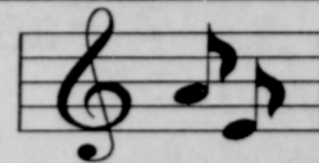




ENTERTAINMENT



Innovative Dance Program Stresses Black-Jewish Ties

On February 10, "Let My People Go", a collaborative work by two New York dance companies, will be presented at the Mittleman Jewish Community Center (MJCC), 6651 SW Capitol Hwy., in Portland. The performance begins at 7:30 p.m.

"Let My People Go" is product of the Avodah Dance Troupe and the Louis Johnson Dance Ensemble. It was specially created for Black History Month showing the bonds between African-Americans and Jews. The piece is based on a poem by Black American Poet James Weldon Johnson (1871-1938). His "sermon in verse" combines biblical material with black folklore, expressed in the language of a Southern black preacher. "Let My People Go" is a retelling of the Jewish Exodus story with parallels for blacks force from their Arian homeland to exile and slavery in the New World. It is meant to help audiences explore common elements of African-American and Jewish histories and to make the audience see the universality in themes of struggle and freedom.

Dancing, singing, shouting, play-

ing of drums and saxophones, and recitations overlap to form this exciting piece. "Let My People Go" combines urban "rap," Hebrew chanting spirituals, modern dance and theatrical elements to form a moving work. The New York Times described it this way:

"The work has both substance and texture with eloquence and emotional force suffusing spoken and movement sequences. Images and bodies seamlessly melt into one another. A vision of the Israelites in Egyptian bondage becomes a tableau of black slavery as black and Jewish voices become one cry for deliverance...The choreography contains wonderfully exuberant movement with runs, leaps an turns that carry the smell of the desert in them as well as the human spirit's yearning to be free. The harmony of the ensemble never sacrifices the individuality of the dancers, whose ethnic and stylistic diversity add to the very human quality of the work." (Barbara Gilford, 2/19/89)

Joanne Tucker of Avodah and Louis Johnson were co-choreographers and directors for "Let My People Go."

Tucker formed the Avodah Dance Troupe in 1983 and has created over 20 pieces for the group. Avodah tours extensively, often performing as part of Sabbath services. Dr. Tucker, who studied at Julliard and the Martha Graham Studio received her Ph.D. from the University of Wisconsin. She was honored with a Carnegie Award in Dance and has recently completed a book on creating dance midrashim, improvisations based on passages from the Torah.

Louis Johnson directs the dance department at the Henry Street Settlement in New York City. He has worked in every phase of theatre and dance. He danced with the New York City Ballet under George Ballanchine and Jerome Robbins. He was choreographer for the Broadway production of "Tree-monisha" and "Purlie." He has mounted ballets for the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theatre, The Cincinnati Ballet, the Dance Theatre of Harlem, and the Joffrey Ballet. He also choreographed the movies "Cotton Comes to Harlem" and "The Wiz."

The special touring company for

"let My People Go" has seven dancers and musicians. Besides the MJCC concert, the group will do a performance and master class for Jefferson High School students on February 11. A workshop on liturgical dance will be given on Sunday, February 10 from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. at Westminster Presbyterian Church, 1624 NE Hancock Street. That workshop is open to the public and costs \$25 per person. Call 246-8831 for information on the workshop.

Tickets for the MJCC performance will be \$10 general admission and \$8 for seniors and students. They may be purchased by mail or charged by phone. Call 244-0111 for ticket information.

This project is funded in part by grants from the Collins Foundation and the Oregon Arts Commission. Co-sponsors are the Mittleman Jewish Community Center, Jefferson High School and Congregation Neveh Shalom. Associate sponsors are the Albina Ministerial Alliance, the American Jewish Committee, and Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon

The Mittleman Jewish Community Center
Congregation Neveh Shalom
and
Jefferson High School
present

Let My People Go

featuring
The Avodah Dance Ensemble
and
The Louis Johnson Theatre Ensemble

In honor of Black History Month this piece explores the common elements of African-American and Jewish histories emphasizing the universality of struggle and freedom.

"Moving and thought-provoking," *New York Times*

**SUNDAY,
FEBRUARY 10, 1991
7:30 p.m.**

at
**Mittleman Jewish Community Center
6651 S.W. Capitol Highway • Portland, OR**

\$10 General Admission • \$8 Senior/Student
Group Rates Available
CALL 244-0111 for Ticket Information

This project is funded in part by grants from The Collins Foundation and The Oregon Arts Commission. Associate sponsors: Albina Ministerial Alliance, The American Jewish Committee, and Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon.

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Announcement Physical and Vocal Exhaustion Forces Anita Baker Tour Cancellation

Citing her doctors' advice that further touring could cause damaging physical and vocal stress, it was announced today that pop.r&b superstar vocalist Anita Baker has cancelled all remaining tour dates on her schedule, and will not resume performing until she has fully recuperated. Baker, who has been on tour continuously since the release of her third platinum album "Compositions," has performed sold-out concert dates in support of

the album since May 1990.

Baker, who recently won her third NAACP Image Award for Best Female Artist, and was nominated for two Grammy Awards for "Compositions" said "I am tremendously disappointed to have to cancel my tour. I look for the understanding of my staff and fans as I work toward making a full recovery that will enable me to satisfy and entertain them for years into the future."

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McFerrin To Appear At Music Millenium

EMI recording artist Bobby McFerrin, along with the eleven-piece vocal group Voicestra will be making a special in-sotre appearance at Music Millenium (32nd and E. Burnside) on Tuesday, January 29th at 2 p.m. McFerrin is a truly gifted individual who is able to use his unique vocal talents as a musical instrument of incredible scope. He's probably best known for the worldwide musical anthem, "Don't Worry, Be Happy".

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Tues. 7:00 p.m.
Wed. 9:30 a.m. & 5:00 p.m.
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