

THIS MODERN WORLD

THE N.S.A. COMES CLEAN

by TOM TOMORROW

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"Handbells Will Be Ringing" has some curious comments regarding composer James MacMillan's 2016 Oregon Bach Festival commission. Campbell correctly notes that OBF has an admirable history of commissioning new work from contemporary composers such as Arvo Pärt and Osvaldo Golijov, but he oddly omits mention of such OBF musical milestones as Krzysztof Penderecki's *Credo* (whose world premiere OBF recording by Helmuth Rilling won a 2001 Grammy award), as well as Tan Dun's 2004 *Water Passion* and the 2009 *Messiah* by Sven-David Sandström.

Perhaps more telling in the context of Campbell's article is a similar failure to note Robert Kyr's 1996 *Inner Dawning* and Stephen Paulus' 1989 *Symphony for Strings*, if only because both composers are U.S. citizens, and it might be added that Kyr is also an "Oregon composer."

Campbell's main complaint appears to be that James MacMillan, a Scot, is a "non-American" composer in receipt of "American taxpayer dollars." This fact, he claims, stems from Oregon's relative failure to support classical music and Oregon composers in the same fashion that Scotland does. This strikes me as a misleading comparison at best. Scotland became a constituent member of the United Kingdom with the 1707 Act of Union, but of course Scotland had a long history of cultural identity before that date. Oregon became a formal part of the U.S. in 1859, and its cultural history before then was rather different from that of Scotland.

However, it must be noted that Oregon as a political entity is older than the current political states commonly known as France, Germany and Italy, which nonetheless have ancient cultural identities. History does matter; the present cannot be understood without reference to it. Given prevailing U.S. attitudes toward taxation in general and public financial support for the arts in particular, I view Oregon's current classical music "investment level" as a glass half full, whereas Campbell would have us see it as half empty instead, if that.

John E. Heintz
Eugene

A NONVIOLENT SOLUTION

Israel-Palestine negotiations are taking place again, and could take six to nine months. Some believe that the Israeli government and the U.S. are just playing a game. Israel has engaged in negotiations on and off for 20 years while continuing to build settlements in the West Bank and expand its occupation.

I recently watched a documentary that showed long lines of Palestinian people in 1948 carrying their possessions as they walked away from their homes in the newly established Israel to live as refugees elsewhere. The contrast between the modern, affluent settlements with parks and swimming pools, and the poverty and lack of water and electricity of the Palestinian people was vivid.

The West Bank is now almost entirely controlled by the Israeli occupation. Military checkpoints and highways separate the Palestinian West Bank from the settlers. They vastly slow the movement of the Palestinian people within their territory and over its borders. The Palestinians deserve better.

Jewish people who migrated to Israel are descendants of the Holocaust, with all the fears, the PTSD that still remain. They have a right to live in a country where they can be safe and secure. But the Palestinian people do, too.

Two wrongs don't make a right, and they can't make a viable solution. I yearn for our governments to nonviolently and firmly seek a solution that is just and that can be the beginning of healing and of the building of safe, dignified lives for all the Palestinian and Israeli people.

Peg Morton
Eugene

NOT SO GREAT FAIR

After two years of not having 4H in Lane County we were told it was back. We had been participating with our children and their horses in Benton County. Apparently some money was available to restart 4H, and we were recruited and invited to rejoin our own home county: Lane County Fair.

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