

ALBAN GERHARDT,
JUNE 29 AND JULY 1

Get Mellow with the Cello

Or, actually, don't — amp it up!

Have you suffered through *The Witches of Eastwick* simply to see Susan Sarandon in raptures over that tall, rich, stringed instrument? Maybe you own *Hilary and Jackie* not for the agony and the ecstasy but for the music. And if you took a survey of all of your mp3s or CDs — or even your vinyl — the Vivaldi, Bach, Haydn, Dvorak and other cello concerto recordings would reach the stratosphere.

Well, this year's Oregon Bach Festival has more than enough to satisfy your cravings. Things kick off June 23 with Yo-Yo Ma playing Osvaldo Golijov's *Azul*, a piece written for this grand master of the cello. Ma premiered the work on the West Coast in 2009 with the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra under the direction of OBF fave Jeffrey Kahane, and Kahane also opens the Bach Fest with Ma this year.

Tickets have been sold out for a couple of weeks, but do not despair. Check Craigslist or eBay, and, of course, the Hult will release returned tickets before the concert (and sell them for the face value).

Also do not despair, for cello music keeps on going in the 2011 OBF. Big faves in Portland and around the internet for things like a well-watched cover of Kanye West's "All of the Lights," the Portland Cello Project plays free at 1 pm June 27 in the Hult lobby and around 9 pm, aka "dusk," in the big party July 4 at Alton Baker Park just before the "Freedom Festival" fireworks display. The concert is "free," though you need to buy admission to Art & the Vineyard for any kind of decent seats and acoustics. The Bach Festival concert and the fireworks usually snag about 15,000 to 20,000 attendees, so get your art (or vineyard) on early.

If you prefer soloists, and you prefer more J.S. Bach in your Bach Festival, don't miss German cellist Alban Gerhardt, performing two concerts of Bach and Britten cello suites, 7:30 pm June 29 and July 1 at Beall Hall on the UO campus. Beall's shockingly good acoustics and intimate feel should make these concerts some of the best of a packed schedule. Meanwhile, you can also appreciate the cellists in the Brahms and Beethoven concerts and in the Discovery Series, where you'll see them in slightly more casual attire. — *Suzi Steffen*

Young and Wild for Music

Maybe it's not typical to take your 6-year-old to the Oregon Bach Festival's big choral concerts — and that's probably just as well for the 6-year-old, unless she's already in love with the massive works that anchor both ends of the schedule and the founder's concert in between.

But without 6-year-old and 16-year-old and 26-year-old listeners now, who will make up the Bach Festival's audience in 20 or 30 or 40 years? Parents looking for events for their children (and grandparents searching for something to share) would do well to consider some of the OBF's special programming for kids, while not ignoring that some of the shorter or smaller concerts could indeed interest children, depending on the children's attention spans and interest levels.

The Bach Festival programs several child-specific events each year, such as the Savion Glover performances a couple of years ago. This year, one of the fest's themes is "The Americas," and the first OBF kids' event fits that theme perfectly. Miguel Harth-Bedoya, former music director for the Eugene Symphony and current music director at the Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra, conducts the Caminos del Inka ensemble in "Travel the Inka Road" at 11 am Saturday, June 25, at the Hult. The group will demonstrate various instruments, play with images and deliver high-quality music for the under-adult set (while not boring the adults). This concert may sell out soon, but, as usual, stand in line for a while before the show, and you might be rewarded with a returned ticket or three.

At 1 pm, also on the 25th, the PICCFEST Choirs (lots of children's choirs from all over the country) perform for free in the Hult Lobby. It's both intimidating and impressive to see the young ones fill the space. And at 7:30 pm Sunday, June 26, you can hear the PICCFEST choirs and more at the First Baptist Church of Eugene, a gorgeous venue for music.

Another kid-specific concert runs at 11 am Saturday, July 2, also in the Soreng, when Jamie Bernstein (yes, that's Leonard's daughter) brings the OBF orchestra to the stage to show off the music of the young Mozart. The Bach Festival literature says that a young Amadeus himself may pay a visit to the concert hall, so if your kid likes to sing "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star," this may be the concert for you.

Finally, the Stangeland Family Youth Choral Academy: Eighty-five teenage singers under the baton of Anton Armstrong, take the stage in Eugene at 3 pm Sunday, July 3, to perform a variety of works including "Danny Boy" and "Loch Lomond." — *Suzi Steffen*

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