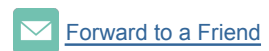
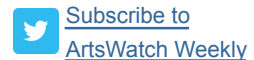


Welcome to the July Is Jumpin' edition of Oregon ArtsWatch Weekly: updates and links to arts journalism for the modern world.



OREGON ARTSWATCH

OREGON'S ARTS & CULTURE NEWS

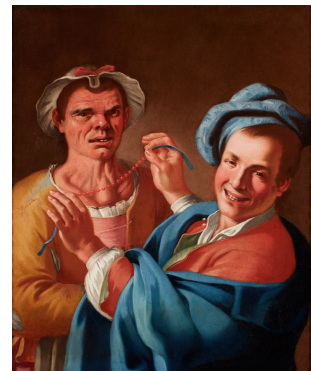


Big biennial, hot opera, milk cow blues

Tuesday, July 19, 2016

Dear ArtsWatch friends,

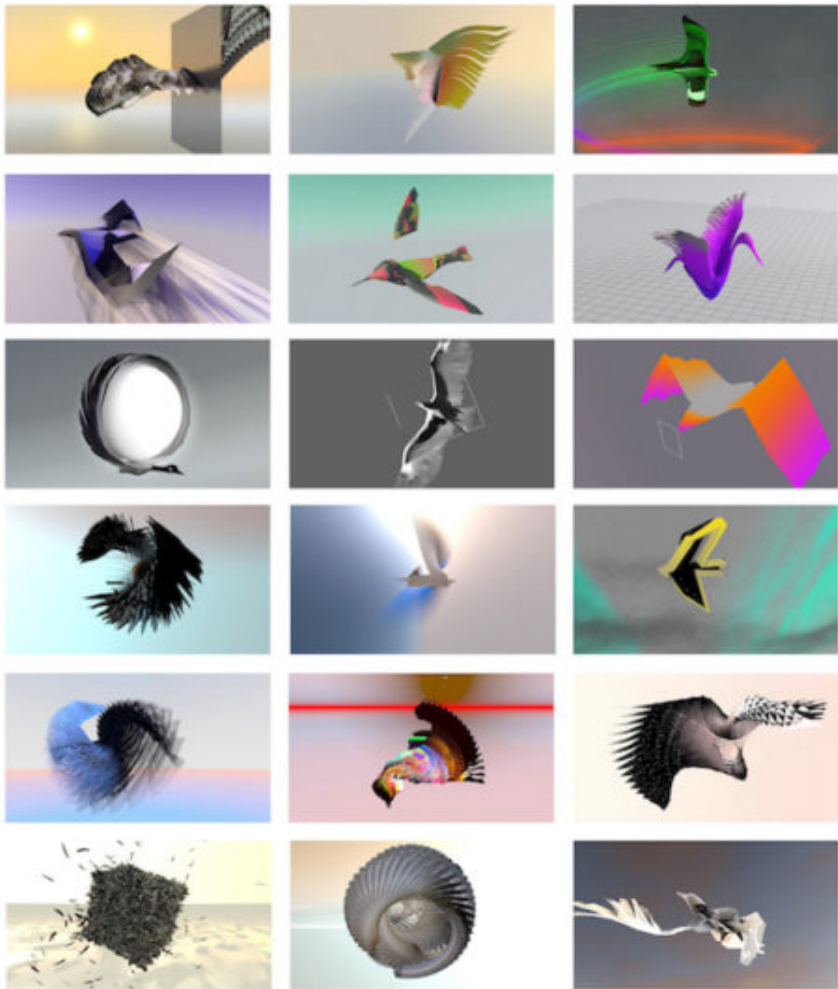
It's big. Very big. And if you want to take the whole thing in, Matt Stangel writes for ArtsWatch readers, you're going to have to ramble all over the state of Oregon. In his opening report, [Portland2016: Disjecta goes gigantic](#), Stangel points out the sheer massiveness of this year's Disjecta Oregon biennial art show. Curated by Michelle Grabner, who was also co-curator of the 2014 Whitney Biennial, this [latest Oregon biennial](#) of contemporary art takes the word "Oregon" seriously, spreading the art around to 25 spaces, 15 of them outside of Portland, in locations including the Schneider Museum of Art in Ashland, Crow's Shadow Institute of the Arts on the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, in Pendleton, La Grande, Astoria, and elsewhere. And Grabner mixes things up: several Portland artists showing in venues across the state, several state artists bringing their work to Portland. What's more, many of the artists have created pieces specifically for the spaces they were assigned.



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THE SILVA FIELD GUIDE TO BIRDS OF A PARALLEL FUTURE

"The Silva Field Guide to Birds of a Parallel Future," digital image of imaginary avians, dimensions variable, 2014–2015, Portland2016/ Image courtesy of the artist, Rick Silva.

Even in Portland, you'll need to travel to several venues to see what's in the biennial. But a single visit to Disjecta's home space in North Portland will grant you a look at one piece of work by each of the 106 artists whose studios Grabner visited – a decision viewed as inclusive by some onlookers and needlessly unfocused by others. Stangel writes: "Though a bit overwhelming, bringing everyone together in one place seems to be a practical remedy to the

you to our latest membership post.
(Pictured: Giuseppe Bonito, "Il Femminiello," ca. 1740-1760, oil on canvas, 30.4 x 24.8 inches, Portland Art Museum.)

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geographical largeness of this year's exhibition—which presents a sizable travel ask of any one person who wants to see everything. So, this bouquet of artwork serves as an invitation to find something you like and, perhaps, explore it further at a satellite location."

Want to see it all? Fill your gas tank. Ready. Set. Go.

PORTLAND OPERA MOVES INTO WARM WEATHER. Rossini's musical romp [The Italian Girl in Algiers](#) heats things up at the opera beginning Friday, bringing with it some perhaps unintentionally uncomfortable ripples of current events: a bunch of tourists are captured and enslaved, and a plucky young Italian woman embarks on a rescue mission. Running for seven performances through August 6, this is the final production in the opera company's first season of summer programming, a major switch from its traditional fall-through-spring seasons of the past. The season began with two large-scale shows (*The Magic Flute* and *Sweeney Todd*) in the 3,000-seat Keller Auditorium, then switched to the more intimate, 870-seat Newmark for *Eugene Onegin* and *Algiers*. This week, you can even double up on the two Newmark shows: *Onegin* ([read Bruce Browne's ArtsWatch review here](#)) concludes with performances on Saturday and next Tuesday, July 26. Portland Opera's switch to a summer season has several reasons, perhaps most importantly that it offers significant savings in production costs. It inevitably also raises the question of whether audiences will follow it into the warm-weather months. Results from this first season will be read carefully. At least we know the Italian Girl will save the day.





*Costume sketch for Isabella, the Italian Girl (Aleksandra Romano).
Costume design for Portland Opera by Sue Bonde.*

CHAMBER MUSIC NORTHWEST AND THE HEART'S DESIRE. Portland's premiere summer music festival has swung into its [fourth week](#) (the music keeps rolling through July 31) with, among other things, a concert of [Scandinavian masterworks](#) by Carl Nielsen and selections from Grieg's *Peer Gynt* newly arranged by Portland composer David Schiff: It'll play Wednesday at Nordia House and repeat Thursday at Reed College. And take special note of Saturday's bargain family concert, [Marita and Her Heart's Desire](#), performing at noon in Reed's Kaul Auditorium. Composer [Bruce Adolphe](#)'s genuinely charming *Peter and the Wolf*-style musical fable premiered 22 years ago at CMNW, and returns with its original narrator, the delightful Portland actor Michele Mariana.

Angela Allen and other ArtsWatch writers have been following this year's chamber festival closely. Here's what we've been up to in the past week:

- [THE EMERSON QUARTET HONORS THE HAYDN-BEETHOVEN LINK](#). In playing Beethoven's early string quartets, the members of the fabled



quartet "looked like buttoned-up IBM managers in their black suits and white shirts," Allen writes, "but they didn't sound like anyone in the conservative business world."

- [CHAMBERVOX SHAKES THINGS UP](#). Chamber Music Northwest, BodyVox Dance, and the Bard himself get all tangled up in a combo concert of dance and music, with new dances to Prokofiev's *Romeo and Juliet Suite* and Mendelssohn's music for *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. We review the collaboration, which continues through Saturday.
- [CHAMBER MUSIC NORTHWEST: ALL HANDS ON THE GRANDS](#). Forty fingers, two Steinways, and a whole lot of fun: Allen reviews the "hoot and a holler" of a Chamber Music Northwest foray into multiple-pianist programming on Lavignac, Schnittke, Mozart, and Rachmaninoff. All in favor, raise several hands.
- [THE SOULFUL ZORÀ QUARTET DESERVED A BIGGER AUDIENCE](#). What if somebody gave a terrific concert and nobody heard it? It almost happened at a free concert by the Zorà that drew a crowd of only about fifty listeners. Allen praises the "high-spirited, soulful" playing and bemoans the lack of that vital element, a decent audience.



DOWN ON THE FARM. On Monday evening I headed downtown to the Whitsell Auditorium at the Portland Art Museum, ducked around a couple of goats cavorting by the sculpture garden near the museum's side entrance (truly: this occurred), and ambled downstairs to see [Milk Men: The Lives and Times of Dairy Farmers](#), the first of three documentary films in the Northwest Film Center's miniseries [NW Tracking Farm Edition: Animal Husbandry](#). Not the sort of subject you might expect in a self-proclaimed urban utopia like Portland, maybe, but if you strip away its recent hipster veneer the city has long and deep ties to the rural communities of the Northwest. Portland filmmaker Jan Haaken's documentary explores the urban/rural split by basically ignoring it, digging deeply into the beliefs, longings, and economic realities of family dairy farming, which for many urbanites must come as a revelation, almost like a visit to a foreign country. The work is long and hard and difficult (and wet and muddy): in modern farming, one is truly tied to the land. In the world of *Milk Men*, easy biases fall away as the backbreaking complexities of a way of life reveal themselves. Haaken is a skilled and honest documentarian, not tipping the scales but letting her subject speak for itself. A lot of the filming happens to take place in my old stomping grounds of Whatcom and Skagit counties in northern Washington state, and so a lot of it looked familiar to me, and yet as a townie I

never really knew the totality of my farm friends' lives. *Milk Men* gets to a fair amount of that, and it's fascinating.



"Boone," by Christopher LaMarca and Katrina Taylor, screening Wednesday at the Northwest Film Center.

The series continues Tuesday evening with Kathy Kasic's [Loose Horses](#), about an auction pen in Montana where unwanted horses head to new homes or the slaughterhouse; and Wednesday evening with Christopher LaMarca and Katrina Taylor's [Boone](#), which documents the hardships and beauties of life on a small goat farm in southern Oregon. Tuesday's screening will be preceded by a panel and reception with all of the *Animal Husbandry* filmmakers.

ArtsWatch links



Cassie Greer as Coriolanus at Bag&Baggage. Casey Campbell Photography

[THE PATRIOT ACT: CORIOLANUS](#). Ah, the power, the glory, the unmitigated disaster. Bag&Baggage mixes Shakespeare's coruscating political tragedy, Thomas Sheridan's little-known 1749 adaptation, an all-woman cast, and an out door meeting into into a tale that resonates uncomfortably in or current political maelstrom. Christa Morletti McIntyre reviews.

[CORPORATE SHOW BIZ: THE LOST WORLD OF INDUSTRIAL MUSICALS](#).

Marc Mohan uncorks the fascinating tale of the golden age of film musicals made for corporate clients: a little song and dance for sales conventioners, in which a chorus line might sing the praises of, for instance, a new line of bathroom plumbing fixtures. Mohan interviews author and collector Steve Young, who'll showcase several of these hidden wonders Wednesday at the Hollywood Theatre.

[FRANK ZAPPA, WEINER-DOG, AND MORE](#). Marc Mohan reviews new film documentaries about the mother of musical invention, an autistic boy (*Life, Animated*) and an elderly Korean couple (*My Love, Don't Cross That River*), plus a slyly misanthropic fictional tale about the life journey of a cute dachshund.

[ECTOPLASM IN THE CITY: THE NEW GHOSTBUSTERS](#). Kourtney Paranteau gives a measured response to the summer blockbuster franchise revamp with a cast of women ghostbusters. "Sadly, in a remake where some thoughtful reimagining takes place, Feig's *Ghostbusters* preserves the sidelining of its non-white lead," she writes, and then concludes: "*Ghostbusters'* contribution to

this summer's pitiful roster of blockbusters alleviates the pure mindlessness of other releases, despite having to work twenty-five percent harder for its dollar."



The Ghostbusters Abby (Melissa McCarthy), Holtzmann (Kate McKinnon), Erin (Kristen Wiig) and Patty (Leslie Jones) inside the Mercado Hotel Lobby in Columbia Pictures' GHOSTBUSTERS.

And finally...

We end with a couple of requests. First, if you have friends or family members who you think would enjoy our cultural writing online, could you please forward this letter to them? The bigger our circle of friends, the more we can accomplish. Second, if you're not already a member of ArtsWatch, may we ask you to please take a moment and sign on? What you give (and your donation is tax-deductible) makes it possible for us to continue and expand our reporting and commenting on our shared culture in Oregon. Thanks, and welcome!

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Thank you!

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