

ASHIA AND THE BISON ROUGE
PLAY SAM BOND'S NOV. 15



BIG (SUR) SOUNDS

Bill Frisell, the Middle Eastern Dance Guild and more

From downtown New York avant jazz in the '80s through more straight-ahead jazz after moving to Seattle to his abstract string quartet (originally part of a multimedia project) to his more recent country-, folk-, and rock-tinged work, protean guitar master **Bill Frisell** manages to explore new territory while maintaining an instantly recognizable artistic voice throughout his many musical meanderings. Fortunately, The Shedd has made it easy to trace Frisell's always intriguing musical journeys by bringing him here often, and Friday Nov. 8, it follows him to Big Sur, where, thanks to a Monterey Jazz Festival commission, he spent 10 days writing a 19-song reflective masterpiece inspired by the legendary California coastal paradise. Featuring members of both his string 858 Quartet and his Beautiful Dreamers jazz trio, *Big Sur* represents a pinnacle of Frisell's two-decade long melding of chamber jazz, rock and American folk music.

Another unique voice rings out Friday Nov. 15 when cellist/chanteuse **Ashia Grzesik** brings her **Bison Rouge** band to Sam Bond's to celebrate the release of their colorful new album, *Diesel vs Lungs*. Familiar to indie classical music fans from her appearances with Vagabond Opera and Portland Cello Project, the Wrocław-born, America-raised Grzesik uses her solo albums to channel her Polish and Slavic heritage, in original as well as multilingual traditional music. In fact, the former Cirque du Soleil performer recently returned from an extended European sojourn that culminated in a fascinating multimedia show in Berlin, and her soaring sound and riveting stage presence owe as much to the European cabaret tradition as to American pop.

Another multicultural performer with Eastern European roots comes to Tsunami Books Sunday Nov. 10, when Czech-born instrument maker **Edward Powell** performs Turkish and Indian music with Eugene's own **Josh Humphrey** on tabla, ney flutist **Mia Baki** and percussionist **Christopher Pfeffer**. Powell, an accomplished sitar master, now himself plays an instrument he devised called the "ragmakamtar," sort of a hybrid between the Indian sarod and Middle Eastern oud lute.

Still more Middle Eastern sounds will be bubbling, and bellies undulating, at Cozmic Nov. 15 when dancers from Eugene's **Middle Eastern Dance Guild** join musicians from Seattle's **House of Tarab** septet in mid-20th-century Arabic dance music on acoustic instruments from the region.

Speaking of dance, one of the most notorious is the "Dance of the Seven Veils" from Richard Strauss's opera *Salome* (now onstage at Portland Opera, incidentally). Thursday Nov. 14 at the Hult Center, the **Eugene Symphony** plays that music, Berlioz's game-changing *Symphonie Fantastique* and a pair of violin showcases, Ravel's *Tzigane* and Saint-Saëns' *Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso*, featuring violinist **Danielle Belen**.

Dance rhythms also percolate through one of the 20th century's most electrifying ballet scores, Spanish composer Manuel de Falla's fiery *Love, the Magician*, which tops the bill at this Saturday's **Oregon Mozart Players** concert at the UO's Beall Concert Hall, along with Mahler's orchestration of Schubert's famous song "Death and the Maiden" and a Rossini overture. You'll recognize some of Falla's famous tunes, but this is a rare opportunity to hear most of this glorious early 20th-century music, with alto **Karen Esquivel** contributing vocals.

Another chamber orchestra, England's venerable **Academy of St. Martin in the Fields**, takes the Beall stage the following afternoon to perform Brahms's *Sextet* in B major and rarely heard octets by Joachim Raff and George Enescu. Also at Beall: OMP's former principal clarinetist, **Todd DelGiudice**, returns from his new Florida home to lead UO big band jazz Nov. 15; Oregon Bach Festival artistic director **Matthew Halls** pops over from England to conduct UO singers and orchestra in Mozart's *Great Mass in C minor* and Benjamin Britten's beautiful *Hymn to St. Cecilia*, in honor of the English composer's centenary and British composer Herbert Howells's tribute to President Kennedy, *Take Him, Earth, for Cherishing* on Nov. 17. On Nov. 18, the **Eugene Symphonic Band** plays music by American composer Frank Ticheli, Mexican composer Arturo Márquez and other uncommonly heard orchestral works. ■



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