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GCCP offers a musical journey to Romania Feb. 2-3

Submitted by Pamela Freund-Striplen



Gold Coast Chamber Players on tour. Photo provided

The third of the Gold Coast Chamber Players season's five concerts, titled "Fantezie" will be performed twice, the first at 8 p.m. Friday, Feb. 2 at the Piedmont Center for the Arts, 801 Magnolia Ave in Piedmont with the second performance at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 3 at the Lafayette Library Community Hall, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd. in Lafayette.

The award-winning GCCP bring the finest in chamber music to Lafayette and the surrounding areas. Founded in 1987, GCCP distinguishes itself by its eclectic programming and by providing community access to leading musicians from throughout the world.

From folk music to the epic String Octet, by Georges Enescu, 'Fantezie' offers a musical journey to Romania. This appealing program includes Enescu's string trio, Aubade, Eugene Ysaée's Solo Violin Sonata "Georges Enescu," an arrangement of Bela Bartok's Romanian Dances for violin and string quartet and finally, the Enescu String Octet.

Three Romanian violinists are featured: Gil Sharon from the Amati Ensemble in Holland; Florin Parvulescu from the San Francisco Symphony; and Corina Stoian. Violinist Dan Flanagan joins violists Ron Ephrat from the Amati Ensemble and Pamela Freund-Striplen. Cellist from the SF Piano Trio and a member of SF Conservatory of Music faculty, Jean-Michel Fonteneau and Jennifer Kloetzel, formerly of the Cypress String Quartet, round out this all-star ensemble.

"Fantezie" brings out the passion and complexity of the Romanian spirit. The centerpiece of the program, Enescu's String Octet, Op. 7, was written when Enescu was only 19 years old and is rarely performed. These performances represent its East Bay debut, offering audiences an extraordinary opportunity. There are between nine and as many as 12 melodic themes used in the work, depending on the analysis (Hoffman and Ratiu 1971, 259; Benteoiu 2010, 13). The greatest number of them (six or seven) are presented in the exposition of the first part. The second part is a kind of demonic scherzo, tumultuous and whirling, while the third is a lyrical, slow movement; in both of them new themes are added (Hoffman and Ratiu 1971, 259).

The Gold Coast Chamber Players offer a pre-concert talk with musicologist Kai Christiansen 30 minutes prior to each performance. Single tickets for the Lafayette performance are \$45 general admission, \$40 senior (65+), and \$15 for students. Introductory ticket price for the Piedmont performance is \$25 in advance, \$30 at the door. All tickets may be purchased online at www.gcplayers.org or by calling (925) 283-3728.

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[back](#)

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