

## CMA Performing Arts Series brings home prestigious award

by Mike Telin



Each year, the Cleveland Museum of Art's Performing Arts Series engages Northeast Ohio audiences with a roster of innovative performers and ensembles representing a myriad of musical genres. Last season, the Museum's director of performing arts, Tom Welsh (left), presented a diverse lineup that included performances by the Calder Quartet, Oberlin Contemporary Music Ensemble, Ragamala Dance and Rudresh Mahanthappa, Mivos Quartet, Roomful of Teeth, and pipa virtuoso Wu Man.

On Sunday, January 10, at the Westin New York in Times Square during Chamber Music America's National Conference, The [Cleveland Museum of Art](#) will be honored with the CMA/ASCAP Award for Adventurous Programming in the category of Large Presenter, Mixed Repertory. The award, which includes \$500 plus a commemorative plaque, will be presented by Cia Toscanini, vice president of concert music, American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers ([ASCAP](#)). Welsh will be receiving the award on behalf of the Museum.

"On behalf of our performing arts team, as well as all of the people who work at the Museum, I'm grateful to be receiving this award," Welsh said in a telephone conversation. "It's exciting that Chamber Music America, which is made up of presenters and ensembles from across the country, is paying attention to what's going on in Cleveland. We're excited and humbled to be acknowledged with this award."

Welsh said that during the vetting process CMA and ASCAP were looking specifically at the programming of music that has been written in the past 25 years. "This award reflects the Museum's commitment to programming music of our time."

Since its founding in 1977, [Chamber Music America](#), a national service organization, has been an advocate for thousands of individual musicians and ensembles working in

the field of Chamber Music. Although the term originally referred to Western classical music performed by ensembles like string quartets, today CMA's membership includes performers from such diverse musical genres as contemporary, jazz, classical, and world music.

Established jointly by Chamber Music America and ASCAP, the annual awards recognize U.S.-based professional ensembles and presenters for distinctive programming of music composed within the past 25 years. The recipients were chosen by an independent panel of classical and jazz chamber music professionals on the basis of their programming and innovations in attracting audiences to performances of new music.

The award is the second for the Museum, which also won in 2005 when the series was under the direction of longtime curator of music Karel Paukert and his former assistant curator, Paul Cox. "We're not really breaking new ground with this award," Welsh said, but rather upholding a tradition in the range of things that we program on the series. Receiving the award is not only great for the Museum, but it's a sign of health for the entire music community in the Greater Cleveland area."

2016 Ensemble category award-winners include:

[loadbang](#) (New York, NY) — *Contemporary*, for groups specializing in contemporary classical chamber music.

[Steve Griggs Ensemble](#) (Seattle, WA) — *Jazz*, for groups performing their own chamber jazz compositions and/or contemporary works by other jazz composers.

[Cantata Profana](#) (Brooklyn, NY) — *Mixed Repertory*, for groups performing both traditional and contemporary classical chamber music.

2016 Large Presenter (more than ten concerts per year) award-winners include:

[The Jazz Gallery](#) (New York, NY) — *Jazz*, for presenters programming primarily contemporary chamber jazz.

[The Cleveland Museum of Art](#) (Cleveland, OH) — *Mixed Repertory*, for presenters programming contemporary classical, along with traditional classical, jazz, and world chamber music.

Small Presenter (nine concerts or fewer per year) award-winners include:

[Musiq](#) (Houston, TX) — *Contemporary*, for presenters specializing in contemporary classical chamber music.

[Kyo-Shin-An Arts](#) (New York, NY) — *Mixed Repertory*, for presenters programming contemporary classical, along with traditional classical, jazz, and world chamber music.

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