

# African rhythms, Euro-style and Hip-Hop music at Roseland Theatre.

beyond. Olu, the Harlem bred and born artist that opened Monday nights tour performance was just the right touch that this concert bill needed. Not only does Olu hold his own spotlight on the tour with his chart climbing hit "Baby Can't Leave it Alone", Olu and his gifted band was enough for an encore performance. Ron Enright, local front man and publicity person for the past three years for Direct Productions, expressed during our interview that he was first contacted about a year ago by "Les Nubians" label manager (Higher Octave) as well as their agency manager. Ron took a strong interest in adding Portland to the list of the "Les Nubians" tour. But just to make sure, Ron had to go out and buy the project and since then, Enright stated, he's been "hooked!" He did some research by asking Portlanders about what they thought about the CD project and mostly everyone contended without hesitation that the French female duo's project was the bomb. The promoters of Direct Productions have been successfully giving props to hip-hop for over the past few years. Kudos to their genius, all-out concert bill of the "Outkast" & "Black Eyed Peas" showcase. Props to introducing generation-x'ers to the Baby Boomers as Direct hosted the spotlight for one of the last poets, the honorable "Gil Scott-Heron", who recently appeared at the Aladdin Theater. And definitely

not to go without mention, when of speaking rap of pioneers, "Public Enemy" who also recently elevated and educated Portland ears, young and old, to a Roseland style, "Fight the Power" hip-hop performance. Not only is it the goal of Direct to bring the same type of hype performances that headlining artist showcase at larger venues in others cities, they are in production planning of bringing the same al la carte, bust-a-gut, urban comedians that premiere on the Def Comedy Jam and BET Comic View comedy circuit. With Directs creative planning, along with an aggressive but strategic business attitude, it's no wonder that their events are more than successful. The sister-duo was caught totally by surprise by the love that the Roseland crowd gave. And because of the overwhelming reception, "Les Nubians" welcomed the crowd into what they title their musical performance of as "Home." "This is our first time here in Portland and what we didn't expect is to feel so at home! Are you feelin' us Portland?! . . . Because we're feelin' you! Portland you are giving us much love ladies and gentlemen...and we love it!" exclaimed Helen. They then opened up for the second half of their performance by blessing the crowd with some French rapping on their take of Sade's "Sweetest Taboo" titled "Tabou"...a definite improved and extra sweet rendition of this classic. New "Les Nubians" fan, Cassie Mathieson stated "With them being

a French band, I thought they translated well with the audience. The vibe was good. I'm amazed that even with just the one album, they not only maintained, but rocked the show well. They filled the whole arena. They definitely made it easy for the crowd to get their money's worth and then some." The crowd listened, lounged and loved all the performances of the sexy "Embrasse-Moi", the lyrical love of "Makeda" as well as two of their single tracks "Demain" and "Les Portes du Souvenir." But much to the surprise of the crowd, it was actually "Les Nubians" encore and perfect way of closing out a polished performance by ending the evening with a backdrop of Stevie Wonder beats and blends. The encore lyrically massaged a 90's version of hail and honor to, whom the "Les Nubians" often comment as "one of the artist who heavily influenced our African and Euro-soul style." They ended the evening with musical shout-outs and involved their fans with melodious silhouettes of the Stevie Wonder classic "Hotter Than July." "Les Nubians" want their following of fans to appreciate music from all genres. Whether their fusing hip-hop, jazz, Euro-funk or r&b, they want their fans to know they're always going to come with flava'. The French and English fluent "Les Nubians" not only aquatinted themselves with their

northwest-based fans, but also made sure that their fans gave props to their live funk ensemble and background singers. Byrd, a Portland "Les Nubians" fan from day one commented that they were "phat, fresh and funky...I couldn't have asked for more. It's the type of entertainment that makes you say...hot done...that was worth it!" So trust, if this sister-duo can make

even the most ballin-shot caller, the roughest roughneck as well as generation x-ers harmonize during a shows encore of the back-in the day Stevie Wonder Motown classic "Hotter Than July" in the midst of a Portland winter, then yes. . . we be jammin' and will be jammin' and jumpin' for another "Les Nubians" performance soon. "Les Nubians" were tres magnifique ... They were very magnificent!

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