



## The Oregon Music World: Featuring 45th Parallel

Includes comments from flutist Martha Long



*We are a collective of musicians who come together to celebrate great chamber music with intimate artistic experiences. Passion for great music is what defines us and Portland is our stage.*

Why is GPFS featuring [45th Parallel](#), a Portland Chamber Music Collective since 2009, in our publication? Because above the flute we all share a love of music, the flute is just our instrument. Plus, some of our favorite flutists in the area are part of this group and make regular appearances such as our Oregon Symphony flutists. This feature along with the others in this publication are long overdue. Let's keep helping each other connect to the vibrant Oregon and Pacific Northwest music scene.

First, 45th Parallel emanates so many aspects of inspiration and creativity it is impossible to do justice featuring this "universe" here (their term, apt). Please take time to learn more about them. You'll be grateful you did. Over and over again, you'll find it interesting, refreshing and inspirational. Not only is this a universe of excellence, but one of curiosity, boundary exploring, inclusive, extraordinarily collaborative and healthy joy - a *joi de vie* with musical vibrations of one sort or another that go deep and wide. Enjoy their [YouTube channel](#), this is a must.

GPFS is simply proud to be a part of a community where the phenomenon that is 45th Parallel emerges, rises and rises and rises year after year after year. You'll find their 21-22 Season (titled Gratitude) here: [New Season](#).

They also have a very informative, attractive, tidy Instagram site that will help you stay posted on "goings on." ([@45thparallelpdx](#)). Everything they have to share is shared or easily accessible through a no-cost or modestly priced membership level should you want access to more digital content and other perks. **Go. Look. Listen. Listen again. Tell others. Join their mailing list.**

Perhaps I'm too easily satisfied, but I can simply stare at their very vibrant home webpage for several minutes and feel intrigue and desire. Here is a recent selection from their YouTube channel [featuring Arcturus](#), the woodwind quintet, featuring chamber music for winds and piano. On a more purely flutist note – here is a video of [Martha Long playing a piece by Reza Vali](#), Folk Song Set No. 9 (about 20 minutes).

There are currently six ensembles within 45<sup>th</sup> Parallel:

- ❖ the 45th Parallel Chamber Orchestra which includes Oregon Symphony principal and GPFS member Martha Long <https://www.45thparallelpdx.org/stars/chamber-orchestra>
- ❖ The Pyxis Quartet, 2 violins, viola and cello - <https://www.45thparallelpdx.org/stars/pyxis>
- ❖ Arcturus Quintet, a woodwind quintet which includes flutist Martha Long - <https://www.45thparallelpdx.org/stars/arcturus>
- ❖ The Gemini Project - 3 percussionists, with the goal of the project to expand to include performing artists from around the world - <https://www.45thparallelpdx.org/stars/gemini>
- ❖ mosai REMIX, string quartet - <https://www.45thparallelpdx.org/stars/gemini>
- ❖ F.O.G. - a favorite of this author! <https://www.45thparallelpdx.org/stars/fog> *F.O.G. is our musical laboratory. It's the place where Ives gets paired with Gesualdo, where poetry gets paired with Beethoven, where jazz, Irish fiddling, baroque music and anything else that sprouts from the fertile mind of founder Greg Ewer is born. F.O.G. is the place where Greg and friends will continue 45th Parallel's eclectic tradition with concerts that amuse, challenge, provoke, and inspire.*

**Last, but certainly not least, teaching is gloriously central to their mission.** This is something else that GPFS has in common with them – the mission of teaching and the commitment to make certain those students who can't afford lessons have some opportunity to do so.

*Teaching the next generation of musicians is also critical to the group's mission. An experiment to give music lessons to students who couldn't afford them has blossomed into an urban success story, fostering confidence, community and an appreciation of beauty from both teachers and students. In the end, it boils down to this: 45th Parallel offers something both simple and complex: Music is nothing less than a marvel of human expression.*

## Q&A with Martha Long

### How would you describe what 45th Parallel is to a child?

*45th Parallel is a group of musicians who are devoted to playing chamber music together. There are five individual ensembles (two string quartets, a wind quintet, a percussion group, and a flexible group for special projects) that present their own concerts throughout the season and come together twice a year to perform as a chamber orchestra. There are also opportunities to perform with musicians from different ensembles--for example, I recently played Amy Beach's Theme and Variations for flute and string quartet and I often perform with one of the cellists as a duo. The range of repertoire spans from the Baroque period, played on period instruments, to brand new works written specifically for 45th Parallel members and everything in between.*



### Why do you want to be a part of 45th?

*I love playing in the orchestra and it will always be my musical home. Chamber music brings a different set of challenges and opportunities, from choosing your own repertoire to using your rehearsal time wisely to choosing what to wear onstage. I always tell my students that just as there is no substitute for private lessons, there is also no substitute for ensemble playing. As a professional, there is no substitute for being one voice in the orchestral tapestry but also no substitute for the simple pleasure of performing chamber music with friends. The two groups serve different needs and purposes within my musical life.*

### What do you most want GPFS members to know about 45th?

*There's something for every type of audience member at 45th Parallel. I can think of recent concerts that included Bach suites on solo baroque violin, a string quartet collaborating with an electric guitarist, concerts that bring together spoken word and new pieces of music, and beautiful performances of standard Classical and Romantic repertoire. If you're new to 45th Parallel, I encourage you to check out our YouTube page (45th Parallel Universe) and watch some of the Friday night concerts that we produced during the pandemic. There are 54 programs to choose from (including several performances by my wind quintet and my own flute recital!) and I'm sure that you'll find something to love. We also love hearing from our audience members, so don't be shy! If there's something that you loved or something that you want to hear, please reach out. Live music is a conversation between the performer and the audience, so we welcome your thoughts and questions.*

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