



**Chameleon**  
Arts Ensemble  
of Boston

Transforming experiences in chamber music.

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**March 3, 2023**

**contact:** Gabriel Rice, Managing Director

**phone:** 617-427-8200

**email:** [info@chameleonarts.org](mailto:info@chameleonarts.org)

**website:** [www.chameleonarts.org](http://www.chameleonarts.org)

**Chameleon Arts Ensemble presents “Fêtes galantes” on April 1 and 2**

**March 3, 2023 – Boston, MA** – Chameleon continues its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary season with *Fêtes galantes* on **Saturday, April 1, 8 PM** and **Sunday, April 2, 4 PM** at First Church in Boston. The program brings together rhapsody and reverie, dreams and magic and includes Claude Debussy’s *Première rhapsodie* for clarinet and piano; Helen Grime’s take on the commedia dell’arte, *Pierrot Miniatures* for flute, clarinet, violin, viola, cello, and piano; Gabriel Fauré’s *Mélodies “de Venise”* for soprano and piano, Op. 58; Andrea Clearfield’s *Unremembered Wings* for oboe and piano; and Mendelssohn’s sparkling chamber concerto, the *Sextet for piano, violin, two violas, cello, and double bass*, Op. 110.



**ABOUT THE PROGRAM**

The program was inspired by **Gabriel Fauré’s *Cinq Mélodies “de Venise” for soprano and piano, Op. 58***. Composed in 1891, the short cycle is based on five poems by Paul Verlaine from his collections *Fêtes galantes* and *Romances sans paroles*. Though Faure considered the grouping to be a kind of suite or story, the end result is more mood than narrative, perfectly capturing the moonlit scenes of rhapsody and reverie of the great French poet.

Similarly, **Andrea Clearfield’s *Unremembered Wings for oboe and piano* (2001)** was inspired by Pablo Neruda’s poem entitled “La Poesia” which speaks of the creative fire within our souls, that mysterious and wild place where dreams become manifest.

Composed in 2010, Scottish composer **Helen Grime’s *Seven Pierrot Miniatures for flute, clarinet, violin, viola, cello, and piano*** was inspired by the Commedia dell’Arte. Using poems by

Albert Giraud as her starting point, each shimmering movement reflects the mercurial nature of the moon-drunk clown – from dreamlike tranquility to explosive brutality. *The Herald Scotland* praised the work noting Grime's distinctive style and “her ability to condense an enormous amount of music into a very small space yet characterize it by translucence of texture, with clarity of thought and expression.”

**Debussy** composed his **Première rhapsodie for clarinet and piano** in 1909 as part of his obligation as a member of *le Conseil Supérieur* of the Paris Conservatory. It was intended as an “examination piece” to showcase the clarinet’s technical and artistic capabilities. However, in Debussy’s hands, a perfunctory, utilitarian assignment was transformed into a work of unsurpassed beauty and poetry — a “masterpiece in miniature” that remains central to the clarinet literature more than a century later.

**Mendelssohn’s Sextet for piano, violin, two violas, cello, and double bass, Op. 110** brings the program to a sparkling close. Composed before the Octet when he was only 15 years old, the Sextet was a vehicle for the young genius to display his knowledge and love for Haydn and Mozart (while hinting at his mature voice to come) and show off showed off his prolific skills as a pianist. The unusual and low scoring allows the piano to shine with trademark Mendelssohn brilliance and elegance.

## **ABOUT CHAMELEON ARTS ENSEMBLE OF BOSTON**

Founded in 1998, **Chameleon Arts Ensemble** has built a reputation as Boston’s most adventurous chamber ensemble, integrating old and new repertoire into unexpected programs that are themselves works of art. Over the past 25 years, Chameleon has performed more than 350 concerts featuring a remarkable array of nearly 700 *different* works by 300 *different* composers presented in smart, thematic programs that appeal to both connoisseurs and newcomers alike. National honors include 2020, 2017 and 2015 awards from the National Endowment for the Arts, two awards from the Koussevitzky Music Foundation in the Library of Congress, and a pair of Adventurous Programming Awards from ASCAP and Chamber Music America.

The Ensemble is led by **Artistic Director and flutist Deborah Boldin**. Her inspired vision and vast knowledge of the chamber music repertoire have garnered widespread acclaim. *The Boston Globe* called Chameleon “a local treasure,” and noted that the Ensemble “has distinguished itself over the course of two decades by sheer dint of its sparkingly imaginative programming.” Chameleon’s exceptional, multi-generational **artists** have appeared with such venerable organizations as Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, Marlboro Music, Boston Symphony, Chamber Music Northwest, Music@Menlo, and the Verbier, Ravinia, and Caramoor Festivals. *The Boston Musical Intelligencer* wrote “one sensed that all the Chameleons were born for chamber music,” and “the cast of players Boldin can summon to concert after concert simply amazes me.”

## **ARTISTS**

Deborah Boldin, flute	Stephanie Fong, viola	Elizabeth Schumann, piano
Vivian Chang-Freiheit, piano	Mary Mackenzie, soprano	Scott Woolweaver, viola
Francesca dePasquale, violin	Kelli O’Connor, clarinet	Randall Zigler, double bass
Nancy Dimock, oboe	Rafael Popper-Keizer, cello	

## CALENDAR LISTINGS

### chamber series 5: Fêtes galantes

**Program:** Claude Debussy, Première rhapsodie for clarinet & piano, L. 116  
Helen Grime, *Pierrot Miniatures* for flute, clarinet, violin, viola, cello & piano  
Gabriel Fauré, Cinq mélodies “de Venise” for soprano & piano, Op. 58  
Andrea Clearfield, *Unremembered Wings* for oboe & piano  
Felix Mendelssohn, Sextet for violin, 2 violas, cello, double bass & piano, Op. 110

**Date/Time &** Saturday, April 1, 2023, 8 PM  
**Location:** Sunday, April 2, 2023, 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 & SAFETY

Individual tickets are \$50, \$39, and \$28; with \$5 discounts for students and seniors. Attendees can review up-to-date **safety protocols** prior to each Chameleon performance this season at <https://chameleonarts.org/safety>.

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