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Saved from Demolition



Historic Victorian makes its way through the streets of north Portland
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Black Portlanders



Memphis native uses her camera to document life in the city
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'City of Roses'



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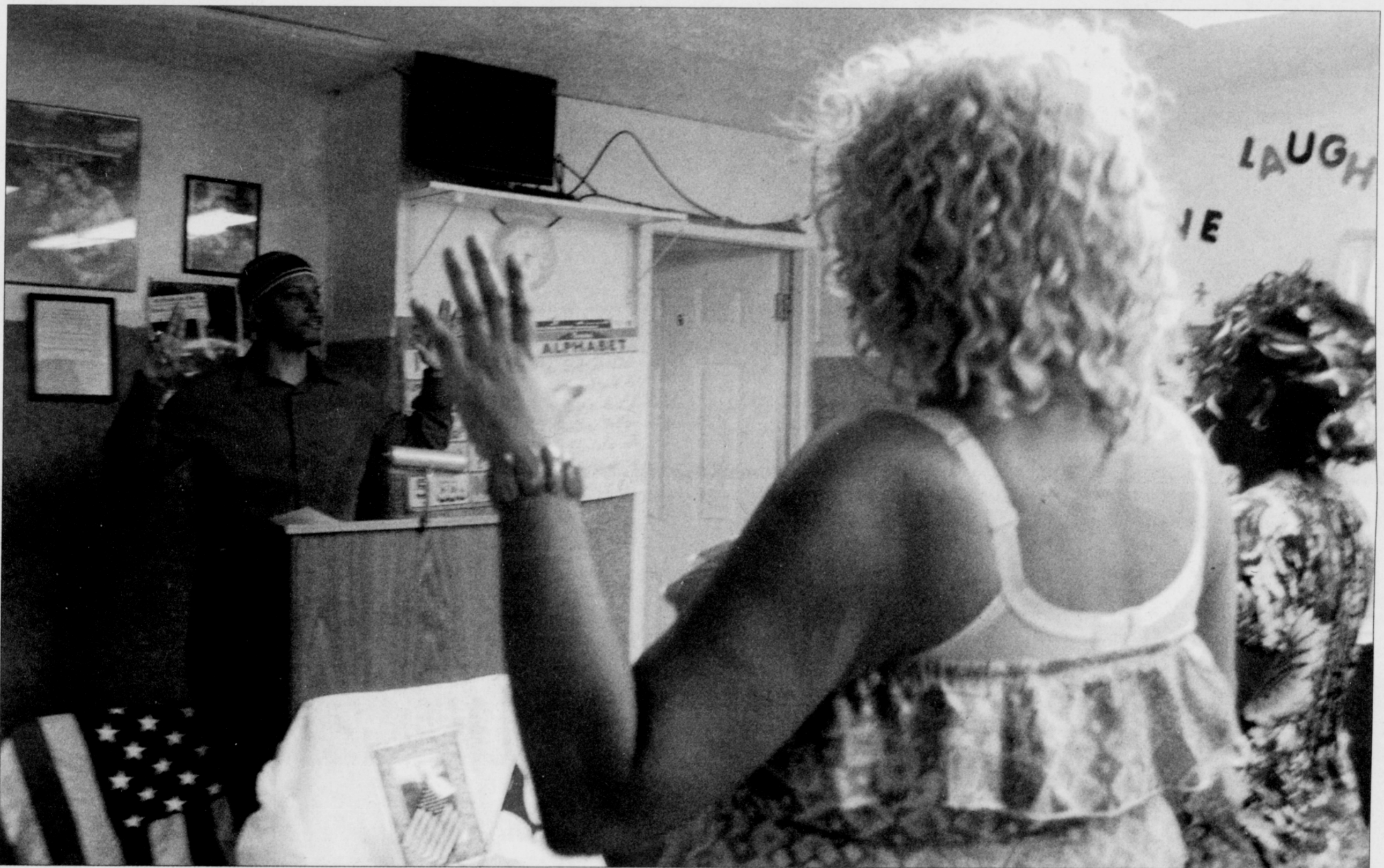


PHOTO BY DONOVAN M. SMITH/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

The Moorish Science Temple of America was founded one hundred years ago by a self-proclaimed prophet named Noble Drew Ali. Members of the Portland temple are working feverishly to spread its five core principles of love, truth, peace, freedom and justice and promote a true nationality for people of African descent across the globe.

A Sense of Belonging

Moorish Science embraces African roots

BY DONOVAN M. SMITH
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

It's not a religion, it's not a cult, and it's not a secret society; it is a spiritual science, it is Moorish Science. The Moorish Science Temple of America has slowly been building a foundation in Portland whether it be through prison ministries, a weekly Portland Community Media television program or gang outreach.

Currently the temple is in its centennial year; it was founded in 1913 by a 27-year-old man named Noble Drew Ali. Born out of ancient knowledge of Africa, the temple works

to instill five basic principles to black men and women in America. Those principles are love, truth, peace, freedom, and justice.

The Portland sect, referred to as Temple #2, holds meetings out of a small building located at 4725 N Williams. Since establishing themselves as a 501 (c)(3) non-profit, they are in talks with the Matt Dishman Community Center in north Portland to relocate. Membership stands at 15 heads, five of whom have joined since the beginning of the year.

Brother Stanfill El, who approximates he's practiced the science for about two years, has this to say about Ali, "He's

a redeemer."

"He came to redeem a people that lost their identity. They took the physical shackles of slavery and put it on our mind," El said.

While the group's principles are not seen as radical, some of their practices can draw controversy.

The Moroccan flag flies in tandem with the American flag every time a meeting is called to order. Why the Moroccan flag? The temple believes that most blacks brought to America during the slave trade were of Moroccan descent, whose inhabitants were once commonly

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