

Review

**NEOSonicFest Concert 5 —
FiveOne Experimental Orchestra at The Screw Factory (April 5)**

By Mike Telin



Anyone familiar with FiveOne Experimental Orchestra knows one thing: no concert will be like the last one. With their “no-boundaries” approach to music, this inventive group has a knack for creating happenings. They regularly incorporate artistic disciplines such as sculptors, filmmakers, dancers, and visual artists into their concerts. And they stand by their mission to present their concerts in unusual spaces like the Sculpture Center and the East Cleveland Township Cemetery.

On Saturday, Saturday, April 5 as part of NEOSonicFest, FiveOne Experimental Orchestra outdid themselves during their performance at The Screw Factory in Lakewood. And once again, it was a happening.

The Screw Factory is a massive complex that once served as the home of the Templar Motor Company. It later became a production facility for nuts and bolts, hence its name. Today it is home to an electrical wire manufacturer while the second and third floors serve as artists’ studios.

Saturday’s concert took place on the second floor in a large, open, cavernous space with the performers placed in the center and the audience seated on three sides. With a bar off to one side, fork lifts on the sides of the stage and illumination provided by large industrial lamps, the somewhat gritty atmosphere actually felt welcoming.

Prior to the concert, FiveOne artistic director John HC Thompson welcomed the large and extremely diverse audience to this “Post-Industrial Cathedral” and encouraged everyone to move around and experience the orchestra from different points of view.

Beginning the program was Missy Mazzolli’s *Still Life with Avalanche*, which she describes as “a pile of melodies collapsing in a chaotic freefall.” Commissioned by eighth blackbird, the Mazzolli creates a sonic landscape over a drone played by harmonicas. FiveOne’s flutist Jeiran Hasan, clarinetist Anthony Slusser, violinist Chiara Stauffer, cel-

list Michael Tavani, pianist Wen-Ting Ong and percussionist Dylan Moffitt performed the rhythmically intricate work with authority and nuance. Mazzolli is an intelligent composer whose works are a staple of new music concerts and it's great that FiveOne included her music in the festival.

Michael Laurello's *Tell Hope Everything You Hear* for guitar and tape (with recorded playback heard through speakers both left and right) is quite an interesting piece consisting of a series of motives that develop, then stop and begin again. Guitarist Joshua Stauffer negotiated the work's tricky technical passages with aplomb.

Following David Crowell's translucent *Waiting in the Rain for Snow*, the first half concluded with Matthew Frederick's slow, smooth and jazzy arrangement of *Phantasm* from Flying Lotus' album *Until the Quiet Comes*.

The second half began with a signature of FiveOne, a performance of a totally improvised work. Saturday's edition was used as a prelude to Jordan Nobles' *Simulacrum*, a work also based in improvisation with a leading line that can be played by any instrument. Each line has 20 accompaniment cells that the rest of the players can choose from to play. While there were many well-played solos throughout, bassist Joel Negus was a standout. Unfortunately, *Simulacrum* simply overstayed its welcome.

In introducing Judd Greenstein's *Sing Along*, John HC Thompson said they chose it because it was a great show closer, and indeed, the uplifting and fresh sounding work brought evening to a fine conclusion.

This was a great evening of music making. Although the acoustics are very "wet", as a performance space the room works well. Thanks to Five One for seeking it out.

Photo by Frank Lanza via Facebook.

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