

Portland African Violet Society Hosts Event

The Portland African Violet Society will host their annual fall display and plant sale, "African Violets in Bloom", Friday, September 26th from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. and Saturday, September 27th from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. at The Water Tower at Johns Landing, 5331 S.W. Macadam, Portland. Admission is free.

There will be an education table and demonstrations as well as free literature and advice on culture. Fresh sale plants will be brought in each day where you will find unusual standard, miniature and trailing african violets. Also among the selections will be blooming plants, young plants and cuttings. Watch for our big annual judged show and plant sale each spring.

For more information contact the president, Nadine Berthold, (503) 252-1614 or the plant sale chairman, Betty Guthrie, (503) 253-5992.

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Mestre Almiro Aquilino (right) and Antonio Ribeiro (left), two Brazilian dancers, demonstrate capoeira, a dance form that looks like a cross between karate and break dancing.

Photo by Richard J. Brown

Brazilians Bring Unique Dance Form to Portland

by Kris Altucher

Portland has a unique opportunity this summer to get a firsthand view of Afro-Latin culture. Zonnie J. Bauer, a local dancer and choreographer, returned recently after five months in South America with two experts in the art of capoeira (pronounced cop-o-ware-a). With Mestre Almiro Aquilino and Antonio Ribeiro, Bauer put together "Woven Cultures," a dance concert that showcases their talent and focuses on South America.

Capoeira is a Brazilian dance form that looks a little like a cross between karate and break dancing in the air. It originated hundreds of years ago when African slaves came to Brazil bringing their traditional music with them. They practiced self-defense disguised as dance to fool their Portuguese masters and set it to African music. Capoeira was banned by the Brazilian government, but it was practiced in secret. Now legal, it is taught in schools as an important part of Brazilian culture. Interestingly, some of the movements in this unique dance form trace themselves back to Angola, the original home of many slaves.

In "Woven Cultures," Bauer incorporates capoeira with modern dance to produce dance theater that is ambitious and exciting. Throughout history, artists have taken inspiration from other cultures to enliven their art. Bauer is no exception. In "Woven Cultures," she weaves together diverse cultures to create a bright and unusual work.

The first part of the show, "La Manta," or "The Cape," focuses on Peru and Bolivia, countries in the Andes Mountains with large Indian populations. The dancers perform against a backdrop of slides showing people and landscapes high in the mountains. While the dancing was interesting, its connection to South America was not overt.

Then the fun began. Playing traditional instruments—berimbaus, an African bow and gourd instrument, conga drum and guitar—the musicians, including Bruce Smith on congas, had the audience wishing they were in the air with the dancers.

The two Brazilians danced in flips and turns, walked on their hands and kicked the air in a stylized form of gymnastic self-defense with moves that seemed humanly impossible. They were accompanied by five other dancers in a blending of Brazilian and American dance.

"Woven Cultures," as a whole, was exciting and entrancing, especially the capoeira.

Mestre Almiro Aquilino and Antonio Ribeiro were brought here from Brazil for the summer by the Portland State University Dance Department and are teaching classes in capoeira at Portland State and at the Echo Theater.

If you get a chance to see the capoeiristas perform this summer, don't miss it! They will perform again during Art Quake, Saturday, September 20, from noon to 2 p.m.

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Senior Citizens \$5/Children under 12 free

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