



# Love matters

Eugene Symphony just won't let day of hearts die down; tonight's concert offers a tribute to the season



**Windy Borman**  
for the Emerald

"Love" is in the air tonight at the Hult Center for the Performing Arts, when the Eugene Symphony takes the Silva Concert Hall stage. The show, titled "Love," invites you to sit back, relax and "let your spirit soar" to the sounds of classical love songs.

The loving theme not only feels appropriate because the concerto occurs amidst the month of love but also because the emotion is one of the most powerful we feel.

At one time or another love affects everyone, but it can be expressed or felt quite differently. Love can be light and happy or passionate and turbulent. It can be shared between family, friends and lovers.

Despite love's universality, it remains one of the least understood and most confusing human emotions. Philosophers, poets, playwrights and composers have all attempted to articulate the meaning of love.

Through works by composers Strauss, Mendelssohn and Prokofiev, the Eugene Symphony hopes to explore, express and educate us on love. The pieces conductor Miguel Harth-Bedoya selected for tonight's presentation explore the different aspects of love.

The concerto begins with Strauss' "Voices of Spring," an elegant waltz "that swirls with visions of Vienna, the city of love."

Next, Mendelssohn's "Violin Concerto in E minor" is a "virtuosic delight" that sparkles and the audience.

Finally, Prokofiev's haunting beauty, "Romeo & Juliet," captures the "drama, suffering, pain, sadness and, at the same

time, the bittersweet feeling of death and departure of a loved one," according to the press release.

In an effort to reach out and educate the community, the Eugene Symphony invited local students to a preview performance of "Love" on Feb. 16.

Harth-Bedoya said the main idea behind the event was for the symphony to develop a relationship with students so that "when they become adults they will still have a good memory of when they came to see us."

One way the symphony emphasized that point was to leave the tuxedos in the closet and perform in Eugene Symphony T-shirts. To further help bridge the gap between the complex theme and music, the symphony sought active participation from students.

The concerto incorporated four students from Thurston and

South Eugene high schools into the preview by having them read excerpts from William Shakespeare's "Romeo & Juliet" before each Prokofiev movement. The narrations seemed to create a friendly, informal environment for the students and draw them into the music.

Brian Lewis, the solo violinist who will perform one movement in Mendelssohn's "Violin Concerto" during tonight's show, knows first-hand that early exposure to classical music can make a lasting impression on a student.

"I began playing the violin when I was four years old," Lewis said. "Almost everyone in my family plays the violin — my mom and sister play, as did my grandmother and great grandmother."

"When I went to kindergarten, I was shocked to learn that not everyone played the violin!"

Lewis's incredible talent, lay-

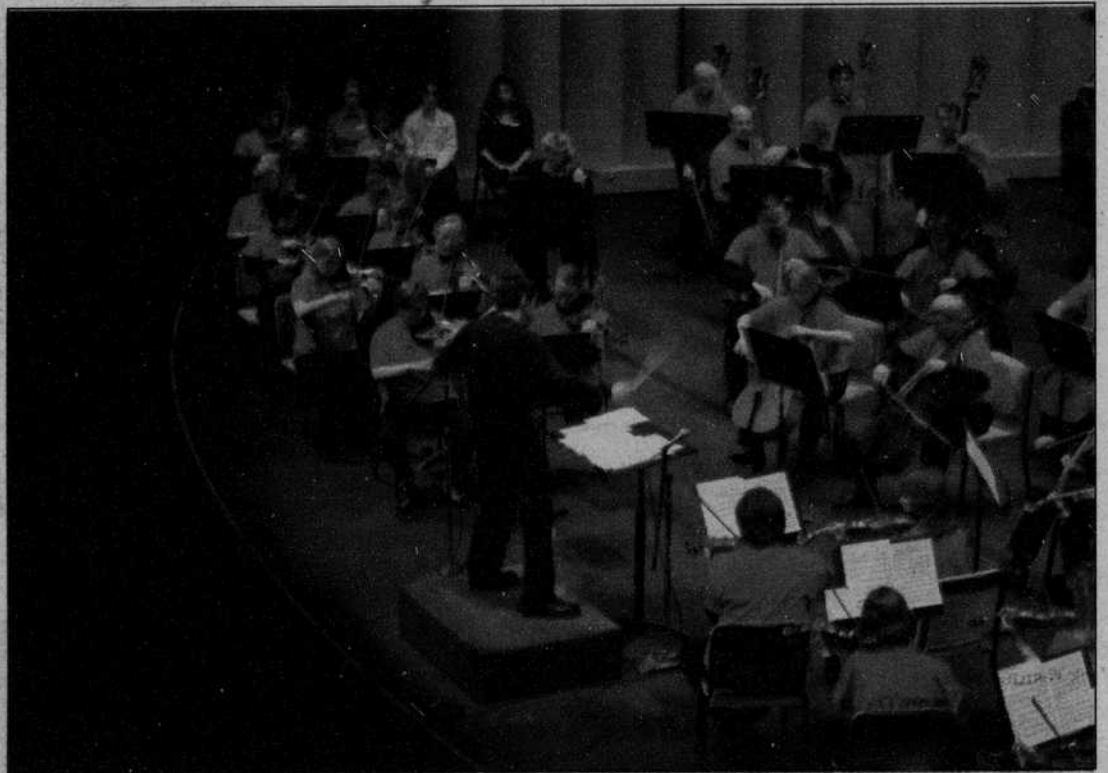
ered with his early training, helped him achieve great things at a young age. He gave his first solo recital when he was five years old and he performed in Carnegie Hall at age nine.

The symphony also serves as a friendly reunion for Harth-Bedoya and Lewis. They both graduated from the Julliard School of Music and shared the William Schuman Prize for their outstanding leadership and accomplishment in music.

Their paths have crossed once prior to "Love," in Lima, Peru, four years ago, when Lewis performed another solo under Harth-Bedoya's direction.

Catch this inspirational celebration of "Love" tonight at 8 p.m. at the Hult Center. Tickets for the performance are \$10 for students and vary between \$12 and \$36 for adults and seniors.

For tickets and information call 682-5000.



All photos by Kevin Calame Emerald

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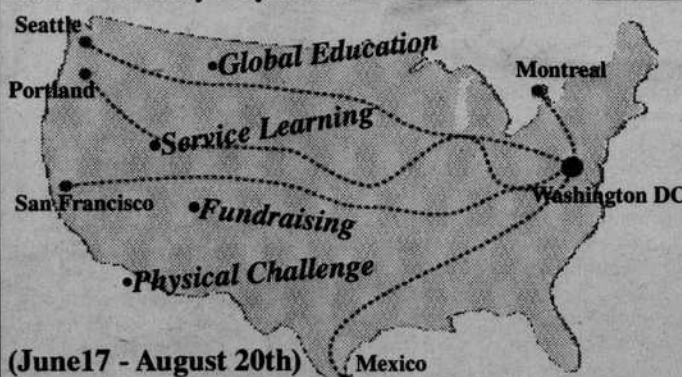
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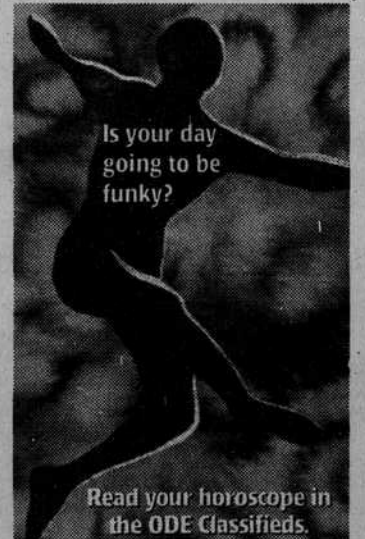
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