



**Chameleon**  
Arts Ensemble  
of Boston

Transforming experiences in chamber music.

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**February 16, 2025**

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**Chameleon Arts Ensemble presents “Fragments and Fantasies,” an Up Close recital of works for violin and piano on March 16**

**February 16, 2025 – Boston, MA** – Violinist Claire Bourg and pianist Mika Sasaki share a Chameleon Up Close recital titled “Fragments and Fantasies” on **Sunday, March 16, 2024 at 4 PM** at Goethe-Institut, Boston. The duo will take on Brahms’ Scherzo in c minor from “F-A-E” Sonata, WoO 2; Judith Weir’s *Music for 247 Strings*; Schubert’s dazzling C Major Fantasie, Op. 159, D. 934; and Schumann’s d minor sonata for violin & piano, Op. 121. *The Arts Fuse* praised Ms. Bourg for “radiant graces” and “sweeping harmonic beauties,” and commended Ms. Sasaki for exploring “every orchestral-like texture, and stormy aside with boldness and graceful humor.”



**ABOUT OUR UP CLOSE RECITAL SERIES**

Our recital series gives audiences members the opportunity to see and hear Chameleon’s superb artists in an informal and “up close” way. *The Boston Musical Intelligencer* praised “the artfully chosen works,” hailed “the two stars treated us to a thrilling performance,” and noted “one felt charmed even before a sound was produced.” The series takes place at the Goethe-Institut Boston, transformed into an intimate cabaret setting with a complimentary glass of wine and refreshments. Artistic Director Deborah Boldin serves as host, sharing colorful commentary and her unique insight into each work.

**ABOUT THE PROGRAM**

They say, “the whole is greater than the sum of its parts,” and nowhere is this more evident than within the intimate confines of the duo.

**Brahms' c minor Scherzo from the "F-A-E" Sonata, WoO 2** is a bit of an orphan in terms of his catalog. It was completed in October of 1853 and intended to be the middle movement of a "collaborative" sonata and gift for the violinist Joseph Joachim. The first movement was written by Albert Dietrich, and the third and fourth by Robert Schumann. Joachim was asked to guess the identity of the authors, and he did so, easily. Brahms' contribution is especially notable and filled with the kind of youthful energy (he was only 20 at the time), lyricism, and soaring aspirations that caused Schumann to call him the "young eagle."

**Schubert**, too, leans into the collective with a work of unprecedented virtuosity: **the Fantasie in C Major for violin and piano, Op. 159, D. 934**. It was written in 1827 shortly after *Winterreise* and near the end of his tragically short life. It is his most substantial composition for violin and piano both in terms of technical requirements (requiring superhuman technique and brilliance from both players) and length (clocking in at nearly 30 minutes). Central to the work is an exhilarating theme and variations based on Schubert's 1822 setting of Friedrich Rückert's *Sei mir gegrüsst!* (I greet you!), whose warm melody and graceful lilt made it one of his most popular songs

Simultaneously majestic, tender, lyrical, tumultuous, haunting, and joyful, **Schumann's d minor Sonata, Op. 121** is a true duo of equal partnership and reminds us (if such a reminder is needed) that he is the indisputable master of fantasy and imagination. The piece is filled with striking contrast and exudes a lifetime of experience in every phrase. The first performance, by Joseph Joachim and Clara Schumann, took place in 1853, after which Joachim wrote: "I consider it one of the finest compositions of our times... It overflows with noble passion and the last movement reminds one of the sea with its glorious waves of sound."

Finally, **Judith Weir's Music for 247 Strings** (1981) is a study in closeness, precision, and wit. In ten, tiny, tricky miniatures, Weir combines the violin and piano into a big "machine" in which the four strings of the violin are added to the 243 strings of the piano to become a big wonderful *one*. She notes: "The first few are played in complete – and perhaps rather restricting – rhythmic unison. In the middle, the instruments seem to seek some independence from each other. By the end, the violin and piano have joined together again, perhaps in a more genuine spirit of togetherness than they started out with."

#### **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 our 27<sup>th</sup> season, Chameleon has performed more than 400 concerts covering a remarkable array of nearly 700 *different* works by 350 *different* composers brought together in smart, thematic programs that connect with our shared humanity and appeal to 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.

**Violinist Claire Bourg** is an in-demand chamber musician appearing regularly with Musicians from Marlboro, Jupiter Symphony Chamber Players, Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, and Curtis on Tour. Festival appearances include IMS Prussia Cove, Festival Mosaic, Yellow Barn, Ravinia's Steans Music Institute, and many others. She is a laureate of numerous competitions and was recently one of 24 violinists chosen to take part in the Concours Musical International de Montréal. In 2024, she performed a recital in Brussels as part of the prestigious Queen Elisabeth Competition.

**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 has previously served as Chamber Music Institute faculty at the prestigious Music@Menlo and currently teaches at Summer Performing Arts with Juilliard.

## **CALENDAR LISTINGS**

### **Up Close 1: Fragments and Fantasies**

with Claire Bourg, violin and Mika Sasaki, piano

**Program:** Johannes Brahms, Scherzo in c minor from "F-A-E" Sonata, WoO 2  
Franz Schubert, Fantasie in C Major for violin & piano, Op. 159, D. 934  
Judith Weir, *Music for 247 Strings*  
Robert Schumann, Sonata No. 2 in d minor for violin & piano, Op. 121

**Date/Time:** Sunday, March 16, 2025, 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**

For tickets or more information, concertgoers can call **617-427-8200** or visit [chameleonarts.org](http://chameleonarts.org). Individual tickets are \$52 with \$5 discounts for students and seniors.

**Telephone:** 617-427-8200

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