

ChamberFest Cleveland: Season thirteen — “Lost and Found”

by Mike Telin

SEASON 13: "LOST AND FOUND"

Programming a summer music festival is not easy. There are so many pieces of the puzzle — and

not all of them artistic — that need to fit together.

But undaunted, ChamberFest Cleveland artistic directors Diana Cohen, Franklin Cohen, and Roman Rabinovich along with executive director Jessica Peek Sherwood have assembled what promises to be the most interesting Festival to date. With the theme of “Lost and Found,” season thirteen runs from June 11-18. Click [here](#) for tickets and more information.



While it's true that new music has always been an important part of their programming, this season ChamberFest has fully embraced the role of the composer/performer. The roster includes composer-in-residence Errollyn Wallen (pictured), pianists/composers Michael Stephen Brown and Roman Rabinovich, and guest composer Judith Markovich.

“I started writing when I was in a comedy group, and I wrote a few songs for them,” Errollyn Wallen recalled. “Then a member of the group said to me, ‘you know, you’re a really good songwriter.’ Songs just seem to come spontaneously for me. It’s a bit like writing a diary.”

Michael Stephen Brown credits his first piano teacher for sparking his interest in composition. “He was also a composer and encouraged me from my very first lessons to write short pieces in the style of Mozart. So I have been looking at music from both the performer and composer angles my whole life.”

Roman Rabinovich said that ever since childhood he has been driven by an instinct to create — whether sculpting from dirt and found objects, or improvising character pieces on the piano.

Judith Markovich said that she didn't begin to study composing until she was 65. She recalled showing her mentor David McKay a very short piece she had written. "I took it to him for fun and he said, 'you don't know you're a composer.' I said 'are you kidding me?' I totally laughed."



Nate's World, a chamber cabaret designed by bassist Nathan Farrington along with Ahmed Alom on piano and Gabriel Globus-Hoenich on percussion is also in the mix. What is Nate's World? "Basically we have a trio that is pretty widespread in our musical interests," Farrington said. "So we go out and do our normal work and then come back together, and we're always in a new place with everyone bringing their newest ideas. We compose all of our own music for the program."

Season thirteen also includes new partnerships including

- The Cleveland International Piano Competition — the 2024 1st Prize Winner James (Zijian) Wei will be featured on two programs.
- The East Cleveland Library — meet composer Errollyn Wallen during a family friendly event that include selections from *The Errollyn Wallen Songbook*.
- Church of the Savior — which will host a concert as well as acting as ground zero for rehearsals and gastronomic gatherings for the artists.

We'll hear more from the composers, performers, and many other ChamberFest participants in the coming weeks.

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