



ABOUT THE FESTIVAL THEME r:EVOLUTION

By Barry Shiffman, *artistic director*

When I first imagined the 2018 Rockport Chamber Music Festival, I envisioned a transformative experience for both audience and artist alike; a dialogue between the two that would inspire new excitement for the beauty and emotional power of music, and signal new momentum in what I truly believe is one of the greatest summer festivals in the world. Rockport Music already has a reputation as a destination for some of the brightest stars in classical music, with a glorious concert hall in which beauty of sound and design exist in perfect harmony, and a proud legacy of inspired artistic leadership under David Deveau. Over my tenure as Artistic Director, I want to see this reputation for excellence evolve continuously: we start this journey of evolution in the summer of 2018 with an aura of revolution and appetite for challenge, embracing the traditional and the new simultaneously, proving the continued relevance of classical music.

The concepts of Revolution and Evolution are intrinsic to humanity and the arts. Great art is never static: it changes, it grows, it challenges, it transcends. The music we love has so often been born of the inspiration of struggle. Music is, first and foremost, the sound of emotion, so it is natural to find that some of the most compelling sounds emerge in times of conflict and upheaval. I have been fascinated to discover how much the desire for change has been the instigator to push music forward. Sounds of anguish in Shostakovich, the roar of defiance in the heroic music of Beethoven, evocation of crushed protest in Tan Dun and Arabic songs of resistance in Golijov—the music’s urgency and power leave the performer and listener changed. The clash of cultures that has resulted from Revolution has always been a rich source of inspiration for artists.

The 2018 summer of r:EVOLUTION signals an exciting new era for the Rockport Chamber Music Festival. Building on its deep, healthy roots, we ignite new enthusiasm and interest for music and the festival itself through electrifying programming featuring countless new artists, broadening our community engagement, and growing Rockport’s reputation as not just a consumer of great music, but also as an investor in the next generation of classical music performance and artists.

With its stellar tradition of performance excellence and the amazing asset that is the Shalin Liu Performance Center, the Rockport Chamber Music Festival deserves its great reputation.

We will build on this momentum, developing the future of the festival through delivering new, visceral artistic experiences, and bringing increased relevance to the programming. I want musicians and patrons to feel that when they are at Rockport, they are participating in something special, where trust, dialogue and creation flourish. My strategy for this evolution leverages our exceptional facilities and existing reputation, focusing on three pillars:

Community Engagement | Investment & Innovation | Performance Excellence

Over the coming years, Rockport will evolve and revolutionize what it means to present classical music to the world. This journey begins with a series that will engage from first to last: a feast for the community. I hope you enjoy the r:EVOLUTION!