

Pianist Frank Wiens Returns to Gualala Arts Sunday, November 12, at 4 p.m.



“Musical strength... commanding manner... grandeur and power” — *London Times*

The Gualala Arts Chamber Music Series will present the technically brilliant and exciting pianist Frank Wiens in a much-anticipated return visit. Previous performances by Mr. Wiens in 2002 and 2004 were met with well-deserved standing ovations.

This recital will be special – an all-Chopin concert, including three Mazurkas, three Etudes, two Impromptus, the Barcarolle, the Ballade in G Minor, the Nocturne in D-Flat Major, the Scherzo in C-Sharp Minor, and the Polonaise-Fantasia – all providing a very enjoyable program.

In his extensive concert tours throughout the United States and abroad, including recitals in New York, London, South Korea, and Europe, Frank Wiens performances have been greeted with high critical acclaim. In 1991 he was invited to tour the Soviet Union as featured soloist in concerts celebrating the 100th anniversary of the birth of Serge Prokofiev. Of one such performance, the *Yaroslavl*, USSR, wrote, “Technical brilliance, a clarity of color, richness of imagery, a nobility of artistic manner. . . Frank Wiens is a brilliant representative of the American school of piano technique.”

A native of New Haven, Connecticut, Mr. Wiens studied at the University of Michigan School of Music, where he was the recipient of the Stanley medal, the school’s highest honor for musical excellence. From there he went on to win major awards in prestigious competitions: North American Young Artists Competition, Southwest Pianists Foundation Competition, and Three Rivers Piano Competition. Since 1974 he has given annual concert tours across the U.S. His performances have been broadcast on National Public Radio and Public Television, and he has been a touring artist with the Iowa Arts Council and the California Arts Council. He has served on the piano faculty of Drake University, and since 1976 he has held the position of Professor of Piano at the University of the Pacific in Stockton. In 1997 he was honored with that university’s Distinguished Faculty Award, and in 2000 with its Faculty Research-Lecturer Award.

The week after the Gualala concert, Mr. Wiens will travel to Romania, where he will perform with the Orchestra Dinu Lipatti, after which he will go to Poland for a series of recitals featuring the music of Frederic Chopin.

Tickets for the Gualala Concert are \$20 each. Children and young people ages 7 through 17 are admitted free. Advance tickets are available at the Gualala Arts Center or at the Dolphin Gallery in Gualala. If not sold out, tickets may also be purchased at the door prior to the performance. For further information call the Gualala Arts Center, 707-884-1138, or go the website GualalaArts.org.

Riley Lee Shakuhachi Concert Saturday, November 4 at 7:30 p.m.

Riley Lee began playing the shakuhachi in Japan in 1971. During the eight years he lived there, he immersed himself in its arts. From 1973 through 1977, he toured internationally as a full-time performer of *taiko* (festival drums) and shakuhachi with a group of traditional Japanese musicians.

His studies with traditional teachers in Japan have included such peculiar methods as practicing barefoot in the snow, running marathons, and blowing into his flute in blizzards until icicles formed at the shakuhachi’s end.

In 1980 he became the first non-Japanese to attain the rank of *dai shihan* (grand master) in the shakuhachi tradition. He completed his BA and MA degrees at the University of Hawaii, and his PhD degree in ethnomusicology at the University of Sydney.

Riley has played his bamboo flute extensively throughout Asia, North America, Europe, and Australia. A prolific composer for his instrument, he has composed and arranged over sixty pieces. He has, to date, released over 30 recordings world-wide, largely of his own compositions.

The shakuhachi is an end-blown flute, first introduced into Japan from China in the eighth century. It has been used as a spiritual tool since the 15th century or earlier. The unique sound of the shakuhachi relaxes the mind and body in many ways, and subsequently aids in meditation and contemplation.

