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## Gold Coast Chamber 19th's season: a story of collaboration

By Sophie Braccini



Last year's concert at the Lafayette Library Community Hall. Photo Alicia Gholami

The Gold Coast Chamber ensemble and its artistic director Pamela Freund-Striplen are an integral part of the new wave of chamber music companies that present powerful public programs incorporating different sets of musicians coming from a larger pool of professionals. Freund-Striplen has created the 2018-19 season in collaboration with several different groups, curating the programs with them and bringing to Lafayette world-class performances.

The first of the seven season recitals is called "Chamber Players Coast to Coast," featuring the Manhattan Chamber Players for a mostly 19th century European classic music program, with the addition of a commissioned creation by a local composer. It will take place at 7:30 p.m. on Sept. 29 at the Lafayette Community Hall. Another performance will be offered in Piedmont in the afternoon the following day.

The relationship between Gold Coast and the Manhattan Chamber Players started one and a half years ago. Having heard of each other, the groups reached out and Freund-Striplen began a discussion with Luke Fleming, the group's artistic director and fellow viola player. Freund-Striplen said that their vision was very similar and together they decided on a program that juxtapositions three European composers known for creating unique nationalistic music.

The concert will include Ernest Chausson's "Concerto for Violin, Piano and String Quartet" - a piece Freund-Striplen describes as very romantic, adding that it was the starting point for Fleming and her as they structured that concert. Chausson was a promoter of French music and his style evolved to more dramatic tones, while maintaining the reserve that was the mark of the French music of that century.

The opening piece will be by Spanish composer Joaquin Torina. Freund-Striplen said that people are going to be transported by the warm, rich and evocative "Scene Andalouse for Piano Sextet, Op. 7" that will be played that night. Torina, who studied in France, was a great admirer of Spanish composer Isaac Albenitz, who drew his inspiration from folk Andalusian music.

The third nationalistic composer is British; Vaughan Williams' "Phantasy Quintet" will contrast with the other two composers as he is known for his wide range of moods, but also for his inspiration drawn from ancient English music, such as English madrigals. Freund-Striplen also noted that she loved the meditative quality of the work and the beautiful use of the viola.

The three pieces are also characterized by their featuring of soloists, piano, violin or viola. Freund-Striplen explains that the concert will be a hybrid between soloistic and chamber music.

The fourth element of the concert is the creation of a piece commissioned to local composer Mary Bianco for this evening. Freund-Striplen explains that Bianco is a patron of the Manhattan Chamber Players and she created a short trio just for that night. Freund-Striplen was excited to announce that Bianco would be present at the concert and would answer a few questions about her light, uplifting piece.

The season's other concerts will also feature partnerships with diverse groups and musicians, sometimes the new generation of chamber musicians that Freund-Striplen is proud to see come forth to carry the torch. The season will also include the now traditional free family holiday concert in December.

Last year, several concerts sold out, so it is recommended to get tickets in advance. For more information, visit [www.gcplayers.org](http://www.gcplayers.org).

Reach the reporter at: [sophie@lamorindaweekly.com](mailto:sophie@lamorindaweekly.com)

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