

Find out what's up with Eugene's Treepeople  
See Page 4B

# THE Friday EDITION

Oregon daily emerald

arts & entertainment

March 8, 1985

## BAROQUE

# BIRTHDAYS

Like any other era in history, theirs was a time when the world was filled with turmoil. There was war and religious conflict.

But there was also opulence and grandeur.

Two of the greatest composers in music history, Johann Sebastian Bach and George Frederic Handel, were born three hundred years ago. They were born in the same year and each devoted their lives to music. But the similarities end there, for the two men lived in different worlds.

Bach's native Germany was torn by war — religious causes and in-fighting. And though he wrote his music primarily to the glory of God, it reflects the religious turmoil of his homeland.

Bach's music, though written for religion, represents the conflict of the day, pitting instrument against instrument, voice against voice. There is no peace here.

But since composers earned their living writing for the moneyed class, Bach did his share of creating for the aristocracy. Possibly his best-known work, the Brandenburg Concertos, is a result of that system of patronage.

And like the religious music of the day, these concertos again reflect the turmoil of the times, with solo instruments fighting for attention and dominance over an orchestra.

Not all music of this period was born and raised in conflict, as the music of Handel shows. Unlike Bach, who lived in near poverty writing for the



church, Handel lived the good life in England, writing opera and oratorio for the rich of Europe.

Earning the equivalent of \$1,500 a year, compared to Bach's \$80, Handel had already "arrived" at the age of 25.

His first love was opera, which he wrote for years after

the vast popularity of the medium was on the wane. But he is most famous for his oratorios — opera without the staging. His "Messiah," written in a 24-day frenzy, is a standard of religious holidays.

And finally, as if 1685 wasn't a big enough year just because of the birth of Handel and Bach, in Italy there was the birth of another composer,

Domenico Scarlatti. At that time, considered the full flowering of the Baroque period, Scarlatti's music showed the way of the future. His harpsichord sonatas, still popular today, are said to have influenced latter "classical" composers, such as Haydn and Mozart.

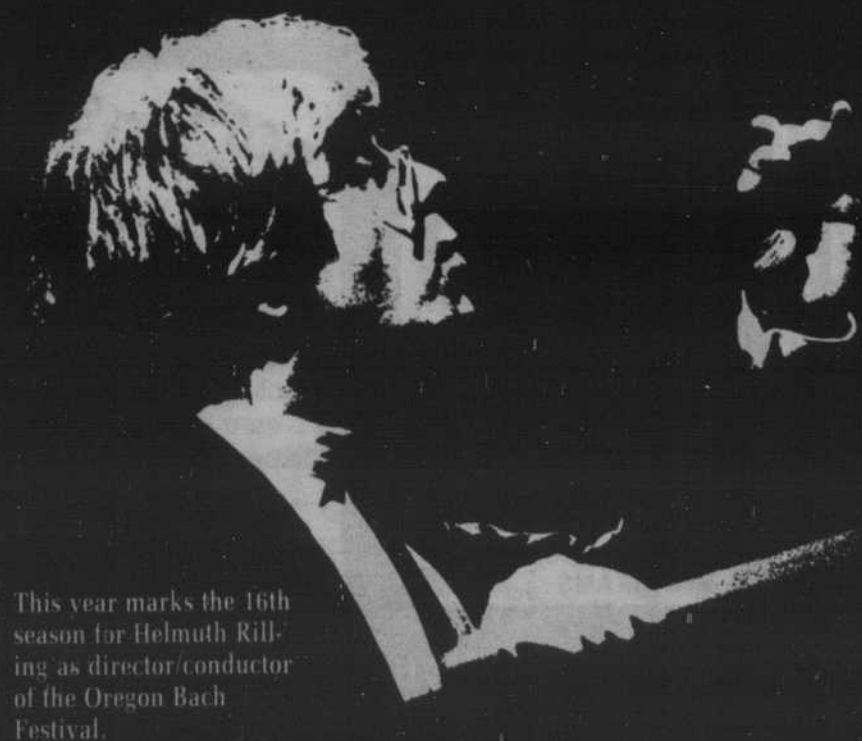
Stacia Scarborough  
Illustration by Shawn Bird

### A rundown of upcoming Bach celebrations

This year is special for those of us who relish classical music and love birthdays: 1985 is the anniversary of the birth dates of baroque composers George Handel, Johann Sebastian Bach and Domenico Scarlatti. The composers would, if they were still alive, be 300 years old this year. Members of Eugene's arts community,

proud of the annual Oregon Bach Festival, are definitely celebrating the birth date of Bach, who was born March 21, 1685. On Thursday, March 21, 1985 several events are scheduled in commemoration and celebration: **Bach's Birthday Bash** Local entertainment and arts groups are planning the "Bach

Continued on Page 3B



This year marks the 16th season for Helmut Rilling as director/conductor of the Oregon Bach Festival.

Photo by Warren Morgan