

Eartha Kitt responds to love, life with candor

By CORINNE ABATT

Somebody in Pontiac last week had the inspiration to call Eartha Kitt, who's playing in "Timbuktu" at the Fisher Theater, and ask a favor.

Would she come out and visit the Pontiac Arts Center on Friday and then officially open the appearance of Michigan Arttrain and the Arts and Autos Festival?

Both events were officially kicked off last Sunday with a flock of activities ranging from music and drama to kite flying and pantomime.

Miss Kitt, who has on occasion been represented as temperamental, consented. And there she was last Friday, touring the Pontiac Art Center, talking with all who approached her (and she is easily approachable), voicing her enthusiasm for the Weller Midener sculpture in the main gallery and comparing the way the youngsters in the ceramics worked with clay to the way she played cotton seeds in her childhood in South Carolina.

She ran manicured hands slowly over one of Midener's mahogany figures, relishing the tactile qualities and wondering where she would put it if she bought it.

She recommended the theater piece with her have some of the rose wine offered.

"It's very pleasant," she said sipping from her glass, "not sweet, I don't like sweet wine."

But ask her about children and her volunteer work on their behalf, and the lady with one of the most sensuous voices in all the world, turns her total attention. She began by voicing concerns—that children be exposed to art in various forms, that they have an opportunity for involvement and as a result become aware not only of art, but of themselves in the process.

She is troubled by the lack of respect which children and young people have for the older generations in this country and blamed at least some of it on TV.

"I see a lot of backtalk on TV and I resent that—you don't find that in other societies like the Oriental where they revere their elders."

Although she described her childhood on a cotton farm as "very rough," she is nonetheless concerned that city children have an opportunity to live and work on a farm. And somehow she equates enjoyment of the arts with close-to-the soil experience.

Now, if all of this was simply vocal comment and theory, it would hardly be worth repeating.

But, Miss Kitt has followed her words with action—even while playing in Detroit.

On Wednesday afternoons, she goes

down to work with the youngsters in a dance class at the Detroit Conservatory of Music.

When at home in Los Angeles, she participates with a dance class on Saturdays in the Watts district.

"It's a marvelous feeling for me to see their feelings—She bothered to come." It took me a year (in Los Angeles) to convince them that I wasn't trying to con them.

"But, even if only one parent and one child shows up, I am there, because they know somebody cares—somebody from outside" is the way they put it."

Her longtime dream of having a working farm where youngsters could come to work the soil and participate in the arts is moving closer to reality. She learned that Carnegie Hall in New York City has a farm in New Jersey waiting for the right kind of a person to develop an arts program for it.

"Being a farmer is just as artistic as being an artist," she said. "Using clay is creative just like planting seeds."

She moved away to get a piece of cheese to feed her gray poodle, Deanna, and then came back with an afterthought, "One of the most important things about art—it has no color."

When she left to go to the Winsor House reception, a clear imprint of her lingered in the gallery.

She wears her pride in having made

it from from a farm in South Carolina to the great stages of the world like a brilliant banner. She is dedicated to doing her part in improving the lot of children and senior citizens in this country.

"Children and senior citizens belong together—they have so much to give each other."

She is an independent person, who considers herself blessed to be both woman and mother.

"I have a motherly feeling about everybody I work with. There's no greater feeling than knowing you're a woman . . . I pity men, I've been free all my life from men."

At this point she commented on the power roles which men who work closely with women are apt to drop into and added in a low vibrating tone, "just a little sharing, that's all I want, just a little sharing."

It is sharing her talents with youngsters that brings the light to her eyes and the smile to her face.

"There is nothing in the world like it. You're not telling them what you have done with yourself, you're showing them."

"Timbuktu" will be at the Fisher until Oct. 28. Then it's on to Chicago, San Diego and Los Angeles and cities in between.



Eartha Kitt pleased the crowd at the Pontiac Art Center because she was complimentary about the exhibit and the art program there. (Staff photo)

Gem and mineral show incorporates many facets

The 15th annual Greater Detroit Gem and Mineral Show is coming Oct. 13-15 to the Lightguard Armory on E. Eight Mile in Detroit.

Hosted by the Michigan Mineralogical Society, it will feature a wide variety of exhibits presented by some of the nation's outstanding museums. Admission is \$2 for adults and 50 cents for children under 12.

Highlighting the displays will be the beautifully jeweled crown which once belonged to the imperial family of Austria.

Back in 1811, Napoleon Bonaparte's, second spouse, Marie Louise of Austria, gave birth to a son and thus assured the empire of an heir. Napoleon in his enthusiasm presented his fruitful wife with a beautiful tiara studded with 800 brilliant Indian diamonds and a generous sprinkling of sparkling emeralds. The diamonds alone totaled something like 700 carats.

Some years later this jewel-studded diadem passed from the hands of Marie Louise to the Archduke of Austria. Just recently, the headpiece was donated to the Smithsonian Institution.

With its emeralds now replaced with choice turquoise cabochons which set off the priceless array of diamonds and adds to the general symmetry of the piece, this fascinating crown is one of the many unusual things to be seen

at the coming Detroit show.

MUSEUMS FURNISHING exhibits, in addition to the Smithsonian, includes the Geological Museum of Copenhagen, Denmark; Canada's National Museum of Ottawa; the Royal Ontario Museum of Toronto; the American Museum of Natural His-

tory; the Philadelphia Academy of Natural Sciences; the Denver Museum of Natural History; the Paterson Museum of Paterson, N. J.; Seaman Mineralogical Museum of Michigan Tech University; Cranbrook Institute of Science; Illinois State University; University of Cincinnati; and Wayne State University.

Besides these many exhibits there also will be a host of individual displays featuring gems and crystallized minerals, fossils, crafts, and specialized creations of many kinds. There also will be a special "Club Alley" section featuring a variety of club exhibits presented by the region's mineral clubs.



The jeweled crown that once belonged to the wife of Napoleon Bonaparte will be displayed during the 15th annual gem and mineral show, coming to this area Oct. 13-15.

Watch for special moon on Monday

Look for a hunter's moon Monday.

Everyone knows about the harvest moon, made famous in song, but the hunter's moon is a bit more obscure.

Both were of more than passing interest in former times, however, because they provided just that much more valuable light by which to complete chores, including September harvesting and October hunting.

The orange glow is from the moon rising early and reflecting the sun's last rays.

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Metro park is awash in color of fall

The brilliant streaks of autumn color are gradually moving across southeastern Michigan and into the Huron-Clinton Metroparks. The best color is expected now through Oct. 15.

Stony Creek Metropark near Rochester has rolling, hilly countryside abundant with fall color. Goldenrods and asters brighten the fields within the park, while the leaves of the trees come alive with color.

Park roads provide an excellent view of the blazing orange clumps of sassafras trees visible on the east side of the park. Especially vivid are the red hues of oaks and sumacs and the yellow of hickory and aspen.

Native white pines offer the green foliage of evergreens as a contrast to the vivid colors of the deciduous trees.

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