

Orchestra's size reflects musical style

An orchestra much smaller than a standard symphony orchestra, the group of 30 or so professional musicians and community members known as the Mozart Players is dedicated to performing not only the works of the Mozart, their 18th century namesake, but those of other composers from that period and periods since.

The Players will present the second concert of their 1984-85 season Sunday, at 8:30 p.m., in Soreng Theatre.

The group, comprised of many University faculty members and graduates, began playing in churches when it was formed by a University music graduate student in March 1982.

"It's almost like a family," says Robert Hurwitz, the Players' music director and music professor at the University.

The name was adopted for the group because the small size of their orchestra was common in Mozart's day. Most of the compositions the Mozart Players

perform were written for a group of that particular size.

"It's a truer approximation of the kind of orchestra available in Mozart's and Haydn's time," says Caitriona Bolster, general manager of the orchestra.

Performing in a chamber orchestra poses more of a challenge to musicians, according to Bolster.

"They're much more exposed," she says. "The playing has to be incredibly precise and clear. They can't cover up anything."

The group also differs from many large orchestras because of its cooperative makeup. The players, the majority of whom are also members of the Eugene Symphony Orchestra, decide on all musical aspects concerning the group, including what pieces to play, the number and place of concerts and what musicians to allow as members.

A conductor is hired only by vote of the players. The musicians also form half

of the orchestra's board of directors, with the other seats taken up by community members.

"It's an unusual situation to have professional performers on the board," Hurwitz says. "Most (orchestras) are not organized like this. There's more say about decisions usually made by other people."

Sunday's concert will feature several selections and a solo performance, as do most of the chamber group's performances. The orchestra will open the program with Mozart's Eine kleine Nachtmusik, K. 525, and A Musical Joke, a composition which "pokes fun at what one can do wrong in a piece," Hurwitz says.

Leslie Sawyer, concertmaster of the Eugene Symphony Orchestra, will be the featured soloist in Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto in E Minor, Op. 64 during the second half of Sunday's performance.

Marianne Chin



Photo by Michael Clapp

Leslie Sawyer will join the Oregon Mozart Players Sunday.

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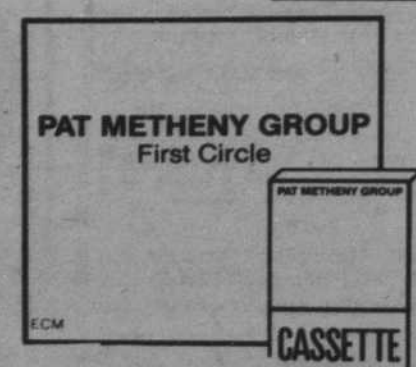
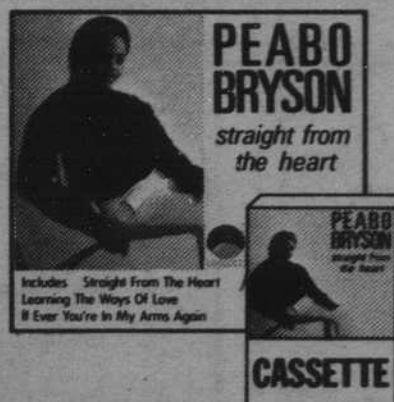
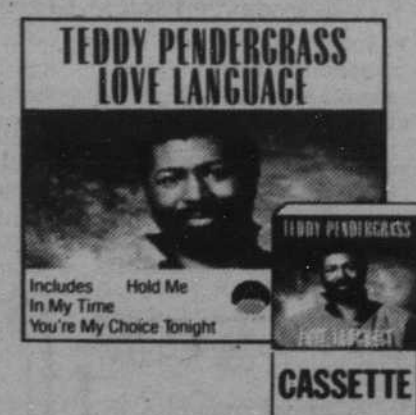
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