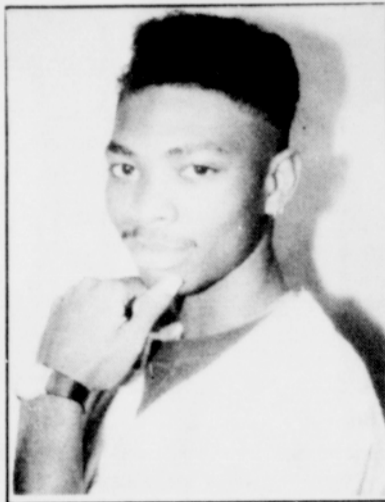


Lets Get It Started ...For Real Though

By Eric Island



Its around seven in the afternoon and the wind is blowing a warm breeze throughout the city. All day the beauty salons and barbers have been full to capacity. Teenagers rushing to every mall in town searching for the perfect outfit; while anxiously anticipating what was to be one of the hottest concerts to touch ground in Portland at the Memorial Coliseum.

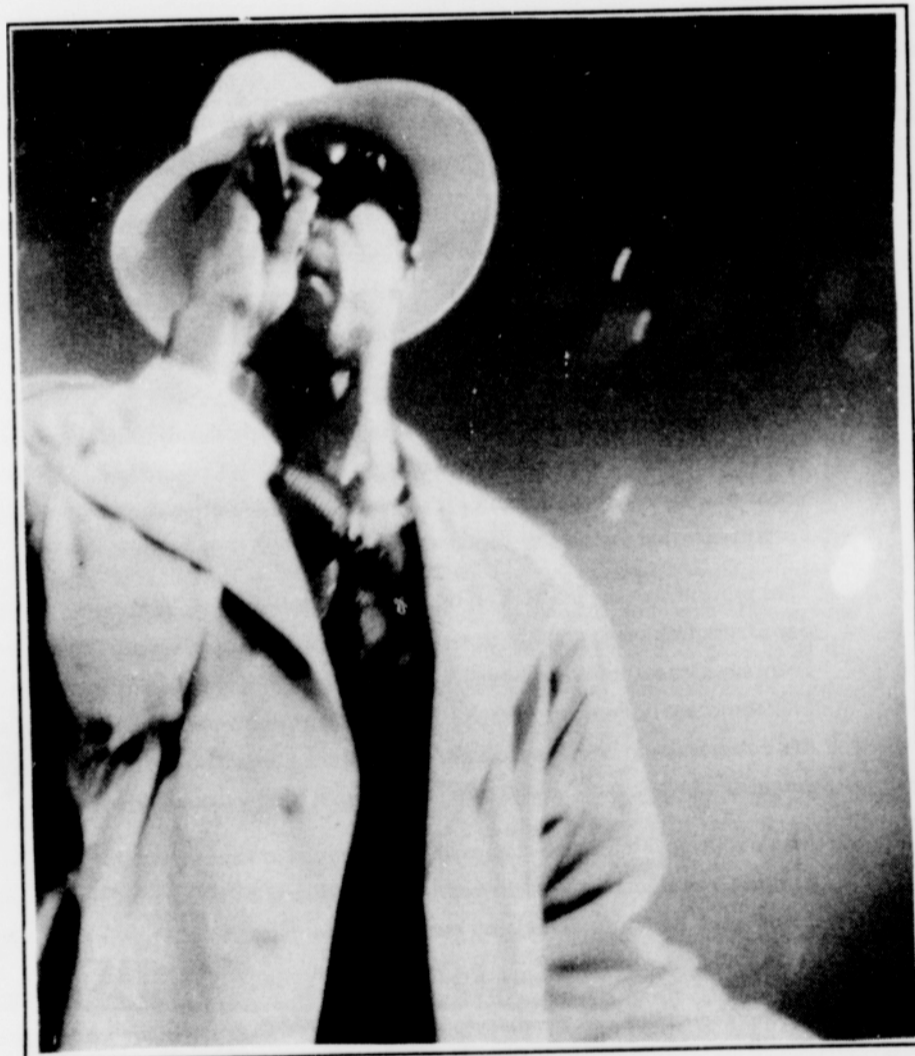
T-Boz, Left Eye, and Chilli better known as T.L.C. opened the show with an energetic vibe that seemed to intensify as the night went on. BABY, BABY, BABY got the brothas jumpin and the ladies singin. Only to topped off by their first platinum: single I AINT TO

TO BEG! But the night had just started...for real though!!

The lights came on. I seen huddles of girls across the coliseum bracing themselves for JoJo, K.C., Devante, and Mr. Dalvin...JODECI in full effect. The lights slowly dimmed and the cheers rang synonymously to reach a peak never before reached that night in Portland. K-Ci, Devante, and Mr. Dalvin walked onto the stage. JODECI minus JoJo, due to illness, stilled moaned and groaned their way into the hearts of many ladies and a few brothas who couldnt help but cheer because they had paid good money for a ticket. Then Devante stepped forward and I actually saw girls jump out their seats bumrush the stage, only to be stopped by security. With a Kool-Aid smile and a monotone voice he said DONT TALK JUST LISTEN which was the cue for the breakout of intense paranoia. Some girls cried, some hyperventilated, some screamed, and some couldnt scream. There were those well-dressed and those who decided to undress. Overall, JODECI hit Portland with a bang and took various men and women on a ride they wouldnt soon forget.

Last but not Least of the opening groups, to HAMMERTIME, was the boys from Phillytown, PA with the Dapperdan shirts and ties combined with matching shorts and shoes better known as the Boyz to Men look. But there werent any boys in this show only men who put together a spectacular show from beginning to end. Highlighted with upbeat dance tunes and emotional love ballads such as Motownphilly and The End of the Road. From beginning to end, in my opinion this was one of the hottest shows to hit Portland and was definitely too legit to miss.

M E S S A G E F R O M H A M M E R



I sincerely thank you for allowing me this opportunity to entertain you with my music. This album is my labor of love and of concern. I enjoy dancing and performing but, Hammer the person goes way beyond a song and a dance. My thoughts about the condition of our world and our society are reflected in this album. Racism, prejudice, the homeless, spirituality, oppression and depression are heavy on my mind. Why? My success has helped to open my eyes wide to the condition of our communities. My brother needs my help. It's not about black or white; it's about people. I was fortunate enough to have lived and worked with people of many diverse ethnic backgrounds in my childhood. I can honestly say that I judge people based on the content of their character and not the color of their skin. I have had many sleepless nights in the recent past. I have felt guilty about my success. I possess all of my material dreams yet there is a void. God has shown me his mercy and reclaimed me. That brings me joy. But there is a hurt and a burden that I feel. I need to help my people. The black family is almost extinct. Yes, there are many social conditions past and present that contribute

to this sad and alarming state. But I am sick and tired of hearing that same old talk that the white man is holding me down. We have got to stop pimping each other, robbing each other, doggin' each other and not trusting one another and killing each other. We need an inner healing. We need to return to yesterday when we loved each other. To a time when my brother would watch my house for me instead of burglarizing it. When my brother would pray for me when I was sick instead of saying "Well, too bad for him". When we would have picnics and parties together and everyone would come and enjoy themselves without the threat of violence. The biggest threat to the black man today is not the white man but the black man. The black man continues to self-destruct. We have placed all of the burden of the family on the shoulders of the black woman. It's time for strong brothers to stand up and accept the responsibility of helping our people. Raise your sons and daughters. Educate them and protect them. Teach them moral values. Teach them about our heritage so that they will have self pride. I need your help my brothers. This is a major battle. The black man is an endangered species. Although we make up approximately 12% of America, we make up 50% of the prisoners in jail. I identify with the brothers in jail because it could very easily be me. I have friends that I love and respect (my lil' partner from Oaktown) who are locked

way. Victims of conditions established before they were born. Lives now wasted. Intelligent minds of young men. Smart enough to run organizations. They receive product (cocaine), process it (chemicals mixed to produce crack), distribute the product with enough mark-up to make sizeable profits and keep the company rolling. Establish districts (turf), and advertise, front & flash (cars, gold, parties) to draw customers and future managers into the game. They have the wits that a Harvard graduate could never have. They recognize the weaknesses in competing organizations and exploit them to the fullest. These minds could have made great contributions to our society. Instead they chose (and in some cases had no choice) to try to make a living in an occupation that has no place for the living. The game has no retirement plan. If I asked would you like to live like the rich and famous for four of five years in return you give me the rest of your life, would you accept? Of course not. The dope game is the same scenario. Most drug dealers in the inner city only survive for four or five years, then it's jail or hell. Yet even as I write this, I understand how the young drug dealer feels. School isn't working, nothing is being taught to you that you can relate to. Mama works her butt off to pay the rent. Daddy's nowhere to be found. Mama makes fourteen thousand dollars a year. She's getting older and you see and feel her pain. There's no chance of Mama moving up and making more money. She has no real future. It hurts. When and if Mama retires, how will she survive. Can you imagine your mother 65 years old and on welfare? After forty-five years of sweat and tears. The pain cuts deep into your soul; I know the pain. I pray for answers. It goes way beyond black or white. We have to find a way to advance our economic situation. The street game must not be our primary hope. Education is the key. They system does oppress us but we must work to remove racism and prejudice out of the system so that people of all races, creeds and nationalities can live and work together in peace and harmony.