

Abbey to host annual Bach festival

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The 38th annual Abbey Bach Festival will be held at Mount Angel Abbey July 29-31. The event, which raises funds for the abbey, attracts people from throughout the Pacific Northwest and beyond.

Father Paschal Cheline, the executive director of the festival, was excited about this year's lineup of musicians.

The three-day festival of classical music features a different headline act each night. On Wednesday night, patrons of the festival will see Duo Affinité, a two-part act featuring Nadina Jackson and Guy Few. Jackson is a world-renowned bassoon soloist, and Few is a leading trumpet soloist.

"I saw them perform up in Vancouver, B.C., and I was fascinated by them," Cheline said. "Right after I saw them perform, I went to see if there was any chance of us getting them. ... You don't get to hear the bassoon that often, and Guy Few with the piano and the trumpet and the corno - he's an unbelievable master at it."

On Thursday, the headline act is Infinitus, an upbeat string trio featuring twin brothers Alex (on cello) and Anthony Cheung (on viola), and John "Adidam" Littlejohn (on violin). Cheline said that Infinitus can play pretty much any kind of music, ranging from contemporary to classical.

Pianist Lucille Chung is the feature act for Friday, the final night of the festival. Born in Montreal, Chung first hit the big stage at age 10, when she played with the Montreal Symphony Orchestra. During her career, she has played with more than 50 world-renowned orchestras, including the Philadelphia Orchestra, the Moscow Virtuoso and the BCC National Orchestra of Wales.

"We are just lucky to have her because she is known all over the world," Cheline said.

Each day the festival starts with Vespers at the abbey church, then moves into a half-hour-long performance by organist Dana Robinson, also held at the church. The night progresses as patrons head to the Abbey courtyard where they are served a picnic supper, which, like the main acts, is different each night. And finally, concertgoers are directed to the Damian Center for the main act.

The quiet environment and scenery of the abbey hill, once a holy place for early Native Americans, adds to the attraction of the festival, Cheline said.



Danielle Peterson | Appeal Tribune file
People attend last year's Abbey Bach Festival at the Mount Angel Abbey.

If you go

Tickets for the event cost \$45 per person. There is also a patron admission option, which costs \$125 and according to organizers is tax deductible. Tickets can be purchased online at www.mountangelabbey.org/bach-tickets.htm, by phone at (503) 845-3066 or at the development and business office at the abbey.

For more information, call the Bach Festival office at (503) 845-3066.

"They just like this locale. They like the monastery. They like the church," Cheline said. "They love the scenery, and the picnic supper out on the grass. There's just kind of a freshness about it."