

CONCERT:

Friday, April 19 | 8 p.m.

Beall Concert Hall

\$15 general, \$10 students and seniors

tickets.uoregon.edu

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PRESENTED BY THE UO WORLD MUSIC SERIES



Zedashe Ensemble

Folk Music and Dance from the Republic of Georgia

**Georgian Singing Workshop**

Thursday, April 18 | 7:30 p.m.

Rm 178, Frohnmayr Music Bldg.

\$10 at the door, free to students

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MUSIC

BY BRETT CAMPBELL

ZEDASHE,
AN ENSEMBLE
FROM THE FORMER
SOVIET REPUBLIC

GEORGIA ON THEIR MINDS

Soviet treasures, Tomos Svoboda, and Puss and Boots

No, we're not talking about Ray Charles, the Allman Brothers, OutKast, R.E.M. or other musicians from the Southeastern US, but rather **Zedashe**, an ensemble from the former Soviet republic, which performs at the UO's Beall Hall April 19. The group of singers and instrumentalists (using bagpipes, accordion, percussion and more) has spent years finding and reviving music that was suppressed or otherwise gone with the wind during the decades of Soviet domination. Georgia actually birthed some of humanity's earliest polyphonic (more than one melody) music, but as we've seen recently in Mali and Afghanistan, repressive governments often attack the oldest and richest cultural traditions to subjugate conquered peoples. Like other latter-day musical revivalists, from Louisiana's BeauSoleil to Portland's Cappella Romana, Zedashe sought its country's vanishing musical treasures from elders who'd sung, played or heard it generations earlier, and found more in manuscripts of Georgian devotional and liturgical music buried in old chests not unearthed until the '90s. The group then turned to preserving folk music — dance tunes, work songs, love ballads and more. Although you might hear traces of other Eastern European musical elements like spicy, sometimes dissonant harmonies (occasionally microtonal), yelps and other vocal techniques, Zedashe purveys and preserves a unique and valuable part of our planet's musical traditions.

Experience music and dance from other ancient traditions on April 13 at Saraha Nyingma Buddhist Institute (477 E. 40th Ave.) when it hosts a fundraiser featuring Tibetan singer **Tsering Wangmo**, the renowned Nepalese-born, Portland-based dance master **Prajwal Vajracharya** and other performers and scholars of the region's cultural arts.

Reviving and preserving ancient music is old hat to the historically informed performance movement. On the afternoon of April 13 at the UO's Collier House, Seattle harpist **Bill McJohn** joins Portland Baroque Orchestra cellist **Joanna Blendulf**, UO harpist **Laura Zaerr** and Eugene early-music maven **David Rogers** in a free concert of medieval, Renaissance and other harp music. On Sunday afternoon, April 14, at United Lutheran Church, Oregon Bach Collegium violinist **Wyatt True** and harpsichordist **Margret Gries** will perform music by Couperin, Rebel, Leclair and other 18th-century Parisian composers. April 21 at the Hult Center's Soreng Theater, the **UO Opera Ensemble** and University Symphony revive a 1708 one-act opera, *Acis and Galatea*, by Spanish Baroque composer Antonio de Lites, paired with another family-friendly one-act opera, Catalan composer Xavier Montsalvatge's version of *Puss in Boots*.

While these shows make old music new, this month offers major opportunities to hear new music. On April 18, the **Eugene Symphony's** most important performance of the season features a rare contemporary work commissioned from an Oregon composer — and one of the best. For decades, **Tomas Svoboda** served as a mentor to young composers at Portland State University, while maintaining an increasingly prolific and admired composing career. One of Eugene's most valuable musicians, Eugene Symphony Orchestra's clarinetist Michael Anderson, tapped the Paris-born Svoboda of Czech heritage, who's recovering from a stroke suffered in December, to write a piece featuring his instrument as part of the orchestra's commendable new effort to develop new works. Svoboda, whose music is as accessible as it is powerful, was an inspired choice for this world premiere. The concert also features Carl Orff's ever-popular 1936 setting of sometimes-racy Benedictine monks songs, the cantata *Carmina Burana*. Oh four tuna!

Hear more contemporary works by an Oregon composer, UO percussion prof **Pius Cheung**, and arrangements of music by J.S. Bach, Astor Piazzolla and more, at Cheung's Beall Hall Concert on April 16, and hear a tribute to one of America's greatest composers and musicians at the UO's annual **Duke Ellington birthday bash** April 14. At First United Methodist Church on Friday, April 12, **Sonos Handbell Ensemble** performs new compositions and arrangements of music from *West Side Story* and *Porgy and Bess* for a most unusual medium. On April 21, the church hosts a performance of Paul Winter's popular *Missa Gaia/Earth Mass*, featuring choirs from the Methodist and Unitarian Universalist churches and co-composer and guitarist **Jim Scott**. Using jazz and classical instruments plus recorded sounds of humpback whales, seals and wolves, this modern mass, like much of the other music in town this month, shows that there's plenty of new life left in old musical forms. ■

RYAN BINGHAM



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