

arts shorts



BACH: WAR PIMP, FOOT MAN

So OK, the Oregon Bach Festival isn't academic enough for you. Yeah, Helmuth Rilling might know nigh-on everything about Bach, as he demonstrates brilliantly and with charming élan during the Discovery Series, but hey, it's not like there are colons in the event names. Not to worry! The German Studies Committee at the UO can solve this problem, as we recently learned in a somewhat late-breaking email update. Here's the deal: For the fourth year in a row, that committee is putting on the **German Studies Oregon Bach Festival Symposium**.

Sound exciting? (Actually, it does sound exciting to the music and history nerds who work here, and we want to pump you up too.) Catchy title: "Sovereigns, Servants, and Song: Religion and Politics in the Baroque." Religion? Politics? Excellent! And, um, fairly contemporary, no?

Cornell's David Yearsley discusses Bach and his war-pimping ways (I kid you not), and Wisconsin's Jeanne Swack gets into Telemann's anti-Semitism (sad! My first piano pieces came by way of Telemann!) at 3 pm on Thursday, May 24, in the EMU Fir Room. The next morning at 9 am in the EMU Rogue Room, those two along with the UO's own Steven Shankman discuss more esoterica ... er ... topics of interest, and finally, some music: Yearsley delivers an organ recital at 8 pm Friday, May 25, at the Central Lutheran Church. So hooboy, here we have pre-OBF learning with a sense of humor, as the OBF's George Evano notes: Yearsley's Friday morning talk is entitled "Bach's Feet," and he'll demonstrate his discussion of Bach's organ-playing techniques Friday night. "Of course," Evano says wryly, "we won't be able to see his feet, so it will be a case of using your ears." And stay tuned for info on **Bach Remix 2**, coming June 2, in the slow but relentless PR buildup for one of the coolest possible Eugene events. OBF 4evah! – *Suzi Steffen*

ON THE ROAD

Forget fancy travel books, guidebooks and carefully guarded tourist sanctuaries where reality never intrudes. Economist **Michael D. Yates**' recent book, **Cheap Motels and a Hot Plate**, finds the author and his wife traveling the country with a different perspective. Yates took early retirement in 2001, and the couple has been moving around the country ever since, from New York City to Portland and many places in between. But the stories Yates tells aren't all scenic viewpoints and sweeping plains. He examines the way working people live, the divide between private and public space, environmental and immigration issues and more (and he does take time to appreciate, say, Oregon's natural wonders). What results is what Jim Hightower calls "the travel book the chamber of commerce doesn't want you to read" and Studs Terkel says offers "the invisible made visible: the stark and powerful truth of the haves and have-nots." Yates' tone is part diary, part lecture, part history of the places where he and his family sometimes spend a good amount of time (more than a year in Portland, where it took the Yates' sons three months to find work). It's entirely possible his book might inspire you to travel a different way – or at least with a different outlook. Yates reads from *Cheap Motels and a Hot Plate* at 7:30 pm Tuesday, May 29, at Hilyard Community Center. Free. – *Molly Templeton*



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