



Chameleon
Arts Ensemble
of Boston

Transforming experiences in chamber music.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Chameleon Arts Ensemble presents “As near as memory –” on November 18-19

October 19, 2023 – Boston, MA – Chameleon continues its 2023-2024 season with *As near as memory* – on **Saturday, November 18, 8 PM and Sunday, November 19, 4 PM** at First Church in Boston. The poignant program of memorials and elegies includes Sergei Rachmaninoff’s Trio élégiaque No. 2 in d minor, Op. 9; the US premiere of Charlotte Bray’s *Fire Burning in Snow* for soprano, oboe, clarinet, violin and cello; and two rarities: Giacomo Puccini’s *Crisantemi* for string quartet and Gordon Jacob’s Sextet in B-flat Major for piano and winds, Op. 6.



ABOUT THE PROGRAM

Dedicated “to the memory of a great artist,” **Rachmaninoff’s** tribute to Tchaikovsky – the **Trio élégiaque No. 2 in d minor for violin, cello, and piano** – was composed in a flurry of emotion in just five weeks, revealing celestial glimpses of his mentor in a rapturous outpouring of pathos and passion. In form and scope, the 20-year old Rachmaninoff chose to mirror Tchaikovsky’s piano trio offered as a similar response to the death of Nikolai Rubinstein. “All of my thoughts, all my strength, is dedicated to the work,” wrote Rachmaninoff, and this singular focus resulted in one of the most dramatic, powerful, and intense works in the repertoire.

Similarly, **Puccini’s *Crisantemi* for string quartet** was composed in one night in January 1890 in response to the sudden death of his friend, the Duke of Aosta. The title of the piece comes from the significance of the flower; in Italian culture, chrysanthemums represent heroism, loyalty, and

mourning traditionally. But unlike Rachmaninoff, Puccini's bouquet is an intimate expression of sorrow, compact and deeply personal. He later used its soaring theme in Act IV of *Manon Lescaut* (1893) to underscore the ill-fated lovers wandering to their deaths.

Charlotte Bray's *Fire Burning in Snow* for soprano, oboe, clarinet, violin and cello is a haunting lament and character study. Austere yet colorful and affecting, she uses three poems by Nicki Jackowska covering themes of love and obsession, loss and solitude, and the space between past and future and the search for a "way forward." Born just outside London and currently residing in Berlin, Ms. Bray has a flourishing, global career writing works of intricacy, beauty, and emotional depth. This will be its US premiere.

Finally, the rarely heard yet superb British composer **Gordon Jacob's 1956 Sextet in B-flat Major for piano and winds, Op. 6** is a work of immediate emotional impact, composed in memory of a friend and colleague. In it, he merges British wit and Gallic sensibilities, with a magical, pastoral atmosphere to create a virtuosic tribute that offers equal parts sparkle and sentiment.

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. Now entering its 26th season, Chameleon has performed more than 400 concerts featuring a remarkable array of nearly 650 *different* works by 325 *different* composers brought together in smart, thematic programs that connect with our shared humanity and 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* noted that the Ensemble "has distinguished itself over the course of two decades by sheer dint of its sparkingly imaginative programming." *The Boston Musical Intelligencer* (BMI) wrote "One of the joys of hearing the Chameleon Arts Ensemble comes from Deborah Boldin's whimsical thematic programming, mixing old and new, letting pieces echo and shed light on each other."

Chameleon's exceptional, multi-generational roster of 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. *BMI* 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	Gary Gorczyca, clarinet	Sarah Rommel, cello
Hazel Dean Davis, French horn	Nik Hooks, bassoon	Scott Woolweaver, viola
Francesca dePasquale, violin	Mary Mackenzie, soprano	Stephanie Zyzak, violin
Nancy Dimock, oboe	Jessica Xylina Osborne, piano	

CALENDAR LISTINGS

chamber series 2: As near as memory –

Program: Giacomo Puccini, *Crisantemi* for string quartet
Charlotte Bray, *Fire Burning in Snow* for soprano, oboe, clarinet, violin & cello
Gordon Jacob, Sextet in B-flat Major for piano & winds, Op. 6
Sergei Rachmaninoff, Trio élégiaque No. 2 in d minor, Op. 9

Dates/Times: Saturday, November 18, 2023, 8 PM
Sunday, November 19, 2023, 4 PM

Location: 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

For tickets or more information, concertgoers can call **617-427-8200** or visit chameleonarts.org. Individual tickets are \$52, \$41, and \$30; with \$5 discounts for students and seniors.

Masks are now optional at Chameleon events; **safety protocols** and policies are posted at <https://chameleonarts.org/safety>.

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