



Chameleon
Arts Ensemble
of Boston

Transforming experiences in chamber music.

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Chameleon Arts Ensemble presents “a tale that’s told in ancient song”

January 15, 2009 – Boston, MA – The Chameleon Arts Ensemble will present its first concerts of 2009 on Saturday, February 14 at 8 PM and Sunday February 15 at 3 PM, at the Goethe-Institut Boston, 170 Beacon Street in the Back Bay. The program, entitled *a tale that’s told in ancient song*, includes: Maurice Ravel’s *Tzigane*, *Rapsodie de Concert* for violin & piano; Manuel de Falla’s *Siete Canciones Populares Españolas* for soprano & piano; Judith Weir’s *Airs from Another Planet: Traditional Music from Outer Space* for wind quintet & piano; Chen Yi’s *Qi* for flute, cello, percussion & piano; and Bedrich Smetana’s *Piano Trio in g minor*, Op. 15.

Composers have long filled concert halls with the sounds of their native lands, and this lighthearted, jubilant program draws from rich folk traditions throughout the world. Bedrich Smetana was the first major composer of the Czech nationalist consciousness that flowered in the 19th century, and he is still considered the musical voice of his people. At the request of a fellow Spaniard living in Paris, Manuel de Falla set seven traditional Spanish folk songs in a manner far beyond simple transcription. Ravel’s *Tzigane* is a virtuoso violin showpiece intended, in the composer’s words, “to bring to life the Hungary of my dreams.”

The contemporary composers on the program draw from folk traditions in thoroughly innovative ways. Chen Yi is one of today’s most significant Chinese-American composers, enthusiastically embraced both in her homeland and in the West. She studied in Beijing and New York, and masterfully combines Western techniques with Chinese instruments and aesthetic. *Qi* takes its title

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from the Chinese concept of the force that permeates all life, and Ms. Chen uses western instruments “to create the sound from East and to abstractly express my feelings of Qi.” Judith Weir is a British composer who, early in her career, rejected the structures and materials of the avant-garde, drawing inspiration from folk music of various traditions. Never simply imitative of her sources however, she delves deeply into their structures and modes of communication. She has modeled an opera on the declamatory style of Chinese theater, and a central tool in her musical vocabulary is the Scottish *piobaireachd*, the variation structure that underlies bagpiping tradition. *Airs from Another Planet*, like many of Weir’s works, takes a narrative as its point of departure: it is a fanciful imagining of the music of colonists on Mars, many generations removed from their Scottish heritage.

In a city immersed in music, the Chameleon Arts Ensemble is distinguished by superb artistry, luminous performances, and dynamic musical dialogues. Since its founding in 1998, Chameleon and artistic director Deborah Boldin have earned unqualified praise for integrating old and new repertoire into unexpected chamber music programs that are themselves works of art, and were recently recognized nationally with a 2009 CMA/ASCAP award for adventurous programming, their second such award in three years. *The Boston Globe* praised her “discerning ears and cosmopolitan tastes” and remarked that “planning a good chamber music program is an art unto itself, and few in town have mastered it as persuasively as the Chameleon Arts Ensemble.” This innovative ensemble draws capacity audiences of those who love the adventure of music—classic and contemporary. A Chameleon concert is a multifaceted experience in an intimate environment joining audience and musicians in an exuberant celebration of music.

For tickets or more information, concertgoers can call 617-427-8200 or visit www.chameleonarts.org. Individual tickets are \$38, \$28 and \$18. \$5 discounts for students and seniors are available. The Goethe-Institut is a wheelchair accessible venue.

