

ATLANTIC GUITAR QUARTET

Founded in 2010, the Atlantic Guitar Quartet is an ensemble dedicated to the creation and promotion of music by living composers. With virtuosic performances, innovative programming and collaborations with artists in other media the AGQ has broadened the definition and repertoire of the classical guitar quartet.

Mark Edwards, Kevin Shannon, Zoë Johnstone Stewart and Jonathan Zwi have each enjoyed extensive solo performing and teaching careers since finishing advanced degrees at the Peabody Conservatory. As a group, AGQ has performed as part of the Evolution Contemporary Music series and the Spring Stage Performances series, at Salisbury University, York College of Pennsylvania, Harford Community College and the Jordan Faye Contemporary Art Gallery. They have been artists-in-residence at the Engineer's Club of the historic Garret-Jacobs Mansion in Baltimore since 2010. In addition to their performances, the quartet was invited to teach master classes and workshops at Salisbury University and the Mid Atlantic Guitar Ensemble Festival.

AGQ has been proactive in expanding the repertoire of the classical guitar quartet by commissioning new works. With major institutional support by the Presser Foundation and the Peabody Conservatory, AGQ has premiered pieces by American composers, Christopher Gainey, Ronald Pearl and David Smooke. These works, along with music by composer Olivier Bensa, will be featured on the quartet's debut CD, to be released in the fall of 2013. AGQ's 2013-2014 season will also feature a new commission by composer Joshua Bornfield, sponsored by the Baltimore Classical Guitar Society.

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As a solo artist, **Mark Edwards** has been hailed as a player who “transfers to another zone, effortlessly strumming, plucking and picking a variety of classical masterpieces with clarity.” (*Montgomery Advertiser*.) Engagements in recent seasons include Trinity Church in New York City, ArtScape in Baltimore, the Toronto Guitar Symposium, The Mississippi Guitar Festival, and the Montgomery Guitar Festival. Mark has also been on the Maryland State Arts Council Touring Artist Roster since 2009.

During the past fifteen years Mark has earned thirty-three top prizes in competitions in the United States, Canada, and Thailand, including the 2010 Asia International Guitar Competition, the 2009 Montreal International Guitar Competition, and the 2008 National Guitar Workshop/National D'addario Solo Competition. Mark holds a Master of Music Performance and Pedagogy from the Peabody Institute of Music, and a Bachelor of Music (magna cum laude) from Columbus State University.

Kevin Shannon actively performs solo and chamber music on both modern classical guitar, and various period instruments including Lute, Baroque guitar and percussion. Kevin is a former member of the 1 East Guitar Quartet, and he is a founding and current member of the Atlantic Guitar Quartet.

In the genre of early music, Kevin has performed with the Peabody Consort, the Peabody Renaissance Ensemble and the Byrd consort. He received a Masters of Music and Graduate Performance Diploma

from the Peabody Institute, where was the Graduate Assistant to Julian Gray, and was awarded a Peabody Career Development Grant. Recent notable performances include collaborations with the New York Baroque Dance Company, performances through the Midori and Friends Foundation, performances in the Marlow Guitar series and the Loyola College Concert Series, and performances at the Kennedy Center.

Along with his performance schedule, Kevin teaches guitar privately in the Baltimore/Washington D.C. area.

Zoë Johnstone Stewart is an active performer and educator in the Baltimore area. As a solo artist, she has performed throughout the U.S. Canada and Italy, including appearances in the Trinity Church concert series, the Assisi Performing Arts Organization, and as a concerto soloist at Alice Tully Hall of Lincoln Center.

As a collaborator in various chamber groups she has performed extensively throughout the Northeast United States and has been featured at the Alexandria Guitar Festival, the Long Island Guitar Festival, the Mannes School of Music Festival and the Connecticut Classical Guitar Society's "Guitar Day." She has received her Bachelor's degree from the prestigious Eastman School of Music and her Masters from the highly esteemed Peabody Institute of the Johns Hopkins University.

In addition to her performing career she is a highly sought after guitar teacher. She is the founding director of the Evergreen Academy of Talent Education, a Suzuki guitar school and also a faculty member at the Preparatory division of the Peabody Institute.

Originally a violinist, **Jonathan Zwi** began the classical guitar at the age of 18 when he found a passion for the instrument at Indiana University, where he completed a Bachelor's of Music under the direction of José Antonio López, Julio Ribeiro and Ernesto Bitetti.

In addition to his degree in Music, Jonathan also received degrees in Philosophy and Cognitive Science. He was the recipient of several research fellowships at Indiana and Yale University and has presented his work at conferences throughout the United States. In 2002, he won a grant from the NIH to conduct research on the structural connectivity of the cerebral cortex with Dr. Olaf Sporns, with whom he co-authored a paper subsequently published in *Neuroinformatics*.

In June of 2007, Jonathan moved to Brazil to focus on the guitar and re-identify with his heritage and in July he won first place in the 1st Eustáquio Grilo International Guitar Competition. As a result he toured Brazil, performing concerts in São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro and Brasilia. While in Brazil, Jonathan was enrolled at the School of Music at the Federal University of Bahia under the guidance of Mario Ulloa. He was also enrolled in the university's School of Fine Arts, specializing in printmaking, silkscreen and photography, and has shown his work in exhibits and galleries throughout Salvador, Bahia. He has continued to exhibit his work upon returning to the United States.

Currently at the Peabody Conservatory, Jonathan is the graduate assistant in guitar to Manuel Barrueco and in Musicology to Dr. Elizabeth Tolbert. He has been the recipient of the Richard Franko Goldman Prize for Performance as well as the Presser Foundation Award. He completed his master's degree under the guidance of Ray Chester and is currently a doctoral candidate under Manuel Barrueco.