

ChamberFest Cleveland: Itamar Zorman on chamber music

by Samantha Spaccasi



Itamar Zorman is enamored by chamber music. “I love the repertoire! There are so many fun works to play,” he said in a phone conversation. During the past year, the Israeli violinist played all over the world, making appearances in Dublin and Serbia. His next stop? ChamberFest Cleveland, performing this week in “Fin de Siècle,” “Hommage,” and “Youth.” See our [Concert Listings](#) for more details.

When he’s not touring, the 2011 International Tchaikovsky Competition winner remains busy with the Lysander Piano Trio. The group has a similar mission to ChamberFest, something that was attractive to Zorman. “The Lysanders are also working on creative repertoire and enriching our programming, not unlike what ChamberFest does,” he said.

This isn’t Zorman’s first visit to the Festival — he performed on it last year. “Diana Cohen asked me to come,” he said. “Even though I’d known her for a while, ChamberFest was the first time I played with her.”

A graduate of the Israeli Conservatory, Jerusalem Academy of Music and Dance, and Juilliard, the violinist said that chamber music was always part of his education. “When I would go to summer festivals, the focus was on chamber music,” he said. “It helped me develop into the musician I am today. When I play with different people, I learn a lot.”

The musician’s love of learning translates to an initiative he co-founded in 2008: the Israeli Chamber Project, which holds programs in Israel as well as New York City. ICP offers masterclasses and partners with conservatories and institutions to provide an accessible chamber music education. “The work that the students do is crucial — after all, they are the future of music. We want to support what they are doing.”

Zorman, a recipient of the Avery Fisher Career Grant, expressed excitement about ChamberFest's programming. "It's very original and creative, and as a performer, it's engaging and fun. You don't always have the opportunity to play some of these pieces," he said. "If I were a concertgoer, this is something I'd love to go listen to."

The violinist is especially looking forward to performing Bartók's *Piano Quintet*. "I've never played the piece before, but it's a fun work by a great composer," he said. "It's going to be interesting to see how it all comes together."

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