

Arts & ENTERTAINMENT

Prominent Writers Welcome a Literary President

Obama called a peer, man of his own words

(AP) -- Last winter, Nobel laureate Toni Morrison received a phone call from Sen. Barack Obama. Obama had contacted Morrison to ask for her support. But before they got into politics, the author and the candidate had a little chat about

literature. "He began to talk to me about one of the books I had written, 'Song of Solomon,' and how it had meant a lot to him," Morrison said in a post-election interview from her office at Princeton University. "And I had read his first book ('Dreams From My Father'). I was astonished by his ability to write, to think, to reflect, to learn and turn a good phrase. I was very impressed. This was not a normal political biography."



Toni Morrison



Barack Obama

For Morrison and others, the election of Obama matters not because he will be the first black

president or because the vast majority of writers usually vote for Democrats. Writers welcome Obama as a peer, a thinker, a man of words — his own words. "When I was watching Obama's acceptance speech (Tuesday night), I was convinced that he had written it himself, and therefore that he was saying things that he actually believed and had considered," says Jane Smiley, author of the Pulitzer Prize-winning "A Thousand Acres" and other fiction. "I find that more convincing in a politician than the usual thing of speaking the words of a raft of hack speechwriters. If he were to lie to us, he would really be betraying his deepest self." "Dreams From My Father" and Obama's "The Audacity of Hope" have each sold millions of copies and have been praised as the rare works by politicians that can actually be read for pleasure. Obama's student poetry was even lauded — and compared to the work of Langston Hughes — by the most discerning of critics, Harold Bloom.

OMSI Holiday Magic Laser Show -- Friday, Nov. 28 through Wednesday, Dec. 31. Performances are at 3 p.m. Tuesdays through Fridays and at 11 a.m., 1 p.m. and 3 p.m. weekends and holidays.

Norman Sylvester Band -- Friday, Nov. 21 and Saturday, Nov. 22, the Norman Sylvester Band will take the stage at 8:30 p.m., at Clyde's in Portland; and on Saturday, Nov. 29 at 8 p.m. at Halibut's in Portland. For more information, call 503-281-5989.

Urban Hip Hop -- Contemporary dance and urban hip-hop join forces when the White Bird Uncaged dance series presents the Canadian dance company Kidd Pivot. Performances are at 8 p.m., currently through Saturday, Dec. 1 at Reed College's Kaul Auditorium.



Children's Theater at Mt. Hood -- The joys and dilemmas of childhood are celebrated in the Mt. Hood Community College play "Magic Theater." Performances, geared for young children, yet enjoyed by all, take place at 10:30 a.m. on Wednesday, Nov. 19 and Friday, Nov. 21. A 2 p.m. matinee is scheduled Saturday, Nov. 22.

Jungle Book -- Tears of Joy Theatre presents "Jungle Book" at the Winningstad Theatre in the Portland Center for the Performing Arts, downtown, on Saturday, Nov. 22 and Nov. 29 at 11 a.m. and Sunday, Nov. 23 and Nov. 30 at 2 p.m. and 4 p.m.



Dance Mosaic -- Experience a rich variety of dance works by gifted local and nationally known choreographers. A repertory concert will be presented by Metro Dancers, on Saturday, Nov. 22, at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m., at Portland Metro Performing Arts, 9933 SE Pine St. For ticketing, call 503-408-0604.

Proper Thanksgiving Feast -- Thursday, Nov. 27, from noon to 4 p.m., Po'Shine's

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Café, 8139 N. Denver, will host a free Thanksgiving meal featuring delicious food, performing arts and storytelling.

Annual Turkey Trot -- Thursday, Nov. 27, the Oregon Zoo invites runners and walkers of all ages to join the annual Thanksgiving Day four-mile run and fitness walk, beginning at 8 a.m., with a one-kilometer tot trot beginning at 9:30 a.m.

Providence Festival of Trees: Imagine -- Friday, Dec. 4, kicks off the holiday season with a gala evening, dinner and tree auction; followed with the public show on Saturday and Sunday for the entire family. Oregon Convention Center-Exhibit Hall C. For more information, call 503-215-6070.

The Nutcracker -- Friday, Dec. 12 thru Sunday, Dec. 14, Portland Festival Ballet presents the Nutcracker with over 100 children from the Portland area at Portland Community College's Sylvania Campus Forum Theater, 12000 S.W. 49th St.

Coming Home: Illusionist Jackson Rayne -- Sunday, Dec. 7, at 7 p.m., the Illusionist Jackson Rayne, alumni of Skyview High School, in Vancouver. Tickets available at the door.

Poetry at Miracles -- Local and national artists and musicians share an evening of spoken word and music at the Miracles Club, 4069 N.E. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd, each Wednesday's, between 7:30 p.m. and 9:30 p.m.

Bob the Builder -- TV's Bob the Builder and his Can-Do Crew invite aspiring young builders to help get the job done in a hands-on traveling exhibit at the Portland Children's Museum. The 2,000-square-foot, multimedia exhibit invites exploration and teamwork for

children and families. The show runs through Jan. 19.

OMSI After Dark -- OMSI After Dark is a night at the museum for the 21 and over crowd filled with food, drink and science fun; \$10 fee. For more information call 503-797-4000 or visit omsi.edu.

Sunday Night Jazz -- Jazz enthusiasts can enjoy listening to the cool sounds of Mel Brown, in the Rogue River Room at Chinook Winds Casino Resort in Lincoln City. No cover charge.

Live Jazz -- Every Friday and Saturday from 8 p.m. to 11 p.m., the Third Degrees Lounge at the RiverPlace Hotel, 1510 S.W. Harbor Way, will host the ongoing weekend series featuring Portland's rich jazz scene with no cover or minimum purchase. For more information, visit pdjazz.com.

Open Mic Night -- Every Wednesday night at 7 p.m., Proper Eats Market and Café, 8638 N. Lombard St., host open mic night.

Sliders Grill -- Sliders Grill, 3011 N. Lombard, features an eclectic assortment of performers on the main stage, accompanied by delicious food. Call 503-459-4488 for more information.

Free First Friday Nights -- The Portland Children's Museum has partnered with Target to provide free admission to everyone on the first Friday of each month from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Oregon Zoo Buck Tuesdays -- On the 2nd Tuesday of every month, the zoo hosts 2-Buck Tuesdays when guests can tour the zoo during regular zoo hours for the discounted price of \$2 per person!

OMSI \$2 Days -- The first Sunday of every month can spark your passion for science at the OMSI when admission is just \$2. For more information, visit OMSI.edu.

Music Millennium Free Shows -- The Music Millennium, 3158 E. Burnside, hosts in-house live performances. Enjoy free music and the opportunity to meet local artists. Call 503-231-8926 for a schedule.

Embracing a Place in History

Rapper says he's voice for a generation

(AP) -- Kanye West is to music what Michael Jordan was to basketball — at least that's what West thinks, in his humble estimation.

"I realize that my place and position in history is that I will go down as the voice of this generation, of this decade, I will be the loudest voice," he said. "It's me settling into that position of just really accepting that it's one thing to say you want to do it and it's another thing to really end up being like Michael Jordan."

The Grammy-winning rapper-producer said Justin Timberlake had a chance to be music's MVP, but hasn't put out enough material. Timberlake's last album was in 2006, while West released a CD last year and is releasing his latest — "808s and Heartbreak" — on Nov. 24.

"There were people who had



Kanye West

the potential to do it but they went on vacation, so when Justin went on vacation I made albums," he said. "And it just came out to be that."

West, 31, said life has been difficult since his mother's death. Donda West died last November after having plastic surgery.

"I'm just going through balancing that. And I always used to have that support system, you know. My mom would be there; no matter what, she was there before everything," he said.



Journey into a Remarkable Mind

Doug Tompos is R. Buckminster Fuller, the engineer, designer, poet, and philosopher who, among other things invented the geodesic dome. R. Buckminster Fuller: The History (and Mystery) of the Universe plays in the Elynn Bye Studio at Portland Center Stage through Dec. 7. For tickets, information, blogs and more, visit pcs.org/bucky.

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