



AURELIO MARTINEZ

Heat Waves

Hot sounds sing summertime concerts

The Shedd may be the hottest place for music in Eugene this month, and not just because of the former church's ancient, soon-to-be refurbished cooling system. The Shedd's latest new theatrical production is Rodgers and Hammerstein's 1951 tale of cultural collision, *The King and I*. Based on the true story of an English woman who in the 1860s served as governess to the King of Siam, it boasts some of the great musical theater duo's loveliest songs, including "Getting to Know You," "Shall We Dance" and that poignant ballad of forbidden love, "We Kiss in a Shadow."

Directed and conducted by the veteran team of **Richard Jessup** and **Robert Ashens**, The Shedd's production includes **Shirley Andress**, **Jay Españó**, a kids' chorus and three songs jettisoned from the 1956 movie starring Deborah Kerr and Yul Brynner. Some of the racial stereotypes are dated, but the story is perennial and perhaps just as relevant now in our own era of cultural clashes.

Along with the heat generated by the cultural friction and parallel love stories within *The King and I*, The Shedd also sparks some hot jazz by hosting Aug. 7-11 the annual **Oregon Festival of American Music** (OFAM), which this year returns to the theme of Le Jazz Hot.

If you want to hear what was really going on in the setting for Woody Allen's 2010 movie *Midnight in Paris*, OFAM's kickoff concert provides a diverse overview, ranging from the pop tunes of **Cole Porter** and **Hoagy Carmichael** to classical composers **Francis Poulenc** and **Heitor Villa-Lobos**. The OFAM afternoon concert Wednesday, Aug. 8, explores the Creole influence on Parisian music, while the evening show takes us into the cabarets and music halls that spawned a different pop music tradition, eventually imbibing jazz influences with famous singers such as the American expatriate **Josephine**

Baker, Mistinguett, Maurice Chevalier and others.

The great Porter's music is featured Thursday, Aug. 9, in the afternoon — but not the familiar classics. Instead, the concert focuses on Porter's early songs written in Paris, as well as a few older songs about the city.

Classical music fans should check out the OFAM afternoon show Friday, Aug. 10, starring singer **Siri Vik**. The show will highlight one of the 20th century's most delightful musical phenomena: the pop-influenced classical composers known as Les Six.

OFAM's closing concert Saturday, Aug. 11, offers a portrait of Sidney Bechet, the incomparable New Orleans soprano saxophonist, clarinetist and composer. Perhaps overshadowed a bit these days by his friend Louis Armstrong, Bechet was a fiery, swinging player whose music still sounds vital. This program spans his glorious career from the 1920s through the 1950s.

As always, OFAM's fascinating talks and film screenings augment the music and make the festival an educational as well as entertaining experience — there are more than a few history lessons worth learning there.

OFAM isn't the only summer festival worth checking out next weekend. If you're willing to drive out to Siuslaw National Forest Aug. 10-13, you can hear some excellent world music at the **Beloved Sacred Art & Music Festival**. In one of the world's most beautiful places, you can hear some of the planet's richest sounds, including Gnawa star **Hassan Hakmoun**, Garifuna singer **Aurelio Martinez**, kirtan chanter **David Stringer**, hand drummers, throat singers, storytellers, yogis, healing rituals and lots of late-night grooving. The Oregon Country Fair crowd and other world music fans should definitely consider taking this particularly long and strange trip. **EW**

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