

No Exit to launch year-long tribute to the music of Erik Satie

by Mike Telin



“In the words of John Cage, Satie is indispensable,” No Exit artist director Tim Beyer said during a telephone conversation. “As iconic as Satie is, you don’t often see a concert presented in his honor.” On Friday, October 30 at Heights Arts, No Exit will launch their seventh season with what will be a year-long tribute to the music of Erik Satie.

“With Satie’s 150th birthday approaching it seemed like an ideal time to showcase music from a composer who many see as the original musical dadaist,” Beyer said. The program will include Satie’s *Nocturnes* Nos. 1 and 2 as well as “Idylle” from *Avant-dernières pensées*. Additional performances will be held at Cleveland State University’s Drinko Recital Hall on Monday, November 9, and at SPACES on Saturday, November 21. All three concerts begin at 8:00 pm.

“Like many composers that No Exit has highlighted in the past, Satie represents an artist who was very much guided by his own compass,” Beyer said. “While he may have been reacting to what was going on musically at the time, he is nevertheless a composer who really did his own thing. Unlike so much of what is thought of as “avant-garde,” his work is infinitely accessible and so often filled with great whimsey.”

The program will also feature Kaija Saariaho’s *Sept Papillons* and Krzysztof Penderecki’s *String Trio*. “I love the way our pianist Nicholas Underhill plays the Saariaho. He really invokes the other-worldly nature of the piece. I don’t know why the Penderecki doesn’t get played more often. I think it’s because the piece doesn’t represent the notion that people have of his music.”

What would a No Exit concert be without the inclusion of a premiere? “Nick Underhill has written a new work for solo piano entitled *The Beach at Time’s End*. It compliments the Satie wonderfully. Ryan Gallegher’s *Night Falls Fast* for percussion and viola, is phenomenal. His music is just so dynamic and expressive. We’ve wanted to work with him for a long time.”

Also being premiered is Minnesota-based composer Justin Henry Rubin’s *Fantasie* for piano quartet. “We recently did the first installment of what will be an ongoing ensemble exchange program between No Exit and the extraordinary Saint Paul-based new music ensemble Zeitgeist. We just returned from Saint Paul, and this spring Zeitgeist will be coming to Cleveland to do the same. The exchange has been great in making us far more familiar with some of the great music coming out of that area — which is how we came to program Justin’s piece.

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