

BLACK HISTORY MONTH



Ithica Tell performs with Anansi the Spider and the King Lion in a Tears of Joy Theatre production for Black History Month.

Puppet Theater Promotes Diverse World Cultures

With exhibit and performances

Black History Month is the perfect time for Tears of Joy Theatre to promote its mission of developing puppetry that celebrates the diversity of world cultures.

"We seek stories which are not only rich in puppet potential with fantastic creatures, talking animals, and magical elements, but stories containing life lessons for all of us," said Nancy Aldrick, Tears of Joy artistic director.

Such stories are incorporated in the theatre's current production of Anansi the Spider, based on folktales that originated in West Africa.

Anansi might be considered an anti-hero character. His actions are not always motivated

by a higher purpose and he doesn't always succeed. He is just a little spider, often ridiculed by the other animals in his world. But he believes nothing is beyond his grasp. We may laugh at him, but he may just have the last laugh.

The play is currently performed by puppeteers Ithica Tell and Amy Gray and the puppets were designed to reflect the African origins of the stories.

Performances are at the Winningstad Theatre, at the Portland Center for the Performing Arts, 1111 S.W. Broadway, and are accompanied by a lobby exhibit of art from Zimbabwe. Each of the vibrant pieces is accompanied by a description of the folktale that is illustrated and a picture of the artist who created it.

For tickets, call 503-248-0557 or 360-695-3050, or visit the Tears of Joy Theatre website at tojt.org.

Black History Celebrated at Washington State Capitol

Nearly 1,300 adults and children joined Washington Gov. Chris Gregoire in the state capitol Monday for African American Legislative Day. The event featured motivational speakers, workshops and youth programs and was a kick-off for Black History Month.

"The key to a better life for Washingtonians is an educa-

tion system that prepares our children to thrive in a global economy," Gregoire said. "In the past three years, we've made significant investments to create a world-class, seamless education system for all of us."

The governor listed a number of critical investments that have been made, including all-day kindergarten for thousands

of Washington children, a new focus on math and science in elementary and high schools, and more enrollment slots in colleges and universities.

The event was sponsored by the Washington Commission on African American Affairs. Created in 1992, the commission recommends policies and programs towards the advancement of black people.

The Portland Observer Established 1970

USPS 959-680

4747 NE Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd., Portland, OR 97211

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF, PUBLISHER: Charles H. Washington

EDITOR: Michael Leighton

DISTRIBUTION MANAGER: Mark Washington

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Send address changes to Portland Observer, PO Box 3137, Portland, OR 97208

Subscriptions are \$60.00 per year

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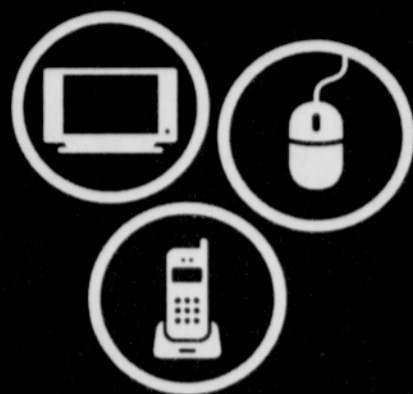
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