

Gettin' Celly With It

PCP and other classic pasttimes

Back in 1994, UO freshman **Douglas Jenkins** bought a cheap cello. The instrument was way too small for him and, what's more, he didn't know how to play it. But thanks to the generosity of a superb teacher (Eugene Symphony cellist Sylvie Spengler) and his own DIY determination, Jenkins — who'd played guitar in high-school punk bands — not only learned to play but also taught himself how to arrange pop music for lots of cellos.

After graduating, Jenkins co-founded what turned into one of Portland's most fascinating bands, the electric guitar- and cello-driven Bright Red Paper. Once in a while he'd jam with other cellists exploring not only classical but also pop and original music for cello. Those sessions outgrew their original house gatherings, and **Portland Cello Project** was born. Soon, friends from Portland's indie rock scene (Laura Gibson, Weinland's Adam Shearer, Corin Tucker, Loch Lomond, Horsefeathers) began sitting in and then collaborating with the cellists. Their annual dance parties started selling out some of Portland's biggest music venues, and their set lists grew to encompass everything from Beethoven to Britney Spears, with Jenkins creating more than 700 and counting.

PCP returns Thursday, Jan. 19, to the WOW Hall, joined by brass and woodwind sections, drummer Rachel Blumberg (Norfolk & Western, formerly of the Decemberists) and guest singer Israel Nebeker, in music that may range from J.S. Bach to the late, great 20th-century French composer Lili Boulanger to that recently liberated master of contemporary vocal counterpoint, Dwayne Michael Carter, Jr., alias Lil' Wayne.

The **Eugene Symphony**, with guest-artist violinist Lindsay Deutsch, offers one of its most appealing concerts

of the season Thursday, Jan. 19, in a show featuring one of the most joyous symphonies ever written, Mendelssohn's Fourth; one of contemporary Mexican composer Arturo Marquez's lively *Danzons*; the great Argentine composer Alberto Ginastera's rollicking 1941 *Estancia* dances as well as a dazzling quartet of late 1965-70 works by Ginastera's student, the fabulous nuevo-tango composer Astor Piazzolla, collectively called **The Four Seasons of Buenos Aires**.

If that program sounds reminiscent of those offered by former ESO music director **Miguel Harth-Bedoya**, maybe that's because guest conductor **Andrés Franco** studied with him (and Helmuth Rilling) and now serves as associate conductor of Harth-Bedoya's Fort Worth Symphony. You can learn to dance the tango in a free lesson offered an hour before the concert by the ESO in its Studio.

Pianist **Jon Nakamatsu** and San Francisco's **Cypress String Quartet** arrive Sunday, Jan. 22, to the UO's Beall Hall for an excellent program of quartets by Haydn (*Op. 76, No. 2*) and Beethoven (*Op. 95*), as well as Brahms's epic *Piano Quintet in F minor*. This show leads the menu of UO concerts, which includes a Jan. 23 recital by new UO faculty member **Pius Cheung** playing his adaptation for marimba of J.S. Bach's keyboard magnum opus, *The Goldberg Variations*; a Jan. 26 Beall recital of classical songs by Strauss, Schubert, Rachmaninoff and more, performed by singer **Laura Decher Wayte** and pianist **David Riley**; and a Jan. 29

concert of new electronic music from around the world curated by Prof. **Jeff Stolet** in the UO's Schnitzer Hall.

If you're still craving some rocking cello, you can find it Saturday, Jan. 21, at The Shedd, when young California cellist **Natalie Haas** returns with her mentor and musical partner, the great Scots fiddler **Alasdair Fraser**, for the fifth time. The genial, award-winning Fraser has done more than anyone to revive traditional Scottish dance music — much of which was traditionally played with cello providing the bass line and also interweaving melodic lines of its own. **Haas and Fraser** (pictured) just released their third CD, *Highlander's Farewell*, and the duo's virtuosic live performances always electrify fans of Celtic and folk music. Finally, on Jan. 25, the San Francisco based electronica duo **Beats Antique** brings its Middle-Eastern flavored dance grooves back to the McDonald Theatre. **ew**



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