



MATTHEW MURPHY

INHERIT THE WINDS

Imani Winds gives classical music a youthful jolt

Many question whether classical music can survive its self-inflicted wounds: aging, demographically narrow (read: predominantly old, white, rich) audiences; endless recycling of the same old tunes from long-dead European composers; bloodless performances in audience-unfriendly settings, etc. The answer, my friend, is blowing in the winds — Imani Winds. Since 1997, the quintet's concerts have mixed classical, jazz and world music, much of it contemporary, some composed by group members. As a result, their concerts regularly attract large, ecstatic audiences that are younger, more varied and more engaged than just about any others in classical music. The ensemble's increasing acclaim has produced Grammy nominations, world tours, performances at all of America's most prestigious classical venues and five recordings.

At 6 pm Sunday, Feb. 16, Imani returns to the University of Oregon's Chamber Music@Beall series. Along with *The Rite of Spring*, that revolutionary ballet score that ignited 20th-century music, their Eugene program also features other 20th-century classics by Debussy and Astor Piazzolla. But the big attractions are new music from living American composers: excerpts from Imani flutist Valerie Coleman from Imani's tribute to the great American dancer/singer Josephine Baker, who ruled Paris cabarets in the 1920s; a new work by Imani hornist Jeff Scott; and a new quintet the group commissioned from one of the 21st century's most fascinating and far-sighted jazzers, Jason Moran.

"That's what we're most proud of," oboist Toyin Spellman says, "expanding the repertoire by adding new sounds, like the premieres by two different jazz composers, Wayne Shorter and Jason Moran, on our new album [*Terra Incognita*]. Imani Winds is constantly listening to new composers, trying to think of ideas to link our program together and make a theme that inspires the audience and the performer to feel like you're in a special space to come to a performance."

Along with playing and commissioning the listener-friendly music of our time, Imani also achieves that sense of greatness and connection by reaching out to audiences through young people's concerts, chats after concerts and a genuinely welcoming vibe. "Our whole mission is to inspire the people who come to our concerts, and the inspiration doesn't just come from playing," Spellman explains. "It comes from the audience knowing the ensemble members and showing our personalities. That way when they hear us play our instruments, they know us." ■

BB BACK BEAT

MUSIC NEWS &
NOTES FROM
DOWN IN THE
WILLAMETTE
VALLEY

On Saturday, Feb. 15, at 9:30 pm chez Sam Bond's, local dreamy folk-rock outfit **Kingdom County** will be hosting a CD release party for the band's latest recording project, **Six Songs**. Longtime music buddies Nicholas Cervantes (lead vocals, guitar) and Josh Humphrey (vocals, guitar) formed the band in 2008 and picked up Kyle McGonegle (bass, mando) along the way. Kingdom County, who have opened for the likes of Ashia & the Bison Rouge and Austin Jenckes, will be joined by the moody alt-country Tara Stonecipher and The Tall Grass.

Valentine's Day Roundup: Whether this day makes you groan or swoon, whether you have zero or 10 sweeties, at least there's some good music to put you in the mood or take your mind off the faux holiday. The jazzy poppers of **Concrete Loveseat** present "Moonglow Valentine" in two shows, 7 pm (\$10) and 9 pm (\$8) Friday, Feb. 14, while activist folk legend **Holly Near**

plays "for the love of our mothers, sisters, daughters, sweethearts and feminist men" with pianist **John Bucci** and the guitars of **emma's revolution** 8 pm at the Unitarian Universalist Church (\$25 adv., \$27.50 door, contact mmeyer@efn.org for info). Wandering Goat hosts a Valentine's Day Extravaganza with local bands **Martian Manhunter**, **Barger Boyz** and Portland's **Dottie Attie** at 7:45 pm. Over at Granary Pizza on 5th at 10 pm, Seattle's National Steel guitar aficionado and palindrome lover **Baby Gramps** will entertain with his witty renditions of labor songs, nursery rhymes, hobo ditties and jazz and blues.



CONCRETE LOVESEAT

Luckeys
CLUB 100 YEARS
TH 2/13 Funk [Open Jam]
FR 2/14 Marv Ellis & We Tribe Organic
SU 2/16 Broadway Revue Burlesque Night
933 Olive St | 541-687-4643

Starlight LOUNGE
★
BEST HAPPY HOUR!
EW "BEST OF EUGENE 2007-12"
830 Olive St | 541-343-3204

In the heart of the Barmuda Triangle



DAILY HAPPY HOUR
3pm-6pm & 10pm-late

CRAFT COCKTAILS!
28 Beer Taps & 8 NW Wine Taps
Join us for lunch, dinner & late night.
Comfort food & a perfect pint!
First National Taphouse
51 W. Broadway | 541-393-6517

BABY GRAMPS

A Gramps Valentine Show

**FRIDAY
FEB. 14
10PM | \$10**

THE GRANARY PIZZA CO.
259 E. 5th AVE., EUGENE

