



# Chameleon

Arts Ensemble  
of Boston

Transforming experiences in chamber music.

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 17, 2023

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### **Chameleon pianists in four-hand Up Close recital on Sunday, March 19**

February 17, 2023 – Boston, MA – Chameleon resumes its popular “Up Close” recital series on **Sunday, March 19, 2023 at 4 PM** at Goethe-Institut, Boston. Pianists **Mika Sasaki and Elizabeth Schumann** will share an enchanting four-hand program titled *Once upon a time...* including Ravel’s *Ma mère l’Oye*, Stravinsky’s *Petrushka*, Mozart’s youthful Sonata in D Major, K. 381, and “Alpha Centauri” from George Crumb’s *Celestial Mechanics, Makrokosmos IV*. *The Boston Musical Intelligencer* praised Ms. Sasaki’s “colorful reading...[with] nuance and sensitivity.” *The Washington Post* described Ms. Schumann as “deft, relentless, and devastatingly good.”



### **ABOUT THE CHAMELEON UP CLOSE RECITAL SERIES**

Our recital series gives audiences members the opportunity to experience Chameleon’s superb artists in an informal and “up close” way. *The Boston Musical Intelligencer* praised “the artfully chosen works,” and hailed “the two stars treated us to a thrilling performance.” The concerts take place Goethe-Institut, Boston transformed into an intimate cabaret setting. Artistic Director Deborah Boldin serves as host, sharing colorful commentary and her unique insight into each work.

### **ABOUT THE PROGRAM**

Worlds of innocence, enchantment, and storytelling come to life as Ravel conjures the poetry of childhood through his suite of five pieces for piano four hands, *Ma Mère l’Oye (Mother Goose)*. It was composed between 1908 and 1910 for the children of close friends and premiered at the first concert of the Société Musicale Indépendante in Paris. The stories were taken from the classic 17th-century fairy tales of Charles Perrault and Marie d’Aulnoy. Though the score is somewhat simple (tailored to suit the

small hands and technical abilities of the children who were to play it), the full effect is anything but, with Ravel's keen sense of narrative, precision, and elegance apparent at every turn.

Similarly, **Stravinsky** reveals a magical land of puppets and make-believe bursting with color and invention. Completed in 1911, *Petrushka* is the second of the three ballets that established him as one of the world's most important composers by the time he was thirty years of age. Stravinsky composed at the piano and his four-hand versions were used for rehearsals. They offer listeners a focused view of the complex works, and in this case, highlights the sharp bitonal harmonies and vibrant rhythms that drive the story.

Four-hand piano music—two players at one keyboard—first surfaced in England in the early seventeenth century and became common in the mid-eighteenth century. As children, **Mozart** and his older sister Nannerl greatly popularized four-hand playing all over Europe through the tours they were taken on by their father; Mozart apparently wrote his first four-hand sonata in London in 1765 when he was only nine years old. The **Sonata in D Major, K. 381** is a relatively more “mature” offering, composed in 1772 at the age of 18 yet filled with youthful imagination and verve.

“**Alpha Centuari**” is the first of four movements of the fourth volume of **George Crumb's** masterpiece of color and invention, *Makrokosmos* subtitled *Celestial Mechanics*. It was completed in 1979 and Crumb describes the work as a “cosmic dance” inspired by the majestic movement of the stars, following in the Classical four-hand tradition of Mozart and Schubert.

## **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.

**Mika Sasaki's** chamber music appearances are myriad including Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, Chamber Music Northwest, Manhattan Chamber Players, Ensemble Mélange, Yellow Barn, Caramoor, and many others. She is an alumna of Carnegie Hall's Ensemble Connect, and her performances have been broadcasted on WQXR, WFMT, All Classical Portland, and Radio Sweden. Ms. Sasaki is currently Chamber Music Institute faculty at the prestigious Music@Menlo and previously taught at Summer Performing Arts with Juilliard.

**Elizabeth Schumann** has won more than 25 prizes in national and international piano competitions including the Bösendorfer, Cleveland, and Hilton Head International Piano Competitions. She was also the recipient of the prestigious Gilmore Young Artists Award and was highlighted in a PBS Television documentary on the Gilmore Festival. Her many solo and chamber music appearances include Australia's Huntington Festival, the Kennedy Center, and Ravinia's Rising Stars Series. She is a

member of the piano faculty at Stanford University, and previously taught at the Perlman Music Program.

### **CALENDAR LISTINGS – 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Season**

#### **Chameleon Up Close 1: Once upon a time...**

with pianists Mika Sasaki and Elizabeth Schumann

**Program:** Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Sonata D Major for piano four hands, K. 381  
George Crumb, “Alpha Centauri” from *Celestial Mechanics, Makrokosmos IV*  
Maurice Ravel, *Ma mère l'Oye* for piano four hands  
Igor Stravinsky, *Petrushka* for piano four hands

**Date/Time &** Sunday, March 19, 2023, 4 PM

**Location:** Goethe-Institut, Boston, 170 Beacon Street

The closest subway stops are Arlington Street on the Green Line and Back Bay Station on the Orange Line. Goethe-Institut, Boston is wheelchair accessible.

#### **TICKETS & SAFETY**

Individual tickets are \$50 with \$5 discounts for students and seniors. Cabaret-style seating. Attendees can review up-to-date **safety protocols** at <https://chameleonarts.org/safety>.

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