

Arts ENTERTAINMENT

The Portland Observer

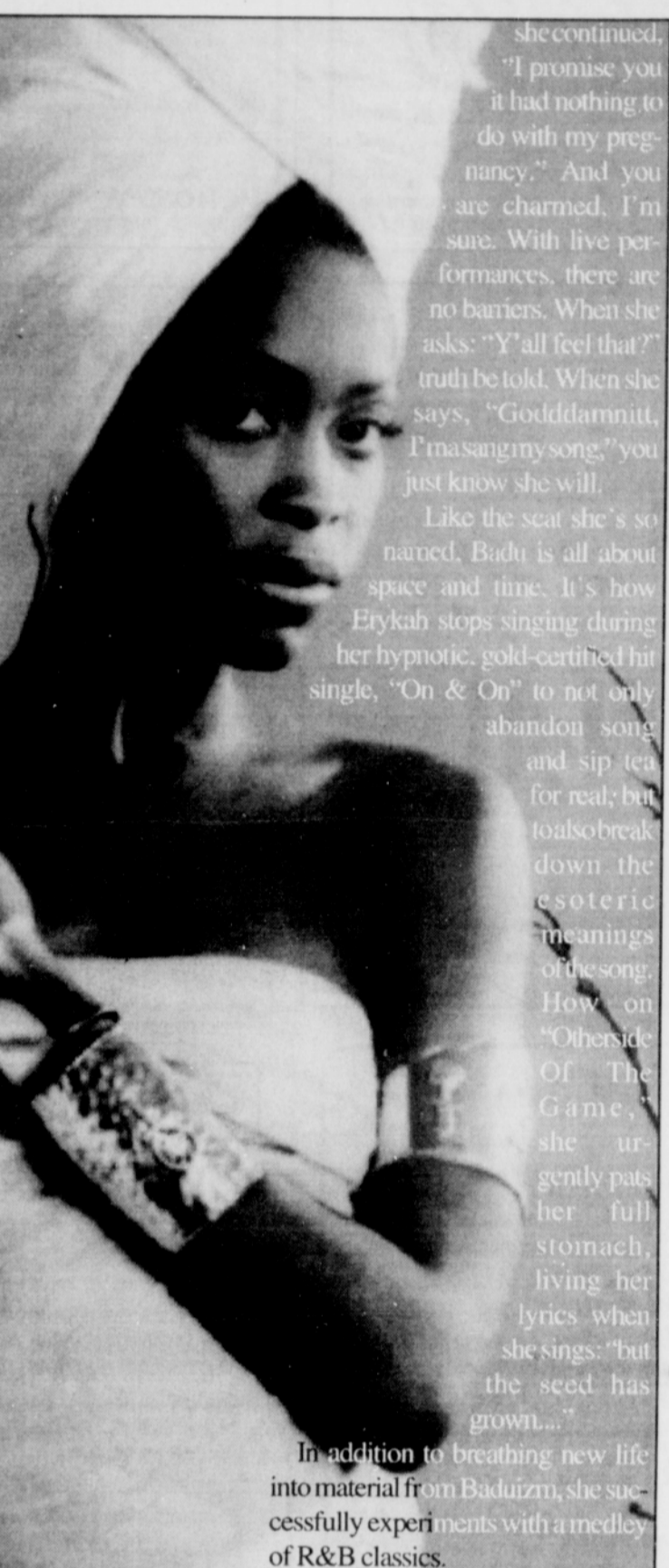
On October 1, 1997, during a live in-studio recording session in New York for the Erykah Badu "Live" album, Kedar Entertainment/Universal recording artist Erykah Badu confirmed there is life in her womb, love in her heart, magic in her gestures and elders in her eyes. Called, anointed, beloved, she came belly button poking proud through her wrap to the beat of Herbie Hancock's "Watermelon Man," her background singers using voice as percussion and Pygmy calls. Just weeks before, she'd completed a summer-long stint on the road with the Smokin' Grooves tour promoting her critically-acclaimed, multi-Platinum debut album *Baduizm*. Badu took to the road, building bridges, gettin' her hustle on, creating a Soul Nation and spreading *Baduizm*—not a religion or dogma—but incense, candles & attitude.

Even when the live taping in Studio B at the Sony Music Studios started two hours late, Erykah calmly explained to the standing-room-only audience, "I apologize for my lateness." Then, in reference to a comment made earlier,

she continued, "I promise you it had nothing to do with my pregnancy." And you are charmed, I'm sure. With live performances, there are no barriers. When she asks, "Y'all feel that?" truth be told. When she says, "Goddamn it, I'm singing my song," you just know she will.

Like the seat she's so named, Badu is all about space and time. It's how Erykah stops singing during her hypnotic, gold-certified hit single, "On & On" to not only abandon song and sip tea for real, but to also break down the esoteric meanings of the song. How on "Otherside Of The Game," she urgently pats her full stomach, living her lyrics when she sings, "but the seed has grown..."

In addition to breathing new life into material from *Baduizm*, she successfully experiments with a medley of R&B classics.



Erykah Badu "Live"

Don Braden, Jazz Saxophonist

New York tenor saxophonist Don Braden will make his first-ever appearance in Portland on Friday, Dec. 5, to inaugurate the Portland State University School of Fine and Performing Arts Jazz Series. Known for his work with jazz legends Wynton Marsalis, Betty Carter, Freddie Hubbard, and Roy Haynes, Braden will join PSU jazz ensembles in performing music from his new RCA/Victor compact disc.

The Voice of the Saxophone, currently the number two record on jazz radio stations across the country.

PSU's big band will perform new arrangements of Braden's work, and a hand-picked student octet will play arrangements written for Braden's New York band.

The Dec. 5 concert begins at 7:30 p.m. in Lincoln Performance Hall, 1620 SW Park. Call 725-3307 for advance tickets.

Saturday, Dec. 6, Braden will present a jazz clinic as part of PSU's Jazz MasterClinic Series.

The clinic will take place from noon to 2:30 p.m. in Room 75 of Lincoln Hall, 1620 SW Park. Call 725-5828.



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It's A Woman Thang

Tonya - R&B newest song bird and an anchor artist for Malaco Records' new J-Town label -- is spinning off another single after rocketing to the top of the charts.

Tonya's debut album, *It's A Woman Thang* on J-Town, mixes driving dance rhythms, romantic ballads, hip hop, straight-line R&B and an unbroken strain of steamy soul.

But it was Tonya's latest single off the album, "I've Been Having An Affair," that first captured the R&B world's attention. The mesmerizing cut was instantly spinning in the New York, Detroit and Chicago mega-markets and was added out of the box on key radio stations in Memphis, Charlotte, Little Rock and Shreveport as it caught fire. Soon it was playing again and again in every major R&B market.

"Affair" quickly moved up Billboard magazine's Hot R&B singles chart, then ultimately hit the chart's elite Top



Malaco/J-Town R&B star Tonya is congratulated by Jackson, Miss., Mayor Harvey Johnson Jr. for her hit single "Affair" from "It's A Woman Thang" album.

40 -- signalling Tonya's professional arrival into the new world of urban music. Jet magazine also rated *Affair* as among the nation's best, ranking it No. 5

on Jet's Singles Chart.

As a result, the Mississippi-born singer has been feted in her adult hometown, Jackson, Miss.

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