



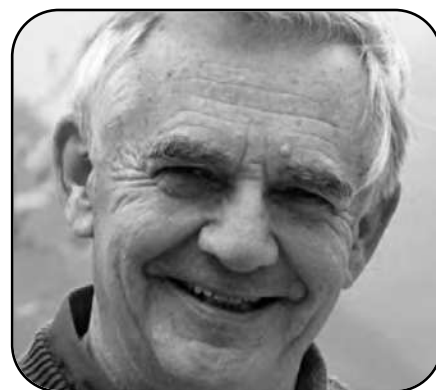
William Zinsser



Marilyn Keller



Ken Peplowski



Steve Stone

OFAM presents the music of some of history's greatest songwriters from the amazing eruption of popular song in the 1930s, which fueled the jazz explosion of the next two decades and still radiates today.

The concert also features the John Pizzarelli Trio. Son of the eminent jazz guitarist (and Stephane Grappelli accompanist) Bucky Pizzarelli, John has (like Harry Connick Jr. and his idol Nat King Cole before him) turned in a poppier direction than many jazz critics can abide, but he's a swinging fret- (and front-) man and singer who was born to this music. This opening gala is probably the best bet if you can make only one concert in the festival's first week.

OFAM next presents a series of concerts at the Shedd devoted to the great American songwriters and featuring some of Oregon's best musicians — Mike Denny, Alan Tarpinian, Marilyn Keller — accompanying Peplowski, Hyman and OFAM vet Ian Whitcomb. On Friday afternoon, August 8, the festival explores Richard Rodgers, who has lately gotten his due in recent books and TV documentaries as one of American music's great composers, lucky enough to work with two of the finest lyricists. Personally, I swing more toward the jazzier and darker Lorenz Hart masterpieces such as "My Funny Valentine" than Oscar Hammerstein's later songs from *Oklahoma!*, *The Sound of Music*, and so many other film and stage musicals, but either way, you can hear some of the grandest music ever written for stage or screen.

On Saturday, August 9, Hyman promises to play 100 of the finest songs of the first half of the 20th century, starting with a slew by the master, Jerome Kern, whose music for *Showboat* was the first great Broadway score, and who continued to compose classics from "Ol' Man River," and "Bill," to "Smoke Gets



In Your Eyes," and many more. That evening, the festival spotlights Cole Porter, America's wittiest chronicler of high society shenanigans, which tends to overshadow the depth he was capable of reaching in classics like "Love for Sale." His songs' lasting value is

evidenced by their fascination for great musicians, including Miles Davis and Frank Sinatra.

The illustrious white songwriters of this era built their palaces on foundations laid by African Americans, and OFAM's August 13

concert pays tribute to four of the greatest: Eubie Blake, Fats Waller, Chuck Berry, and America's greatest musical hero, Duke Ellington, who wrote standards (e.g. "Satin Doll") as lasting as any, and, of course, also pioneered an orchestral jazz that has never been equaled. Blake composed "I'm Just Wild About Harry" among other classics, and lived long enough to be lauded on Broadway with the show named after him. Waller, not only a songwriter with few peers, but a fabulous pianist as well, composed "Ain't Misbehavin'" among dozens of other standards, but was said to have sold the rights to many more that appeared under others' names — sometimes in return for the hamburgers he was so fond of. I'm not sure why Chuck Berry's music is here, except that it demonstrates that the bridge between the first great wave of popular music of the 1930s and the second — rock and roll of the 1950s — isn't as long a stretch as it might have seemed at the time.

New Takes on Old Standards

Some years back, the pre-eminent New York pianist/arranger/jazz historian Dick Hyman got a phone call from a distant cousin, a jazz singer named Sandy Stewart. Her 16-year-old son, who'd taken up piano a few years earlier, had blossomed into what she thought was prodigious talent. Would Hyman listen to him play? He did, and, suitably impressed, arranged private lessons for the teen with one of New York's finest piano teachers. Within a few years, Bill Charlap was playing piano for legends like Gerry Mulligan, Benny Carter, and Phil Woods, and

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