

ChamberFest Cleveland — *Together Again (June 13)*

by Mike Telin



The weather on Sunday morning, June 13, was bright and sunny but not too hot — perfect for a ChamberFest lawn concert. Not to miss out on the occasion, a multitude of people, lawn chairs in hand, made their way down Guilford Road in Cleveland Heights to hear a wonderfully varied program titled *Bach and More*.

Violist Dimitri Murrath kicked things off with the beguiling *Passacaglia* from Biber’s Rosary Sonatas. Introducing the piece, Murrath proved himself to be a droll comedian as he joked about the sounds-alike surname shared by the Bohemian-Austrian composer Heinrich Ignaz Franz and the Canadian pop singer Justin (Bieber).

The work is quintessential Biber — simple melodic lines that transform into virtuosic technical passages, which the skillful violist tossed off with aplomb.

American composer Coleridge-Taylor Perkinson’s musical inspirations were drawn from Baroque and American Romanticism as well as the blues, spirituals, and black folk music, all of which can be heard in his *Lamentations* (“Black Folksong Suite”) for solo cello. Zlatomir Fung was the perfect interpreter of the engaging and rhythmically quirky piece.

The young cellist brought a full, jazzy swagger to the opening “Fuguing Tune: Resolute.” His tone took on a mysterious hue during “Song Form: Plaintive,” and an impressive pizzicato, deep-pocket groove, sliding from one end of the instruments register to the

other, in “Calvary Ostinato.” The concluding “Perpetual Motion” found Fung diving into the virtuosic lines — shredding them like a rock-star.

“Dawn,” from Eugène Ysaÿe’s *Sonata No. 5*, was a perfect choice for a program presented in nature’s concert hall. And violinist Itamar Zorman astutely guided the audience through the work’s numerous stops along the environmental trail.

The talented violinist then gave an enthralling performance of J.S. Bach’s formidable *Chaconne*. Clean, sensitive playing coupled with well-paced lines made for an entrancing listening experience — so much emotion drawn from a small solo instrument.

The morning concluded with a reprise of Ravel’s *Sonata for Violin and Cello* from last Wednesday’s program. And again, Zorman and cellist Dane Johanson provided ample emotion and an expansive color palette during their energetic performance.

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