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Who doesn't want to get the heck out of Eugene in February? Clearly it's time for another virtual musical tour!

First stop: New Orleans, through the magic of the **Emerald City Jazz Kings'** shows this Thursday night, Feb. 9, (cabaret seating) and Sunday, Feb. 12, afternoon (concert seating) with early clarinet-fueled music by Louis Armstrong, Jelly Roll Morton and other Big Easy jazz masters, along with similar hot jazz from non-Nawlins types like Bix Beiderbecke and the Dorsey Brothers.

Alternative destination: **Harvey Brindell @ The Tablerockers Bluesband** playing Chicago blues at the Jazz Station this Thursday, Feb. 9. Guitarist Brindell, blues harpist Ray Beltran, drummer Ashbolt Stewart and bassist Dave Wagner have been blowing the blues for decades.

Brindell recently relocated to Portland, next stop on our musical tour. Friday, Feb. 10, brings the funky jazz of Portland's veteran **Trio Subtonic** to Hi-Fi Lounge. Keyboardist Galen Clark's band is easy to groove to but also repays close listening. Another fine Northwest jazz funk outfit, Seattle's **McTuff**, plays the club Feb. 17. **Portland Cello Project** mainstay Gideon Freudmann heads down I-5 Saturday, Feb. 11, for this month's Broadway House Concert at 911 West Broadway (reservations at 541-686-9270).

One of PCP's more classically inclined players, Freudmann's original music (often under the name CelloBop), also partakes of jazz, electronic, folk and other styles, electronically looped and layered and often used in NPR and other radio and TV programs. He gets a rich sound out of a single instrument (which he can pluck, bow, or even drum on), an ideal act for the intimate Broadway House vibe.

Another Feb. 11 option: Head to Argentina with **Oregon Mozart Players**, whose concert at the UO's Beall Concert Hall features that country's two greatest 20th century composers, Alberto Ginastera (whose 2016 centennial finally brought some of his terrific music, like the *Concerto for Strings* on this program, back into circulation) and his most famous student, nuevo tango master Astor Piazzolla, whose deliciously danceable *History of the Tango* is anything but a dry history lesson. The program detours through the mythical land of the Gypsies with two famous classical violin showcases based on melodies from Europe's Roma people: Ravel's wild *Tzigane*, and Sarasate's flashy *Gypsy Airs*.

Sarasate was a Spanish composer, and you can continue your musical Spanish sojourn this Sunday, Feb. 12, at United Lutheran Church, 2230 Washington St., where **Música Eugenia** sings and plays Spanish sounds

from the Renaissance to the present by composers well known (For, Rodrigo) and not so much (Mudarra, Milán, Murcia, Sanz, Marín, Guerau) plus a new original Spanish song written by the band members, who play Baroque and Classical guitars and *vihuela* and percussion.

Our Spanish sojourn continues with the **Eugene Symphony's** Feb. 16 concert featuring a kaleidoscopic 1999 guitar concerto by one of America's greatest living composers, Christopher Rouse. "My thoughts went immediately to the great Spanish tradition of music for this instrument," Rouse wrote, "and it seemed logical for me to exhibit my admiration ... in my own composition," which is named for and inspired by the wild and wondrous Catalan architect Antoni Gaudí (who designed Barcelona's magnificently weird Sagrada Familia) and flamenco traditions. The soloist is the superb Grammy-winning guitarist he wrote it for, Sharon Isbin. The recommended concert opens with another ebullient Rouse rouser from the same time, *Rapture*, and closes with Ravel's famous orchestral arrangement of Mussorgsky's famous gallery stroll, *Pictures at an Exhibition*.

If you prefer to go all Brexit instead, try British brass band music at **Oregon Brass Society's** Feb. 12 show at First United Methodist Church, 1376 Olive St. Next is a visit to the Land o' Love, courtesy of jazz singer **Mandy Harvey's** Valentine's night concert at the Jazz Station Tuesday, replete with swinging standards and more.

Next Friday: France, via singer **Harry Baechtel**, pianist **Michael Seregow** and the **Sylvestris Quartet**, a San Francisco ensemble that plays on historically authentic gut strings rather than modern steel or synthetics. Their more nuanced, silken sound should sound gorgeous in the UO's acoustically pristine Beall Hall at their Feb. 17 show featuring music by late Romantic/pre-Impressionist French composer Gabriel Faure. They'll play his lovely first piano quintet, a pair of his song cycles setting poetry by his fellow French artist, the great symbolist poet Paul Verlaine, and more.

We embark on a whirlwind, one-night world tour on Feb. 18, departing from Beall Hall, where Israeli mandolin virtuoso **Avi Avital** deploys the instrument that reached the peak of its development and influence in 18th and 19th century Italy to play music from England, Germany and Georgia with a quartet of young Americans. In this highly recommended Chamber Music@Beall concert, Avital joins one of America's hottest young string quartets, the Dover Quartet (which numbers at least one Oregonian and which has delighted audiences at recent Chamber Music Northwest performances), to play music by J.S. Bach, 20th century Georgian composer Sulkhan Tsintsadze and contemporary English composer David Bruce. — Brett Campbell

A WOMAN OF SALT

A trio of composers premier new works

Audiences will have the opportunity to experience an intimate evening of contemporary music when three composers show off their opera chops at Tsunami Books at 7 pm Friday, Feb. 10.

The Woman of Salt: An Interactive Project in Opera features original compositions by Daniel Daly and Jason Heald and a scene from *The Woman of Salt*, composed by Eugene's Anice Thigpen and performed by soprano Laura Wayte, pianist Nathalie Fortin and cellist Kathryn Brunhaver.

We recently caught up with Wayte, who's understandably smitten with Thigpen's work. After all, it's not every day someone writes a piece of music for your voice.

"I love it," Wayte says. "It is the most amazing compliment and honor, and it also makes me step up into a new level of my game. With new music, there is no accepted history of style attached to the music, and it is up to me to establish that. Such fun and such freedom."

Wayte says that, in a sense, the opera found her: "One day my friend Anice and my husband [UO Music Professor Lawrence Wayte] came out of a composition lesson and told me Anice was writing an opera."



The Woman of Salt has been a symbiotic, multi-year undertaking, Wayte explains, with a rich, creative dynamic shared among the composer, singer and musical consultant. Laura and Lawrence Wayte live across the street from Thigpen; their quiet street in the South Eugene Hills has proven a nutritive environment for the performing arts to grow.

"One day, Anice knocked on our front door and asked my husband, Larry, who has a master's degree in music composition, if she could take lessons from him to learn how to write music," Laura Wayte recalls.

"Larry became kind of a coach for Anice as she tried to get onto the page the music she was hearing. Three and a half years later, we drank a toast to this opera Anice had created."

Thigpen's score trains a bright light on the story of Ahdoo, wife of the Old Testament figure Lot. In the biblical tale, Ahdoo ignores warnings and looks back at her home as it's destroyed, turning her instantly to a pillar of salt.

"Anice's piece, entitled *Dilemma*, is the moment in the opera when Lot's wife, Ahdoo, begins to hear voices encouraging her not to leave Sodom and Gomorrah," Wayte says.

In Genesis, God rewards the obedience of Lot, Ahdoo, and two daughters by allowing them to leave the town and avoid destruction.

"But two of their daughters are married to men from those towns, and they won't be allowed to leave. This is a problem for Ahdoo, who despite the warnings not to, decides to look back at her daughters and witness their deaths," Wayte says.

This performance is just a taste of the complete opera, which will premier in June. — Rachael Carnes

Catch The Woman of Salt: An Interactive Project in Opera at 7 pm Friday, Feb. 10, at Tsunami Books, 2585 Willamette St. To purchase tickets visit lanearts.org; \$10-\$20 sliding scale, with proceeds benefiting The Woman of Salt project and Lane Arts Council.