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ENTERTAINMENT

THE CHARLOTTE POST

Charlotte's Fastest Growing Community Weekly

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Richard Simmons Will Give Two Exercise Concerts

Who is behind that inspirational force that gets women, men and children touching their toes and stretching their limbs as early as 9 a.m. every weekday morning on WSOC-TV, Channel 9?

That person is a success phenomenon called Richard Simmons--and get ready Charlotte, he's coming to town.

Simmons will be giving two exercise concerts at the Charlotte Civic Center Saturday, May 22. Sponsored by WSOC-TV, Belk Stores and the Mecklenburg County Medical Auxiliary, the concerts will be conducted at 1 and 4 p.m. The ticket proceeds will go to benefit the Charlotte Rehabilitation Hospital. Tickets are \$6 and are available at all Belk Stores in Charlotte, Albemarle, Concord and Salisbury.

Simmons, who has struggled with a weight problem in the past, shares his exercise and diet secrets to millions everyday on his television program--"The Richard Simmons Show"--weekdays at 9 a.m. on Channel 9. The program is an inspirational mix of humor and seriousness and includes everything from entertaining skits to the delicious recipe of the day and of course the exercises--with Richard making slimming down look easy. And on May 22, he will show Charlotte.

PolyGram Releases Two Hit Singles

PolyGram Records will release the single "Back to School Again," sung by Casablanca-PolyGram recording artists The Four Tops, and the theme to the upcoming Paramount film, "Grease 2." "Grease 2" is the sequel to one of the best loved and most successful stage and screen musicals of all time, "Grease," and the forthcoming soundtrack album is the heir in spirit to the ten million selling "Grease" soundtrack album.

"Grease 2" stars Maxwell Caulfield and Michelle Pfeiffer, and is produced by Robert Stigwood and Allan Carr, the producers of the original "Grease," and directed by Patricia Birch, the original choreographer for "Grease" on Broadway. The soundtrack LP features musical performances by Caulfield, Pfeiffer, Tab Hunter and other members of the cast as well as The Four Tops, and was produced by Louis St. Louis, the musical director of "Grease" on Broadway and the author of the song "Sandy," sung by John Travolta on the first "Grease" soundtrack. St. Louis contributes five original songs to "Grease 2."



OBBA BABATUNDE
...Self-taught singer

Talent Is The Liquid That Pours Into Him

Obba Babatunde Is "Like A Pitcher!"

By Loretta Manago
Post Staff Writer

Obba Babatunde is like a pitcher and talent is the liquid that pours into him with so much abundance that Obba Babatunde overflows with the ability to do not only one thing exceptionally well but several other things as well.

A self-taught singer, actor, dancer, musician Obba Babatunde has been stunning audiences everywhere with the magnetism of his talents. Masters of the entertainment industry have praised him with such compliments as "...an outstanding performer" and "...one of the best dancers of the business."

Although young in years Babatunde is no stranger to the work involved in professional entertainment. Nor is he unaccustomed to hearing applause from audiences that say to him his work has not been in vain.

Babatunde was only six years old when he began staging song and dance numbers for family and friends. Throughout school Babatunde was constantly involved with music, drama and choral productions. By the time he was 14 Babatunde was playing eight to ten

brass instruments.

Already charting his path for the direction he'd had chosen for himself Babatunde received his first professional job touring the West Indies with the Metropolitan Brass Ensemble while still a teenager.

In order to get a smooth mixture of first-hand musical experience and book knowledge of his other interests, the theater, Babatunde enrolled in a Brooklyn College where he majored in Speech and Theatre.

Babatunde's diversified interests have allowed him the opportunity to develop his other talents.

During his professional career Babatunde has performed with the Negro Ensemble Company, National Black Theatre, Afro-American Total Theatre and several national touring companies. He was lead male dancer and choreographer for the International Afrikan-American Ballet, after which he wrote and directed musicals for the New York State Children's Theatre. He was offered a part in the movie "Short Eyes" as an undercover policeman and he shared the stage with Leslie Uggams and Richard

Roundtree in the touring company of "Guys and Dolls." When six principal roles in musicals for Broadway were offered to him Babatunde chose "Timbuktu!"

"Timbuktu!" more than any other production gave Babatunde the chance to showcase several of his skills. He acted as a consultant in West African folklore and music as well as writing and playing instruments in two of the charts used in the show; he created the character Chakaba, on stilts, and gave memorial performances in the "Antelope Ballet" and other dances throughout the play.

Chosen over 60 competitors from across the country Babatunde began a world tour with Liza Minelli in 1978. He sung and danced with Ms. Minelli in several numbers throughout the show and took the spotlight during his solo, "Mr. Cellophane."

New sights and higher heights is the fuel that keeps Babatunde's ambitions burning. He will star in a new Broadway musical called "Reggae" with Calvin Lockhart and Phillip Thomas. Babatunde is a man without stereotypes. He accomplishes it all.

Mint Museum Schedules Five One-Act Plays

Original one-act plays -- written by Charlotte playwrights -- star in the Golden Circle Theatre during the month of May.

Mint Museum Theatre Guild members will present two weekends of original one-act plays May 14, 15, 21 and 22 at 8 p.m. in the Golden Circle Theatre, 501 Hempstead Place. Tickets are \$2 for each evening's performance.

Two one-acts will be presented at each performance May 14 and 15. "Baby Talk," written by Judy Cook and directed by Lydia Grybos, has a cast of five: Pauline Nilend, Bonnie Cook, Judy Fletcher, Dandy Saville, and Susanne Dean. "Matador, Adios," written by Mark Gilbert and directed by Sandy Queen, is a 20 minute monologue delivered by Dean Whitworth.

On May 21 and 22, three one-act plays will be presented each evening. "Strategy," written by John Thompson and directed by Phyllis Van Cleave, has a cast of two -- Vaughn Olinger and Rudy Thompson. "Lou Gehrig Did Not Die of Cancer," written by Jason Miller and directed by Dan Shoemaker, features Barbara Hird and Paula Tinsley. "Miri," written by Lie Steele and directed by Mary Coyne, has a cast of five: Sandy Queen, John Brewer, Mindy Asrael, Phil Cutrell and Ted Levine.

The five one-act plays, acted and directed by Mint Museum Theatre Guild members, are presented under the supervision of Marilyn Carter, Artistic Director for the Department of Performing Arts of the Mint Museum. Proceeds benefit the Dorothy Masterson Scholarship Fund to assist deserving students with tuition for acting classes taught at the Mint.

Dallas

J.R. uses his power to try and force the Farlows to stop protecting Sue Ellen and John Ross, on a rebroadcast of "Dallas," Friday, May 14 at 9 p.m. on WBTV, Channel 3.

Unknown to J.R., Sue Ellen's relationship with Dusty is already being adversely affected by his feelings of inadequacy. Bobby is having troubles of his own. Pam has a life-threatening emotional breakdown and he has to deal with a possible extortionist after receiving a baffling piece of mail. Cliff Barnes' new role as head of Wentworth Tool and Die does not sit well with his new-found half-sister, Katherine, and Mitch considers a new approach to his medical career in the hope of getting Lucy back.