ENCORE Festival of Music and Ideas:
It's all about "Storytelling"

by Mike Telin

"Everyone has a story, and we are all storytellers," ENCORE Chamber Music founder and artistic director Jinjoo Cho noted during a telephone conversation. "Storytelling is our craft, it's at the core of everything we do."

On Friday, June 10, at 7:00 pm, the ENCORE Festival of Music and Ideas will launch its 7th season with a program titled "Tales of War & Grief." The concert features music by Schubert, Erkki-Sven Tüür, Matthijs van Dijk, Radiohead and Led Zeppelin performed by the Signum Quartet — Florian Donderer & Annette Walther (violins), Xandi van Dijk (viola), and Thomas Schmitz (cello).

At 6:00 pm, the Cologne, Germany-based musicians will become panelists to discuss war, grief, and how current events are impacting our mental health around the world.

The Festival, held at the Dodero Center for Performing Arts on the campus of Gilmour Academy in Gates Mills, runs through July 17. Click here to view a list of Festival events. In-person and live stream tickets can be purchased here.

From its inception, ENCORE Chamber Music has been about mentoring young musicians. "We have about 85 in the two programs," Cho said. Part One is a String Quartet intensive that is designed for pre-formed string quartets and individuals ages 16 to 26. Part Two, the Summer Academy is recommended for students ages 13 to 23 who are preparing for college auditions, competitions, and/or concerts."Our hope is that placing the educational programs alongside the Festival will inspire people to think beyond a single concert," Cho said.

One example of thinking beyond a single concert is "Tales of Pleasure: Food & Desire" on Friday, June 17. The 6:00 pm conversation will feature Brandon Chrostowski of EDWINS Leadership & Restaurant Institute who will talk about arming people who are re-entering society "with a skill set and a smile," and shaping the stories of countless individuals through the culinary arts. The 7:00 pm concert will be a humorous, jazzy program filled with themes that tingle the senses, and includes Cleveland composer Andrew Rindfleisch's, *Night Singing*.

New to the Festival this year is the 'Living Composer Highlight.' "I'm so happy that Andrew Rindfleish is our inaugural composer," Cho said. "He's a wonderful person and his music has so much color and so much depth. We've programmed a few of his pieces and we've commissioned a work from him called *Phantasmagoria*, which will premiere on July 8."

A 6:00 PM Conversation with Rindfleisch will be followed by a 7:00 pm program they're calling "Tales of Pursuit & Obsession: Intimate Letters." In addition to the Rindfleisch, the playlist includes music by Janáček and Schubert.

The concluding concert on July 10, "Body-Go-Round: Round 1" by collective A will begin at 3:00 pm with a conversation featuring Hyunjun Park, co-founder and CEO of Catalog. Park is leading the effort to handle the explosion of digital information, using cutting-edge tools of synthetic biology. He is passionate about using biology to address complex challenges.

"Body-Go-Round" will begin at 4:00 pm. The multi-disciplinary work combines contemporary dance, visual installation, interactive media art, and music. Artistic director Jinyeob Cha created the choreography for the opening and closing ceremonies of the 2018 Pyeongchang Winter Olympic Games. She has choreographed for LDP Company of Korea, Hofesh Shechter Company (UK), Galili Dance company (Netherlands), and the English National Opera (UK).

When asked about ENCORE's achievement of its seven-year milestone, Cho said that she couldn't be happier. "I wanted to create something that would spread my love of music across Cleveland. I wanted to give back to the community that gave so much to me. So many people are contributing in so many ways. And ENCORE is becoming a community, which is really nice."

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