

Arts Renaissance Tremont: *The Art of Influence* (Mar. 1)

By Kevin McLaughlin



Arts Renaissance Tremont titled their program on Sunday, March 1, *The Art of Influence*. The premise was simple: students now fully launched into professional life performing beside the teachers who shaped them. It was partly debutante's ball, partly show of pride.

Pilgrim Congregational UCC is a round room — its pews curve inward, the ceiling rises gently, and sound returns generously. On Sunday afternoon the space felt less like a sanctuary than a living room. Erica Brenner, president of ART, greeted the audience warmly, and artistic director Feza Zweifel

served as a calm and appreciative emcee.

Cleveland Orchestra percussionists Thomas Sherwood and Tanner Tanyeri opened with Andy Akiho's *Karakurenai*. Written for variable instrumentation and played here on orchestral bells (Sherwood) and vibraphone (Tanyeri), it's a study in interlocking rhythm. As a duet, the piece becomes a test of alignment and nerve.

Akiho builds the piece from short rhythmic figures passed back and forth. One player starts a pattern, the other finishes it. The tension comes from a gentle 3-against-4 pull — a steady pulse nudged by triplets. Sherwood and Tanyeri kept the shifting accents clear, their shared silences landing together. What might have been just an exercise instead felt lively — two musicians pushing each other toward precision.

They followed with Thomas Kotcheff's *5ERVO*. The title refers to a feedback mechanism correcting its own motion — “servo,” spelled with the number five,

intimating rhythmic troubles ahead. The setup resembled a small Rube Goldberg apparatus spread across a table: log drum, brake drum, scrap metal, glass bottles, pie plate. The players alternated propulsion and pauses, as if recalibrating the system in real time. The piece demanded stamina, precision, and clarity — all in ample supply.

The violin pairing of Mari Sato and James Thompson shifted musical eras and back again. In Jean-Marie Leclair's Sonata for Two Violins, the voices intertwined and parried with courtly balance. Allegro phrases were tossed and traded, and a Gavotte shaped with grace. Thompson, now concertmaster of the Erie Philharmonic and BlueWater Chamber Orchestra, matched Sato's refined playing, gesture for gesture. Their synchrony was striking.

Béla Bartók *Duos* — Arabian Song, Pizzicato, Transylvanian Dance — carried a sharper edge. Rhythms snapped, harmonies threw elbows, and the final dance had a real bite.

After intermission, Cleveland Orchestra principal oboe Frank Rosenwein and Adrian Gonzales brought wit to Jeffrey Rathbun's *Four More Diversions for Two Oboes*. "Fanfares" sparkled. "Unchanging" found stillness without stagnation, the accompaniment shifting beneath a fixed line. In "Speedsters," the players were as dexterous and coordinated as dancers. Their blend was exquisite — tone matched, articulation aligned. Even their comic "honking" effects matched in vehemence.

The horn segment carried the afternoon, for sentimental reasons. Richard King and Meghan Guegold Hege, now both Cleveland Orchestra members, were joined by pianist Joanna Huang — like Guegold Hege, herself a former student of King.

In the Johannes Brahms songs — "So lass uns wandern," "Es rauschet das Wasser," and "Walpurgisnacht" — the hornists phrased together with the easy unity of players who sit in the same orchestral section. In Gunther Schuller's *Duet No. 1* and *Chanson (Homage à Darius Milhaud)*, the lines leaned toward jazz — relaxed, playful, intuitive.

Throughout the program, the musicians spoke briefly about what they had learned from one another — as student and teacher. The sentiments felt unguarded and genuine. One teacher described a student's gifts: preparation, calm, patience. The student in turn recalled his teacher's advice — broaden your horizons (visual art and dance) — and the example he set as a professional. The gratitude and pride between each pair were unmistakable.

The concert closed with a nine player version of Akiho's *Karakurenai*, the earlier percussion duet expanded into communal texture. Rhythms overlapped, accents shifted, silences aligned. What began as two gears meshing became a larger mechanism — precise and coordinated, like a musical clock.

The audience in Pilgrim's circular room responded with clear appreciation.

Published on ClevelandClassical.com March 4, 2026

Click here for a printable copy of this article

[Return to the Front Page.](#)