

# He Let Dancing Into Our Childrens' Hearts

BY BILLY DON MOORE

When you think of great athletic talents most people will not think of the Ballet. This story has alot to do with great athletic talent. Bo may know football, and he may know Baseball, what he does'nt know, is Ballet. Joe knows Ballet. Dancing requires hard work and discipline. Dancing combines picturest artistry along with some complex athletic moves. Joe Wyatt, the Director of the school of Oregon Ballet Theater, knows Ballet. For the last twenty plus years, it has been the love of his life. When you think about Ballet, I guess the Pacific Northwest is not high on your list. Joe Wyatt is here to change that.

Joe comes from a long line of dancers. Even Joe's father wanted him to follow in his sister's footsteps and become a dancer.

Joe was born in Trinidad where he grew up under the influence of West Indian and African folk Dance. Joe wanted to pursue his dance career at the highest level. So he left home and moved to the Capitol of Performing Arts, New York City. He enrolled in a small College in Up state New York called Brock Port State. He started taking Ballet classes. It was not long before the talent Joe possessed was enough to earn him a scholarship to the well known Ballet school, Jacob Pillow. At Jacob Pillow, Joe studied different styles of dance. One of the most popular was the Flammenco. While Joe was performing the Flammenco, Joe was having his pictures taken by the renown photographer of dance, John Linquist. Joe wanted to further his career so he sent some of his pictures to Authur Mitchell, the Director of The Dance Theater of Harlem. Authur Mitchell liked what he saw and it was not long before he made Joe an apprentice in the company. Within two years, Joe was performing lead roles in such famous productions as, Pasdedeux from Don Quioxe. While Dancing with the company, Joe met a beautiful Ballerina, Elena Carter. The two dancing together formed such a dynamic team. Elena wanted to enhance her career, even more so, in 1976 she took off to Mexico. Joe soon followed. A personal relationship soon developed between the two. While in Mexico, they studied dance in an exchange program where Cuba would send instructors to Mexico to teach different styles of dance. Joe was getting excel-



Joe Wyatt

lent roles which Black men never had the opportunity to perform. Dancing for the National Ballet Company of Mexico, in such prestigious roles such as, Albrecht in Giselle. By now Joe and Elena where very close and soon married in 1978. Three years later they returned to the states a married couple. They went back to The Dance Theater of Harlem and were back on tour. While making a West Coast swing in 1980, they came to Portland. Joe was leaving his Hotel and was shocked when a man spoke to him. It was a pleasant surprise from the callous New York city. It reminded him of home. Joe was looking for a new challenge in his career. He wanted to get out on his own. Plus, he was a married man looking for a place to settle down. Being tired of the road and touring, they felt Portland would be a great place to settle down and raise a family. "It as a tough decision to leave the company of my mentor". Joe said. But Joe saw himself wanting to give something back. "Mr. Mitchell had taught me so much and will always be close to my heart. But I felt it was time to move on. The love I have for The Dance Theater of Harlem will burn forever in my heart".

Joe and Elena set up shop in Portland. Dancing and teaching at Jefferson, while performing for the Pacific Dance Theater. In 1983 they became parents of a beautiful baby girl, Jessica. While dancing, Joe suffered a serious injury to his achilles tendon. This would end his active career as a dancer. He soon became the Director of The School of Oregon Ballet Theater. Joe and Elena grew apart in time but Their daughter remains the main focus in Their lives. Joe Wyatt had this burning

desire to give something back to the African American community. Like his mentor Authur Mitchell, the need to give cultural enlightenment to young people was a top priority on his list. He contacted Lillian Waddle at the Albina Ministerial Alliance where she said she had a thousand dollars in the budget. Thus the Creative Movement Course for pre-school kids was born. This expands their mind while it helps them to accept and appreciate their imagination. Words cannot express the value of the Creative Movement Course. The lessons the kids learn will help them in life to stay in touch with the arts. Watching these kids respond to their instructor is a thing of beauty and a sight to behold. Monya Wubbol, a very warm and sensitive human being who takes great pride in what she does and the response she gets from the kids, is astonishing. The staff at AMA agree the Monya's impact on the kids has a very positive effect.

Joe Wyatt, what you are doing for the community is opening up new ways of expression for young minority kids. Giving them the opportunity to get in touch with their imagination. Expanding the thought process. You are helping these kids get in touch with their souls.

Joe Wyatt also helps the homeless children at the Y.W.C.A. in downtown by providing scholarships to a dance class for any one with enough courage to enroll. The City of Portland can be proud to have Joe Wyatt. Joe Wyatt recently, with the help of Lillian Waddle, received a grant from U.S. West Communications for \$7,500 to further enhance the AMA Creative Movement Course by providing more classes. The fact that this is happening in North, Inner Northeast Portland is really wonderful for our kids.

We are sure Joe's mentor, Authur Mitchell, is very proud of what he is doing.

No, the Pacific Northwest is not New York City, capitol of the performing arts. But we do have Joe Wyatt, And let's say Joe knows helping people and Joe knows Ballet.

# Lion At Bay, III The Children Die In The Street

BY PROFESSOR MCKINLEY BURT

That wasn't too hard to follow, was it? We refer to last weeks' recapitulation of significant (if not always pleasant) inter-actions between Portland's school district, parents, teachers, activists and just plain concerned citizens. If the odds against meaningful change seem insurmountable, I suggest that particular mindset may be nothing more than a self-fulfilling prophecy-and not a rational assessment at all.

At the close of that article, I made reference to the "Idaho Education Project", a long-term plan to revamp the state's education system such that it would achieve INTERNATIONAL parity in technology by the year 2000. At the same time there was promised an account of "What concerned citizens are doing on their own (including this writer)." What I have found out is that-frequent allusions to my "Beaverton Business Partner" have paid off, for the teachers and parents I encounter seem determined not to be thwarted or confused by any of the parties to current controversies.

They are going to their business and industry employers and asking "just what is it my students/children should know if they are going to work 'overthere' in the manufacturing, fabrication or other technical departments? I know that hardly anybody there is a scientist, chemist, physicist or engineer-but they have good jobs and turn out a quality product." Black and white they are doing what Americans have always done when pushed against a wall; seeking a way around the morass of conflicting goals and mission statements (rhetoric), uncorrelated masses of data on a mysterious 'technological competence' the bureaucrats can't define.

Breaking my pledge not to do again for people who should be doing for themselves, I persuaded my 'industry

partner' to send over a couple of vans to pick up a group and haul them out to several plants to learn for themselves exactly what goes on-and to receive first hand orientation from practicing technicians. Now, this is what I was doing in the community on my own initiative as far back as the early 1970s' (Under a U.S. Forest Service Contract I had designed and implemented-using greyhound buses). Obviously, I was never able to persuade the school district to follow suit-no more than I was able in 1969 to get them to adopt my "computer-terminal-in-classroom project".

Perhaps I can further the exposition that 'the blind cannot lead the blind' by citing three of the scores of technology and communications catalogs on my shelves. Keep in mind that these are simply updates of similar essential guides that I used in 1966, 1969 1974 and 1980, when either winning national awards in innovative education, operating kids science clubs, or trying to persuade backward administrators to bring Portland up to the 20th century-let alone the 21st. The publications are from "National Instruments-Omega Instruments-Jensen Tools." Most of the instruments I had used, serviced, calibrated or repaired ON THE JOB for industry! No degrees doctorates in the fields. Just solid basic competencies in "readin-Writin-Rithmetic". Companies advance interested employees to more advanced math and science through either in-house or outside classes.

With a minimum of technical jargon what these catalogs offer for sale are instruments and tools which accomplish for industry the very same tasks carried out by the appliances in your home (whether you are aware of it or not). By your thermostat, thermometer, refrigerator, washing machine, furnace, hot water heater, air conditioner, whatever. They measure and/or con-

trol, heat, pressure, electrical current, etc, in such a way that products and goods can be efficiently produced in a quality fashion. They monitor, calibrate, adjust, and even report back to a distant human as to just how the process is proceeding. That term is "Telemetry". THAT'S IT! You will note that for a unconfused U.S. Military with a 'competency-based' learning system, blacks performed flawlessly as they operated the most sophisticated equipment and technology the world has ever seen. No "disadvantaged" polemics and no "Special Ed".

There is no reason for our "children dying in the street", because they have been failed by an education system which has left many unlettered, unmotivated and unemployable, I am angered everyday when I recall the unused lesson plans I developed for the districts multicultural program in math and science. The ones which clearly demonstrated the relationship to a city's infrastructure-and which provided the necessary minority motivation by documenting that specific inventions in technology, science and math is documented to have been developed by Africans and African Americans. It's done by Father Clements, Marva Collins and others.

It is not much satisfaction that I am now proving my point in 'other' schools and districts around the country, thanks to delivering services by modern tele communications (and Federal Express). Not when we have our present senario. Last night the 12 year-olds uprooted the newly planted trees across the street in front of the new Umoja facility. What will they be doing as unemployable 16 year-old drop-outs?

Concluded next week. The confusion in the state's legislature and administrative bodies. Proposition 5 supporters have new demands.

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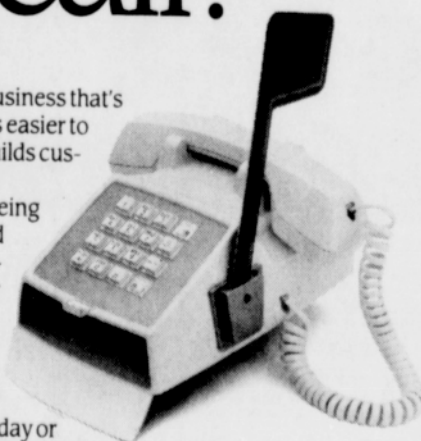


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