



Chameleon
Arts Ensemble
of Boston

Transforming experiences in chamber music.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Chameleon Arts Ensemble presents “Shadows, Canons, Veils” on April 20 and 21

March 21, 2024 – Boston, MA – Chameleon continues its 2023-2024 season with *Shadows, Canons, Veils* on **Saturday, April 20, 8 PM and Sunday, April 21, 4 PM** at First Church in Boston. The program examines the intersection of past and present as shadows of history gives way to the future. It includes Rebecca Clarke’s *Midsummer Moon* for violin and piano; Serge Arcuri’s *Les Furieuses enluminures* for flute, clarinet, piano and string quartet; Beethoven’s Quintet in E-flat Major for piano and winds, Op. 16; Thomas Adès kaleidoscopic reimagining of Couperin’s *Les baricades mystérieuses* for clarinet, bass clarinet, viola, cello and double bass; and Dmitri Shostakovich’s Piano Quintet in g minor, Op. 57.



ABOUT THE PROGRAM

Rebecca Clarke’s *Midsummer Moon* sets the stage for our “shadowy” theme. Clarke was one of the finest violists of her day and a superb composer as well, despite a small output of only 90 works. She was the first woman to study composition at the Royal College of Music and among the first women – in 1912 – to play in an orchestra professionally. *Midsummer Moon* was composed in 1924 for the celebrated violinist Adila Fachiri. Clarke added the title after the fact, noting in her diary: “Worked hard again all day and got my piece finished after tea. I’m calling it ‘Midsummer Moon,’ which is the best title I can find that describes it.” Its hazy, otherworldly language lends comparison with Debussy and Vaughan Williams, and exploits the quixotic abilities of the violin to portray the colors and shadows of the full moon and the wispy clouds that play hide and seek with it.

Similarly, Canadian composer **Serge Arcuri's** *Les Furieuses enluminures* was inspired by the ceiling frescoes in the Florence Baptistery and the Medieval art of illumination: the adornment of the first letters of a text with fantastical scenes and mythological monsters. It was completed in 2000 and the musical character is drawn from Gregorian chant generally and *Veni Creator Spiritus* specifically.

Beethoven's Quintet for piano and winds, Op. 16 was composed in 1796 and is said to have been inspired by Mozart's quintet, K. 452, written a dozen years earlier. Beethoven chose the same instrumentation, the same key (E-flat Major), and same three movement structure. The music contains many nods to Mozart by way of its delectable melodies, genial nature, and rich instrumental textures. But Beethoven being Beethoven, he doesn't stick to the Classical script, bringing his brand of glittering piano writing and dramatic voice to the fore.

Thomas Adès describes Couperin's *Les Baricades Mistérieuses* (1717) as a better source of instruction than any he'd received from his teachers, an object lesson in how to generate melody from harmony and vice versa. His inspired arrangement – for clarinet, bass clarinet, viola, cello, and double bass – is a shimmering, kaleidoscopic trompe l'oeil that makes the original both clearer *and* more mysterious, unveiling Couperin's enigma for the 21st century.

Finally, **Shostakovich**, too, looks to the past, bringing Baroque grandeur to his electrifying brand of modernism and his celebrated **Piano Quintet**. The work was completed in September 1940 and premiered in November with the composer at the keyboard. Its five movement structure mimics a Baroque suite and reminds us of Shostakovich's immense skills as a contrapuntalist (in the finest Bachian sense) and the ways he used traditional forms and modes of expression to chart a vivid and compelling path to the future.

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	Elizabeth Fayette, violin	Rafael Popper-Keizer, cello
Vivian Chang-Freiheit, piano	Gary Gorczyca, clarinet	Scott Woolweaver, viola
Hazel Dean Davis, French horn	Nik Hooks, bassoon	Randall Zigler, double bass
Francesca dePasquale, violin	Kelli O'Connor, clarinet	
Nancy Dimock, oboe	Jessica Xylina Osborne, piano	

CALENDAR LISTINGS

chamber series 4: Shadows, Canons, Veils

Program: Rebecca Clarke, *Midsummer Moon* for violin & piano
Serge Arcuri, *Les Furieuses enluminees* for flute, clarinet, piano & string quartet
Ludwig van Beethoven, Quintet in E-flat Major for piano & winds, Op. 16
Thomas Adès, *Les barricades mystérieuses* for clarinet, bass clarinet, viola, cello & bass
Dmitri Shostakovich, Piano Quintet in g minor, Op. 57

Dates/Times: Saturday, April 20, 2024, 8 PM
Sunday, April 21, 2024, 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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