnitude that the Harlem renaissance was, but there's a chain established which promotes and develops the talent link so the gift of the gifted won't waste away in the pocket of isolation that the Northwest finds itself in. This link is Herero, a visual and theatrical arts production company, expanded, operated and funded by Bobby Fouther and Marvin Johnson.

Fouther, a Portland native, explains the concept. "As a Black artist, the concept was to bring about visual arts through drawings, and performing arts by dancing, to tell a historical story. We project positive images about people of color from all over the world because we realize that our cultures are related. The name 'Herero' means cheerful people and is derived from a tribe in S.W. Africa. By adopting this name, we are projecting a small part of history that existed."

Johnson, the co-innovator, describes the marketing approach. "In terms of our dance and cards, we're doing benefits for the school system, community affairs and art shows. Currently, we're doing shows with the Opening Night Association, where we'll have our art and cards. Our card line is a selection of all-occasion ethnic greeting cards. The retail outlets are the Portland Book Store, The Talking Drum and Finnegan's Toys & Gifts."

The visual experience encountered during a performance of the dance troupe will stimulate your other four senses. You'll be able to hear the tunes you might have played on your turntable, and your feet and fingers will touch each other in harmony with the dancers before you. You'll be able to taste the excitement that Eddie Reese injects into his routine. Synchronized down to its last beat by the catalyst, Fouther. And followed up with a solo that is skillfully performed by Reyburn Brown, 18. "Between myself, Ruby Burns and Chuck Davis, we've put together certain ethnic dances within our repertoire. We're researching other avenues of ethnic dances so we can create a strong dance situation in Portland. In some of the local dance performances, 90 percent of the dancers are Europeans. Now, there is nothing wrong with that, but we should have more control over our culture. It shouldn't be something that we don't know or that they bring someone from New York to teach. It's fine when they come here, but you shouldn't have to wait until they get here to be able to participate. It used to be that many parts of the culture were handed down from generation to generation. The reason why the percentage of Afro-Americans is low in something we created is because in the home there's a lot that we don't do. We separate ourselves from each other inside the home. Therefore, we have to have these situations in the schools and the neighborhood. We want participation inthe area where we live." Fouther, 30, runs down the people and underlines the beliefs of Herero.

"We started in January of this year, and in September, we'll perform at ArtQuake. This is a big step in its own rank," stated Johnson as he answered a question about the progress and the future of his company. "From utterly unknowns we've done benefits and shows in areas all around town. We've earned the reputation for being a quality type business. We conduct ourselves in a very businesslike manner and it pays off in the long run."

The group also consists of Allyson Spencer, Tamara Sykes, Dee Dee and Becky Itill, Marlene Holiday, Sinta Robinson and Doris Rush. Herero is one group to watch on its way up.

The Greg Smith Show will appear in a benefit for the Yaun Child Care Center Sept. 12 and 13 at the Sheraton Airport Inn Columbian Room. Time is 9 p.m.-2 a.m. Saturday, and 6 p.m.-12 p.m. Sunday. Tickets are $3 single and $5 couple, and are available at House of Sound, Music Millenium, Longhair Music, Highland Community Center and Bird Suite Records.

COUNT BASIE

Ivancie proclaims "Count Basie Day"

Portland Mayor Frank Ivancie today announced that he will proclaim August 22 as "Count Basie in Portland for Artquake Day."

Count Basie will visit Portland on the 22nd to perform at an Artquake fundraiser in the 1515 Building, where he will also celebrate his 77th birthday.

The last time a mayor of Portland proclaimed a day in honor of an entertainer was in 1963, when Louis Armstrong came to town to play at ceremonies at the Lloyd Center.

NOTICE

Musical Comedy: An original musical comedy, "IN CONSORT," 90 minutes of original singing, dancing and snappy patter will be presented Friday, Aug. 28, at LaBamba, 58 SW 2nd. Curtain time is 8 p.m. and admission is $3. Call 224-0247 or 682-2663 for information or reservations.

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The Declaration of Independence wasn't signed on July 4, 1776 as is popularly believed. It was adopted that day, but most of the delegates didn't sign it until Aug. 2, 1776.

It seems hard to believe, but Montreal, Canada, is farther south than Paris, France.

Miami, Florida's name was originally Fort Dallas.

The only cities or towns in America whose names start with the letter "X" are Xenia, Illinois, and Xenia, Ohio.

George Washington lived in a house called the White House 30 years before he was president. When he married Martha Custis, her home, by coincidence, was known as the "white House"; Washington lived there in 1759. He didn't become president until 1789.

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Tickets available at House of Sound also.

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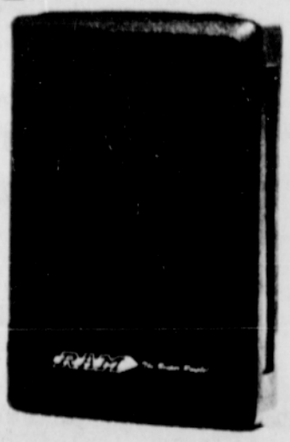

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