

FiveOne Experimental Orchestra to launch workplace concerts

by Mike Telin



Since 2008 audiences have come to expect the unexpected from the Cleveland-based [FiveOne Experimental Orchestra](#) (51XO). The ensemble regularly presents concerts in truly non-traditional spaces including warehouses, cemeteries, sculpture gardens, and even at a vintage consignment store. Beginning in January, 51XO will extend their innovative approach to the sustainability side of the organization with a new outreach program that enables Cleveland-area employers to hire the ensemble to perform for their employees onsite.

“Sustainability is the holy grail of non-profit organizations,” 51XO cofounder and executive director Jeremy Allen said during a telephone conversation. “We are constantly tasked with finding new and increasingly sustainable ways to share art with our community. Grants are wonderful when you get them, but you can’t build a revenue model around them.”

Allen said that 51XO has learned a lot about sustainability during the past couple of years through the training they’ve received from the Robert Rauschenberg Foundation. “We’re creative people and we should be using those creative energies to develop new programs in both artistic and organizational capacities. I anticipate that we will have a good bit of interest in this program once the word gets out.”

The program is designed to introduce new musical works to listeners outside of the ensemble’s regular concert season. Allen thinks that with the current trend of employers

offering experiential perks to their employees, this workplace concert series couldn't come at a better time. "It is a great choice for clients because it significantly benefits both the employees and the community at large," he said. "It's a win-win for everyone involved."

Allen pointed out that studies have shown that music, and particularly classical music, not only improves productivity and creativity in the workplace, but also reduces stress, increases focus, and contributes to a general feeling of well-being. "Providing employees with something that benefits them personally will make them happier, and if they're happier everything works better. Companies like Google have been reaping the benefits of this for years. The program also gives us an increased opportunity to reach new audiences and to try new things artistically."

Although the program is in its experimental stage, Allen said he will work with clients to create options that will fit their needs in terms of the size of the ensemble, the length and time of the concert, as well as cost. "Audiences tell us that what they love most about our concerts is that we are approachable and that it is a very personal experience for them. We want to bring that personal touch to the workplace."

For more information or to book a concert, contact:

Jeremy Allen, Executive Director
fiveoneinfo@gmail.com
216.226.3255

Photo: clockwise from bottom left — Tracy Mortimore (double bass), Audrey Whartenby (flute), Chiara Stauffer (violin), Jeremy Allen (composer), Joshua Stauffer (guitar), Rob Kovacs (piano), Evan Mitchell (percussion), James Lee (clarinet), Robert Nicholson (cello).

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