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MUSIC BY BRETT CAMPBELL

Vibrant Voices

Vocal and choral music highlight May offerings.

In the late 1960s, British singers saw what happened when American blues and folk artists went back to their roots. They decided to do the same thing, sparking the Celtic music revival that continues to this day. Such bands as Fairport Convention, Steeleye Span, and their many spinoffs even influenced rockers like Traffic and Jethro Tull.

Of those bands, although it never quite made it big, especially in America, Pentangle was one of the best. It combined the superlative acoustic guitar talents of jazz and folk-oriented John Renbourn and the bluesier Bert Jansch with the ravishingly beautiful voice of Jacqui McShee.

McShee's vocals floated over Renbourn's rich fingerstyle guitar lines, which blended folk, jazz, blues, and even Middle Eastern styles. Three decades later, **McShee and Renbourn** are reunited, appearing in Eugene on Wednesday, May 21 at Café Paradiso. Fans of folk, Celtic, guitar, and voice shouldn't miss this one.

For a more recent Celtic fusion experience, on Thursday, May 22, you can hear **Four Shillings Short** at Sam Bond's Garage. Deploying hammered dulcimer, mandolin, Medieval & Renaissance woodwinds, tinwhistles, mandola, percussion, banjo, and vocals, the group's signature sound is unexpected: a sitar, which somehow works more often than you'd expect. Fans of Celtic and Indian music: Check out this group.

As Attorney General Ashcroft's taxpayer-financed robbing of the statue of justice's nu-

dity shows, plenty of American politicians fear art more than terrorists. Government disapproval of the arts is nothing new, but in the Soviet Union, it could get you the gulag.

After Stalin deemed his great opera, *Lady MacBeth of Mtensk*, insufficiently populist, Dmitri Shostakovich found himself in a dilemma — how to write a piece that would win official approval without selling out his artistic approval. Dubbed — not by the composer — “an artist's creative answer to justified criticism,” his *Fifth Symphony* reflects the tensions of the time — and the composer's ingenuity in hoodwinking the authorities.

One of the most powerful orchestral works of the 20th century, the symphony concludes with a triumphant theme that's memorable enough to satisfy any lover of Tchaikovsky or Beethoven — but

the composer later insisted that the triumph is that of the bad guys, a forced rejoicing under duress. The **Eugene Symphony** May 15 concert also features a Verdi overture and one of those virtuoso Romantic showstoppers, Camille Saint Saens' second piano concerto.

Another big, juicy piano concerto tops the bill at the **University Symphony** concert at the UO's Beall Concert Hall on Sunday, May 18, when UO Prof. Gregory Mason solos in Aram Khachaturian's knucklebuster. The concert also features one of the 20th century's loveliest choral works: Leonard Bernstein's exuberant “Chichester Psalms.”

Voices are in the spotlight at the UO this month: On Thursday, May 15 the **UO Opera Ensemble** presents scenes from



Jon Nakamatsu performs Saint-Saëns' Piano Concerto No. 2 - "a virtuoso Romantic showstopper" - with the Eugene Symphony, Thursday, May 15.

Starhawk
Eugene
May 20-25

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"Connecting Permaculture and the Sacred"
T-W, May 20 - 21 Lost Valley Education Center
(541) 937-3351, www.lostvalley.org

"War, Peace, Terror, and Global Justice — Where Do We Go Now?"
Thursday, May 22 7p UO EMU Ballroom
Post-presentation Booksigning \$6 students; \$11 non-student Tickets at UO/EMU Ticket Offc.

Webs of Power Booksigning
Friday, May 23 Noon
Mother Kali's, 720 East 13th

"Vision and Action": An Activist Trainer's Training
Friday, May 23 9:30-5p
\$50; limited attendance.
(541) 345-1633 or inform@rio.com

"Magic, Ritual, & Activism"
Saturday, May 24 10a-4p
\$25-75 sliding scale; Dorris Ranch, Springfield
(541) 746-6090 or wyld@efn.org

"An Evening Ritual for the Earth"
Saturday, May 24 8-10p
Donation; Dorris Ranch, Springfield

"Taking it to the Streets (& beyond)"
Sunday, May 25 1-4p
Donation; WOW Hall, 291 W. 8th
(541) 746-6090 or wyld@efn.org

For more info: (541) 345-1633 or www.lostvalley.org/Starhawk.html

