

THE ROMANTIC-SPOOKY SPECTRUM

From the Eugene Symphony's Mahler moment to Vox Resonat's cemetery Day of the Dead concert

The brilliant banter between Beatrice and Benedict in Shakespeare's comedy *Much Ado About Nothing*, one of theater's most entertaining duets, seems ideal for a musical setting. Sure enough, French Romantic composer Hector Berlioz, who created the trailblazing *Fantastic Symphony* and other colorful orchestral works, wrote one (including the libretto, which adds some characters and subplots and jet-tisons others) in 1862.

Yet in an opera world too often content to recycle the usual suspects, the symphony is seldom performed, except for its overture.

Eugene Opera (also see **Bravo** story this issue) remedies that Oct. 28 and Oct. 30 when it brings Berlioz's sparkling *Much Ado* to the Hult Center's Soreng Theater. This production features not only some of Oregon's finest singers (**Melina Pyron** and **Brendan Tuohy** in the leads, plus **Laura Beckel Thoreson** and **Sandy Naishtat**) but also two of Eugene's top actors, **Bill Hulings** and **Steve Wehmeier**. It might be your only chance to see this relative rarity performed live in Oregon.

Some French-Shakespearean sparkle is just the antidote to the late Romantic Germanic gloom that will no doubt still hover over the Hult in the wake of **Eugene Symphony's** Oct. 20 performance of Gustav Mahler's tragic 1904 *6th Symphony*. Actually, like all of Mahler's symphonies, this one seems to contain a whole galaxy of emotions — he'd actually married and celebrated the arrival of two children just before writing the symphony, mostly on a pastoral vacation — before he brings the big hammer down at the end.

There's more German Romanticism on Oct. 22 when terrific Portland small choir **The Ensemble** and a pair of crack pianists perform Brahms' light-hearted *Love Song Waltzes* at Central Lutheran Church (1857 Potter Street). Written for amateur musicians, these mega-pop hits of their day made Brahms a star and a lot more money than



LEYLA MCCALLA PLAYS MUSIC FROM HER HAITIAN HERITAGE AT SAM BOND'S GARAGE

his symphonies, remaining popular ever since. Better still, the vocal quartet will sing contemporary songs written by some of Portland's most accessible classical composers.

Earlier on Oct. 22 at the University of Oregon's Beall Hall, **Russian String Orchestra** plays Schoenberg's intense late Romantic tone poem *Transfigured Night* and Schubert's string quartet *Death and the Maiden*, leavening the heaviness with a little Mozart. The next day, **Oregon Camerata** comes to Beall to play 20th-century music by Polish composer Witold Lutoslawski, Russia's Alfred Schnittke, the crazy-fun Stanford composer Mark Applebaum and Brazil's Heitor Villa-Lobos.

And at 4 pm Oct. 23 at the UO's Lewis Integrative Science Building, multidisciplinary artist **Audra Wolowiec leads semaphore**, a performance featuring **CHOIR**, Portland composer and sound artist **Jesse Mejia's** experimental vocal group, whose score is based on data from a neuroscience lab.

Halloween's nigh, which means Eugene early music

ensemble **Vox Resonat's Day of the Dead** concert returns Oct. 29 to (shudder) the Masonic Cemetery Mausoleum at E. 26th and University. They'll sing a powerful lament on the fall of the Roman Empire by the great Renaissance composer Dufay, and other suitably spooky Renaissance and Baroque music by Purcell, Josquin, the murderer Gesualdo, Byrd, Lassus and more.

Other annual spookfests also return: **Mood Area 52** performs its sizzling live score (electric guitar, cello, accordion, bass, horns, toy piano, percussion) to F.W. Murnau's classic vampire flick *Nosferatu* Oct. 28 at Bijou Art Cinemas, while the same night's annual **Pipe Screams** concert at First United Methodist Church (1376 Olive Street) features spooky classical music by costumed organists and choristers. You can repent your sins at the same church the next day at a free choral concert with music of Haydn, Vaughan Williams, Messiaen and more.

On Oct. 27, The Shedd brings back one of the jazz's most visionary and admired composers-bandleaders-trumpeters, **Dave Douglas** — but in a different configuration than the many we've seen there. This time, he's playing new music he wrote for The Westerlies, the young Seattle-born, New York-based brass quartet that enchanted Broadway House last year and which will be joining Douglas and drummer **Anwar Marshall**. It's a don't-dare-miss double treat.

Finally, this Friday, Oct. 21, you can hear a couple of former Carolina Chocolate Drops explore American roots music at Sam Bond's Garage. **Dom Flemons** plays and sings Piedmont blues, spirituals and jug band music, while cellist-guitarist-banjoist **Leyla McCalla** plays and sings original and traditional music from her Haitian heritage as well as the Creole, Cajun, jazz and French influences that still simmer in and around her New Orleans home. And speaking of cellos, on Oct. 29 the cello-rock trio **Rasputina** plays the WOW Hall. ■



TOMMY STINSON'S COWBOYS IN THE CAMPFIRE

PHOTO BY DEWON SIMPSON



SHISHO

BARNO'S BACKYARD BALLROOM PRESENTS

Many of us played in bands as teenagers. Far fewer collaborated with The Dead Milkmen, got noticed by Dr. Demento or opened for Tommy Stinson of The Replacements.

ShiSho, a folk-punk-comedy duo comprised of teenaged sisters Viviane and Midge Ramone, recently relocated to Eugene from Akron, Ohio. The pair has accomplished all those monumental things while still living at home with their parents.

Viviane Ramone tells EW she realizes folk-punk-comedy is an unusual descriptor. "We were raised on punk music. We love punk music," she explains. "We play acoustic guitar and accordion. There's not a lot of technical finesse."

"We really try to capture the spirit of punk within the constraints of our acoustic or folksy instruments," Viviane continues. "A lot of our songs tell stories. We try to keep our songs lighthearted — a carefree attitude."

The siblings are settling into Eugene nicely. "Eugene is super cool!" Ramone says. "The Boreal especially has that DIY feel."

ShiSho's Oct. 21 show is the pair's first performance in town, and the inaugural event at a new house venue called Barno's Backyard Ballroom.

On top of all that, ShiSho is opening for legendary punk guitarist **Tommy Stinson of The Replacements** who, along with **Chip "Slippy Fly" Roberts**, will perform an all-acoustic set as **Cowboys in the Campfire**.

ShiSho is excited to debut in Eugene alongside a bona-fide punk-rock legend. "Tommy is such an amazing songwriter!" Ramone says.

ShiSho opens for Tommy Stinson's Cowboys in the Campfire "Southern Dandies Tour" 7 pm Friday, Oct. 21, at Barno's Backyard Ballroom, 3230 Fillmore Street; \$20, tickets available at ticketfly.com. All ages. — *William Kennedy*