

**Review of HOHS Concert:  
Dr. Paul Grove – Music from All Over  
Performed on Oct. 29, 2023**

As a relatively new resident of Harrington WA (March 2022), I'm so delighted and grateful for the incredibly talented performers offered by the beautiful and nostalgic Harrington Opera House. Dr. Paul Grove's solo guitar performance of music from around the world, was quite exceptional! He's been a featured soloist with the NW region's most prominent symphonies and ensembles. He has toured throughout the US, as well as in Russia, Brazil, India, and Canada. Having such a world renowned, talented performer, come to our little town and perform in our opera house, was so special for us. He came to Harrington knowing his audience would be small. It seems to me like a sort of music mission trip, away from the big city to our quaint little farm town. It must be for the pure pleasure of sharing his musical gifts with us. We are honored and so very grateful. When I was thanking Dr. Grove after the show, I told him I was thankful enough for a hundred more people! My hope is that our Opera House audience will grow and support more amazing talent.

During Dr. Grove's performance, he enlightened and entertained us by sharing historical information on his selections from around the world and why he chose them. Through his stories, we could see and sense his heartfelt love for each piece of music. But then, when he played his guitar, the music was so thought provoking, emotive and pictorial. We could envision all the different cultures, their people in love, in sadness, in hope, in fear and in joy. What a delight it was to hear him play a piece called, "Green Fields And Meadows", composed by George Frederick McKay, Harrington WA (1899-1970). The lighthearted and romantic flow in Mr. McKay's music made it so easy to envision the same lush green farm lands and beautiful meadows surrounding Harrington. How special!

Dr. Grove told us a tragic and triumphant story about an amazing connection he has with an Afghanistan composer and children's music teacher, Ustad Sarmast. The composer feared for his family's life when escaping the Afghanistan war and continued to risk his life because he would not stop composing, playing and teaching music. When Dr. Grove played the Afghan composer's piece titled, "Farwardin", it made my heart and eyes well up. Even though the tune was light and beautiful, it had an undertone, a low note of sadness. I was suddenly surprised when I briefly envisioned a terrified Afghanistan woman running away, looking back in fear. Wow. Is it possible that my vision was a sight the composer saw? Can music do that...travel all the way from an Afghan composer's life to my life in this little town? Perhaps. Music is an incredibly far reaching gift! The world hears laughing and crying in the same language. Music must have the power and potential for a vastly bigger conversation, a way of communicating an understanding and connecting us all in very unique ways. When Dr. Grove was all finished playing, he stood smiling and thanked us. But then, in an almost sad and serious tone, he said, "The world needs more music." He paused, glanced down and then looked around at his audience and said, "Especially now." We all understood. Thank you for uniting our world with your amazing performance!

By Jeri' Kanally