

Bach and Before

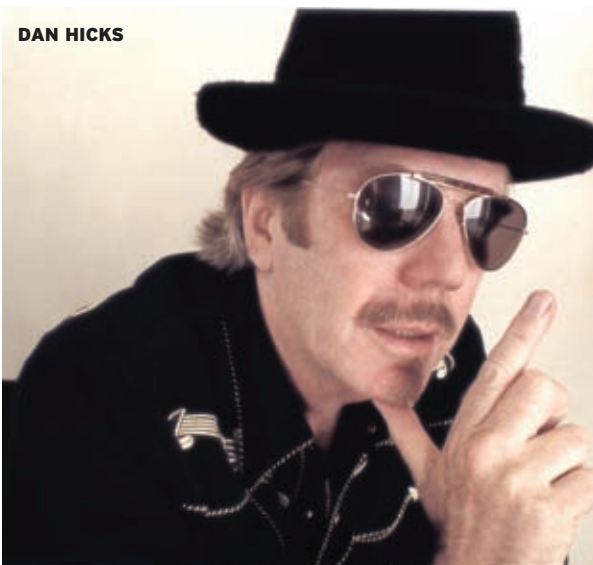
UO concert series wrap-up, and more

The Oregon Bach Festival doesn't start till the end of June, but if you just can't wait to get that summer Baroque fix there are a couple of enticing early music concerts this weekend.

The **Oregon Bach Collegium** joins members of **Ensemble Primo Seicento** on Friday, June 8, at Central Lutheran Church to perform music of the Italian Baroque. The Bach Festival concerts increasingly feature performances on the instruments and in styles the composers intended, and the members of the OBC (unrelated to the festival) and its guests also specialize in playing replicas of ancient instruments such as the sackbut (an early trombone), Renaissance violin, cornetto (sort of a cross between a trumpet and recorder, eventually supplanted by the oboe), dulcian (predecessor of the bassoon) and organ.

Like those gorgeous instruments, the early 17th-century Italian composers — Frescobaldi, Donati, Rossi, Cesare, Riccio and Cima — are much more rarely heard than later (German) Baroque composers like Bach and Handel, but their best music is no less enchanting and expressive. Those latter two composers' music will also ring out on Sunday, June 10, at First Methodist Church, along with tunes by Tchaikovsky and others in a concert of solo music for handbells, rung by **Beth Mays**.

Speaking of 18th-century German Baroque composers, you can hear music by one of the greatest, Bach's contemporary George Frederic Handel, on Saturday, June 9, and Sunday, June 10, at Beall Concert Hall. There's an Italian connection, too, because Handel's 1724 opera, *Julius Caesar in Egypt*, not only features a Roman title character but is also considered one of the composer's



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greatest operas in Italian. You won't see "authentic" costumes or sets, though. This **UO Opera Ensemble** production sets the story of Caesar vs. Ptolemy in space — planet Egypt — and gives it a science-fiction flavor. Regardless of the trappings, the music is some of Handel's most tuneful, with glorious arias that will tingle the tentacles of listeners in any galaxy.

That's one of the last UO concerts of the season as the university wraps up its academic year. On Sunday, June 10, the **University Percussion Ensemble** plays contemporary works at Aasen-Hull Hall, and the acclaimed **UO Gospel Ensemble** will sing its rousing songs at Erb Memorial Union (EMU) Ballroom. UO student **Dan Meinhardt**,

who's completing his master's degree in jazz studies, releases his first album, *Go West* (recorded at the university), in a June 9 concert at the Jazz Station. The saxophonist's group plays original compositions along with covers of jazz containing prominent 1960s and '70s influences.

Meinhardt performs in the sextet of another UO alum, trombonist/composer **Joe Freuen**, in the latest Broadway Avenue House Concert (911 W. Broadway near Monroe Park) Saturday, June 16. Freuen, who's recently returned to Eugene from graduate studies at the renowned Manhattan School of Music, claims influences as diverse as Radiohead and Nine Inch Nails as well as more traditional jazz inspirations like Miles Davis. He's worked with the Emerald City Jazz Kings, Cherry Poppin' Daddies and others. The Daddies saxman **Jesse Cloninger** is also in the band, along with Portland guitarist **Bill Marsh** (who'll also play in Meinhardt's show), another UO alum, drummer **Jason Palmer**, and other local jazz stalwarts.

You can still hear some jazz influence in the music of the great singer songwriter **Dan Hicks**, who on June 8 brings his **Hot Licks** band back to The Shedd. A true West Coast legend whose pedigree stretches back to the pioneering mid-1960s San Francisco rock/jug band The Charlatans, Hicks embraces jazz, blues, Western swing and laugh-out-loud lyrics. In a Portland performance last year, his sharp wit and sly tunes seemed as snappy as ever, and his more recent songs stood up to classics like "I Scare Myself" and "Where's the Money?"

The Shedd also opens its annual summer musical June 14-17. This time it's the ever-popular 1966 Bob Fosse-Neil Simon-Dorothy Fields/Cy Coleman show *Sweet Charity*, adapted from Fellini's 1957 film *Nights of Cabiria*. Boasting brassy classics like "If My Friends Could See Me Now" and "Big Spender," this production by director/choreographer **Richard Jessup** and music director **Robert Ashens** showcases **Laura Sue Hiszczynskij**, **Chas King**, **Ron Judd** and **Dylan Stasack**. **EW**