

Arts Renaissance Tremont turns twenty-nine this season

by Mike Telin



Since its founding in 1991, [Arts Renaissance Tremont](#) (ART) has been a cultural pillar in that West Side Cleveland neighborhood. And from the beginning, the organization has made its home at the historic Pilgrim Congregational UCC. Under the tireless direction of its founder and director Chris Haff-Paluck (*left, with Jinjoo Cho*), with assistance from a group of dedicated board members and volunteers, ART has remained true to its vision of keeping concerts free of charge.

On Sunday, October 13 at 3:00 pm, ART will kick off its 29th season with a recital by cellist Darrett Adkins and pianist Cicilia Yudha. Their program will feature works by Janáček, Kodály, Messiaen, and Chopin.

“Twenty-nine years — who knows where all the time has gone?” Haff-Paluck said during an interview, noting that the Tremont neighborhood was very different in the early ‘90s. “There are so many restaurants and galleries now, but it wasn’t that way back then. People wanted arts programs to be happening in the neighborhood.”

One of those people was the new pastor at Pilgrim Church. “My mom was the one who put me on to Pilgrim,” Haff-Paluck recalled. “She was UCC, and I grew up in the UCC. She said that it’s a beautiful place, and that the new pastor, Rev. Dr. Laurie Hafner, and her husband were into the arts. She also told me that I had played in a concert there when I was a kid, although I didn’t remember.”

Haff-Paluck arranged to visit Pilgrim and to have a conversation about presenting some classical music performances. She said that when she walked into the sanctuary, she was blown away by the space and the acoustic. “I’m so grateful that Laurie, who was trying to build a congregation, agreed to host some concerts. After those were done she said, ‘This is wonderful, let’s make this your home.’”

From the beginning, ART has made collaborations part of its core mission. “One of the first was the Bach *St. Matthew Passion* with Daniel Hathaway when he was still at Music & Performing Arts at Trinity Cathedral. We did half at Trinity and half at Pilgrim.”

More recently, ART concertgoers have been invited to donate non-perishable items for local distribution through the Pilgrim Food Pantry. Arts Renaissance for Kids (ARK) brings music programs to nearby libraries, schools, and community centers. The Stepping Out community concerts are geared toward seniors and those with limited mobility. This season that program has expanded into a new partnership with the Rocky River Senior Center. And for the past two summers, ART has brought performances by the young musicians at ENCORE Chamber Music to various venues in the area.

Looking back, the opportunity to work with many wonderful area musicians is what has made Haff-Paluck’s job a true labor of love. Many of those musicians are part of ART’s 2019-2020 season.

On Sunday, November 24 at 3:00 pm, Cleveland-based BlueWater Chamber Orchestra will present a program of works by Schumann, Adès, and Tchaikovsky, conducted by Daniel Meyer. The concert will feature an audience favorite, violinist Jinjoo Cho. “I thought she was a phenom from the time she arrived in the States at age 13 or 14 to enter the Cleveland Institute of Music Young Artist Program,” Haff-Paluck said.



An ART holiday tradition will continue on Sunday, December 15 and Monday, December 16 at 7:00 pm with Burning River Brass. “We were the first organization to present them, and they’ve played every year but one, when a blizzard forced the concert to be cancelled.”

On Friday, January 31 at 7:00 pm, the Amici String Quartet (Takako Masame and Miho Hashizume, violins, Lynne Ramsey, viola, and Ralph Curry, cello) will

continue their cycle of the complete Beethoven quartets with Op. 74 (“Harp”) and Op. 18, No. 1. “They’re all members of The Cleveland Orchestra, and this is their sixth performance of the Beethoven cycle on the series. They’ve also done some school programs for us.”

ART will celebrate Bach’s 335th birthday on Sunday, March 22 at 3:00 pm. “This concert is always a lot of fun — and who doesn’t like Bach.”

On Sunday, April 19 at 3:00 pm, violinist Ivan Zenaty and pianist Dmitri Vorobiev will perform works by Bach, Schumann, Martinů, and Smetana. “Ivan has a great international career, and Dmitri, who teaches at North Carolina School of the Arts, is amazing.”

The season will conclude on Sunday, May 10 at 3:00 pm with the “dynamic duo” of Cleveland Orchestra principal cello Mark Kosower and pianist Jee-Won Oh. Their program will feature works by Beethoven, Chausson, Britten, Brahms, and Mussorgsky. “They’ve played for us many times. They’re fantastic musicians and such nice people.”

The Stepping Out Series at the Rocky River Senior Center will continue on Saturday, November 2 at 1:30 pm. Violinist Shannon Lee and pianist Christine Hill will perform works by Mozart, Paganini, H.W. Ernst, and Bruch.

On Monday, November 18 at 2:30 pm, the Cavani Quartet (Annie Fullard and Catherine Cosby, violins, Eric Wong, viola, and Kyle Price, cello) will play music of Charles Washington and Beethoven.

Both concerts are free — donations are welcome — but seating reservations are required. Call 440.333.6660.

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