

Wedding in the Aegis garden

By Sophie Braccini



Bride and groom cut the cake at Aegis in Moraga.

Photo Sophie Braccini

For the first time ever, a wedding was celebrated in the courtyard at Moraga Aegis. It was not residents getting married, however, but Marketing Direc-

tor Molly Gleason-Kodama who wed during a perfectly simple and touching Buddhist ceremony where all the residents were invited.

Some 150 chairs were installed under a large tent in the large courtyard of the residence. Flowers were everywhere, scenting the air and lifting the spirits.

Friends, family and residents sat quietly as Molly, radiant in a white and silver dress, walked in to meet David who was waiting for her at the altar where a Buddhist priest, a friend of Molly's, was going to officiate. The ceremony began, interlaced with Buddhist chants and bells, offering of flowers, and holding of the nenju – traditional Japanese Buddhist beads.

Then the two exchanged vows in front of the assembly and promises were made to be true, to trust, to love, to hear one another, to understand, to be open, to support each other. Live music, cutting of the cake, food and champagne were part of the joyful afternoon.

Candice Moses, the director of Moraga Aegis, was in charge of one thing during the festivities: taking care of Molly's well-

behaved little dog. She was also beaming with pride, talking to the residents who were participating and sharing their joy.

She explained that it was the residents who had been at the root of this event: the first ever wedding celebrated in any of the Aegis residences. She said that when residents heard of the marriage, they wanted to be with Molly on this important day. So many wanted to go that the only thing that had to be done was to host the ceremony on the premises. And so it was done.

Moses commented that one of the most beautiful aspects of the event was the lively mix of people who rejoiced and shared their best wishes with the new couple, from young children to most of the senior residents, all united in a celebration of love.

'French Connection' closes Gold Coast Chamber Players season

Submitted by Pamela Freund-Striplen



SF Piano Trio

Photos provided

The award-winning Gold Coast Chamber Players season finale, "French Connection," will feature the Piano Quartet #2, op. 45 by Gabriel Faure and piano trios of Lili Boulanger and Maurice Ravel. What makes Ravel's trio such a masterpiece, besides its immediate sensual appeal, is the blending of both a skillfully crafted structure and the indescribably fresh voice of Ravel and a new musical era.

The final of this season's five concerts will be performed twice: first at 7:30 p.m. on Saturday, May 19 at the Lafayette Library Community Hall, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd. in Lafayette and then at 7 p.m. on Sunday, May 20 at Piedmont Center for the Arts, 801 Magnolia Ave. in Piedmont.

The trio includes many wonderful details of construction and expression including novelties both exotic and presciently neoclassical. Lili Boulanger was the first woman

to win the prestigious Prix de Rome in composition and was undoubtedly influenced by her close family friend Gabriel Faure. Faure's second piano quartet has been called "tempestuous" with vibrant modal inflections and innovative progressions. Arthur Cohen writes, "It is a cultured music that has a freshness that never stales."

Bringing this program to life is the San Francisco Piano Trio, featuring German violinist Axel Strauss, French cellist Jean-Michel Fonteneau, and American pianist Jeffrey Sykes, with American violist Pamela Freund-Striplen. The SF Piano Trio has been praised for its virtuosic ensemble playing and the Well-Tempered Ear noted that the trio "brought a closely attentive and particularly quiet audience to its feet for a prolonged standing ovation. ... That they played with terrific virtuosity and technical fluency was easy to perceive through-

out the demanding program. But the careful listener, the discerning ear, was more impressed ... by their unerring musicianship; and by their ability to blend, to dialogue with each other."

Founded in 1987, GCCP distinguishes itself by its eclectic programming and by providing community access to leading musicians from throughout the world.

Tickets are \$45 general admission, \$40 senior (65+), and \$15 for students and include a pre-concert talk by musicologist Kai Christensen at 7 p.m. (Lafayette only). Purchase online at www.gcplayers.org or by calling (925) 283-3728.

Limited seating, please reserve early as these concerts usually sell out.



Pamela Freund-Striplen

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