

Bob Florence

Owen Cordle calls Bob Florence "a modern-day Duke Ellington".



See Arts & Entertainment, page B2.

February is Black History Month

See inside, page B4.

Bridging Heaven and Earth

"Fire on the Mountain" plays at Winningstad Theatre at the Portland Center for the performing arts



See Metro, page B1.

The Portland Observer 25¢

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THE WEEK IN REVIEW

70 dead in Israeli crash

Israel Radio says at least 70 people were killed in the mid-air crash of two Israeli army helicopters during a storm in northern Israel Tuesday.

Army mired in sex scandal

As the U.S. Army was hit by fresh charges of sexual abuse, a Senate panel heard testimony concerning the extent of the allegations.

Clinton polishes State of Union

President Clinton is putting the finishing touches on the State of the Union address he'll deliver tonight.

US Mulls Strike on Iraq

The United States said Tuesday there was no reason for heightened concern about military action in the Persian Gulf after a German newspaper reported that America might launch a cruise missile strike on Iraq.

Skater Escapes Prosecution

A Connecticut judge is permitting Olympic skating champion Oksana Baiul to enroll in an alcohol education program, effectively granting her request to avoid prosecution on drunk driving charges.

EDITORIAL.....A2 VANCOUVER.....A3 FAMILY.....A5 HOUSING.....A6 EDUCATION.....A7 METRO.....B1 ARTS & ENT.....B2 BLACK HISTORY.....B4 CLASSIFIEDS.....B5

Legislature's has dramatic Black History Month

by Neil Heilpern

Black History Month at the state capitol will include an array of African art, student achievement recognitions and visits from African-American ministers.

Staff members of Rep. Margaret Carter (D-Portland) were busy this week gathering striking wooden sculptures and other African art forms from various legislators, lobbyists and interested citizens.

The art display will be exhibited in front of both House and Senate chambers throughout February.

Various ministers from the community have been invited to give the invocation at the beginning of a House floor session, followed by a talk, "a moment in black history to increase awareness," according to one staff member.

Rev. Alice Faye Warren, chaplain at Legacy Emmanuel Hospital, kicked off the ministerial schedule Monday. Other ministers scheduled to appear in the House are Allen Bethel (February 6), Reverend Jinter (February 10), Bishop A.A. Wells (February 12), Reverend Greenidge (February 19), Reverend McCullough (February 21), Bishop Grace (February 24) and Reverend Bailey (February 26).

On February 21 members of the Portland legislative delegation will recognize 50 outstanding African American students from the Portland public schools.

The students will actually receive their awards February 27 at the Black History Month Youth Celebration to be held at Doris' Cafe, 352 NE Russell, Portland.

A member of the Oregon Trail Blazer basketball team, not yet selected, is expected to be featured speaker at the event.



Rep. Margaret Carter sings National Anthem to open 1997 Oregon Legislature in Salem, January 13, 1997.

Jurors break for readings

Jurors in the O.J. Simpson civil case broke off deliberations Tuesday to listen to readings of testimony about Simpson's alibi, a bruising fight with his ex-wife and a limousine driver's oft-repeated time line.

It was the third day of deliberations for the six-man, six-woman jury, which started deliberations anew after a juror was dismissed Friday.

The group asked to hear testimony about opportunity and motive in the June 12, 1994, slayings of Nicole Brown Simpson and Ronald Goldman.

Simpson, in four days on the stand, maintained he was in bed, showering, chipping golf balls and taking his dog for a walk around the time of the slayings.

Simpson told jurors he took responsibility for the bruises Ms. Simpson received during a Jan. 1, 1989, fight between the two, but he swore he didn't hit, strike, slap, kick or beat her.

They asked for only the plaintiffs' questioning of Simpson, limousine driver Allan Park and Simpson pal Al "A.C." Cowlings.

Cowlings testified reluctantly that he took Ms. Simpson to the hospital because he was afraid she had a concussion.

When the judge asked if the jury would like to hear cross-examination as well, the foreman, a white-haired graphic artist, conferred with two women jurors and said: "Just the direct."

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"When We Were Kings" album released

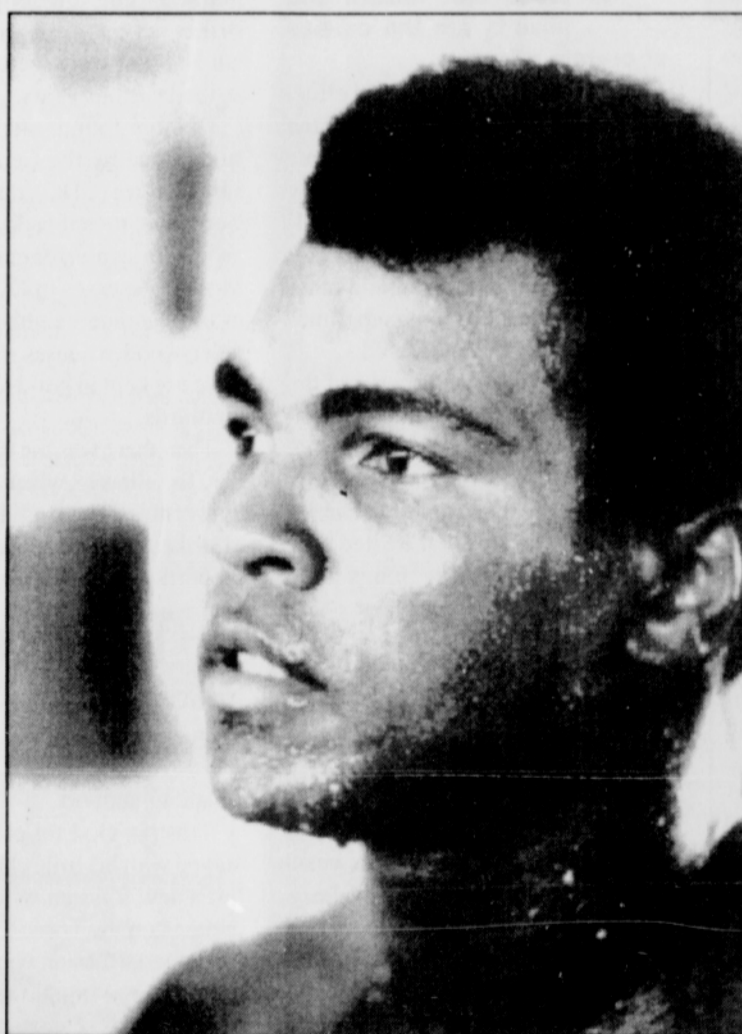
On February 11th Mercury Records will release one of the most important and intriguing albums of 1997.

The film When We Were Kings has been in the works for over 20 years, and its soundtrack reflects the intensity and passion of the original "Rumble In The Jungle," and displays the influence it had on the generation that followed.

Lauryn Hill of The Fugees on "When We Were Kings: "I was inspired when Ali went to Africa. The things he was saying and the places he was going made me feel proud to be African. It encouraged me and made me want to go over and bring something back for the youth."

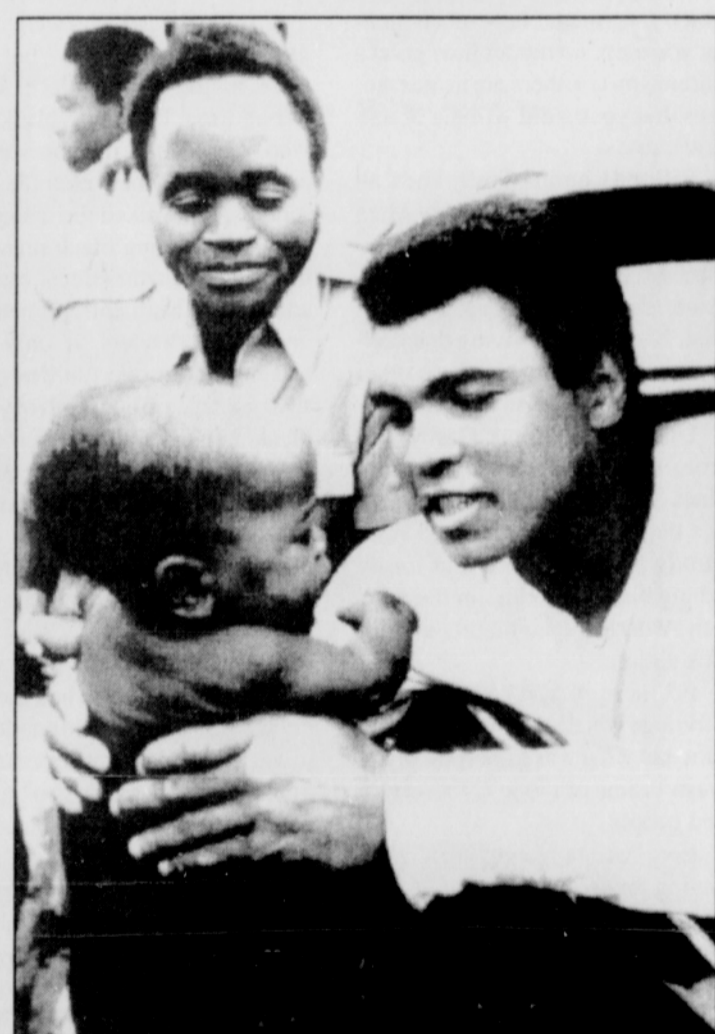
When We Were Kings...

It was a wild time alright. The Belgian Congo was now called The Republic Of Zaire and 22 million citizens of this African nation were anxiously awaiting the arrival of Muhammad Ali.



Left: Muhammad Ali after a rigorous workout preparing him for the '74 'Rumble in the Jungle' match against George Foreman in the Leon Gast film When We Were Kings, a Gramercy Pictures release.

Right: Muhammad Ali greets a local baby as he drives past throngs of admirers in Zaire in the Leon Gast film When We Were Kings, a Gramercy Pictures release.



Photos by: Howard L. Bingham

the fighters to the new Kinshasa Stadium which had seating for over 120,000 people. Of course Don King was there, this probably being his finest hour. Not only had he succeeded in hustling up the money for the fight but he was also staging a musical extravaganza billed as the African Woodstock.

BB King, The Spinners, Bill Withers, Ceilia Cruz, Miriam Makeba and 20 African artists were on hand and the pulse rate of this African nation was racing.

Amidst all the excitement, the superstars and the hype one couldn't help but notice the

special grace of Muhammad Ali. Although he was an overwhelming underdog and common sense would not permit a bet on the former champion, there was still a twinkle in his eye and a spirit in his step that put hope in the hearts of those who believed in miracles. This is the story of When We Were Kings.