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# MUSICAL MONSTERS

*P.D.Q. Bach unleashes a cracking good tour*

BY DEANNA UUTELA

Robert Louis Stevenson's 1886 *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, known for its vivid portrayal of a man with a massively split personality, has come to signify the crazy, uncontrollable nature hiding inside us all. In this spirit of duality, composer Peter Schickele is preparing to release his hilarious musical monster, P.D.Q. Bach, this year at the OBF.

Schickele's story begins, like many tales, with a discovery in an old castle. In 1954, Schickele claims, he was rummaging around a Bavarian castle in search of rare musical gems when he happened upon a manuscript of one P.D.Q. Bach. P.D.Q. was the last of Johann Sebastian Bach's twenty-odd children, and apparently his least favorite, Schickele says. But the story gets even weirder: When the manuscript was taken back to the U.S. and performed at the University of Southern North Dakota at Hoople, the professor realized too late that he had released a monster on the musical world.

Unable to restrain himself, Schickele unleashes on the rare occasion the bizarre, and dare I say disturbing, music of P.D.Q. Bach. P.D.Q.'s use of unusual instruments, such as the left-handed sewer flute and the bicycle, have left audiences perplexed and laughing.

Unlike his Hydran counterpart, Schickele takes his music very seriously. Schickele is a Juilliard trained composer who has arranged music for movies and soundtracks, performed with leading

Peter Schickele and his alter ego



American orchestras and won four consecutive Grammy Awards.

The one thing that Peter Schickele and P.D.Q. Bach do have in common is their love of writing party music. P.D.Q. has recorded such favorites as: "Shepherd On The Rocks, With A Twist," "Gretchen am Spincycle" and "3-Step Crab Dinner." Schickele is known for his albums *Songs From Shakespeare*, *Mother Goose and More*, and *Sneaky Pete and The Wolf*. And both have charmed audiences all over the world with their light-heartedly serious approach to spreading the love of music.

You can see both characters perform on one stage at the Hult Center at 7:30 pm on Saturday, June 30. Tix range from \$15 to \$52. ♦

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