

Be Amazed!

HARRINGTON STRING QUARTET October 6th, 2004

Dendrios Chapel, 7:30pm

The Harrington String Quartet gave consistently bold, suave performances.

- The Dallas Morning News

ZAGREB SAXOPHONE QUARTET October 19, 2004

Dendrios Chapel, 7:30pm

The sound palette of the Zagreb Saxophone Quartet is extremely rich, marked by pure and beautiful shades... The excellent interpreters have shown great skill in the performance of Baroque pieces, and, certainly, even more so in pieces written originally for their instruments...

- Bogdan U_akar, Delo, Ljubljana (SI)

CHAMBER ORCHESTRA KREMLIN October 26, 2004

Corson Auditorium, 7:30pm

This is an ensemble of remarkably tight discipline and heart-on-the-sleeve expressiveness.

The combination is completely compelling.

- Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel

MOMIX November 3, 2004

Corson Auditorium, 7:30pm

The dancers are wondrous--bravura technicians who are joyful in performance and exceptionally attractive.

- Hedy Weiss, Dance Critic

FRANK HUANG, Violin November 9, 2004

Dendrios Chapel, 7:30p

Huang made everything he played seem easy without leaving a note to chance.

Evidence of his technical skill came at every turn.

- New York Magazine

"A CELTIC CHRISTMAS" with BOYS OF THE LOUGH November 30, 2004

Corson Auditorium, 7:30pm

colour, depth and character a presentation that is as dependably entertaining as it is sincere in its intentions.

- Glasgow Herald



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Tracker

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trails of his childhood, near Harbor Springs, where he would spend hours just listening and walking.

Raphael is now a husband, a father, a grandfather, a mentor to the community. Still, he walks the woods. He cannot abide the fact that the outdoor skills so carefully passed down by elders are slipping by unnoticed and unrealized by the next generation.

That is why Raphael spends much of his own time traveling North America to insure that this legacy remains. Along with mentoring youth groups locally, Raphael teaches native beliefs through the Wilderness Awareness School

(www.natureoutlet.com) in Duvall, Wash. Their programs use tracking of animals as a tool, one which blends ancient beliefs with current ecology; storytelling with self-motivated learning; culture with biology. Ultimately, after some guided time in the woods, participants redefine and rekindle their true passion and purpose in life.

Raphael and I continue hiking. His eyes lock in on signs of a struggle — a rabbit fleeing from a predator, possibly a bobcat. The cat has retractable claws that would not show in a print.

One gets the feeling he is locked in a three-way contest of will — man pursuing cat pursuing rabbit. Over and over again Raphael scans the length of a fallen basswood, looking for hair or scat or scratch marks.

"A fallen log is a good highway for animals," he says.

Eventually the dark stands of maple and oak hardwood give way to spotted sunlight and scrawny juniper. We breach the

edge of the forest and trudge through sand dunes heaved toward the foam-laced surf of a turquoise Lake Michigan.

Raphael bends down and points out a series of perfect circles drawn in the beach. He explains that, much like a grade-school protractor, the offshore wind whips blades of dune grass down and around in the sand, trenching a plate-sized circle as it goes.

We step further and spot enormous pitchfork prints in the sand. They turn out to be not a Great Blue Heron, as I suspect, but a wild turkey gathering grit to grind grain in its crop.

As we turn to leave the shore of Lake Michigan, Raphael nods to a surreal series of designs stamped on the side of a 30-foot sand dune.

"Well, what do you make of it?" Raphael asks.

From the peak of the dune, a pair of wavy depressions are carved in the sand. They feather down the length of the slope, ending in an intertwining cluster. Alongside each are clawed tracks with a single dragged line.

"Was there a fight?" I ask. "Maybe a chase between a predator and its prey?"

Raphael smiled. "Otters playing," he said.

Just for the pure joy of it, a pair of otters had run to the top of the sand dune, slid belly-down to the bottom, briefly wrestled, then bounded back up to the top to race down again. Hence the two different tracks — one set sliding, one set climbing.

As Raphael patiently unfolded this mystery, I couldn't help but wonder: If otters can rekindle their passion and purpose for living, can humans be far behind?

Tom Tracey is a freelance writer who lives in Traverse City.