

## The Focus

## Earth, Wind &amp; Fire from page 2

later, that I'd still be doing this, I would have thought that that statement was crazy. People have truly embraced EWF and our music and that's what truly keeps us going. As long as people want to hear the music, then we will be out here performing it.

Felicia: Well on behalf of your fans, we thank you. I look forward to having my children experience EWF as well.

A: Thank you. I can't tell you how good it sounds and how often we hear

people say that they've introduced their children to EWF and they love it. It's wonderful to hear that you and other people embrace the EWF legacy like that and want to pass their music down to their kids. It's a tremendous feeling to know that you've created a sound that actually transcends all ages and cultures.

Q: I've enjoyed some of your recent performances, specifically speaking of Sinbad's annual HBO Groovefest. The one EWF performed at was in Aruba and just looking in the audience, the wide variety and spectrum of people and ages was wonderful. I enjoyed seeing a kaleidoscope of people enjoying your music. Did you visualize and experience that as well for you?

A: Yes. The demographics at our concerts are very broad in terms of

age and culture.

Q: On this new project, you're going to be working the hip-hop bad/group *The Roots*? What has this been like?

A: Correct. Their one entity. Others would be Wyclef Jean, Eric Benet, Angie Stone. Yeah, we've got a good mixture of writers and producers

working on this project, but Maurice White is still the head producer.

Q: I know that in my strong interest in hip-hop as well as R&B, I've attended two Roots concerts, and I know comparatively speaking if I may, The Roots, as an all-out hip-hop band, have honorable similarities with EWF, instrumentation wise. The Roots are very much recognized as live hip-hop band playing their own instruments.

And I say this to mean, there are so many groups/bands out there that are trying to make a name for themselves, but I many of them rely so heavily that every member of the group wants to sing and just sing alone. But when you can fuse different talents together as the *Roots* do with rappin, singing and playing their own instruments, it's definitely something to roll with.

A: You are so very correct. And those who do play, I think that the quantity of musicians has slightly deteriorated in that some are not really taking the study of their

chosen instruments seriously. It's like this: everybody in EWF can play all styles of music. And that's what you'll hear when you come to our show because it's a very musical show.

Q: I'm also a fan of Mint Condition and in a lot ways, they remind me a lot of your style and format of musical instrumentation. Are you familiar with *Mint Condition's* style of R&B?

A: Yes, very much so. Great band by the way. I greatly agree. I have told others in interviews that the only group out there now that comes close to EWF is Mint Condition, figuratively speaking.

Q: Please give me some insight on your tour that starts this November with Mrs. Patti Labelle? Are you looking forward are you looking to this and is this your first time on the road with Mrs. Patti?

A: Actually, large scale tour wise, it is. We did do a date with her a couple of months ago, which was really nice. That date was really what gave us the idea to do the tour package. We've been working on this for a while and it's finally coming together and EWF is very excited about it.

RJ: EWF is just happy to be able to do this, still. When you start this thing, you never know where it's going. To even get one record out, let alone 20 or 25. We stay blessed.

Q: When did you receive the Hollywood Walk of Fame Star?

A: That was in 1996. The most

recent was the induction into the Rock n' Roll Hall of Fame. That was in March of this year.

## Walk a Mile to Save a Mind

CONTRIBUTED STORY  
FOR THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

The United Negro College Fund (UNCF) will be holding their 6<sup>th</sup> annual Walk-a-Thon to raise money for minority students to attend college. The benefit will be held on Saturday, September 9 at Peninsula Park and registration is required.

Join in the team fun. To be a leader and form a walking team, round up a minimum of 2 other teammates. Fill out a registration form and mail it back or phone UNCF at 503/223-8890. Set a fundraising goal and sign up sponsors on the enclosed sponsor sheet form. Be sure to collect donations from your sponsors as you go along. Register for the walk between 8 a.m.-9:15 a.m. Turn in you sponsor sheet, checks and cash at the registration table. After the Walk-A-Thon, please notify your sponsors that you completed the walk and make arrangements to collect any outstanding funds. You have until Friday, October 13, 2000 to turn in all funds to qualify for prizes. Post-walk refreshments and raffle will be provided at 11:30 a.m.

UNCF is the nation's oldest and most successful minority assistance organization. Their mission is to provide affordable access to quality higher education and the financial assistance needed to ensure that deserving students can achieve their academic goals and earn the college degrees that will prepare them to function successfully in an increasingly complex world.

Almost 90% of the students attending UNCF member colleges require some form of financial aid in order to attend college. They have found that federal and state educational assistance programs have not kept pace with rising college costs. Against this backdrop of need, UNCF helps thousands of deserving students achieve their academic goals, but for everyone we help, there's one we can't. Not without the funds. Your participation in this year's walk-a-thon will help to ensure that everyone who should go to college does.

## Art Galleries Showcase: Paintings, Sculpture &amp; Fabric



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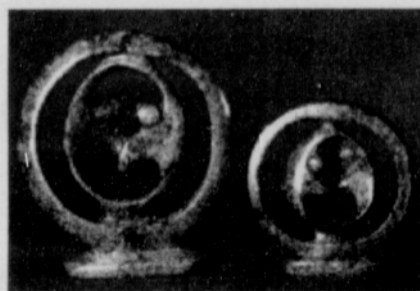
Red Eagle Gallery on the south side of the Central Library, brings you authentic museum-quality stone sculpture, in the Shona tradition from the beautiful land of Zimbabwe.

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