

ENTERTAINMENT

PULSE EDITOR: MONICA HANDE

Okinawan music encounters Western styles

■ A steel guitar and a 700-year-old sanshin make for an interesting performance at the WOW Hall

By Josh Ryneal
Oregon Daily Emerald

Bob Brozman, a self-described "world blues" musician and collaborator with world-music artists around the globe, is bringing his blend of steel guitar and Hawaiian influences to the WOW Hall tonight as part of his collaboration project with renowned Okinawan guitarist Takashi Hirayasu.

Their new release, "Jin Jin/Firefly," showcases the pair's virtuoso talents and combines Brozman's steel and Hawaiian guitar with Hirayasu's sanshin, a 700-year-old Japanese stringed instrument. The album's vocals are based on Okinawan nursery rhymes, but Brozman and Hirayasu liven things up with guitar arrangements that include everything from ballads to rollicking ska-influenced rhythms.

The pair met for the first time just hours before recording the album and went directly to a small Okinawan island to record in a one-room house. That minimalist approach shines on "Jin Jin/Firefly," and listeners can hear how well the pair meshes.

Brozman, who has put out 25 albums during the course of his career, said he tries to meet the artists "not 50 percent of the way, but three-fourths of the way" when he plays with them.

"Takashi is no different," he said. "When we first started playing, I watched his facial muscles, his

pupils, his hands, the way he holds his instrument, all to get a feel for the style of music I'm collaborating over."

Brozman describes his latest effort as "Okinawan music meets Western styles," but added that all music is blues of one kind or another.

"I use my instrument as a tool of expression of that," he said.

Brozman plays a number of different types of guitar on the album, including steel guitars from his own collection, which is considered one of the country's largest. He uses the instrument to play percussion as well as to complement Hirayasu's sanshin, and even manages to coax a harmonica sound in one song on the album.

The sanshin is not an instrument that may be immediately familiar to American listeners, but Hirayasu plays it like a regular guitar for a sound that is something entirely different. Brozman said the sanshin is "like a banjo without frets."

"We're inventing a whole new style of music," he said.

Brozman has collaborated with world music stars from more than a dozen different countries, including West Africa, India and Guinea.

"I like to focus on cultures that have been colonized," he said. "I'm trying to form a worldwide family of musicians."

Hirayasu, who has collaborated with artists such as guitar legend Ry Cooder, said that working with Brozman was effortless.

"It was so easy," he said. "He has open ears; I have open ears; it was so easy."



Courtesy Photo

Takashi Hirayasu and Bob Brozman (left to right) will treat their audience to an East-meets-West fusion of styles at the WOW Hall.

The pair has another project due out in the summer of 2000, which will continue the musical experimentation of "Jin Jin/Firefly."

"My work with Takashi covers the whole range of human emotion," Brozman said. "We just play music, not a style or genre."

Bob Fennessy, publicist for the WOW Hall, said Brozman has played there a few times and is known for his humor and the inventiveness of his live shows.

"He definitely has an audience here. It's a neat thing; he never does the same show twice," he said. "He

can play with anybody and it sounds great."

Tickets are available at the WOW Hall box office and the EMU ticket office. Prices are \$12 in advance and \$14 at the door. Doors open at 8 p.m., and the show begins at 8:30 p.m.

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These choirs sing without words

■ Tonight's concert will bring unsung instruments into the spotlight at Beall Hall

By Monica Hande
Oregon Daily Emerald

Tenor and bass will fill Beall Concert Hall tonight at the University Tuba Choir's annual Octubafest.

The Tuba Choir will team up with the Oregon Tuba Ensemble, a Lane County-based Oregon Tuba Association ensemble, to present a concert featuring tubas and euphoniums.

The tubas provide bass, said Jeff Turay, Oregon Tuba Ensemble director, and the euphoniums, or baritone, are in the tenor range. It is an equivalent to a men's choir, he said.

The Tuba Choir has invited the

Oregon Tuba Ensemble to contribute to Octubafest, partly as thanks to the Oregon Tuba Association's financial contributions to low-brass education at the University and the scholarships it offers to tuba and euphonium players. The two ensembles will perform some pieces individually and others together under the direction of Richard Frazier.

Tonight's repertoire will highlight a few solos and duets. The Oregon Tuba Ensemble is prepared to perform a John Phillips Sousa march, "Washington Post," and a few other pieces arranged by members of the ensemble.

Turay said the Oregon Tuba Ensemble, which is composed of about 10 musicians, occasionally performs at the University. The Tuba

Choir is made up of University musicians as well as a few community members, including a couple of high school students. Each year, the ensemble prepares for two annual events: Octubafest and The Return of the Mighty Tubas of Spring.

In the spring concert, "we get to show off all the stuff we learned throughout the year," said Tim Bott, a sophomore music composition major.

Bott said the ensemble puts tubas and baritone, the "forgotten-about instruments," in the spotlight for a change. The concert will begin at 8 p.m. Turay expects tonight's performance to last from 90 minutes to two hours. Tickets cost \$3 for students and \$5 for the general public and will be available at the door.

Calendar

Tuesday, October 24

International Film Festival: Sweden's "My Life as a Dog" is part of a "Coming of Age" series of films shown in their original languages with English subtitles. 7 p.m.-9 p.m., 122 Pacific Hall. Free.

Model United Nations: Weekly meeting offers students an opportunity to learn about various cultures, current international issues and how the

United Nations works. 5 p.m., Century Room D, EMU. Free.

Weaving New Beginnings Reception: All members of the UO community are invited to this fifth annual event welcoming faculty, staff and students of color. Doors open at 5:45 p.m.; the 6:45 p.m. program includes special recognition for all attending faculty, officers of administration and staff having seven or more years of service. Ballroom, EMU. Free.

Presentation: Andy Kerr shows slides, describes his desert "explorations" and explains what can be done to save the desert for future generations. 7:30 p.m., 100 Willamette Hall. Free.

Medieval Film Series: "The Lion in Winter," quasi-sequel to "Becket," portrays Christmas with the dysfunctional Plantagenet family. Katharine Hepburn won Best Actress for her portrayal of Eleanor of Aquitaine. 7 p.m., 180 PLC. Free.

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