

Gualala Arts Chamber Music

Announcing Our 2006-07 Season

David McCarroll, Violin and Mary Elliott, Cello
September 3, 2006

We are thrilled to open our season with these two brilliant young artists. David McCarroll's career has taken him from the Starcross Community in nearby Annapolis to the Menuhin School in London and Boston's New England



Conservatory of Music. At every step of the way, he has astonished audiences with his virtuosity and deep musicality. See page 2 for more information about him. Cellist Mary Elliott also attended the Menuhin School. A native of Wales, she is currently studying at the Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester, England.

Their program includes works by Bach, Barrière, Bartók and Halvorsen.

Tao Lin, Pianist **October 15, 2006**

Born into a musical family in Shanghai, China, Tao Lin was admitted to the Shanghai Conservatory at eight where his rapid progress resulted in numerous prizes. As a soloist, he has performed with the Winnipeg Symphony, Miami Chamber Orchestra and University of Miami Symphony. This spring he toured with the Moscow Chamber Orchestra. A devoted chamber musician, Lin collaborates regularly with the Thibaud Trio, which appeared at Gualala Arts last season.

Frank Wiens, Pianist **November 12, 2006**

One of Gualala's favorite pianists, Frank Wiens' programs are deep, rich, and profoundly musical. A native of New Haven, Connecticut, Wiens studied at the University of Michigan School of Music, where he was the recipient of the Stanley Medal, that school's highest honor for musical excellence. He served on the piano faculty at Drake University and, since 1976, has held the position of Professor of Piano at The University of the Pacific in Stockton, California. We are delighted to welcome back Frank Wiens to our concert series.

Capriccio Quartet **January 28, 2007**

These talented members of the San Francisco Opera drew a sold out crowd here last year. Soprano Virginia Pluth, mezzo-soprano Sally Porter-Munro, tenor Richard Walker, and baritone Frederick Matthews join Ian Robertson who accompanies them on piano and serves as narrator. Their operatic and musical comedy selections are vocally superb. This will be an afternoon of light hearted fun and pure musical enjoyment.

Axel Strauss, Violin & Roy Bogas, Piano **February 18, 2007**

Roy Bogas returns with the brilliant violinist who has performed in the Summer Chamber Music Weekends. Axel Strauss won the Naumburg Violin Award in 1998. In 2001 he joined the faculty of the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, where he serves as Professor of Violin. Bogas, who earned degrees at the University of California, Berkeley, and at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, is Music Director for Holy Names University in Oakland and solo pianist for the San Francisco Ballet.

The Kirkwood Ensemble **March 18, 2007**

This talented trio delivers breathtaking music. Critics praise Roxanne Michaelian, piano, for her "polish and elegance," Victoria Ehrlich, cello, for a "thrilling performance," and Dawn Harms, violin, the "her unabashedly romantic approach." All are accomplished Bay Area musicians. We are delighted to welcome them to their first Gualala Arts performance.

Cypress String Quartet **April 15, 2007**

Cecily Ward and Tom Stone, violins, Ethan Filner, viola, and Jennifer Kloetzel, cello, are artists in residence at San Jose State University and have been widely praised for virtuoso performance, innovative programming, and dedication to musical education. Founded in 1996, the Quartet has appeared frequently on NPR's *Performance Today*, and has performed in prominent venues around the world. We proudly present the Cypress Quartet for a third engagement at Gualala Arts.

The Broderick Ensemble **May 6, 2007**

Elizabeth Prior Runnicles, viola, brings us fellow chamber music instrumentalists following performances in the San Francisco Chamber Music Series and other notable Bay Area venues. Ensemble members are established concert musicians who perform with the San Francisco Symphony, Opera Orchestra, and Ballet Orchestra. We are in for a treat.

The Fifth Annual Chamber Music Weekend with Roy Bogas and Friends **July 7 & 8, 2007**

The Chamber Music Weekend concerts bring together some of the Bay Area's top musicians. They are a not-to-be-missed summer tradition. Please join us for both the Saturday evening and Sunday afternoon concerts.



Spotlight on David McCarrroll

David McCarrroll grew up just over the Gualala River, through the Sea Ranch woods, and near the Annapolis vineyards, at Starcross Monastic Community. Born in Santa Rosa, David was raised by his adoptive family, Brother Toby McCarrroll, Sister Marti Aggeler, and Sister Julie DeRossi, the Starcross monks.



David McCarrroll at age five.

David's interest in music became apparent very early. When he heard a Santa Rosa Symphony Tiny Tots concert, "He was mesmerized by the kids who played *Twinkle, Twinkle*," according to Sister Marti. "He never let up. He was insistent." Only 4 years old, David began studying the violin with Helen Payne Sloat, a long-time Santa Rosa Symphony Orchestra member. As an eight-year-old, he enrolled at the Crowden School in Berkeley.

At age 13, David was invited to attend the Yehudi Menuhin School near London. His tuition for this prestigious school was supported by Donald and Maureen Green, who have known David since he was three months old and followed his every performance. In his five years at the Menuhin School, he studied with Simon Fisher, a well-known author of books on violin technique. In 2004, at age 18, David received a full scholarship to study with celebrated violinist David Weilerstein at Boston's New England Conservatory of Music.

"His playing had me with a teary eye... very rare..."

Early in his musical career, David began performing as a soloist and in chamber music groups. As a twelve-year-old, he filled Newman Auditorium at Santa Rosa Junior College. "We haven't heard the last of David McCarrroll," Gaye LeBaron wrote in the *Press Democrat* in 1998. At age 16, David gave a recital at the Burbank Center for the Arts. Since then he has performed at Queen Elizabeth Hall and Wigmore Hall in the UK as well as various venues in Switzerland, Tunisia, Thailand, and the United States.

In the summer of 2005, David participated in the prestigious Yellow Barn Chamber Music Festival where he received the Dorothy Richard Starling Foundation Scholarship. He made his debut with the Santa Rosa Symphony in 2005, playing Prokofiev's First Violin Concerto. Santa Rosa Symphony conductor laureate Corrick Brown wrote "His playing had me with a teary eye...very rare." Brown praised David's "incredible lyricism and fine intonation."

In addition to his love for music, David is actively interested in social concerns and helps with Starcross projects. His favorite work on the family farm is in the olive orchards.

Concerts on the Coast: Some History

The Gualala Arts Chamber Music Series is part of a long tradition of bringing fine music to our community. Over the last forty years, we have had concerts featuring both local talent and musicians from around the world. In the 1960's Gunnar Johansen presented *Hay Bale Concerts* in the Del Mar Ranch Stables. Billed as benefits for Gualala Arts Scholarship Fund, the concerts needed a Steinway piano trucked up the coast from Sherman-Clay in San Francisco. Concert goers sat on hay bales. Local cats curled on their laps.

Johansen, a world-renowned pianist-composer, was a professor at the University of Wisconsin. He had summered at his home north of Anchor Bay since 1935. Lucie Marshal, writing in 1993, called him "the first professional musician to settle on the coast." His concerts featured what *San Francisco Chronicle*



Gunnar Johansen, Bill Stornetta and Smokey.

critic Alfred Frankenstein called "dazzle and lift." In 1971, Frankenstein referred to the horse stable as "California's most enchanting concert hall. It has absolutely perfect acoustics for piano recitals; you can hear a straw drop, and there are a lot of straws." The Hay Bale concerts continued until 1976.

Meanwhile, two community based organizations had emerged. First, the Arena Coast Music Association, and then, the Alliance for Coast Music and Drama presented music series. Concerts took place at the Point Arena High School Auditorium, the Methodist Church and the Gualala Community Center. Starting in 1982, Will Reed organized concerts featuring both local artists and musicians from San Francisco. In the 1980's, the Activities Center by the Sea Ranch Airport was used. But cable television had come to the coast; support lagged, and efforts ended in 1987.

They were soon revived under Gualala Arts Center sponsorship. Using rented space in the old Art Center up by the airport, the Sunday afternoon series began. The room seated barely eighty people seated on chairs and pews borrowed from the Baptist Church. Harry Langdon donated part of the money to purchase a piano, and soon community members contributed the rest by purchasing piano keys on a plaque designed by JoAnn Hafner.

Since dedication of the Arts Center building in 1998, concerts have taken place in Coleman Auditorium. In 1999, the Bloch Retrospective highlighted the season. In 2003, we introduced the Summer Chamber Music Weekend, featuring Roy Bogas and Friends. It is now an annual tradition.

We pieced this together from a variety of sources, fearing we would forget the rich history of musical performances in our community if we did not write it down. Do you have a favorite story to add? Send it to us, and we will try to include it in next year's newsletter. We need to hear more about the people who have brought good music to the coast.

David Lytle's Piano

Many of us remember David Lytle whose concert grand piano is the center piece for much of the serious music presented at Gualala Arts. Dave was a Sea Rancher, retired engineer, and active member of the Book Group, the Piano Group, and our Chamber Music Committee. We are grateful to Dave and to his son, Douglas Lytle, who gave the piano to Gualala Arts after his father's death in 2003. The piano, once the joy of Dave's life, continues to bring joy to others.

Pianos were very important to Dave. He attended nearly every chamber music recital, sitting in the front row for piano concerts so he could watch the hands of the pianist move across the keys. He had played the piano since childhood. In 2003 Dave went on a quest to find a better piano. With advice from friends in the Piano Group and in consultation with his piano tuner, Will Reed, Dave found a Yamaha Concert Grand Piano in Southern California and had it transported to his home in The Sea Ranch. Dave was thrilled with his new piano. He invited all his friends to his home so they could share in the joy of playing his piano. Sadly, Dave's time with his beloved piano was short. Shortly after losing his wife to cancer, Dave lost his own life in an auto accident. At his memorial service in the foyer of the Gualala Arts Center, many of his Piano Group friends played his piano in memory.

At the time of Dave's death, his Book Group had been reading *The Piano Shop on the Left Bank*, by Thad Cathart. In an April 2003 e-mail he wrote:

I have now obtained this book and read it with great joy; I thank you so much for finding and recommending it to me. I found it much more than the topic implies. It is adventurous, whimsical, instructive and even romantic at times. I would recommend it to a general audience, with some qualifications... I am definitely going to suggest it to my piano tuner and some other people in the piano group.

Dave was to lead discussion of the book but passed away before the Book Group met.

Of the many guest artists who have performed on David Lytle's piano, it is Roy Bogas who has taken a special interest in its sound quality. Earlier this year, at Roy's request, the Chamber Music Committee authorized Will Reed to "voice" the piano. Voicing is a process of using a needle-like instrument to perforate and "fluff up" felt pads of the hammers in the piano mechanism that become compacted over time. Roy and Will spent hours voicing the piano before Roy's concert last February and achieved a warmer, rich tone to enhance Roy's musical selections. You may have noticed the piano is plugged into a wall receptacle. No, it has not become an electric keyboard. The piano is just keeping warm and free from humidity with its own tiny hidden electric heater.

Today, Dave's piano has a new home among old friends. Will Reed still tunes it, and members of Dave's piano group are in the concert audience.

Chamber Music Audiences Grow

The past five years have witnessed a steady increase in audience size at the Chamber Music Concerts. In the 2001-2002 Season, we averaged 48 people at the concerts. By 2002-2003, there was an average of 64 attendees at the winter concerts with a total of 244 enjoying the first two-day summer concert in July 2003.

The 2003-2004 Season grew to an average of 72 at the winter concerts with a large but undocumented number at the summer concerts. Attendance during the 2004-2005 Season averaged audiences of 94 per concert with a sold out crowd of over 300 on the July 2004 weekend.

The 2005-2006 Concert Series continued the trend, averaging 97 people per concert. That represents double the audience size, compared with just five years ago. And that doesn't even count the enthusiastic crowds for the popular Roy Bogas and Friends Chamber Music Weekend. Last July over 200 people attended the Sunday concert.

The increase in attendance has allowed the Chamber Music Committee to support nine concerts with highly acclaimed musicians for the 2006-2007 Concert Series. Thus, audience growth has resulted in concerts with better-known performers and, ideally, a more enjoyable musical experience for local chamber music fans.

When Do You Feel the Need for Music?

A quick glance at recent Gualala Arts Chamber Music concert attendance tells it all. In addition to the expected large audiences during the July Chamber Music Weekend, February is the most popular month for attending a chamber music concert. The February 2003 concert drew 69 people, the largest audience that season. In February 2004 the number grew to 96. In February 2005 Roy Bogas filled Gualala Arts with 176 fans. And in February 2006, The Capriccio Quartet drew an enthusiastic audience of 158. Something about the chill of February must draw serious music lovers to the warmth of Gualala Arts chamber music!



The Capriccio Quartet will return January 28, 2007.

Chamber Music in Gualala?

How do we attract musicians to Gualala? How does a small, isolated community on the Northern California coast get talented artists to make the long trek up Highway One? As our chamber music series has become more well known, agents have begun to send us information about musicians who would like to come here. We have a list of over one hundred artists who have expressed interest. They enjoy the intimacy of Coleman Auditorium; they comment on the enthusiastic audience and the community's hospitality.



Our Musician Selection Subcommittee has an ongoing process for reviewing musicians. The committee considers pianists, duos, trios, quartets, instrumental and vocal ensembles, and instrumentalists (such as solo guitarists and woodwind groups). They listen to tapes and CDs and go over promotional materials. This usually narrows it down to a dozen or so performers for further review. Next comes the difficult task of contacting performers, listing dates that are open and telling them what our budget allows. Then we make our final choices. We want to offer varied programs with the best musicians available, often choosing dates with holiday weekends to encourage out-of-area attendance. The idea is to choose entertaining recitals, keeping within a responsible budget.

Gualala Arts sends out contracts and requests publicity materials and detailed programs. Often, artists enjoy meeting local families who volunteer to provide housing, so we contact people who would like to meet the musicians on a personal basis. We make up the program notes you receive at the concert. Finally, performance day arrives. Committee members bring the snacks we serve at intermission. We arrange rehearsal times and set up chairs in the auditorium. The musicians appear. The music begins. Ah! It's all worth it!

But we can't do it without your help. If you enjoy the performances, we hope you will contribute so they can continue. Ticket sales cover only a little more than half our expenses, so we seek contributions from our patrons to make a successful season possible. Please fill out the form below, and return it with your contribution. It will help us continue to bring fine music to our community.



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