

KAUFMAN MUSIC CENTER PRESENTS

Tuesday Matinees

Aizuri Quartet



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Virtual performance filmed at
Oktaven Audio in Mount Vernon, New York
Streamed Tuesday, March 9, 2021 at 2 pm ET

Kaufman Music Center
presents

Tuesday Matinees

Aizuri Quartet

Emma Frucht and Miho Saegusa, *violin*; Ayane Kozasa, *viola*; Karen Ouzounian, *cello*

ELEANOR ALBERGA
(b. 1949)

String Quartet No. 1 (1993)
I. Détaché et martellato e zehr lebhaft und swing it man

RHIANNON GIDDENS
(b. 1977)
arr. Jacob Garchik

***At The Purchaser's Option* (2016)**

BEETHOVEN
(1770-1827)

String Quartet No. 12 In E-flat major, Op. 127 (1825)
I. Maestoso – Allegro
II. Adagio, ma non troppo e molto cantabile – Andante con moto –
Adagio molto espressivo – Tempo I
III. Scherzando vivace
IV. Allegro

All 2020-21 Kaufman Music Center performances are online, filmed in safe, socially distanced locations observing health and safety protocols, and streamed to the safety of your home.

Steinway is the official piano of Merkin Hall

KaufmanMusicCenter.org/MH | 212 501 3330

A Program Note

Rhiannon Giddens

At the Purchaser's Option from *Freedom Highway* (2017)

Rhiannon Giddens makes a psychological journey into America's troubled past with *At the Purchaser's Option* (from her album *Freedom Highway* and arranged for string quartet by Jacob Garchik). The song was inspired by a 19th-century advertisement Giddens found for a 22-year-old female slave whose baby was also available for sale ("at the purchaser's option"). Giddens, a musical historian, imagines the interior world of the slave whose soul is out of reach to her captors.

I've got a babe but shall I keep him
'Twill come the day when I'll be weepin'
But how can I love him any less
This little babe upon my breast

You can take my body
You can take my bones
You can take my blood
But not my soul

I've got a body dark and strong
I was young but not for long
You took me to bed a little girl
Left me in a woman's world

You can take my body
You can take my bones
You can take my blood
But not my soul

Day by day I work the line
Every minute overtime
Fingers nimble, fingers quick
My fingers bleed to make you rich

You can take my body
You can take my bones
You can take my blood
But not my soul

I've got a babe, but shall I keep him?

About the Artists

Praised by *The Washington Post* for “captivating” performances that draw from its notable “meld of intellect, technique and emotions,” the **Aizuri Quartet** was awarded the Grand Prize and the CAG Management Prize at the 2018 M-Prize Chamber Arts Competition, along with top prizes at the 2017 Osaka International Chamber Music Competition in Japan and the 2015 Wigmore Hall International String Quartet Competition in London. The Quartet’s debut album, *Blueprinting*, featuring new works written for the Aizuri Quartet by five American composers, was released by New Amsterdam Records and nominated for a 2019 GRAMMY Award.

Through its engaging and thought-provoking programs, branded by *The New York Times* as “genuinely exciting” and “imaginative,” the Quartet has garnered critical acclaim for bringing “a technical bravado and emotional power” to bold new commissions, and for its “flawless” (San Diego *Union-Tribune*) performances of the great masterpieces of the past. In the 2019-20 season the group toured extensively across North America giving both debut appearances at Lincoln Center and Carnegie Hall as part of CAG Winner’s Series.

Based in New York City, the Aizuri Quartet was the 2017-2018 MetLiveArts String Quartet-in-Residence at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, where they presented five unique programs throughout the season, leading *The New York Times* to applaud them as “a quartet of expert collaborators, who cogently traverse a range of repertoire staples and modern works.” Previous residency engagements include: the 2015-2016 Ernst Stiefel String Quartet-in-Residence at the Caramoor Center for Music and the Arts; resident ensemble of the 2014 Ravinia Festival’s Steans Music Institute; and, from 2014-2016, the String Quartet-in-Residence at the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia.

The Quartet has performed extensively throughout North America as well as in Europe, Japan, Mexico, Chile, Costa Rica and Abu Dhabi, and has commissioned and premiered new works by Pulitzer Prize-winner Caroline Shaw, Lembit Beecher, Paul Wiancko, Yevgeniy Sharlat, Gabriella Smith, Rene Orth, Michi Wiancko and Alyssa Weinberg. Its critically acclaimed debut album, *Blueprinting*, which showcased many of these new pieces, was nominated for a 2019 GRAMMY award in the category of “Best Chamber Music/Small Ensemble Performance.”

Formed in 2012 and combining four distinctive musical personalities into a unique collective, the Aizuri Quartet draws its name from “aizuri-e,” a style of predominantly blue Japanese woodblock printing that is noted for its vibrancy and incredible detail.



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