

DuRoche used jazz to build communities

By
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IVN Contributing Writer

The I.V. branch of Josephine Community Library hosted an Oregon Humanities program in Cave Junction on Friday, April 26. The Conversation Project presentation by jazz musician and writer Tim DuRoche was titled, "The Art of the Possible: Jazz and Community Building."

DuRoche is the director of programs for the World Affairs Council of Oregon and hosts a radio program called "The New Thing" on KMHD in the Portland area. Dubbed "Oregon's resident jazz intellectual" by Oregon Music News, he previously worked for Portland Center Stage where he developed programs around historic preservation, civic engagement, sustainability and the arts.

The talk touched briefly on the history

of jazz, the first truly American art form, and how it reflected the rising ethnic and cultural diversity of the country during the 20th Century. In the early days, jazz was blamed for the ruin of society as the "Jazz Age" introduced increased freedom of expression for everything from rising hemlines to women's suffrage. The popularity of sheet music, records and radio brought jazz into people's living rooms, and gave even new Americans commonalities in the developing cultural phenomenon. The art form helped develop social values such as unity and equality.

DuRoche pointed out jazz improvisation allows all participants in the "conversation" to build on affirmatives. "Improvisation is inherently inclusive. We all want to be right, and jazz makes this possible," he said.

DuRoche then compared the process of jazz performance to solving conflict and building community.

"In collaborative leadership everyone gives up parts of what they want in order to achieve consensus," he said. "True leadership is the capacity to invite. The notion that you're committed to the whole allows you to share power."

DuRoche then posited that jazz and community share questions such as, How much risk are you willing to take? What can you agree on? And, how much are you invested in the well-being of the whole? He went on to express the hope that jazz could inspire us all to embrace cooperation as a cornerstone of our culture.

DuRoche concluded that, "Jazz is the art of the possible where dissent is given space and the gifts of each person are acknowledged and valued. We all have the capacity to create the world we share. We must ask ourselves, 'What can we create together that we can't create alone...that will make a difference?'"

As part of the presentation, Oregon Little Big Band Duo Michelle LeComte and Tim Wallace performed several jazz pieces as well as demonstrating improvisation techniques. This lively discussion was attended by a small, but enthusiastic group of musicians and jazz aficionados who were encouraged to comment about their own experiences in both music and group dynamics.

Oregon Humanities is a nonprofit organization that "connects Oregonians to ideas that change lives and transform communities," by encouraging citizens to get together, share ideas, listen, think and grow. This is the fourth season of the Conversation Project, a statewide program supported by the National Endowment for the Humanities, Oregon Cultural Trust and individual contributions.

Beautiful African music that is good for your soul!

Immanuel United Methodist Church presents Echoes of the Blind Sunday, May 19 at 6 p.m. at 200 W. Watkins St. in Cave Junction.

Echoes of the Blind, originated in Monrovia, Liberia. This group was composed of blind men and women who sang for food on the war ravaged streets of Liberia. Lasana Kanneh remembers singing in the midst of rebel fighting with bullets flying over their heads. At different points, he was forced to sing for infamous war lords.

Liberian Acappella was a group of 10 Liberian men, who by fate traveled out of Africa and toured 46 states in four years. The goal of this group was raising funds for the orphans left back in Africa. One of the highlights, of this group was singing at the Grand Ole Opry in Nashville, Tennessee for a crowd of over 20,000 people.

Lasana's next group was the African Gospel Acappella consisting of six blind men from the original two groups. This group toured the West Coast for four years and you can still hear Lasana's distinctive lead vocals on the official website and their CDs. A very memorable experience for African Gospel was singing with the late Larry Norman in one of his last concerts and being featured on one of his last CDs. While the former groups were all acappella style, Lasana has added instruments to his new music. This has created a totally unique and original style that cannot be contained in any one genre. Soaring vocals, simple melodies and killer arrangements create this special music.

IjenNeh has achieved much success recently with the music. Winning the gospel sing at the Clackamas County Fair, sponsored by the FISH 104.1, two years in a row with the crowd favorite "Blessed Assurance Reggae". Lasana was competing against 21 other singers, singing mostly mainstream Christian pop. Lasana has also been featured on NPR, VOA, and many other local & national stations. Lasana Kanneh suffered much in his native homeland of Liberia. He was born blind and ostracized by his community for this disability. He was eventually abandoned at the school for the blind in Monrovia. God intervened and an evangelist took him home and preached the good news to him. He readily believed the Word of God and could not return to his home due to his conversion. He escaped war, persecution, poverty, abuse and personal failure to bring you these beautiful songs of faith, hope, and restoration.

Admittance is free but a free will offering will be accepted.

Visit his website at: ijenneh.wordpress.com

Illinois Valley Fine Artists to host watercolor workshop

The Illinois Valley Fine Artists are hosting a two day watercolor workshop May 13th and 14th with Umpqua County artist, Vinita Pappas. The workshop will be in the RCC building in Kerby, 24353 Redwood Hwy, from 10 to 2. The cost is \$80.

Vinita has won many awards. Recent ones include Fourth Place Award Watercolor Society of Oregon; 44th Annual Aqueous Media Exhibition: Grand Prize Winner; Mirror Pond Gallery National Pastel and Watercolor Exhibition: Chosen for 2009 Greatest of the Grape

Featured Artist and Poster Art and Best of Show Award, "Hundred Valleys", Umpqua Valley Art Association. She teaches a popular online watercolor class with national and international students.

On her website Create38.com she says, "The life of a watercolor is a very fragile thing! To maintain the immediacy that I am after, I work in three major steps. The first being a wash that transitions in color, value and temperature with no sign of a brush stroke. The second phase establishes the mid-tones and has to integrate color and subject. This is by

far the most difficult step and is often where failure comes. The final stage is my favorite. I use calligraphic brush strokes with dark or bright colors. Using brush strokes is one way to personalize a piece. The more I paint, the more I appreciate seeing the hand of an artist in a painting."

Join this fun workshop and learn how to loosen up and paint with more freedom and expression in watercolor. To register please contact Bea Thompson via phone 541-597-2359 or email randb@cavenet.com or call Pat Hammer at 541-592-6351.

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COME SEE QUINN

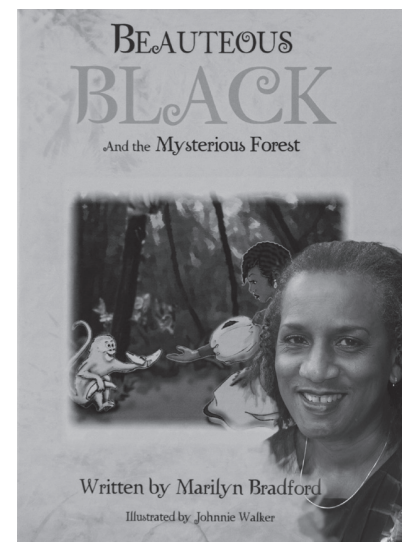
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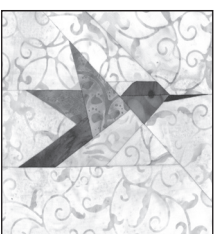
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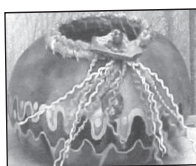
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