

EL OBSERVADOR

Honduran-Born Violinist to Perform

Jorge Avila is an award-winning Latin-American musician



Jorge Avila, who played at the Ground Zero memorial ceremony in New York City, will perform with Portland pianist Cynthia Rampone on Saturday, May 17.

The Community Music Center and the Mu Phi Epsilon Foundation present award-winning violinist Jorge Avila in recital on Saturday, May 17th at 7:30 p.m. in the Community Music Center Auditorium, 3350 S.E. Francis St.

Avila is considered one of today's leading young Latin American violinists. The Honduran native has performed as a soloist with orchestras in Europe and both Central and South America. Television audiences may remember him from his performance of Barber's "Adagio" as part

of the Ground Zero memorial ceremony in New York City.

A program of masterworks for the violin by Mozart, Bach and Brahms, as well as the Theme from "Schindler's List" by John Williams, will highlight Mr. Avila's world-class musicianship and exceptional talent. He will be accompanied by Portland pianist Cynthia Rampone.

Admission is \$10 for adults, \$5 students and seniors, payable at the door only. For more information, please call 503-823-3177.

Total Immersion Course

The Mexican heritage city of San Miguel de Allende has nearly no rain—and with Mt. Hood Community College's Study Abroad program, students will spend two weeks this summer studying in this city's dry, exquisite setting.

The college's Study Abroad program allows students to earn one term of college Spanish credit toward a degree or certificate by attending classes at a specialized college in another country. The \$1,395 for this trip includes round-trip airfare, room

and board, tuition and the assistance of a resident MHCC instructor. Study will take place at the Academia Hispano Americana, a highly respected Spanish language school since 1963. Classes range from beginning, intermediate to advanced and carry five credits in Spanish language.

Space for the June 28 to July 13 course is limited. The sign-up deadline is May 9. To find out more, contact MHCC instructor Holly DeGrow at 503-491-7268.

'He's a Magic Man'



Antwan Towner intrigues Billy Reed's patrons with a disappearing spider act.

PHOTO BY GUNTHER JOSE FRANK/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

continued from Front

He hopes someday Miss Elsie will come see him perform, but he credits his father for sinking the magic hook. When Towner turned eight, his dad took him to the magic shop to pick out some props for his birthday. He would follow the instructions and fool his classmates with card tricks and disappearing objects.

"I think the average boy between the ages of eight and 13 has an interest in magic," Towner said. "Some continue that interest."

The after-school hours and weekends of Towner's adolescence were spent at Jim Pace's White Rabbit Magic shop in the Lloyd Center Mall. Pace, a veteran magician himself, taught young Towner the ropes of the profession. By the time he was a teen, Towner found himself entertaining not just his middle school peers, but shoppers in downtown Portland.

"I like putting a smile on people's faces," Towner said, explaining his desire to practice magic. "When I can walk into someone's mind and flip a switch it surprises them that I can touch something so personal."

Making people smile is exactly what Towner does during his magic acts with

Adam The Great at Billy Reed's. Guests at the northeast Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard eatery and bar are endlessly amazed by his card tricks—one of which involves mysteriously pulling a whole deck out of his mouth. His red foam balls squeak, multiply and disappear all before their eyes.

Towner said he performs tricks any novice magician can perform, but it's his

of appearance and tries to make the magic he performs an extension of his appearance.

For shows, Towner is never without a perfectly fitted tuxedo or a pair of wacky contact lenses. His favorites right now are cat eyes, blue and white stars and zebra stripes.

"They look a little crazy, a little different," Towner said. "And no, they're not just for looks, I do need to wear contacts. But I try not to tell people that because then they'll say, 'If he's so magical why doesn't he fix his own eyes?'"

Towner knows his Las Vegas aspirations will take a lot of work, but he's ready for it. For now he promises to do as many shows as possible while working on a new stage routine that will include production of doves, canes, silk scarves, candles and puffs of smoke and eventually even levitation.

In addition to performances at Billy Reed's, Towner does private parties and donates his time to schools and Doernbecher Children's Hospital. To see him perform, stop by Billy Reed's, 2808 N.E. MLK Jr. Blvd, between 6 p.m. and 9 p.m. on Sunday and Monday night for a free tabletop show. To book a private show, contact Towner at 503-807-1244.

"Magic defies the laws of what humans can or cannot do. I like going against the grain a little and breaking the rules, but in a good way."

— Portland Magician Antwan Towner

delivery of the act that sets him apart from other magicians.

"It's like, 'Bam! Here I am!'" he said. "Magic defies the laws of what humans can or cannot do. I like going against the grain a little and breaking the rules, but in a good way."

By breaking the rules, Towner said he means the rules of perception. Also an aspiring model who has done print advertisement work for Nike and other fashion designers, Towner knows the importance



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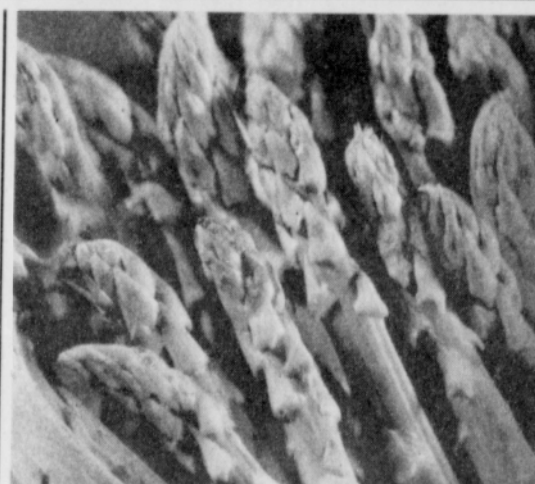
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