

Jazz Giants

OFAM brings stars of three generations to Hult, Shedd.

Herbie Hancock emerged from Chicago in the early 1960s with a series of now-classic, impressionistic Blue Note albums that displayed both his keyboard virtuosity and his study of composers from Debussy to Bill Evans. Music's greatest spotter of young talent, Miles Davis, recruited Hancock for his celebrated 1960s quintet, to which he became a major compositional contributor.

Since then, Hancock has become one of jazz's most popular artists, always pursuing new sounds and technology (his Powerbook is as important to him as his Steinway), from the landmark '70s fusion bestseller

Headhunters through the proto-techno "Rockit" in the '80s to his current electronically tinged multimedia work. But Hancock maintained his ties to mainstream jazz, from the '70s acoustic supergroup VSOP through his gorgeous, Grammy-winning *Gershwin's World* CD a few years ago.

Now he's teamed up with fellow multiple Grammy winner and tenor sax titan **Michael Brecker**, whose funk fusion helped define jazz in the '70s and '80s, and **Roy Hargrove**, the young Texas trumpeter who became one of the jazz stars of the 1990s. On Feb. 3 the Oregon Festival of American Music is bringing their New Directions in Music show, which celebrates the music of the post-Davis/Coltrane generation — Hancock, Wayne Shorter, Ray Charles, Chick Corea, and more — to the Hult Center. This compelling confluence of jazz musicians is an absolute must-see concert for any jazz fan.

OFAM is bringing another contemporary jazz star, violinist **Regina Carter**, to the Shedd Friday, Jan. 28. Her influences range from earlier jazz fiddle legends Stephane Grappelli and Jean-Luc Ponty to the Motown soul of her hometown of Detroit. She's played with some of today's top jazzers and in the String Trio of New York and Uptown String Quartet, and was the first jazzers allowed to play Paganini's famous Guarneri violin on an album of jazz arrangements of classical works. I found Carter's ear-

lier efforts a bit slick, but her later music shows a percussive swing to go with her easy lyricism. This concert should appeal to jazz fans as well as many pop, soul and even classical music lovers.

The Shedd hosts yet another fine female fiddler on Jan. 26 when the charismatic **Natalie MacMaster** brings her Cape Breton-style music and dance moves back for the third time. Her electrifying shows, awards and collaborations (Paul Simon, Alison Krauss, the Chieftains, and more) keep winning new fans for Celtic music.

As long as we're name dropping, **Jerry Marotta** has played drums for Peter Gabriel, Elvis Costello, John Mayer, Trey Anastasio and dozens of other famous rockers. He's appearing at Café Paradiso on Jan. 27 with **Tom Griesgraber**, who plays the several instruments including the Chapman Stick, a 12-stringed guitar/bass/synth hybrid played by tapping strings behind frets — like playing the guitar fretboard without plucking or strumming. The duo can certainly rock, but also conjures a delicious variety of melodic moods and atmospheres one reviewer called "space age soundtrack music."

The UO's Beall Concert Hall hosts some enticing concerts from a couple of new faculty members, each accompanied by pianist **David Riley**. On Jan. 24, **James Bunte** plays modern music for saxophone by Samuel Barber and several contemporary composers, including a piece that combines jazz and hip-hop motifs with taped dialogue from Texas death row inmates. Then on Feb. 3, **Nancy Andrew** plays flute music from the 18th, 19th

and 20th centuries, including one of Haydn's cheerful London trios, contemporary pieces by Shulamit Ran and fantasy variations on a Sacred Harp tune by UO professor **Robert Kyr**. On Feb. 1, the **UO Chamber Choir** plays still more recent music by **Benjamin Britten** and other composers, plus traditional folksongs and show tunes.

Anyone who's seen the Monty Python Tchaikovsky sketches, as well as some hardcore classical fans, may find it difficult to take the Russian Romantic's music seriously: "Tchaikovsky. Was he the tortured soul who poured out his immortal longings into dignified passages of stately music, or was he just an old poof who wrote tunes?"

Yet he's easily one of the most popular composers ever, and his unforgettable melodies can still move all but the most jaded listeners. Even I can't resist the ebullient string sextet, "Souvenir of Florence," to be played with other **Tchaikovsky chamber works** and songs on Jan. 26 at Beall Hall. It's part of a weeklong festival including lectures, ballet excerpts, a Marché dinner menu, that culminates in two full concerts of Tchaikovsky's most popular music at the Hult Center. The Jan. 27 show features the famous *Violin Concerto* and the wild and blustery tone poem *Francesca da Rimini* inspired by Dante's *Inferno*, while the Jan. 29 has the bombastic "1812 Overture," the powerfully dramatic *Romeo and Juliet* tone poem, and the even more famous *Piano Concerto*, performed by soloist **Stewart Goodyear**. Either concert is good choice for the casual classical music fan who likes a lot of musical fireworks and memorable tunes. **EW**



HERBIE HANCOCK
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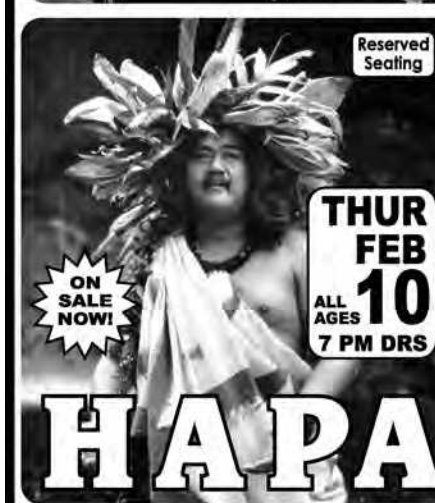
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