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Music

Earth, Wind & Fire delights

BY FELICIA L. SLIDER
FOR THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

In this exclusive interview with Earth, Wind & Fire's original member/drummer Ralph Johnson, we discuss as the labor of love that brought the world Earth, Wind & Fire.

From vinyls to 8-tracks, from cassettes to CD's, I dedicate this article to the group.

We, your fans, whether our first EWF experience were putting the needle to the record from our parents "secret" collection, or as adult fans who've shared your shining star from the 70's and beyond, love you for your longevity in showing us that EWF is... the way of the world.

Felicia: First, I want to congratulate you on your 30 years of unspoiled success.

Q: Recently, on June 20, I understand that EWF went to the White House to play at a State Dinner...how was the experience for the group?

A: It was a great one. What happened was, the King of Morocco, who was attending the State Dinner asked about what type of entertainment he wanted. He said EWF. He's a big fan. And that's how we got there. On the 22nd, we are also leaving the US to perform for him again in Morocco.

Q: Were you in current production of your upcoming project when you received the request from the King?

A: Yes, we were. We're preparing for it to be out in the spring of 2001.

Q: I read that Verdine (White) stated that through the span of the 30 years in touring, that every time he performs on stage, he plays like it's the first time ever? Please explain, does this parallel to you personally as well?

A: Yes, we try to embrace this thought: the attitude of gratitude. Basically, that we are still able to do this 30 years later is a blessing. Meaning, when you (groups) first start out, you don't even know if it's going to be successful or how long it's going to take you. And the reason you're doing the group thing anyway is because you want to be with someone who wants to play music as you do. If someone would have told me then, that 30 years

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