

# Creative Collaboration

Artists from across the spectrum perform new works at Lord Leebrick.

The key to artistic progress is often collaboration — artists from various fields working together, hanging out together, creating together. The resulting cross-fertilization can stimulate artists to go beyond the perimeters of their own field, build audiences across artistic boundaries and produce multi-faceted works of lasting appeal. Unfortunately, too many forces conspire to separate artists, so it's been gratifying to see opportunities emerging recently for progressive artistic collaboration in Eugene.

One is Cherry Blossom musical arts, which created last year's children's music theater production, *Nisse's Dream*, which sold out every show. Next weekend, Cherry Blossom convenes a broad spectrum of Northwest artists at Lord Leebrick Theatre for what promises to be the most compelling show of the season for regional performers, creators and arts lovers. Highlights include:

- A dance poetry piece called *September 11*, a response to the tragedies in New York, Iraq and Afghanistan, based on a poem by Carter McKenzie, in which a quartet dances to music composed by Paul Safar and performed by a quartet of local musicians
- Improvised music to accompany an original film by composer/flutist Daniel Heila, performed by Heila, clarinetist Kurt

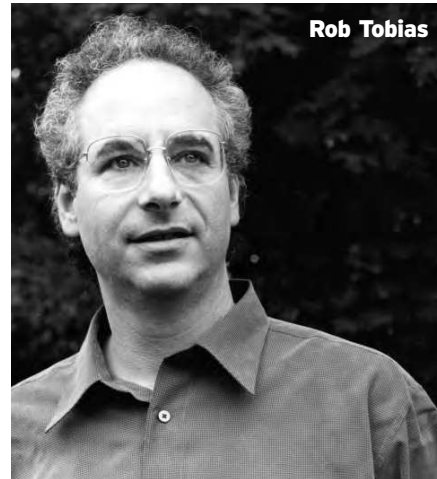
Doles and trumpeter Tim Clarke, all of whom created a wonderfully atmospheric soundtrack to one of Heila's films at DIVA last month

- A humorous audience participation piece called *Examining the American Search for the Perfect Partner*, perpetrated by OSU music professor and performance artist Michael Coolen
- A short film accompanied by Rob Tobias
- Jazzy rock by Brook Adams and friends, accompanied by projected graphic images
- Theatrical improvisation by one of Eugene's most accomplished musicians, the great pianist Art Maddox
- Ballroom dance and solo piano by Staver Dance Sport, a narrated musical tale by composer Gary Noland, modern dance by Traduza, performance painting by Mika Holtzinger, and more.

Local artists responding to current events by collaboratively creating new multimedia works — this is the kind of venture that builds a vital artistic community here, and I hope our community supports it.

Another hotbed of local creativity is DIVA, the visual arts institute that's also been putting on some intriguing music and other performances. On April 22, DIVA hosts the Eugene Composers Collective's third and final concert of the season, featuring original

works by local composers. The ECC is another new institution that's contributing to Eugene's artistic vitality; these shows always feature some thought-provoking music. Many of these composers got their start at the UO, which hosts the Oregon Composers Forum featuring new music by UO composition students, a free show at Beall Hall on April 25. And one of the school's most



Rob Tobias

accomplished graduates, percussion wizard and UO faculty artist Sean Wagoner, presents a solo showcase there on April 24.

Still another source of local creativity is the spiritual community associated with Indian music and chant. On April 15, Dharmalaya Yoga Center hosts a CD release party for Solala Towler's new *Sacred Soundings* disk, featuring members of Windhorse and guests on tabla, vocals, didjeridoo, tamboura, percussion, violin,

flute, bass and more to accompany throat singing, harmonic singing and chant.

I always get excited about new music, but there's plenty of beauty in the old stuff, too — especially the *really* old stuff. One of the finest concerts I ever attended in Eugene happened a few years ago at Beall Hall, when the amazing French singer Anne Azema joined renowned early music multi-instrumentalist Shira Kammen in an intimate journey through medieval music. The duo returns to Beall on April 18 in a free show featuring music and poetry on the theme of courtly love.

Most of the composers will be new to you (they certainly are to me, and I love this period), but this pair is adept at explaining what's going on in these lovely (and sometimes lusty) songs, and they make their concerts unforgettable time travel experiences. Essential to early music fans, and recommended to everyone.

Finally, there's some striking new music coming to Portland this month. One of the hottest contemporary music groups, Ethel, will play their greatest hits at Reed College on April 23. This is another group that really reaches out to audiences while presenting groundbreaking music. And on April 21, Portland's own terrific new music ensemble, Fear No Music, welcomes zheng (Chinese zither) virtuoso Mei Han and composer-instrumentalist Randy Raine Reusch in music that combines thousands of years of Chinese musical traditions with original world music and jazz influences. It's at the Wieden / Kennedy building on Northwest 13th Street. **EW**

**Straight Line**

**Pabst Blue Ribbon BEER**

Straight Line has played with some of the best punk bands around, like Fugazi, Agent Orange, Good Riddance and Unwritten Law. With the release of *Heterodoxy*, the punk band formerly known as Spun has returned! Their 2nd release titled *Black & White*, is due out later this year. To find out where to see them live this Saturday night go to Eugene Weekly's nightlife page.

[myspace.com/straight\\_line](http://myspace.com/straight_line)

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