

Critic's Picks: Magical Strings, Tacoma Symphony's "The Messiah," Vashon Island Studio Tour and Hilltop Artists glass sale

Magical Strings' Celtic Yuletide at Urban Grace

Tacoma Symphony's "The Messiah" in Gig Harbor, Tacoma

Vashon Island Studio tour and Hilltop Artists glass sale

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Magical Strings' Celtic Yuletide

The three-generation Magical Strings ensemble returns to Tacoma for its annual Celtic Yuletide concert, featuring fiddles, harp, dulcimer, percussion, Irish dancers and singers from this Olalla family.

7:30 p.m. Friday (Dec. 11). Urban Grace Church, 901 S. Market St., Tacoma. Tickets in advance: \$28 reserved, \$20 general, \$12 ages 12 and younger (\$3 extra at door).magicalstrings.com.

Vashon Island Studio Tour

Catch the second weekend of the Vashon Island Studio Tour, and maybe get some of your Christmas shopping done at the same time. With 35 studios all over the island, and media from encaustic to jewelry to glass, there's plenty to see.

10 a.m.-4 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. Free. Various venues, see online map for details or pick up a brochure at island businesses. Tour info, vashonislandartstudiotour.com; ferry schedule, wsdot.wa.gov/ferries

Hilltop Artists glass holiday sale

If you buy a student-made glass ornament, vessel or jewelry at the Hilltop Artists holiday glass sale, your money goes to support this tuition-free program for at-risk youth.

10 a.m.-1 p.m. Saturday (timed tickets from 9 a.m.). Jason Lee Middle School auditorium, 602 N. Sprague Ave., Tacoma. 253-571-7670, hilltopartists.org.

Symphony plays 'Messiah' — twice

By popular demand, the Tacoma Symphony and Chorus will perform Handel's beloved oratorio "The Messiah" twice this week: in Gig Harbor and Tacoma. Geoffrey Boers conducts, with soloists Tess Altiveros, soprano; Melissa Plagemann, alto; Brendan Tuohy, tenor; and Charles Robert Stephens, bass.

7:30 p.m. Dec. 17 at Chapel Hill Presbyterian, 7700 Skansie Ave., Gig Harbor; and 7:30 p.m. Dec. 18 at St. Charles Borromeo, 7112 S. 12th St., Tacoma. \$25-\$45. 253-272-7264, tacomasympphony.org.

Read more here: <http://www.thenewstribune.com/entertainment/arts-culture/article48209410.html#storylink=cpy>