**The Trustees of the Saint-Gaudens Memorial Present**

# AEOLUS QUARTET

**Nicholas Tavani, *violin***
**Rachel Shapiro, *violin***
**Gregory Luce, *viola***
**Alan Richardson, *violoncello***

*An Afternoon in Paris and Vienna*

**Sunday, August 24, 2014**
**2:00 PM**

## THE SAINT-GAUDENS NHS

*CORNISH ♦ NEW HAMPSHIRE*

A note from
*Fern Meyers, Concert Series Director*

The Trustees of the Saint-Gaudens Memorial are grateful to all those who attend and generously support concerts at Saint-Gaudens National Historic Site, a National Park for the Arts. In the spirit of Augustus Saint-Gaudens, who enjoyed fine music, singing and playing the flute, the Memorial organized a summer concert in the Little Studio in 1952. What began with a single piano recital has grown to an annual series of 11 concerts, presented to those who visit the park. We give special thanks to the charitable individuals and corporations who are sponsoring select programs this season.

The 2014 summer concerts feature outstanding musicians who bring their talents to an eclectic series of programs drawing from classical, jazz, ethnic and musical theater genres. We hope that you will make these concerts a Sunday afternoon tradition and introduce others to music at the park.

The Saint-Gaudens Memorial is a private, non-profit New Hampshire organization, established in 1919 to maintain a living memorial to Augustus Saint-Gaudens on the site of his home and studios. In 1964, the property—including structures, works of art and furnishings—was donated to the United States for public ownership and in 1965 Congress created the Saint-Gaudens National Historic Site. The Memorial partners with the historic site to increase public awareness of the life, world and work of Saint-Gaudens; preserve and interpret the cultural resources at the site; and promote the arts in general. We do this through educational and artistic programs, advice and other forms of support.

*Cover image: The Kneisel Quartet, America's first fully professional string quartet and the Cornish Colony's quartet in residence, 1898.*

## PROGRAM

Quartet in F Major — Maurice Ravel (1875-1937)

*Alleg*ro Moderato
Assez vif, très rhythmé
Très lent
Vif et agité

Quartet in F Major Op. 59 #1 — Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)

Allegro
Allegretto vivace e sempre scherzando
Adagio molto e mesto—attacca
Thème Russe: Allegro

## About the Artists

**Nicholas Tavani**, violinist, was lauded by the *Washington Post* for his "brilliant musicianship." Mr. Tavani debuted in Washington, D.C.'s Gaston Hall at the age of eight. As a chamber musician, recitalist, and concerto soloist, he has performed extensively to critical acclaim in the United States and around the world. As first violinist of the Aeolus Quartet, he was a winner of the 2011 Plowman International Chamber Music Competition, the 2011 Yellow Springs Chamber Music competition, and the 2009 Coleman International Chamber Music Competition. He is also a laureate of the Postacchini and Kingsville International Violin Competitions.

A passionate advocate of new music, Mr. Tavani has premiered and recorded several works by living composers, including Samuel Adler, Alexandra Bryant, Christopher Theofanidis, and Dan Visconti. His discography includes two albums with the Aeolus Quartet in wide release on the Longhorn/Naxos label. Performances with orchestra include the Aspen Festival Orchestra, Prince William Symphony, Little River Symphony, Masterworks Festival Orchestra, Austin Chamber Music Festival Orchestra, CIM Chamber Orchestra, and many others. Collaborations include Peter Salaff, Ieva Jokubaviciute, Daxun Zhang, and Michael Tree.

Mr. Tavani's current season includes sonata performances at the Phillips Collection in Washington DC and WCR Concert Hall in New York, concertos in Virginia and Massachusetts, extensive touring across the US

and Canada with the Aeolus Quartet, and serving as teaching assistant to the Juilliard Quartet at the Juilliard School, where the Aeolus Quartet is currently Graduate Quartet in Residence. An alumnus of the Cleveland Institute of Music, Nicholas studied violin with William Preucil and chamber music with Peter Salaff and the Cavani Quartet. In addition to a Bachelor of Music in Violin Performance from CIM, Nicholas also studied mathematical physics at Case Western Reserve University.

**Rachel Kitagawa Shapiro**, violinist, first became acquainted with the violin at age four. She has since performed in such venues as Carnegie's Weill Recital Hall and across the United States, Canada, Mexico, the United Kingdom, Germany, Norway, the Czech Republic, and China. Her collaborative highlights include performances with Roger Tapping, Eugenia Zukerman, Victor Rosenbaum, and the Miró Quartet, as well as an appearance with members of the Philadelphia Orchestra on a subscription concert for the Philadelphia Orchestra's 2011 Chamber Collection series at the Kimmel Center. She has performed multiple times on the Stradivarius "Greffuhle" violin (1709) of the Smithsonian Institution's rare instrument collection with the Smithsonian Chamber Players. A devoted and dynamic educator, Ms. Shapiro has served on faculty as a chamber music coach and private teacher at Stanford University's "Why Music Matters" Educational Program for Gifted Youth, the Austin Chamber Music Center Workshop, and the George Washington University Summer Chamber Music Institute. As teaching assistant at both the University of Texas at Austin and the University of Maryland, she coached undergraduate and graduate student ensembles and taught private lessons.

At the age of fifteen, Ms. Shapiro made her debut as soloist with the Reading Symphony Orchestra. She appeared on a broadcast of NPR's "From the Top" radio show as concertmistress of the Settlement Chamber Orchestra in Philadelphia, PA. An alumna of the Perlman Music Program: Chamber Music Workshop, Aspen Music Festival, ENCORE School for Strings, and Meadowmount School of Music, Ms. Shapiro has performed in masterclasses for such distinguished artists as William Preucil, Joel Smirnoff and Charles Castleman. She is presently pursuing a Doctor of Musical Arts degree at the University of Maryland, having earned her Master of Music from the University of Texas at Austin in the Graduate Quartet-in-Residence program. She received a Bachelor of Music in violin performance under the tutelage of Linda Cerone at the Cleveland Institute of Music, with a minor in English literature from Case Western Reserve University. Ms. Shapiro is currently enrolled in the Artist Diploma program at the Juilliard School.

Ms. Shapiro is a founding member of the Aeolus Quartet, with whom she enjoys traveling the world and performing concerts in every venue imaginable.

**Gregory Luce**, violist, was praised by *The Washington Post* as an "appealing, natural player", Mr. Luce has performed in festivals in Austria, England, Hungary, Germany, Canada, and the United States. He has additionally premiered dozens of pieces in varied ensembles across the United States, with concert venues including the Kennedy Center, Alice Tully Hall, Carnegie Hall, Severance Hall and the Meyerhoff Concert Hall in Baltimore. As an educator he is also in demand, having been invited to coach, teach privately, and perform at numerous schools and festivals such as the Juilliard School, Stanford University, the Interlochen Summer Arts Academy and the Austin Chamber Music Center's Summer Workshop.

Mr. Luce has enjoyed an ongoing working relationship with the Conspirare Symphonic Choir of Austin, TX since 2011. Following a performance alongside them in January of 2011, the concert was hailed by National Public Radio as being "dreamlike…uncanny." The same concert was reviewed by Brett Campbell of the Wall Street Journal, who called the performance "a powerful new achievement in American music that vividly traces a journey from despair to transcendence."

Mr. Luce is currently an Artist Diploma student studying with Misha Amory and Roger Tapping at the Juilliard School in New York. He graduated from the Peabody Conservatory initially (B.M.), where he studied with Stephen Wyrczynski formerly of the Philadelphia Orchestra and Victoria Chiang, and afterwards graduated from the Cleveland Institute of Music (M.M.), where he studied with Mark Jackobs of the Cleveland Orchestra. As a member of the Aeolus Quartet, Mr. Luce was honored to be in the first graduate string quartet-in-residence at the University of Texas at Austin, where he received his first Artist Diploma with high honors while studying with John Largess of the Miró Quartet.

Since 2008 he has been violist of the Aeolus Quartet, top prize-winners at numerous national and international competitions. Following their performance in Trondheim's International Chamber Music Competition of 2009, the Aeolus Quartet was praised by Strad magazine for their "high-octane performance," with Mr. Luce receiving particular note as being "especially enjoyable." He plays on a French viola made by Pierre Leroux in 1950.

**Alan Richardson**, ‘cellist, is a Virginia native and founding member of the Aeolus Quartet. Mr. Richardson is a fellowship student in the DMA program at the University of Maryland, where he studies with Evelyn Elsing. He is a graduate of the Cleveland Institute of Music (B.M.), where he studied with Melissa Kraut and Richard Aaron, and the University of Texas at Austin (M.M.), where he studied with Joshua Gindele. In Fall 2013, he entered the Artist Diploma program at Juilliard.

Mr. Richardson has performed in many of the great halls across North America, Europe, and Asia including Carnegie Hall, Severance Hall, St. Martin in the Fields, Shanghai Oriental Art Center, Montreal’s Pollack Hall, Trondheim Frimurerlogen, and the Hamburg Laeiszhalle. As a member of the Aeolus Quartet, he was awarded Grand Prize at the 2011 Plowman and Yellow Springs Competitions, top strings prize at the 2009 Coleman Competition, Silver Medal at the 2011 Fischoff Competition, and a Bronze Medal at the 2010 International Chamber Music Ensemble Competition.

As an educator, Mr. Richardson has given master classes and outreach presentations across the United States. He has served on faculty at the 2011 Austin Chamber Music Festival, and had the opportunity to teach and coach many undergraduate and graduate students while serving as teaching assistants at the University of Texas and University of Maryland.

## About the Aeolus Quartet

Praised by Strad Magazine for their “high-octane” performance, the Aeolus Quartet is among the finest young string quartets performing today. Violinists Nicholas Tavani and Rachel Shapiro, violist Gregory Luce, and cellist Alan Richardson formed the Aeolus Quartet in 2008 at the Cleveland Institute of Music. Since its inception, the all-American quartet has been awarded prizes at nearly every major competition in the United States and performed across the globe with showings “worthy of a major-league quartet” (Scott Cantrell, Dallas Morning News). Luke Quinton of the Austin-American Statesman writes, “The Aeolus Quartet is a powerful and thoughtful group of young musicians who are plotting an ascending course…this vibrant group shows great promise.” They are currently the Graduate Resident String Quartet at the Juilliard School.

The Aeolus Quartet are Grand Prizewinners of the 2011 Plowman Chamber Music Competition and 2011 Chamber Music Yellow Springs Competition. They were awarded First Prize at the 2009 Coleman International Chamber Ensemble Competition, a Silver Medal at the 2011 Fischoff International

Chamber Music Competition, and a Bronze Medal at the 2010 International Chamber Music Ensemble Competition in New England. The 16th Annual Austin Critics' Table named the Aeolus Quartet their 2010-2011 "Best Ensemble." The Aeolus Quartet has released two critically acclaimed albums of classical and contemporary works through the Longhorn/Naxos label which are available on iTunes, Amazon, and major retailers worldwide.

The Quartet has performed across North America, Europe, and Asia in venues such as Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall, Reinberger Recital Hall at Severance Hall, Merkin Hall, The Library of Congress, Renwick Gallery, St. Martin-in-the-Fields, and the Shanghai Oriental Arts Center. Dedicated to bringing music into the community, the Aeolus Quartet has been widely recognized for their highly innovative and engaging outreach programs. The Fischoff National Chamber Music Association awarded the Aeolus their 2013 Educator Award in acknowledgment of the positive impact their educational efforts have had in diverse communities. Additionally, they were awarded the 2012 Lad Prize which culminated in large-scale community engagement work, performing in the Stanford area, and a masterclass residency at Stanford University. The Aeolus Quartet has also served as teaching faculty at Stanford University's Education Program for Gifted Youth (EPGY), the Austin Chamber Music Workshop, and Da Camera of Houston's Music Encounters Program. Working in collaboration with the University of Texas through the Rural Chamber Music Outreach Initiative, the Quartet has presented educational programs and performances in communities throughout the state of Texas.

The Aeolus Quartet has studied extensively with the Miró, Guarneri, and Juilliard Quartets. Other mentors include artists such as William Preucil, Peter Salaff, Donald Weilerstein, Itzhak Perlman, Gerhard Schulz, and Mark Steinberg. Members of the Quartet hold degrees from the Peabody Conservatory, the Cleveland Institute of Music, and the University of Texas at Austin, where they served as the first Graduate String Quartet-in-Residence. The Quartet's 2013-2014 season includes multiple performances on the Smithsonian Institute's rare instrument collection, an educational tour of the Midwest in conjunction with the Fischoff Competition, concert touring throughout the United States, and residencies in North Carolina and at the Austin Chamber Music Center's Summer Festival. The Quartet is named for the Greek god Aeolus, who governed the four winds. This idea of a single spirit uniting four individual forces serves as an inspiration to the members of the Aeolus Quartet as they pursue their art.

## PROGRAM NOTES

### Maurice Ravel Quartet in F Major

The early twentieth century in French music is most often associated with Impressionism. Claude Debussy, by his sheer compositional force and prominence in the minds of listeners the world over, has assured this fact. Paul Dukas and Maurice Ravel, amongst others, followed in the footsteps of Debussy and created what would become an almost uniquely French musical language, the hallmark of which was an abandonment of traditional forward-driving tonality in favor of harmonic stasis. This stasis was achieved through the use of whole-tone scales that have no tonic or central focus, which allowed the music built on them to float above our expectations; never demanding the sense of completion that drives traditional tonal music. As a result, Impressionist music often failed to adhere to the standard formal structures of music.

These harmonic techniques were a means—one of many—through which the Impressionist composers endeavored to express emotion as directly as possible. In many ways, their music transcended the Romantic ideals of the nineteenth century; rather than trying to evoke emotion from the listener—making music an empathetic art—the Impressionists sought to depict the emotions themselves. This process necessitated a deep sincerity, however, since a composer could not possibly compose an emotion he did not feel.

In stark contrast to the harmonic vagueness and sincerity of Impressionism, Neoclassicism thrived on irony and an adherence to musical forms and structures codified hundreds of years earlier. In the wake of the First World War, many composers felt that the surfeit of emotion found in Romantic and Impressionistic works was not suited for a global political and cultural landscape that was so obviously brokn. The resulting veneer of detachment logically flourished in war-ravaged France, and was the basis for Neoclassical music. By using musical forms that had been popularized hundreds of years earlier—such as the sonata—in conjunction with modern musical language, composers hoped to add a level of irony to their music. In many cases, Baroque or Classical counterpoint techniques would be married with twentieth-century harmonies, with the result being a music that focused on individual lines as much as it did an overall sound.

Despite the outward differences between Impressionism and Neoclassicism, they were both primarily incubated in France within a

few decades of one another. What, then, could be the link between the two? In 1911, Ravel gave an interview in which he may have unwittingly answered this question. In speaking of French music, he said that "its great qualities are clearness and order…The French composers of today work on small canvases but each stroke of the brush is of vital importance." Ravel's words, coming as they did before Neoclassicism truly began, are surprisingly prescient.

While the two styles used strikingly different palettes, they both featured an emphasis on small details that made each musical brush stroke vital. In Impressionism, it was often small changes in tone color that were used to denote changes in the emotion being depicted. Neoclassicism stressed clean, coherent writing that focused on the effect that could be had by small gestures.

Maurice Ravel's String Quartet is a work that shows the profound influence of the Impressionist Debussy while looking forwards—and backwards—to the forms that would inform Neoclassical composition. The work in four movements is generally closely associated with Debussy's own quartet, written in 1893. While it is true that the two works have a number of similarities—reliance on Impressionistic modal harmony and a second movement that is dominated by pizzicato, to name two of the most often cited—Ravel extends what Debussy had done to new heights.

The opening movement sets the stage for the entire work, both formally and thematically. It is in a standard sonata form, with a statement, development, and recapitulation that would fit perfectly in Mozart's time. From this point the quartet moves to a scherzo and a rhapsodic third movement followed by a dance-finale with a stilted modern rhythm. It is not just a Classical structure that unifies the work, however. The themes heard in the first movement—especially the one that begins the work—come back in different guises throughout the rest of the piece. For example, the pizzicato strings of the second movement are playing an idea derived from the first theme, and the third movement can be heard as an almost improvisatory take on the first movement's melodic material.

**Beethoven Quartet in F Major Op. 59 No. 1**

Written six years after the publication of his Op. 18 set, the three quartets of Op. 59 represent a significant and hard won accomplishment for Ludwig van Beethoven. Commissioned by the

Russian ambassador to the Imperial Court at Vienna, Count Andreas Razumovsky, the Op. 59 set was published at a time when Beethoven's personal struggles -principal among them his growing deafness- had reached a turning point. The quartets of Op. 59 are already worlds away from the pure classicism of his previous six quartets, and they drew harsh criticism from audience and performers alike. To complaints by the violinist Ignaz Schuppanzigh, Beethoven famously replied, "Does he really suppose I think of his puling little fiddle when the spirit speaks to me and I compose something?" The expansiveness of form and musical scope of these first quartets of Beethoven's so-called "middle period" are to the chamber repertoire what the "Eroica" is to symphonic; Beethoven creates a new technical and formal language to convey his renewed conviction that only through his art may he achieve true freedom.

The Quartet in F Major, Op. 59 No. 1 is a significantly longer work than the Op. 18 quartets, and the first movement is proportionately more expansive. Marked Allegro, the stately theme rises out of the cello amidst bouncing eighth notes from the inner voices. Passing to the first violin, it develops into several thematic fragments, among them a set of lovely winding duets first between the two violins and then between viola and cello. Introduced by a short, jocose motive in the cello and passing to the violins, the second theme blooms in a manner purely symphonic. A series of eerie, distant sounding chords pass around the quartet, further amplifying the effect of spaciousness in this movement, before a brief codetta leads into the development. Unprecedented in its length, this development features forays into distant keys as well as a swiftly intensifying fugue at its center. The recapitulation begins seamlessly as the cello reclaims its theme in contrary motion to a downward scale in the first violin. A dramatic coda leads this movement to its close.
*Notes by Robert Lintott*

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The park is open daily from Memorial Day weekend to October 31, 9:00 AM to 4:30 PM. Admission to the site is $5.00 per person, children 16 and under admitted free. As a National Park Fee Area, Federal Golden Age Passports are honored.

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