

"Les Nubians" sisters showcase and fuse the flava' of

BY FELICIA SLIDER

FOR THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

The union of hip-hop and fusing jazz, European and other music genres is anything but new. But as far as the sister duo "Les Nubians" from Bordeaux, France are concerned, they don't just borrow from jazz, hip-hop and r&b sounds, they tap into its spirit, soul and strength.

And this is what they have successfully done with their duo debut project titled "Princesses Nubiennes" (Virgin Records)(Omtown Music/Higher Octave).

Not only did "Les Nubians" French lyrics offer sophisticated, sensual and spiritual sensations to last Monday nights crowd at Portland's Roseland Theater, the Faussart sisters made sure that their first time to the city of Portland left a special imprint of their reggae, hip-hop, African, r&b and musical influences.

The African-French sisters Helen (born 1975) and Celiste (born 1979) are the daughters of a Cameroonian mother and French father. After spending most of their early childhood in France, it was in 1985 that the family moved to the African country of Chad. After living in Chad for seven years, they then spent their teenage years by moving back to France.



Images Courtesy of Piotr Sikora, D.R.

It was obvious that these sisters were destined to create musical ministry. From their days spent performing as an a cappella group and working with bands, the soon to be known "Les Nubians" would let their musical talents give birth worldwide. Now known as vocalist, performers, as well as songwriters, they trusted their instincts that their gift of writing original music and their shared love of performing would eventually lead them to recording their own music. Helen stated so herself, as she invited her Portland fans into the reality why she had no problem choosing her real love: "music"...instead of a selfish lover that once asked her during a past all night "love" session of writing and creating her music, to either as she says her ex-boyfriend stated "love him or leave the music..."

One doesn't have to guess which "love" won. This declaration, as well as other life changing decisions, cemented and began to pave the road for the now higher ground that "Les Nubians" has

climbed. They are now combining the influences of African rhythms, hip-hop, Euro-pop, soul and reggae vibes that musically groomed them as adolescents and has generously graced their talent as adults. And so they journeyed. To the land of Portland on Monday, October 24 for an 8pm performance that gave even the jiggiest Joe, joy and left the biggest-baller-shot-caller, blushed.

Normally one might come to a hip-hop show extra fashionably late. Possibly, because too many venue showcases are often, at least an hour late and have a way too lengthy sound and mic check. Maybe these sound engineers should get as much top billing as the headlining artist. But not the case here. Direct Productions did and have been doing a boombastic job of having a positive and punctual flow as people walk in the door to their often sold-out and definitely positive hip-hop, jazz, soul and blues concert shows. What made the start of the show happening and hype was the Direct Productions promoters resident DJ, MixMaster KD. This Portland based but often bi-coastal spinning DJ, is known for his turntable props from his Portland following of concert and club-going fans to the boroughs Brooklyn, Bronx and

TEARS OF JOY THEATRE
1999-2000 SEASON

ON SALE NOW AT ALL:
Fred Meyer FASTDXX
 TICKET CENTERS
 CHARGE A TICKET INFORMATION: **224-TIXX**

Subscribe Now & Save Up to 40%

Subscribers \$8
 Adults \$13 Children \$9

MONKEY KING

November 5 - 28

Petrouchka's Winter Carnival

December 11 - 27

Singing Our Way Home

February 11 - March 12

Thumbelina

March 17 - April 2

Shows at Portland Center for the Performing Arts

Also, see **A Grimm Late Night** in new Saturday series for adults!

For Subscriptions & Information:
 (503) 248-0557 or (360) 695-0477

KENNEDY SCHOOL
 McMenamins
THEATER

MOVIES NIGHTLY
 WITH WEEKEND MATINEES

For schedule & information call:
288-2180

McMenamins Kennedy School
 5736 NE 33rd · Portland, Oregon
www.mcmenamins.com

