

Musical WayBack Machine

Ancient to modern sounds on Eugene stages

The wayback machine is especially active this month in Eugene music. On Thursday, May 10, **The Ambrosia Ensemble** performs sacred music from throughout the centuries at Central Lutheran Church. The group, run by UO students, will perform motets by Renaissance composer Thomas Tallis, Romantic paragon Anton Bruckner, and work by three contemporary Eugene composers, including four premieres from the new opera, *The Canticle of the Black Madonna*.

Saturday, May 12, the dial is set for the Renaissance, when the **Eugene Vocal Arts Ensemble**, accompanied by **Byrdson Early Music Consort** performs in costume at its ever-popular annual English madrigal dinner, which this year moves to the Lane County Fairgrounds' Wheeler Pavilion. Omnipresent local actor **Bill Hulings** will preside over the ceremonies as the Bard, and along with enjoying the feast, the audience can participate in Renaissance dancing — around a Maypole.

We flash forward a few centuries on Sunday, May 13, to the Baroque era, when the **Oregon Bach Collegium** performs chamber music by George Frederic Handel at United Lutheran Church. The period-instrument specialists will play the glorious

opera and the oratorio composer's less-often-heard small scale sonatas in historically informed style on violin, harpsichord, recorder, lute, oboe and voice, with UO music professor **Marc Vanscheeuwijck** on baroque cello.

Friday, May 18, back at Central Lutheran Church, the new early music ensemble **Vox Resonat** ventures even further back — to the Middle Ages, to sing some of the earliest existing written Western music. Another UO prof, **Eric Mentzel**, who won a major international reputation as an early music singer with groups such as *Sequentia* and the original European incarnation of *Vox Resonat*, will lead the group of soloists in songs dedicated to the Virgin Mary composed in Italy, Spain, England and France from the 12th through 15th centuries. May wasn't just the month of spring fertility but also when the medieval cult of the Virgin Mary really heated up, and that fervor still shines through these haunting, rarely performed works.

Skipping over the popular Classical era, the machine alights in the Romantic period on May 17, when the **Eugene Symphony** performs Anton Bruckner's big *Symphony #6*, a march from proto-Romantic composer Hector Berlioz, and 19th century rock star Franz Liszt's *Piano Concerto #1*, featuring 24-year-old prize-winning pianist **Adam**

Golka at the bench. The concert kicks off a symposium of scholars who'll be checking their Liszt at the UO music school next weekend, which includes a solo recital by the acclaimed pianist **Antonio Pompa-Baldi** May 18, at Beall Concert Hall.

There's lighter Romantic music on the program at the **Eugene Symphonic Band's** May 14 concert at First Baptist Church, including Berlioz, waltzmeister Johann Strauss and more — including a contemporary work by new UO percussion professor **Pius Cheung**.

We enter the early 20th century May 21, at Springfield's Wildish Theater, when **Chamber Music Amici** performs lovely works by American composer Arthur Foote, Andre Jolivet's 1944 *Chant de Linos*, and a movement from Argentine composer Astor Piazzolla's *Four Seasons of Buenos Aires*.

Staying in the middle of the last century, singer **Siri Vik** performs some of the greatest American songs in concerts at The Shedd, May 18 and May 20, featuring the immortal lyrics of Broadway legend Lorenz Hart and the music of Richard Rodgers. Along with familiar fare such as "Where or When," "Spring is Here," "It Never Entered My Mind," "The Lady is a Tramp" and "My Funny Valentine," the show also spotlights some of his lesser known, though equally witty compositions. Hart's brief

stay on this planet was as tragic as his songs were compelling, in part because American society of the time forced him to live a closeted gay life, and that emotional intensity pervades his songs, no matter how superficially happy the words.

We return to the present with a couple of shows at Beall Concert Hall. The **Oregon Percussion Ensemble**, on May 21 plays music by today's greatest living composer, Steve Reich, one of the most popular younger composers, Jennifer Higdon, and more. One of today's most acclaimed younger jazz pianists, **Dan Tepfer** brings his New York-based trio to perform Tuesday, May 15, with the **Oregon Jazz Ensemble**.

Also at The Shedd, Sunday, May 13, the **Emerald City Jazz Kings** perform music of another, less renowned mid-century American show-tune master, Jimmy Van Heusen, whose songs ("I Thought About You," "High Hopes," "Come Fly with Me," et al) graced plenty of major films in the 1930s, '40s and beyond.

Finally, The Shedd looks to the future Saturday, May 12, when the rising young Austin fiddler/singer **Carrie Rodriguez** combines her classical violin training at Boston's Berklee College of Music with her dad David's epic songwriting legacy and her own spunky compositional style. **EW**

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