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**BAY AREA FAVORITE AFIARA STRING QUARTET MAKES ITS
CAL PERFORMANCES DEBUT ON SUNDAY, MARCH 17 IN HERTZ HALL**

BERKELEY, February 7, 2013—The Afiara String Quartet makes its Cal Performances debut on Sunday, March 17 at 3:00 p.m. in Hertz Hall, playing a program that pairs two classic pieces of string quartet repertoire with a very personal work commissioned by the quartet in 2010. Afiara members Valerie Li and Yuri Cho, violins, David Samuel, viola, and Adrian Fung, cello, are no strangers to the Bay Area—they were quartet-in-residence at San Francisco State University’s International Center for the Arts from 2007 to 2009, and have returned to the region several times since. The *San Jose Mercury News* gave the ensemble high praise as “quicksilver and delicate, muscular, electric and filled with sentiment ... blazingly beautiful.”

The Afiara String Quartet’s Berkeley concert opens with Joseph Haydn’s String Quartet in F major, Op. 74 No. 2. An outgoing, almost symphonic composition, the work is deceptively simple in its strong themes and listenable structure, both of which belie the complex ideas underpinning the music. Next on the program is the second String Quartet by Juilliard School graduate and Boston University faculty member Brett Abigaña. Commissioned by the Afiara String Quartet in 2010, the four movements of the work—*Psalm*, *Berceuse*, *Vocalise*, and *March*—capture different facets of the life of Betty Samuel, the late mother of the Afiara String Quartet’s violist and the dedicatee of the work. After an intermission the program will conclude with Ludwig van Beethoven’s Op. 59 String Quartet in C major, the third of his “Razumovsky” quartets. Written for Count Razumovsky in 1806, this set of three quartets includes different treatments of Russian folk songs, several of which are included in Modest Mussorgsky’s *Boris Gudonov* and Igor Stravinsky’s *Firebird Suite*. To this day this Beethoven quartet is considered a long and technically difficult work, and is rarely approached by all but the finest professional string quartets.

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The four Canadian musicians of the Afiara String Quartet came together in 2006 and quickly made a name for themselves on the chamber music scene, winning the 2008 Concert Artists Guild International Competition. The Afiara String Quartet, which takes its name from the Spanish word *fiar*, meaning “to trust,” has performed at multiple venues in New York City (including Carnegie Hall and Lincoln Center), Cincinnati, Washington DC (at the Kennedy Center), Montreal, Banff, San Francisco, Silicon Valley (including Google and Facebook headquarters), as well as many cities in Europe. The Afiara String Quartet spent two years as the graduate resident string quartet at the Juilliard School in New York and have taught at the University of Alberta, Edmonton; Toronto’s Royal Conservatory of Music; Chamber Music of the Rockies; Indiana University’s Summer String Academy; and Canada’s Southern Ontario Chamber Music Institute. The group’s first CD, released in 2009, includes the Mendelssohn Octet recorded with the Alexander String Quartet. The Afiari Quartet’s official website is www.afiari.com; @afiarasq is the group’s lively, very personal Twitter feed.

TICKET INFORMATION

Tickets for Afiara String Quartet on Sunday, March 17 at 3:00 p.m. in Hertz Hall are \$42.00 and are subject to change. Tickets are available through the Ticket Office at Zellerbach Hall; at (510) 642-9988; at www.calperformances.org; and at the door. Half-price tickets are available for UC Berkeley students. UC faculty and staff, senior citizens, other students and UC Alumni Association members receive a \$5.00 discount (Special Events excluded). For select performances, Cal Performances offers UCB student, faculty and staff, senior, and community rush tickets. For more information about discounts, go to <http://calperformances.org/buy/discounts.php> or call (510) 642-9988.

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CALENDAR EDITORS, PLEASE NOTE:

CAL PERFORMANCES PRESENTS

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Sunday, March 17, at 3:00 p.m.

Hertz Hall, UC Berkeley Campus
Bancroft Way at Telegraph Ave., Berkeley

Chamber Music

Afiara String Quartet

Valerie Li, violin

Yuri Cho, violin

David Samuel, viola

Adrian Fung, cello

Program:

Haydn/String Quartet in F major, Op. 74, No. 2

Abigaña/String Quartet No. 2

Beethoven/String Quartet in C major, Op. 59, No. 3

Tickets: \$42.00, subject to change; they are available through the Cal Performances Ticket Office at Zellerbach Hall; at (510) 642-9988; at calperformances.org; and at the door.

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