

## Time Canvas Ensemble and Archie Green to explore “Hip Hop and Minimalism”

by Alice Koeninger



Time Canvas Ensemble will cap off their *Home Not Home* concert trilogy with four performances of “Hip Hop and Minimalism,” featuring hip-hop artist and mental health advocate Archie Green (left). Three house shows will take place on Thursday, August 9 and Friday the 10th at 6:30 pm, and on Sunday the 12th at 4:00 pm. [RSVP](#) through their website and get an email with the house address the day before. A fourth performance will take place at Historic St. John’s on Saturday, August 11 at 8:00 pm — buy tickets [here](#).

In a phone interview with Time Canvas guitarist and executive director Joshua Stauffer, he described how the title *Home Not Home* relates to hip-hop and minimalism through the African American experience. “Many people don’t feel at home, or completely welcome in their own country,” he said. The Ensemble — which also includes violinist and artistic director Chiara Stauffer and cellist Robert Nicholson — thought that this phenomenon was important to include in their discussion of refugees and what it means to call a country home, especially in a city like Cleveland that is becoming so gentrified.

Stauffer said he thought of Green right away because of his work advocating for mental health in the African American community in Cleveland. Time Canvas is excited to collaborate with him while he raps over and in between minimalist pieces such as John Cage’s *In a landscape* and Philip Glass’s *Mad Rush*. Stauffer emphasized that since he is not black, he could not speak to the African American experience, and that Time Canvas’s goal as an ensemble is to “get out of the way” and give Green a platform to speak. “We’re just giving him a lot of paint and putting up a canvas and saying, ‘Go for it!’”

I reached Green through email to get a better sense of his music, his interpretation of “home not home,” and how it relates to the black American experience. His most recent EP, *Black Pharaoh*, was created “in protest against the way the black man is viewed in this country.” Green said it was his way of “fighting back against oppression, depression — and a way to lift my spirits and that of my community.” (Listen to the full EP on Soundcloud [here](#).)

In his collaboration with Time Canvas, Green plans to touch on issues such as Trayvon Martin’s death and the unjust killings of black people, as well as depression, self-care, pro-blackness, and pride in his African American heritage.

Green fully relates to “home not home” through his experience growing up as “a token black kid in Chagrin Falls,” he said. “Although I am a citizen of this nation, I still often don’t feel *at home* here due to systematic oppression, racism, and other ills that this country subjects my people to. What is not as celebrated or documented in the media is black excellence. A great example is LeBron James opening up the I Promise School in Akron, or Virgil Abloh becoming the first African American to head menswear for Louis Vuitton in the luxury brand’s entire history. Viewing social media timelines flooded with death, or persons of color having to deal with police when they did absolutely nothing wrong, can be very traumatic. This contributes to self-hate, and in turn becomes depression.”

Hip-hop and minimalism may seem like strange partners at first, but sampling is extremely common in both genres. Green, who is a big fan of Steve Reich’s *Music for 18 Musicians*, samples sounds like running water and recorded speeches in *Black Pharaoh*. The African American experience and minimalism will also intersect through another Reich composition that will be included in the program. *Come Out* was created to benefit the Harlem Six, six black boys who were arrested for the murder of a Hungarian refugee in Harlem. These boys were beaten while in jail.

From listening to Green’s music, it is clear that he is not afraid to tell the ugly truth, but that he also wants to make people feel better. Through his work as a mental health advocate in black communities where depression isn’t taken seriously, and through his music, he seems to cut through the bad to get to the good. Though this Time Canvas concert may feel heavy, it promises to be a beautiful fusion of minimalism and spoken word.

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