

## **Aeolus Quartet**

Formed in 2008 at the Cleveland Institute of Music, the Aeolus Quartet consists of violinists Nicholas Tavani and Rachel Shapiro, violist Caitlin Lynch\*\*, and cellist Alan Richardson. 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). Mark Satola of the Cleveland Plain Dealer writes, “A rich and warm tone combined with precise ensemble playing (that managed also to come across as fluid and natural), and an impressive musical intelligence guided every technical and dramatic turn.” They were the 2013-2015 Graduate Resident String Quartet at the Juilliard School, and they currently make their home in New York City.

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 Fischhoff 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,” and the “Best Touring Performance” in 2017. 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. A third album of contemporary and classic American composers is scheduled for worldwide release with Azica Records in spring of 2018.

The Quartet has performed across North America, Europe, and Asia in venues such as Alice Tully Hall at Lincoln Center, 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. For the 2015-2016 season, the Quartet was the recipient of a CMA Residency Partnership Grant. Named the 2015-2016 Guarneri Quartet Residency in recognition of Aeolus’ artistic achievement, the project involved extensive outreach and performance at Duke Ellington School for the Arts, the Sitar Arts Center, and George Washington University. The Fischhoff 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 collaborated with many leading artists, including Renee Fleming, Ida Kavafian, Joel Krosnick, and Paul Neubauer. They studied extensively with the Juilliard, Guarneri, St. Lawrence, and Miró 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 Juilliard School, the

Cleveland Institute of Music, the University of Maryland, and the University of Texas at Austin, where they served as Graduate String Quartet-in-Residence.

Aeolus is the ensemble in residence at Musica Viva of NY on the Upper East Side. Thanks to the generosity of the Five Partners Foundation and Ruth Trampler, the four members play on a set of instruments by famed Brooklyn luthier Samuel Zygmuntowicz. 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.

**\*\*For their appearance in Joplin, Jason Fisher will perform with the Quartet as violist.**

For more information: [www.aeolusquartet.com](http://www.aeolusquartet.com)



Violinist **Nicholas Tavani** was born in Arlington, VA, and debuted in Washington, D.C.'s Gaston Hall at the age of eight. The Cleveland Plain Dealer recently praised him as “an alert and sensitive artist, with beautiful tone and exquisite phrasing,” and the Washington Post has hailed his “brilliant musicianship.” As a chamber musician, recitalist, and concerto soloist, Mr. Tavani 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.

Mr. Tavani serves as first violinist in the Aeolus Quartet, who are currently Artists in Residence at George Washington University and Musica Viva New York. In addition, he serves as a member of the Mark Morris Dance Group Music Ensemble and the Smithsonian Chamber Players.

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 Renee Fleming, Peter Salaff, Ieva Jokubaviciute, Daxun Zhang, and Michael Tree. Mr. Tavani's current season includes solo performances in Maine and New York, concertos in New York, extensive touring across the US and South Korea with the Aeolus Quartet, and tours with the Mark Morris Dance Group to Israel and the US.

As a committed educator, Mr. Tavani has served on the faculties of the George Washington University School of Music, Point CounterPoint Music Festival, the MasterWorks Festival, and the University of Maryland High School Music Academy. He served as teaching assistant to the Juilliard Quartet at the Juilliard School, where he studied with Joseph Lin and Ronald Copes, and the Aeolus Quartet was 2013-2015 Graduate Quartet in Residence. Mr. Tavani is currently completing his doctoral work under the mentorship of David Salness at the University of Maryland. 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**, born in Reading, PA, first discovered the violin at age four. She has since performed in such venues as Carnegie's Weill Recital Hall, London's Wigmore Hall, and across the United States, Canada, Mexico, the United Kingdom, Germany, Norway, the Czech Republic, the United Arab Emirates, China, and Korea.

Founding member and second violinist of the critically acclaimed Aeolus Quartet, her playing has been praised by Mark Satola of the Cleveland Plain Dealer, "in a beautifully balanced interlude wherein the second violin dances attendant to a heartfelt melody... Rachel Shapiro [was] outstanding here." Collaborations include a performance on the Metropolitan Opera stage alongside Renée Fleming, as well as appearances with Michael Tree, Jon Kimura Parker, the Juilliard Quartet, and the Miró Quartet. In demand as an ensemble player, Ms. Shapiro was invited to appear with members of the Philadelphia Orchestra on a subscription concert for the Philadelphia Orchestra's Chamber Collection series at the Kimmel Center. In the 17-18 season, Ms. Shapiro appears with the Mark Morris Dance Group Music Ensemble, A Far Cry, and on faculty at TCU's Intensive Chamber Music Workshop.

Ms. Shapiro was appointed Professorial Lecturer at the George Washington University in 2013. She has served on faculty at Stanford University's "Why Music Matters"

Educational Program for Gifted Youth, the University of Maryland's High School Music Academy, the Austin Chamber Music Center Workshop, and Point CounterPoint Chamber Music Camp. As teaching assistant at the Juilliard School, the University of Maryland, and the University of Texas, she coached undergraduate and graduate student ensembles and taught private lessons.

Ms. Shapiro holds an Artist Diploma from the Juilliard School, having earned her Master of Music from the University of Texas at Austin and her Bachelor of Music from the Cleveland Institute of Music. She attained a Doctor of Musical Arts degree at the University of Maryland in 2016. Having minored in English Literature, Ms. Shapiro is an avid writer and was recently published in *Strings* magazine.



Violist **Jason Fisher** is a founding member of Boston's Grammy-nominated chamber orchestra, A Far Cry. A Carnegie Hall Fellow and a Peabody Singapore Fellow, Jason has toured Europe, Asia, Kazakhstan, and the Kyrgyz Republic. Concerts at Vienna Musikverein, Singapore Esplanade, and Carnegie Hall. Performances with Pink Martini, Jake Shimabukuro, Itzhak Perlman, Yo-Yo Ma, Renée Fleming, Kiri Te Kanawa, and with members of the Florestan Trio, and the Æolus, Brentano, Cleveland, Emerson, Mendelssohn, and St. Lawrence String Quartets.

Jason is principal viola of Boston Baroque and appears with a bicoastal variety of period ensembles including Gut Reaction, Antico/Moderno, the Handel & Haydn Society, and the Seattle and Portland Baroque Orchestras. He also frequently performs in and acts as band contractor for musical theater and opera at the American Repertory Theater in Harvard Square, including the recent productions of *Crossing*, *The Great Comet*, *Jagged Little Pill*, and *The Black Clown*.



New York based cellist **Alan Richardson** maintains a packed touring schedule as a member of the award winning Aeolus Quartet. Raised in Richmond, Virginia, Mr. Richardson went on to earn a BM from the Cleveland Institute of Music, an MM from the University of Texas, and an Artist Diploma from the Juilliard School. His primary mentors include Melissa Kraut, Richard Aaron, Joshua Gindele, Evelyn Elsing, Joel Krosnick, Neal Cary, and Jim Wilson.

Mr. Richardson has performed across North America, Europe, and Asia, in halls such as Carnegie, Severance, Wigmore, Seoul Arts Center, and Shanghai Oriental Arts Center. He has performed with many wonderful artists including Renée Fleming, Ángel Romero, Joel Krosnick, Michael Tree, Sam Rhodes, Nina Lee, Jon Kimura Parker, Pedja Muzijevic, and the Miró, Juilliard, and American String Quartets. In addition to his work with the Aeolus Quartet, he has performed as a guest with the NYC based chamber collective Decoda, and with the Mark Morris Dance Group.

Mr. Richardson currently holds a position of Professorial Lecturer at the George Washington University. He has served as a teaching assistant at The University of Texas, The University of Maryland, and The Juilliard School. Mr. Richardson has served on the teaching faculty of the Austin Chamber Music Center, Corcoran Chamber Music Institute, Point CounterPoint, and the University of Maryland High School Music Academy.