

Arts & ENTERTAINMENT

The Portland Observer

Drumming up a storm



Ghanian women performers (left), and Obo Addy (right).

BY SABRINA SAKATA

Local Portlandian Obo Addy is beating his way up a path to music's level of elite artists, and this week-end you'll have two great opportunities to witness his talent.

The National Endowment for the Arts recently awarded Obo Addy the prestigious National Heritage Fellowship, the highest honor in folk and traditional arts.

The twelve national recipients will attend an awards ceremony and concert during September 1996 in Washington, D.C. and receive a one-time award of \$10,000.

Obo Addy lives in Portland, was named a master drummer by the Arts Council of Ghana for his proficiency in drumming of all regions of his country.

He weaves this traditional music

with jazz and European pop to create an innovative, and captivating folk sound.

Obo Addy's Okropong are giving their annual show stopping performance in Portland, giving a new ring to traditional Ghanian music with their talking drums, bells and shakers.

On Friday, August 16th, he'll bring his ethnic sounds to the Oregon History Center's Ellipse (1200 SW Park Ave.) for the "Tunes at Noon" concert series held every Friday from 12-1 p.m.

Make a mad dash to Park Ave. on your lunch break to ensure good seats because this special event is free of charge. Tables are even provided so you can chow down to Addy's beats.

On Sunday, August 18th, he'll make his way under St. John's bridge

to host the Seventh Annual Homowo Festival for African Arts, beginning at 1 p.m. in Cathedral Park in North Portland.

This African harvest festival is the largest culturally-based African/African-American festival in the Northwest and will feature several other local artists as well.

The event is free but donations are encouraged. In addition to Addy's performance, the festival will also include crafts, workshops, and food from around the world.

Powell's Books will also bring a Bookmobile with a wide selection of African books. Kids will be delighted with storytelling that will go on throughout the day.

Young Composers debut

On Sunday, September 7th at 7pm at the Clinton Street Theater, The Young Composers Collective will make their Portland Debut; an evening of live new compositions. They are known for their original and outrageous shows performing works that stem from jazz, classical, world music, popular styles and beyond.

The Young composers Collective



has received much critical acclaim in recent years, described as "One of the most important new music groups in our region" by *The Rocket* magazine.

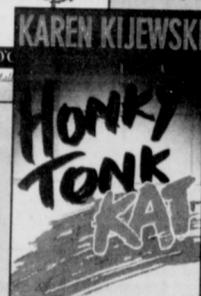
Sponsored by Chiapas Urgent Call, The Young Composers Collective concert will raise funds for the Aguascalientes Cultural Resistance Centers in Chiapas.

Oregon Ballet Theatre (OBT) will present "OBT Exposed," a three-week outdoor rehearsal workshop, August 26 through September 13, 1996, in the downtown South Park Blocks (between Main and Salmon Streets, behind the Arlene Schnitzer Concert Hall). "OBT Exposed," brings the behind-the-scenes world of dance to the streets. The free event will be open to the public from 10:00 am to 6:00 pm, Monday through Friday, as well as over Labor Day Weekend.

Mysterious women on the scene at the crimes



Carol O'Connell's *Killing Critics* (Putnam) begins with a discreet murder, but quickly connects with a much more brutal crime. As NYPD sergeant Kathleen Mallory probes into the murder she discovers that the ghosts of the past will not be still. And the formidable Kat Colorado, "the quintessential female P.I." (Booklist), comes to the aid of a childhood friend in Karen Kijewski's latest thriller, *Honky Tonk Kat* (Putnam), set against the backdrop of



Nashville's country music scene. In the age of talk-show mania, and crazed paparazzi, it's hardly unusual to hear of a celebrity being harassed by an overzealous fan. But when superstar country entertainer Dakota Jones begins receiving threatening letters, then finds dead roses on her bed, she fears it's not the work of your run-of-the-mill kook. At Dakota's urging, Kat joins her friends tour to investigate the case.

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Friday the 16th BIG barrel of laughs

Dancers, singers, actors and musicians come together to create the loosely connected series of skits that make up "Menagerie", presented by Michael Menger's Realty BIG Dance Company. Conduit Studio, 918 SW Yamhill St., Suite 401. Starts 8 pm. Repeats Saturday. \$10; students/seniors \$8; Fastixx, 224-8499.

Classic rock

Harking back to the days of Cream and Hendrix, the Mule plays flat-out, road-tested, improvised jams, steeped in the blues and stoked by the creative passions of three dedicated musicians. Featuring members of the Allman Brothers Band with Terrell Roseland Theater. 9 pm. \$10 advance, Fastixx 224-8499. All ages.

Saturday 17th Afternoon tunes

Jimmy Cliff will be the leading performer at the SOL FEST Rhythm Carnival at Portland Meadows. Other artists include Bela Fleck & the Fleckstones, fishbone Fire Fingers of Funk, and Disappear Fear. Gates open at 1 pm. Fastixx, 224-8499.

Hot Curry

Mark Curry, star of the hit sitcom "Hangin' with Mr. Cooper" returns to his hometown roots for a look at life in the "hood", and much more, when HBO COMEDY HOUR: MARK CURRY--THE OTHER SIDE captures this TV favorite in his second HBO solo special, debuting Saturday, Aug. 17, (11:30 pm-12:30 am ET).

"The Scoop": Talking to Kevin Eubanks

BY JANICE MALONE

If you're an avid viewer of NBC-TV's "The Tonight Show Starring Jay Leno," you should already be aware of what a talented musician Kevin Eubanks is.

Not only is he the show's band leader, he's also proven to be quite a funny sidekick for Leno for many of the show's comedy skits.

According to Kevin, he had no idea he would eventually get into the comedy routine of the show when he came aboard nearly five years ago.

Not only is Kevin a great musician, he's also a cool guy to chat with.

The Scoop: I understand that you've been flying with the Thunderbirds. [An airplane group]

Kevin: Yeah, I wasn't just a mere passenger, I actually flew the plane. The pilot makes the plane go as fast as he wants and I got the chance to steer it. It was an incredible experience. It's getting to the g-force level of speed that really freaks you out.

The Scoop: So how did you get this opportunity?

Kevin: It all started when Jay and I went over to Italy to perform for the troops right before they were sent to Bosnia. We got along great with the airforce pilot that flew us over. As we were flying, I was just so fascinated by what the pilot was doing, so he asked me if I'd ever like to fly with the Thunderbirds. That was an invitation I just couldn't pass up. I really love heights. I'm especially fond of riding on roller coasters.

The Scoop: You sound like a daredevil kind of guy.

Kevin: (Laughs). Not really. But being in music can be like a daredevil. No, I don't bungee jump but I do like mountain climbing. I'm not a hard-core climber.

The Scoop: What's your official title on the show? Is it "band

leader" or "music director"?

Kevin: I guess you could say "musical director" and underneath that comes a lot of things like picking music for the comedy bits. When visiting bands come in, I decide on who should do whatever.

The Scoop: Fill in the blank. People would be surprised to know what about Jay Leno?

Kevin: Aww, that's a good one. Everybody already knows that he works 28 hours a day. He loves motorcycles. He loves to eat. Let me come back to that question.

The Scoop: Okay. People would be surprised to know what about Kevin Eubanks?

Kevin: People would be surprised to know that I can't swim. I don't know, swimming was just something that I never thought about pursuing as I kid. And then as I got older, I kept putting it off the swimming lessons. But when I see signs saying "swim-

ming lessons," I sometimes think it would be cool to learn.

The Scoop: The media has made so much hype out of the so-called Leno/Letterman competition. Do you guys really feel the pressure on the whenever it's sweeps time?

Kevin: I think we feel it more from people outside of the show--you know, in the newspapers etc. They really build it up. It's all about ad dollars and what you have. Personally, I stay away from those kind of things. It doesn't matter if your Number One or Number Two, the real important thing it to give the public a good show.

The Scoop: What's the most embarrassing moment that's happened during the show?

Kevin: It didn't happen to me. It was Jay, He tried to pick Winona Ryder up just as we were going to commercial and he fell and she also fell right on top of him! Luckily nobody got hurt but that whole inci-

Obo Addy Hosts the Seventh Annual

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Presented by the Homowo Foundation for African Arts and Cultures and sponsored in part by grants and contributions from Metro, RACC, Oregon Arts Commission, NIKE, Templeton Foundation, Tucker Foundation, Anheuser Busch Companies, Gales Creek Insurance, Music Millennium, Ralph L. Smith Foundation, Pacific Gas Transmission, PGE and Portland Parks and Recreation.

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