

Public invited to come Dancing with Sea Lions



Porter the Sea Lion will take the stage in her many artistic incarnations thanks to the work of 20 area artists, each of whom has created his or her own one-of-a-kind creation using a large fiberglass blank canvas of Porter. The original 20 life-sized sea lion statues arrived at the Florence Events Center

in February and then were dispersed to each of the artists participating in the Dancing with Sea Lions project.

After submitting their ideas and acquiring their sponsors, the artists have spent the last two months preparing for their “big reveal” April 8 at a special VIP

reception, followed by a public showcase April 9 at the FEC.

The statues are part of the FEC’s 20th anniversary celebration, “Dancing with Sea Lions.”

All 20 sea lions will gather at the FEC for display before being installed at locations

in Florence, as well as spots between Reedsport and Newport.

The April 9 public showcase will be from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Come experience a one-of-a-kind Shuffle Concert

“You choose, we play,” say the members of the world-class ensemble, Shuffle Concert.

“From Baroque to classical and romantic; from jazz, to pop and Broadway, this group is so multitalented they let the audience select the pieces they will play,” says Nancy Pearson, director of SEAc coast Entertainment Association which is producing the concert. “You’ve never been to a concert like this. Every performance is a completely customized and memorable experience. It really is like putting your iPod on shuffle; only better because it’s live.”

Shuffle Concert will perform in a rare Thursday evening concert April 7, at 7 p.m., at the Florence Events Center. They will give a pre-concert talk at 6:15 p.m. Also, Shuffle Concert members will present an informal performance at the Florence Senior Center on April 8, as part of SEAc coast’s arts and cultural outreach and enrichment program. The 1 p.m. event is free and open to the public.

“At a Shuffle Concert performance, the audience does not receive a traditional program as they enter the concert hall. Instead, they get a number and a ‘musical menu,’” explains Pearson. “Members of the group pick a number out of a hat, the audience member holding that number then selects the piece they want to hear from the menu.”

And the menu is amazing.

Between 40 and 50 items including styles from Americana to French, from Spanish/Latin to Jewish; and covering periods from Baroque to Romanic to Classical to early- and mid-20th century. Performances by Shuffle Concert, and Quattrosound last October, were in part sponsored by a grant from the Western States Art Federation and National Endowment for the arts, secured by SEAc coast board director Sandy Kuhlman.

The New York City-based, mixed-genre Shuffle Concert was born in 2010 while founder and artistic director Eliran Avni was exercising on the elliptical machine at the gym. His MP3 player jumped from a Pretenders song to the first movement of Prokofiev’s Fifth Symphony, nearly causing him to lose his balance. The six core members — Avni (piano), Ariadne Greif (soprano), Brendan Speltz (violin), Moran Katz (clarinet), Sofia Nowik (cello), and Hassan Anderson (oboe) — are all classically trained chamber musicians, but can handle (Handel?) everything from Beethoven to Björk to Gershwin to Stevie Wonder.

Anand Giridharadas, critic for The New York Times, writes: “To be in the room that evening was to discover the

tension and the drama of never knowing what’s next... As they played, they swayed... They moved as if the music were something they were riding atop, not creating.”

“SEAc coast’s season wraps up Friday, May 13, when The New Hot Club of America heats up the FEC,” says Pearson. “This dazzling ensemble is comprised of some of today’s top gypsy jazz artists in North America. You’ll want to tango in your

seat as they recapture the sound, style, and spirit of the 1930’s-era Hot Club of France.”

Tickets, artist profiles, show times, video clips and more are available at SEAc coast EA.org. Tickets are \$30 or \$10 for those age 17 and younger.

Tickets can also be purchased at the Florence Events Center box office, 715 Quince Street; by phone at 541-997-1994 or online at eventcenter.org.

