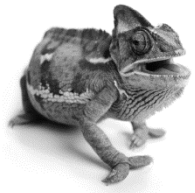

Chameleon
Arts Ensemble
of Boston

PROGRAM NOTES

Chameleon Arts Ensemble of Boston
Deborah Boldin, Artistic Director

2025-2026 chamber music season
chamber series 2: Homeward Bound

Saturday, November 22, 2025, 7:30 PM at First Church in Boston
Sunday, November 23, 2025, 4 PM at First Church in Boston

Program:
Franz Schubert, *Auf dem Strom* for soprano, French horn & piano, D. 943, Op. 119
Stacy Garrop, *Postcards from Wyoming* for flute, clarinet, violin, cello, piano & percussion
Charles Ives, *The Housatonic at Stockbridge* and other songs for soprano & piano
Ernest John Moeran, Fantasy Quartet for oboe & strings (1946)
Ludwig van Beethoven, String Quintet in C Major, Op. 29, "Storm"

Program notes by Gabriel Rice

Franz Schubert (1797-1828) is the only major composer associated with Vienna who was actually native to the city. He was only first-generation Viennese, however; his father had moved to the capital from a section of Moravia that is now part of the Czech Republic. Schubert's family was not wealthy, but his father was a teacher so his children were well educated in academic subjects as well as music. The violin was young Franz's first instrument, and the family string quartet was the laboratory for some of his earliest compositions. By the time he was seven years old, his family had noted enough talent to send him to sing an audition for Antonio Salieri, the court music director, and he filled a vacancy in the Salieri's *Hofkapelle* choir in 1808. With the choir position came free tuition and board in the prestigious Imperial and Royal City College, the best school in the city for non-aristocrats. Music played a large role in the program at the College, with an excellent student orchestra in which Schubert was soon a member of the second violins. He also had the opportunity to take regular lessons with Salieri.

After five years at the Imperial and Royal City College, Schubert left for a teacher-training course, in order to follow his father and older brothers in the teaching profession. Despite producing an impressive number of compositions, he had shown no signs yet of being able to support himself as a musician. He grudgingly taught school for a number of years, but was nonetheless able to continue writing music with increasing facility. The years 1814 and 1815 in particular mark the blossoming of his skills. Always able to work fast, Schubert composed almost 150 songs, two string quartets, two symphonies, two masses, and at least four *Singspiele* – in a period of only fifteen months. His output during this time averaged at least 65 bars of

music a day, which would have been remarkable for a full-time composer. Schubert was also teaching year-round at his father's school, taking twice-weekly composition lessons with Salieri, attending operas and concerts, teaching privately, and socializing with numerous friends. Unfortunately, Schubert's circle of friends included several whose lifestyles were largely idle and pleasure-seeking, and he spent a great deal of time and money drinking heavily and living hard.

He was eventually able to make a reasonable living and enjoy some fame as a composer, but he was the first of the major composers who did not also earn regard as a sought-after performer. By 1823, just around the time that he was beginning to be compensated well for the commissions and publications of his works, Schubert began to turn down requests to appear in person due to illness. All evidence points to the first stages of syphilis, which afflicted as many as one in five in some European cities at the time. Over the next five years until his death, Schubert was often forced to retire to his bed, to the countryside, or occasionally the hospital, trying to cure the various manifestations of the disease. Although he remained productive throughout his illness, he died just short of his thirty-second birthday. Considering the quantity and range of his output in such a short time, one can only guess what his impact on music history could have been had he lived even ten more years.

Auf dem Strom for soprano, piano, and horn was composed for a concert consisting exclusively of Schubert's music on March 26, 1828. Significantly, the date coincided with the first anniversary of Beethoven's death. Schubert had been a torch-bearer at Beethoven's funeral, and he was beginning to be aware that some were holding him up as his musical successor. *Auf dem Strom* is clearly an homage to the master; the funeral march from the *Eroica* Symphony is referenced repeatedly, and Beethoven's song cycle, *An die Ferne Geliebte* (To the Distant Loved One) can also be detected. Tragically, that concert, though a musical and financial success, would be the only event solely dedicated to Schubert's music in his lifetime. He died on November 19 of the same year.

Stacy Garrop (born 1969) is an award-winning, internationally recognized freelance composer and lecturer whose music is centered on dramatic and lyrical storytelling. Her catalog covers a wide range of genres, with works for orchestra, opera, oratorio, wind ensemble, choir, art song, and various sized chamber ensembles. Dr. Garrop has received numerous awards and grants including an Arts and Letters Award in Music from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, Fromm Music Foundation Grant, Barlow Prize, and three Barlow Endowment commissions. Notable commissions include *Forging Steel* for the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, *The Battle for the Ballot* for the Cabrillo Festival Orchestra, *Goddess Triptych* for the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra, *Berko's Journey* for the Omaha Symphony, *Forged by the Sea* for the U.S. Navy Band, *The Transformation of Jane Doe* for Chicago Opera Theater, *In a House Besieged* for The Crossing, *Give Me Hunger* for Chanticleer, *Glorious Mahalia* for the Kronos Quartet, *Rites for the Afterlife* for the Akropolis and Calefax Reed Quintets, and *My Dearest Ruth* for voice and piano with text by the husband of the late Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg.

In recent years, Dr. Garrop has served as the featured composer of the Bowling Green State University New Music Festival and Indiana State University Contemporary Music Festival, with

additional guest residencies at Florida State University, Great Plains Saxophone Workshop, Kennesaw State University, Michigan State University, University of Colorado at Boulder, University of Denver, University of Wisconsin - Madison, and University of Michigan - Ann Arbor. She also served as a mentor composer for the Cabrillo Conductors/Composers Workshop, LunART Festival Composers Hub, and the Toulmin Foundation. She is an ongoing mentor for Chicago a cappella's HerVoice Emerging Women Choral Composers Competition.

Dr. Garrop was the first Emerging Opera Composer of Chicago Opera Theater's Vanguard Program (2018-2020), during which she composed *The Transformation of Jane Doe* and *What Magic Reveals* with librettist Jerre Dye. She also held a 3-year composer-in-residence position with the Champaign-Urbana Symphony Orchestra (2016-2019), funded by New Music USA and the League of American Orchestras. She previously served as composer-in-residence with the Albany Symphony (2009/2010) and Skaneateles Festival (2011), and as well as on faculty of the Fresh Inc Festival (2012-2017).

Dr. Garrop earned degrees in music composition at the University of Michigan-Ann Arbor (B.M.), University of Chicago (M.A.), and Indiana University-Bloomington (D.M.). She taught composition and orchestration full-time at Roosevelt University from 2000 to 2016 before leaving to launch her freelance career.

Composer's program note:

> In 2014, I enjoyed a wonderful residence at the Ucross Foundation in Clearmont, Wyoming. Ucross is an artist colony that gives writers, composers, and visual artists the gift of time, space, and support to follow their artistic pursuits; we are provided with studio space, housing, and meals so that we can work almost continuously on our projects. I have been in residence at numerous artist colonies; however, nothing in my previous experiences prepared me for living in such isolated, wild country. Ucross is situated on a 20,000-acre cattle ranch at nearly 4,000 feet in elevation with fewer than 150 people living within the town. But what Clearmont lacks in population, it makes up for abundantly and spectacularly in wilderness and wildlife.
>
> *Postcards from Wyoming* presents three glimpses of what I found to be the most striking aspects of my residence. The first movement, *High Plains Prairie*, represents the conundrum that is a high elevation landscape: from afar, the eye sees little else than an unending and threadbare horizon. But as one inspects the land up close, the prairie bursts with color provided by sagebrush, grasses, insects, and creeks. The second movement, *Call of the Wild,* is a tribute to the wide range of animals that reside in the area. Deer, turkeys, and rabbits frequently passed outside of my studio window; cows and sheep lived in fields close by. Snakes, raccoons, and field mice also made guest appearances. While I'm thankful that I didn't see any predators (such as wolves), I became increasingly aware of the wildness of the animal population that surrounded my studio. *The Solitude of Stars,* the third and final movement, was inspired by the stunning nightly display of the heavens above. Without city lights dimming the night sky, countless stars shone brightly over the vast expanse of the prairie.

Charles Ives (1874-1954) was the son of a remarkable bandmaster and church musician in Danbury, Connecticut named George E. Ives. The elder Ives is not known to have written any music, but he had training in harmony, counterpoint, and orchestration and an experimental attitude about music that he transmitted to his sons. According to Charles, he believed "that man as a rule didn't use the faculties that the Creator had given him hard enough. I couldn't have been over ten years old when he would have occasionally have us sing, for instance, a tune like *The Swanee River* in the key of E-flat, but play the accompaniment in the key of C." The elder Ives is also known to have experimented with microtones, scales without octaves, and natural partial tunings of the piano. He believed strongly in encouraging natural music-making by untrained musicians, and he would accompany outdoor Camp Meeting services with a specially-built slide cornet, so that he could follow the rising pitch of the congregation without holding them to an arbitrary pitch level.

By the age of fourteen, Charles was the youngest salaried church organist in the state of Connecticut. His father had encouraged a career as a concert pianist, but he stayed away from solo performing out of shyness. Many of the traits that characterize his later music were developed in the work under his father's supervision, including polytonality (fugues in four keys) and musical quotation, particularly of popular songs and marches. In 1894, Ives enrolled at Yale and began study with Horatio Parker. His father died suddenly the same year. Ives was somewhat frustrated by Parker's conservatism, but judging from the surviving compositions of that period (the First Symphony most prominent among them) he learned a great deal about editing to a level of controlled refinement.

After graduation Ives moved to New York and entered the insurance business, which would remain his primary source of income until retirement. For the first few years he kept a church organist job but gave it up in 1902 to devote more time to composing. In 1905 he became reacquainted with Harmony Twichell, the sister of a Yale classmate, and they were married three years later. He continued composing until 1926, when the creative well seemed to just dry up. Harmony described how "he came downstairs one day with tears in his eyes and said he couldn't seem to compose any more – nothing went well – nothing sounded right." He spent the rest of his musical life revising, preparing manuscripts for performance, and attending concerts. Beginning with Copland's performance with Hubert Linscott of several songs at the Yaddo Festival in 1932, Ives' music caught the ears of many young composers, and his place in the musical world was secured. He was awarded the Pulitzer Prize in 1947 for his Third Symphony. In 1954 he died of a stroke while recovering from minor surgery.

Ives' music has never been easy to categorize. He never fit well into any particular compositional school, probably because his father had instilled in him such a strong sense of independent thought. His reliance on quotation, particularly of the simple musical materials of 19th century marches and popular songs, has often baffled analysts and led them to take him less than seriously. In his settings, however, the musical materials of his boyhood evoke the kind of timeless serenity that strong memories can bring. Often his music sounds a great deal like memory, without a strictly measured timeline, sometimes building to a climax that is literally a wash of overwhelming experience. His choice of popular music also reflects a heartfelt love of the music that people experience together at home, in their church services, town meetings, and

holiday gatherings. Politically active throughout his life, Ives often chose patriotic themes, such as the organ variations on "America," not to parody, but out of a genuine patriotism that wasn't afraid to have fun. And as we will hear in "They are there," which closes the set of today's songs, his patriotism was never blind allegiance, not afraid to criticize, and most of all focused on people, not symbols.

One of the most remarkable characteristics of Ives' output, and another aspect that has resisted traditional commentary, is its amazing diversity of materials and musical language. He eschewed the development of a "personal style" or a recognizable sound in favor of serving the work at hand with the most effective and appropriate materials. Nowhere is this more evident than in the songs. He wrote songs throughout his composing career, ranging from simple settings of traditional and original melodies, to reworkings of German and French texts used by composers of the past, to complex, often impressionist sounding songs of great beauty and delicacy. His are art songs that stand up to comparison with the greatest song composers of the 19th century, for their organic relationship of text to music, for their subtlety of emotional effect, and sometimes for the powerful expressiveness gained by contrasting simple music with complex text or vice versa.

Ives' own thoughts on songs, from the postface to *114 Songs*, are as follows:

> Some of the songs in this book, particularly among the later ones, cannot be sung, – and if they could perhaps might prefer, if they had a say, to remain as they are, – that is, "in the leaf," – and that they will remain in this peaceful state is more than presumable. An excuse (if none of the above are good enough) for their existence, which suggests itself at this point, is that a song has a *few* rights the same as other ordinary citizens. If it feels like walking along the left hand side of the street – passing the door of physiology or sitting on the curb, why not let it? If it feels like kicking over an ash can, a poet's castle, or the prosodic law, will you stop it? Must it always be a polite triad, a "breve gaudium," a ribbon to match the voice? Should it not be free at times from the dominion of the thorax, the diaphragm, the ear and other points of interest? If it wants to beat around in the valley, to throw stones up the pyramids, or to sleep in the park, should it not have some immunity from a Nemesis, a Rameses, or a policeman? Should it not have a chance to sing to itself, if it can sing? – to enjoy itself, without making a bow, if it can't make a bow? – to swim around in any ocean, if it can swim, without having to swallow "hook and bait" or being sunk by an operatic greyhound? If it happens to feel like trying to fly where humans cannot fly, – to sing what cannot be sung – to walk in a cave, on all fours, – or to tighten up its girth in blind hope and faith, and try to scale mountains that are not, who shall stop it!
>
> – In short, must a song
> always be a song!

The songs in today's set were selected for their celebrations of the people and the places and the small, ordinary moments of life that embody our sense of "home." The images he conjures are so specific that they go directly to the feelings underlying them, transcending their own specificity to become universal.

At the heart of this set is “The Housatonic at Stockbridge,” originally the third movement of his 1914 orchestral work *Three Places in New England*, which Ives re-set as a song in 1921. Its genesis was a walk he took with Harmony along the Housatonic River on their honeymoon in the summer of 1908. “We walked in the meadows along the river, and heard the distant singing from the church across the river. The mist had not entirely left the riverbed, and the colors, the running water, the banks and elm trees were some-thing one would always remember.”

Ernest John Moeran (1894-1950) was born in Middlesex, England to a cultured and affluent family. His musical aspirations were encouraged early, and following high school at the prestigious Uppingham School he attended the Royal College of Music, initially for piano but soon switching focus to composition. Moeran’s studies at the RCM were interrupted by World War I; he enlisted and was sent to France in 1917, where he received a shrapnel wound that necessitated the insertion of a crude metal plate in his skull. Unsurprisingly, this affected his health for the rest of his life. He was able to return to duty in 1918, and his battalion was sent to Ireland where he found the time to collect Irish folk music, which would give inspiration to much of his later work.

From 1919 to 1925, Moeran lived in London and built his career with the financial support of his mother. This was a fertile time creatively, and his portfolio grew to include songs and choral pieces, piano and chamber music, and several orchestral works. All that would change beginning in 1925, however; he moved to a cottage in Kent with fellow composer Philip Heseltine – better known by his professional name Peter Warlock. Their home became (for lack of a more dignified term) a party house, and Moeran developed a dependency on alcohol and lost the focus to be able to compose at all.

In the 1930s, Moeran gradually regained his abilities and slowly re-established his reputation. He moved almost exclusively to Ireland in 1934, and he credited the peaceful landscape of County Kerry with inspiring him to compose again. In 1943 he met and fell in love with the cellist Peers Coetmore and wrote many fine works for her. They married in 1945, but the relationship was difficult in no small part because of his alcoholism; she moved to Australia and they kept in touch by letters. In the last years of his life, he sought the help of multiple doctors for the pain of the plate in his head and for alcoholism. He died of a cerebral hemorrhage while out for a walk on the pier in Kenmare on December 1, 1950.

The Fantasy Quartet for oboe & strings was composed in 1946 at the request of celebrated oboist Léon Goossens of the London Philharmonic. Despite Moeran’s personal sufferings in the last few years of his life, it is a joyful and energetic work in the strong English pastoral tradition. Moeran drew on memories of his childhood surrounded by the folk songs of the Norfolk coast, and he also included fragments of the well-known tunes “Seventeen Come Sunday” and “The Pretty Ploughboy.”

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827) was the son and grandson of professional musicians, both employed in Bonn, Germany at the court of the Electorate of Cologne. Surprisingly few details

of his early years are known, but he displayed enough talent performing on both the violin and piano that he was compared to the young Mozart by a visiting teacher. He visited Vienna in 1787 and probably met and had one or more lessons with Mozart, but only stayed for two weeks due to the fatal illness of his mother. In 1789 Beethoven effectively took over the care of his family, petitioning the court for half of his alcoholic father's salary. In 1790 he met Haydn, and with the help of the Electorate of Cologne moved to Vienna to study with him beginning in November 1792. The relationship, though cordial, was not entirely happy, and – likely to Beethoven's relief – Haydn left in early 1794 to London for one of his extended stays. Beethoven now sought instruction from Johann Georg Albrechtsberger, a master of contrapuntal techniques, and also studied for a time with Antonio Salieri, particularly regarding setting Italian texts to music. By 1796, he had established a renowned career as Vienna's leading virtuoso pianist and was beginning to travel on concert tours, playing his own music and that of others, and often improvising to great acclaim.

But all would not continue happily; as early as 1801 he began to share the information of his increasing deafness, and he suffered to the point of despair with the condition for the rest of his life. Beethoven's individualistic, headstrong, often rebellious nature was only heightened by the social isolation of deafness, and his personal relationships were never smooth. Family troubles continued as well, and in 1813 he became guardian of his nephew Karl despite protracted legal battles with the boy's mother. The relationship with Karl was perpetually marked by drama, taking enormous amounts of time and energy. In 1814, at the height of his fame, Beethoven gave his last public performance as a pianist. From this point on he could no longer function as a performer, and his loneliness and isolation only increased. As his personal struggles intensified, however, his music only reached deeper and deeper into his own soul, and plumbed further the extreme, sometimes violent, sometimes almost divine emotions of the individual human life. His great achievement as a composer can be summed up as the appropriation of the classical forms of Haydn and Mozart's generation for the new age of Romanticism, showing the world how the expression of the intensely personal can become the expression of the universal.

Beethoven's String Quintet in C Major was composed in 1801 shortly after the Op. 18 string quartets. As mentioned above, 1801 was also the time at which he could no longer hide or deny the encroaching deafness that would torture him and eventually end his performing career – but somehow the music he wrote at this time betrayed little of that struggle. The Quintet is considered a work in transition from Beethoven's early to middle periods, and one can almost hear the division in the middle of the piece; the first two movements seem to come very much from the world of Mozart, and the last two seem to look ahead to Beethoven's more radical, more individual later music. The mood changes quite a bit as well, from the generally sunny atmosphere of the first half to a darker intensity in the second. The fast tempo and swirling frenzy of notes of the final movement is what gave the piece its nickname "The Storm."

There was also something of a storm around the piece's publication rights, which were sold by Beethoven to the Leipzig publisher Breitkopf and Härtel. He had dedicated the quintet to Count Moritz von Fries, later the dedicatee of the Seventh Symphony as well, who – according to Beethoven's account – was deceptively approached by the Vienna publishing house Artaria and Company to borrow a copy of the manuscript in order to correct the mistakes in their edition. They then published another version, which angered Beethoven, who was afraid that his

agreement with Breitkopf and Härtel was thereby breached. He immediately wrote a letter to Breitkopf and Härtel characterizing Artaria as “arch-villains” and “scoundrels” and suggesting legal and even personal action against them. In other correspondence he described the whole affair as “the greatest swindle in the world” and even suggested that his brother Carl, while acting as a go-between, had somehow lost a particularly beloved dog in the confusion.

Never one to wait patiently for a situation to work itself out, Beethoven then took the impetuous step of publishing an open letter in the *Wiener Zeitung* newspaper:

> TO MUSIC LOVERS: In informing the public that the original Quintet in C Major, long ago advertised by me, has been published by Breitkopf and Härtel in Leipzig, I declare that I have no part in the edition published at the same time by Herren Artaria and Mollo in Vienna. I am the more constrained to make this declaration because this edition is highly faulty, incorrect, and quite useless to players, whereas Herren Breitkopf and Härtel, the rightful owners of this Quintet, have done all in their power to produce the work as beautifully as possible.

Artaria had too much reputation at stake to let such an accusation stand, and they filed a formal petition with the High Police Court demanding a retraction. At the count’s request they held off publication until Breitkopf and Härtel’s edition had been on sale for 14 days. Furthermore, they claimed that Beethoven himself had corrected two copies of the edition they were publishing, so any remaining errors were his. Beethoven then requested all available copies for inspection and instructed his student Ries to “correct” them by smearing ink all over them.

Ultimately the court ruled against Beethoven and ordered him to publish a retraction, which he refused to do. Artaria did not pursue the legal recourse they were entitled to, perhaps because they were not entirely without fault in this case, but more likely because they simply did not want to anger Beethoven any further and close the door to any future business with him. Three years later, lawyers for both parties hammered out a formal agreement regarding the Quintet specifically, and Artaria continued to publish some of his works.

\- Gabriel Rice

Garrop biography and note courtesy of the composer, edited by Gabriel Rice