

SUSAN MCKEOWN
PERFORMS WITH
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AT TSUNAMI BOOKS

FORGET PORTLAND ENVY

Eugene's got major chops this month with shows from pianist Vijay Iyer to singer-songwriter Susan McKeown

There was a time when Eugeneans had to venture up I-5 if we wanted to catch the top touring classical and jazz pianists at, say, Portland Jazz Festival, Portland Piano International and other events. No more. While PJF, which starts next week, is indeed featuring one of today's most inventive jazz masters, pianist **Vijay Iyer**, he will also bring his DownBeat-award-winning trio with drummer **Marcus Gilmore** and bassist **Stephan Crump** to The Shedd 7:30 pm Thursday, Feb. 19. The coveted DownBeat prize was only one in a slew of honors (including jazz album of the year, pianist of the year, jazz artist of the year and more), culminating in a MacArthur Foundation "Genius Grant" that brought him deserved attention beyond the jazz cognoscenti. Trained in cognitive science at UC-Berkeley, he's collaborated with poets, choreographers, filmmakers and musicians way beyond jazz circles and now teaches at Harvard. His last two trio albums, *Break Things* and his award-winning *Mutations*, include some of the most elegantly exploratory music made today.

Another internationally acclaimed performer who's heading to Portland (to play with the Oregon Symphony) will also treat Eugeneans to a full recital 3 pm Sunday, Feb. 15, when violinist **Stefan Jackiw** joins New York pianist **Anna Polonsky** in the University of Oregon's ChamberMusic@Beall series to play Maurice Ravel's wild gypsy-inspired "Tzigane," a nocturne by the acclaimed contemporary Finnish composer Kaija Saariaho, a scaled-down version of Witold Lutoslawski's "Partita" that Jackiw is playing the Oregon Symphony and César Franck's soaringly beautiful Sonata in A. Then at 7:30 pm Tuesday, Feb. 17, the **Portland Percussion Group** brings its mallets down to the UO's Aasen-Hull Hall.

That's not to say that we need Portland to bring us starry names. The **Eugene Symphony's** Feb. 19 (8 pm) concert at the Hult Center features **Garrick Ohlsson**, who's been near the top of the classical piano world since becoming the only American to win the International Chopin Competition in 1970. The New York-born, San Francisco-based pianist will star in a Rachmaninoff concerto, and the band also plays ballet music from Mozart's opera *Idomeneo* and Sibelius' wintry Symphony No. 7. Ohlsson gives an open-to-the-public master class at the UO on Wednesday, the same day the Eugene Symphony Organization presents its multimedia Youth Concert for elementary-age students at the Hult.

Vibraphone master **Chuck Redd** returns to The Shedd (in the company of a band of Portland jazz vets: pianist **Tony Pacini**, bassist **Tyler Abbott** and drummer **Todd Strait**) Saturday, Feb. 14, for a workshop (10:30 am) and performance (7:30 pm). The Shedd also hosts the latest show of Carl Woideck's Jazz Heritage Project, a tribute to the 1950s cool jazz-singing style personified by Anita O'Day, Chet Baker, Chris Connor and more, featuring singer **Sonja Rasmussen** 1:30 pm Sunday, Feb. 22. The Shedd also welcomes back the excellent a cappella folk-bluegrass **Honey Whiskey Trio** in concert (7:30 pm) and vocal workshop (1:30 pm) on Saturday, Feb. 21.

Speaking of roots-y tunes, the wonderful Dublin-born singer-songwriter **Susan McKeown** performs originals rooted in American and Irish music at the intimate Tsunami Books 7:30 pm Saturday, Feb. 21. She'll be joined by guitarist and composer **Kyle Sanna**, one of the most promising young composers produced here at the UO during his undergrad days a decade or so ago. **Kevin Burke** (the Irish fiddling champion long-based in, yes, Portland) returns to Tsunami Books 7 pm Monday, Feb. 16, with his **Celtic Fiddle Festival** trio, which shows the art form's widespread development including masters from Brittany (**Christian Lemaître**) and Quebec (**André Brunet**).

Finally, 4 pm Sunday, Feb. 22, First United Methodist Church hosts a fine small vocal ensemble that even Portland would envy. Led by UO prof and Sequentia singer **Eric Mentzel**, **Vox Resonat** sings a Lenten Evensong service and concert of music by William Byrd, Alessandro Scarlatti and other composers. ■

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KESEY THT

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KESEY THT

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KESEY

TYCHO

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