FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Chameleon Arts Ensemble closes chamber music season with “swan songs” on May 18 & 19

April 18, 2019 – Boston, MA – The Chameleon Arts Ensemble closes its 2018-19 chamber music series with in the twilight air on Saturday, May 18, 8 PM and Sunday, May 19, 4 PM at First Church in Boston. The program explores “swan songs” and late works including Johannes Brahms’ String Quintet No. 2 in G Major, Op. 111; Maurice Ravel’s G Major Violin Sonata; Gabriel Faure’s Piano Trio, in d minor, Op. 120; Arnold Bax’s Elegiac Trio for flute, viola, and harp; and Elliott Carter’s exquisite essay on the passage of time, Tempo e Tempi for soprano, oboe, clarinet, violin, and cello.


ABOUT THE PROGRAM
Brahms intended the G Major String Quintet, Op. 111 to be his “swan song” and final publication. He was at the peak of his compositional powers and poured everything he had into it, telling his publisher that he had said all he could as a composer and to expect no more pieces. The result is a tour de force of chamber music, one of the most exhilarating, colorful, and refined works in his catalogue.

Similarly, Faure’s d minor Piano Trio reflects a pure distillation of thought and expressive power, honed over a lifetime. Chamber music spanned the entirety of his creative life and provided an intimate outlet for his lyric gifts. Faure began the trio in the summer of 1922 but work was slow; he was in failing health and had become deaf. And yet, the trio displays no pity or even a hint of valedictory gesture. It is simply Faure at his finest, most radiant perfection.
Ravel's late works, on the other hand, are filled with experimentation and innovation. His final chamber work – the G Major Violin Sonata – is an excellent example of this. Composed between 1923 and 1927, Ravel takes his singular sense of color and infuses it with an American blues idiom. He writes “To my mind, the 'blues' is one of your greatest musical assets …While I adopted this popular form, I venture to say that nevertheless it is French music, Ravel's music, that I have written. Indeed, these popular forms are but the materials of construction, and the work of art appears only on mature conception where no detail has been left to chance.”

Looking at the theme from another vantage point, Sir Arnold Bax’s Elegiac Trio for flute, viola, and harp, is a farewell to friends he had lost during the Easter Rising in the spring of 1916. Scored for the same combination as Debussy’s 1915 prototype, there’s no evidence one way or another as to whether or not Bax knew of it. Texturally, they share many sonorous traits but Bax frames his trio through an Irish pastoral lens to create a poignant swan song.

Finally, a remarkable, autumnal work from a remarkable life, Elliott Carter’s Tempo e Tempi for soprano, oboe, clarinet, violin, and cello is an exquisite (near-Romantic) essay on the passage of time. He writes: “Fascination with Italian music, literature, and visual arts has grown ever since my mother took me to Rome in around 1924.” Through a series of eight reflective vignettes (of varying instrumentation) he animates poems by Montale, Ungaretti, and Quasimodo with characteristic brilliance and moving lyricism.

ABOUT CHAMELEON ARTS ENSEMBLE OF BOSTON
Founded in 1998, Chameleon Arts Ensemble has distinguished itself as one of Boston’s finest, most versatile chamber ensembles. For 20 years, Chameleon and Artistic Director Deborah Boldin have consistently earned unqualified praise for integrating old and new repertoire into unexpected chamber music programs that are themselves works of art. They were recognized nationally with 2009 and 2007 Awards for Adventurous Programming from Chamber Music America and the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers. The Boston Globe recently noted: “The Chameleon Arts Ensemble has distinguished itself over the course of two decades by sheer dint of its sparkingly imaginative programming. Its concerts are the slow food of local chamber music, events where sounds and sensibilities, rhapsody and reverie, old music and new, are balanced with care and a sense of individual voice.”

The artists of the Ensemble are highly respected and sought-after performers, with growing national and international reputations. Their superb artistry and finely-honed collaborative skills ensure luminous performances and dynamic musical dialogues. The Arts Fuse praised them for “a spectacular, shattering rendition.” The Boston Musical Intelligencer hailed “Chameleon’s interpretation riveted, offering a seemingly entirely new way of hearing a familiar piece.”

PERFORMERS
Jessica Bodner, viola
Deborah Boldin, flute
Robyn Bollinger, violin
Gloria Chien, piano
Nancy Dimock, oboe
Gary Gorczyca, clarinet
Franziska Huhn, harp
Eunae Koh, violin
Mary Mackenzie, soprano
Rafael Popper-Keizer, cello
Scott Woolweaver, viola
CHAMELEON ARTS ENSEMBLE OF BOSTON

CALENDAR LISTING - 2018-2019 Season

Chamber Series 5: in the twilight air

Program:
Maurice Ravel, Sonata for violin & piano No. 2 in G Major
Gabriel Fauré, Piano Trio in d minor, Op. 120
Elliott Carter, Tempo e Tempi for soprano, oboe, clarinet, violin & cello
Arnold Bax, Elegiac Trio for flute, viola & harp
Johannes Brahms, String Quintet No. 2 in G Major, Op. 111

Date/Time & Location:
Saturday, May 18, 2019, 8 PM
Sunday, May 19, 2019, 4 PM
First Church, 66 Marlborough Street, Boston

The closest subway stops are Arlington Street on the Green Line and Back Bay Station on the Orange Line. First Church in Boston is wheelchair accessible.

TICKETS
Individual tickets are $47, $36, and $25, with $5 discounts for students and seniors.

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