

The long road to The Rail Yards concert for pioneering Chatter Chamber Ensemble

David Felberg (Chatter's Artistic Director and violinist) is endlessly creative, tireless, and innovative. So, when he was presented with this opportunity, it took very little time for him to envision a concert that would be about the new beginnings and renewal of this wrecked, but extraordinary, space. He knew he wanted to perform Arvo Pärt's "Tabula Rasa" – "blank slate" – as a beautiful homage to the Rail Yards. The rest seemed to fall into place, the way it does when he and [Associate Artistic Director] James Shields start scheming about music. And it led to the Bach Double Violin Concerto and a thrilling piece by Alfred Schnittke. All for solo violins, piano and/or harpsichord and a string orchestra.

So back to the beginning: more than a year ago (on January 14, 2013), I met with Betty Rivera, the Director of Cultural Services [for the City of Albuquerque]. She asked, and I answered that what I wanted most for Chatter was a concert in the old Rail Yards. To my surprise and delight, she was immediately enthusiastic and positive about it. We were off and running ... not having any idea of what would be required.

David and James got to experience the Rail Yards acoustics a couple of times during the year as we were trying to figure out the time of year and time of day for such an event ... given the



Artistic Director David Felberg plays and conducts a ground-breaking concert at The Rail Yards on the first Saturday in May. Photo by Stephanie Hainsfurther.

weather and the rather few-to-nonexistent amenities of the Rail Yards.

Ever undaunted, we needed to figure out pianos and harpsichord (how to get them safely into and out of the space), how to create a stage large enough for two grand pianos, a harpsichord and 24 string musicians; what about bathrooms and chairs and a "green room" for musicians and promotion and ticketing and parking? Will the Mayor come? What about funding?

Wonderful PianoWerkes came up with a solution for the pianos and we eventually found strong support from Wells Fargo and the Albert Pierce Foundation. We learned the ways of City Planning and the Fire Marshall; a Chatter Board member created a floor plan that was accepted; we contracted to have a mammoth stage built and chairs rented.

And on it goes. The thrill of being able to be in that place that seemed a place of destruction for "Terminator" movies and for "Breaking Bad", the place that was originally built to repair locomotives—I try to imagine the brutal heat and noise of those days. And now, it is such a place of quiet – and of grand, outsized potential.

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--Pamela Michaelis is president of the Board of Directors of Chatter Chamber

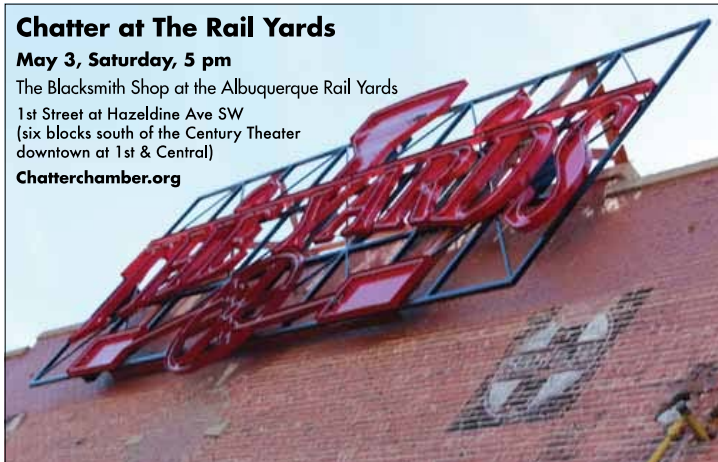
Chatter at The Rail Yards

May 3, Saturday, 5 pm

The Blacksmith Shop at the Albuquerque Rail Yards

1st Street at Hazeldine Ave SW
 (six blocks south of the Century Theater
 downtown at 1st & Central)

Chatterchamber.org



The Performers: The Chatter Ensemble - David Felberg, solo violin; Ruxandra Marquardt, solo violin; Conor Hanick, piano and harpsichord; plus 22 strings.

Admission prices for the Rail Yards concert are the same as for Chatter's regular Sunday concerts: \$15 regular, \$9 for those under 30, and \$5 for children under 12, but they're available in advance and at the door. Tickets are available online at chatterabq.org/railyards

Special tickets, which include up-front seating and a pre-concert reception at 4 pm are also available for \$100 (\$75 tax-deductible).

The art and displays: Artist Eric Thelander is creating a new body of work just for the

Chatter at the Rail Yards event. Thelander is a New Mexico-born artist with an extensive knowledge of metal arts. A great deal of this knowledge comes from a ten-year apprenticeship with NM Governor's Award recipient, sculptor Evelyn Rosenberg. Most recently, Thelander has developed his own process for etching his photographs into galvanized steel. Photo etchings of the Barelvas Rail Yards will be on display and available for purchase at the Chatter concert.

In addition to the musical performance and art, three locomotive / train enthusiast groups, including the Wheels Museum and Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec, will have displays including a model train set.