

## Jupiter Quartet celebrates teaching and playing at ENCORE Chamber Music

by Samantha Spaccasi



For the Jupiter Quartet, returning to Northeast Ohio is like returning home. Cellist Dan McDonough and violinists Meg Freivogel and Nelson Lee attended the Cleveland Institute of Music, and violist Liz Freivogel attended the Oberlin Conservatory. “We all started our careers in the Cleveland area, in a way,” said McDonough in a recent phone conversation. “We got a solid education in chamber music at those schools.”

The Jupiters return to Cleveland for a performance at ENCORE Chamber Music at the Gilmour Academy on June 16 at 7:00 pm. The program includes Beethoven’s Quartets Op. 18, No. 2 and Op. 131, and György Ligeti’s *Quartet No. 1*, “Metamorphoses Nocturnes.”

The Quartet is the Artist-in-Residence at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. They also maintain private studios and direct the string chamber music program. McDonough loves that he has the opportunity to not only perform around the world, but teach as well. “I love when something clicks every once in a while. You talk about a concept while working on a piece that a student’s been playing for years, and it gradually works its way into their consciousness,” he said. “But sometimes, there’s a moment where you can see their eyes light up, where you can see when the student puts it together, and they smile and grasp what you’re talking about.”

When the quartet first formed in 2002, another Cleveland-based group, the Cavani Quartet, had some advice for the players: “They told us we’d have a school visit with every concert, so we had to develop a way of talking to various kinds of audiences and making programs that are suitable for all ages,” the cellist said. “When you’re starting out, a young quartet has to know how to give engaging concerts in the community.”

A summer training program for young musicians, ENCORE Chamber Music brings quality ensembles to the Cleveland area. Founded by violinist Jinjoo Cho, the program's focus is education and audience engagement. This was attractive to the Jupiters, who make outreach a priority. "We deeply believe in sharing our love of chamber and classical music not just from the concert stage, but with young students and the larger community," McDonough said. "Being part of a university is a great vehicle for pursuing that. Even before we were teaching officially, we made that a big part of our mission."

This marks the first time that the entire quartet will play at ENCORE. "I went there alone last summer because the Cavani needed a cellist. It was the first time the Festival was happening, and I was so impressed with what Jinjoo had put together," he said. "I was really happy when she asked if the whole quartet could come back and I was thrilled to share how great ENCORE is with my colleagues."

McDonough praised Cho's direction of the program. "It's nice to see that Cleveland has its own camp now to focus on chamber music. She has a great sense of what the program's about, and I agree with what she's trying to accomplish."

The group will also perform an ENCORE Sunday Unplugged concert, "Summer Tango," on June 18 at 2:00 pm with their old friends, the Cavani. "We're going to be doing some octets and sextets with them, and Jinjoo will also play with the eight of us," he said. "It's going to be really fun."

Tickets for the event can be purchased [here](#).

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