



presents...

PIVOT Festival

ATTACCA QUARTET

Amy Schroeder | Violin
Domenic Salerni | Violin

Nathan Schram | Viola
Andrew Yee | Cello

ROOMFUL OF TEETH

Cameron Beauchamp | Artistic Director

Estelí Gomez
Jodie Landau
Virginia Kelsey

Steven Bradshaw
Caroline Shaw
Cameron Beauchamp

Martha Cluver
Thann Scoggin

GABRIEL KAHANE | Voice, Piano, Electric Guitar

Wednesday, January 24, 2024 | 7:30pm *Attacca Quartet*

Thursday, January 25, 2024 | 7:30pm *Roomful of Teeth*

Friday, January 26, 2024 | 7:30pm *Attacca Quartet/Roomful of Teeth*

Gabriel Kahane appears as special guest on all three programs

Herbst Theatre

ALL THREE PROGRAMS TO BE ANNOUNCED FROM THE STAGE

Launched in 2016, **PIVOT** is a San Francisco Performances series created for adventurous audiences interested in truly unique arts experiences, driven by a philosophy of innovation, creativity and artistic excellence that pushes the boundaries of the traditional concert experience.

For the ninth year of PIVOT, guest curator Gabriel Kahane and friends dig deep into music that asks enduring and enlightening questions about our ever-changing world and seeks the uplift of answers rooted in shared experience.

PIVOT: New Adventures in the Performing Arts was developed under a grant from:



Gabriel Kahane is represented by MKI Artists
70 S Winooski Ave., #318, Burlington, VT 05401 mkiartists.com

Attacca Quartet is represented by Polyarts, a HarrisonParrott Group company,
South Wing, Somerset House, The Strand, London, WC2R 1LA harrisonparrott.com

Roomful of Teeth is represented by Pink Noise Agency, a BIG Arts Group company, Brooklyn, NY bigartsgroup.com
Steinway Model D, Pro Piano, San Francisco



SAN FRANCISCO
PERFORMANCES

presents...

PIVOT FESTIVAL

Thursday, January 25, 2024 | 7:30pm

Herbst Theatre

Roomful of Teeth

Gabriel Kahane | Piano, Electric Guitar & Vocals

CAROLINE SHAW

The Isle

PETER SHIN

Bits torn from words

Movement 4

ANGÉLICA NEGRÓN

Math, the one which is sweet

INTERMISSION

GABRIEL KAHANE

Elevator Songs



ARTIST PROFILES

This year's PIVOT series marks Gabriel Kahane's fifth, sixth and seventh appearances for San Francisco Performances. He made his debut with us in March 2017.

Attacca Quartet makes its San Francisco Performances debut with this engagement.

Roomful of Teeth returns for the first time since its April 2017 SF Performances debut.

Gabriel Kahane is a musician and storyteller whose work increasingly exists at the intersection of art and social practice. Hailed as "one of the finest songwriters of the day" by *The New Yorker*, he is known to haunt basement rock clubs and august concert halls alike, where you'll likely find him in the green room, double-fisting coffee, and a book.

He has released five albums as a singer-songwriter including his most recent LP *Magnificent Bird* (Nonesuch Records), hailed by the *San Francisco Chronicle* as "a gorgeous, intimate collection of musical snapshots." As a composer, he has been commissioned by many of America's leading arts institutions, including the Brooklyn Academy of Music, Carnegie Hall, the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, and the Public Theater, which in 2012 presented his musical *February House*.

In 2019, Kahane was named the inaugural Creative Chair for the Oregon Symphony, following the premiere in Portland of his oratorio *emergency shelter intake form*, a work that explores inequality in America through the lens of housing issues. The piece was released as an album in March of 2020, and is scheduled for performance by half a dozen other American orchestras in the coming years.

In his 2023–24 season, Kahane embarks on a new collaborative commissioning project with the Attacca Quartet, Pekka Kuusisto, and Roomful of Teeth as part of a two-year initiative with San Francisco Performances, with additional performances scheduled around the U.S. and Europe. Season highlights include the European premiere of *emergency shelter intake form* in London with the BBC Concert Orchestra, duo recitals with Jeffrey Kahane, a conducting appearance with the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, and the New York premiere of his piano concerto *Heirloom* by Jeffrey Kahane and The Knights. Venues include UCLA's Nimoy Theater, Seattle's Meany Center, and New York's 92NY.

Kahane's discography also includes 2014's *The Ambassador*, which received an acclaimed staging at BAM, directed by Tony and Olivier Award-winner John Tiffany; an album of chamber music, *The Fic-*

tion Issue, with the string quartet Brooklyn Rider and vocalist/composer Shara Nova; a recording with The Knights of his orchestral song cycle *Crane Palimpsest*; as well as the original cast album for *February House*.

A frequent collaborator across a range of musical communities, Gabriel has worked with an array of artists including Paul Simon, Sufjan Stevens, Andrew Bird, Phoebe Bridgers, Caroline Shaw, and Chris Thile. After nearly two decades in Brooklyn, Kahane relocated with his family to Portland, Oregon, in March of 2020. Their freakishly self-possessed cat, Roscoe Greebletron Jones III, when not under investigation for securities fraud, continues his fruitless attempts to monetize his Instagram account.

Two-time Grammy-award winning **Attacca Quartet** are recognized and acclaimed as one of the most versatile and outstanding ensembles of the moment—a true quartet for modern times. Gliding through traditional classical repertoire through to electronic, video game music and contemporary collaborations, they are one of the world's most innovative and respected ensembles.

In 2021, the quartet released two albums that embody their redefinition of what a string quartet can be. The first Album, *Real Life*, featuring guest artists such as Tokimonsta, Daedalus, and Anne Müller, was followed up by *Of all Joys*, which features works from Phillip Glass, Arvo Pärt, and music of the Renaissance period. Passionate advocates of contemporary repertoire, the quartet are dedicated to presenting and recording new works. Their 2019 release *Orange*, in collaboration with Caroline Shaw, saw them win the 2020 Grammy Award for Best Chamber Music/Small Ensemble Performance, with their





ARTIST STATEMENT

As the performing arts rebound following the gut punch of the global pandemic, it has become a truism to suggest that we cherish live performance now more than ever. As artists, we are grateful for the energy we derive from audiences, and vice versa. All of us, it seems, are more finely attuned to the necessary, numinous exchange between maker and receiver, each alive to his need for the other. But more than that, for those of us whose livelihood is art-making, there is a newfound awareness of the communion we experience in the rehearsal room, and on stage, among our colleagues. Indeed, the pandemic has underlined the extent to which music-making is a social act.

When Melanie Smith invited me, in July of 2021, to dream up a series of collaborations for this festival, my mind gravitated toward potential co-conspirators who are not only great artists, but great people: folks with whom, to borrow a formulation from political pollsters, “I’d like to have a beer with.” The 12 individuals who comprise Roomful of Teeth and Attacca Quartet are all thoughtful, funny, considerate, strange, and inspiring people. It has been a supreme pleasure getting to know them better through the process of writing new works for each ensemble, works that you’ll hear at the PIVOT Festival.

It’s my hope that, through an array of music spanning from the seventeenth century (François Couperin) to the twenty-first (Caroline Shaw), you’ll leave these concerts not only enriched by a cosmos of sound, but with a feeling for the humanity of this extraordinary cadre of artists, and with a sense that a community—of which artists and audience alike are members—will have sprung up within the walls of the Herbst Theatre.

—Gabriel Kahane

follow-up album *Evergreen* winning the 2023 award in the same category. The quartet continue to perform in the world’s best venues and festivals.

Recent highlights include Lincoln Center’s White Light Festival and Miller Theatre, Carnegie Hall, Phillips Collection, Chamber Music Detroit, Chamber Music Austin, and Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum in Boston as well as Ojai Festival, BRIC Arts, and Big Ears Festival. Outside of the US, performances include Kings Place and in Oslo at the Vertavo Haydn Festival as well as performances at Gothenburg Konserthus, MITO Settembre Festival in Italy, Sociedad Filarmónica de Bilbao, Strijkkwartet Biënnale Amsterdam, Strings of Autumn Festival Prague, Thüringer Bachwochen, Sala São Paulo in Brazil, Fundación Beethoven in Chile, National Theatre of Panama, and Teatro Mayor in Bogota.

The founding members of the Attacca Quartet met while all studying at the Juilliard School in the early 2000s and they made their professional debut at the Carnegie Hall in 2003. Other accolades include First Prize at the 7th Osaka International Chamber Music Competition, the Top Prize and Listeners’ Choice award winners for the Melbourne International Chamber Music Competition, and Grand Prize Winners of the 60th annual Coleman Chamber Ensemble Competition.

The Attacca Quartet has engaged in extensive educational and community outreach projects, serving as guest artists and teaching fellows at the Lincoln Center Institute, University of Texas, Juilliard School, the Boston University Tanglewood Institute and Bravo! Vail Valley among

others. They are expert programmers and communicators, and beautifully mix existing works with those by living composers.

Roomful of Teeth is a Grammy-winning vocal band dedicated to reimagining the expressive potential of the human voice. By engaging collaboratively with artists, thinkers, and community leaders from around the world, the group seeks to uplift and amplify voices old and new while creating and performing meaningful and adventurous music.

Founded in 2009 by Brad Wells, the band was incubated at the Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art (MASS MoCA) in North Adams, Massachusetts, where members studied with some of the world’s most extraordinary singers and teachers. Through experimentation, exploration, and plenty of failures, the group learned that the boundaries of the human voice are never what they seem, that rules can be bent, even broken, and perhaps they should be.

Through their unique collaborative process, Roomful of Teeth has worked with many of today’s most compelling musical creators to build a significant and continuously growing repertoire. They have collaborated with a wide range of artists and ensembles spanning genres and art forms.

As the world rapidly changes, Roomful of Teeth is cultivating deeper relationships with technology, continuing to explore and expand the artistic reach of the human voice. They are excited about new collaborative projects focused on stories of place, home, and community in diverse environments around the world. They explore, learn, and collaborate with passionate curiosity, contagious enthusiasm, and deep gratitude.

Prologue

To be honest, this hotel is kind of creepy
The ice machine is speaking in tongues
Aggressively cheerful cooking shows haunt the tv
We can't find sleep in this iron lung

And the woman next door she is in mourning
And the couple upstairs, well, good for them
We shuffle onto the window, storm clouds are forming
And the streets are filled with wild-eyed men

We are longing for some familiar city
Toronto, Milwaukee, LA
But the weatherman he is whispering a certain elegy
You won't be traveling today...

Room 302: Newborn Plague

Driving through Utah
Day after Christmas
In the first months of
The newborn plague

He puts on a record
I ask what is this
He says "I guess it's
just how I've always prayed"

Three hours on a two lane road
Nowhere to turn nowhere to go
But the sky the sky the sky the sky the sky

He does the night shift
Driving by steep cliffs
Til the pink light and
Copper hills, a blur

Tail lights and morning stars
I don't know where we are
Don't see another car
Are we the last living lovers
On the earth?

Lobby is quiet
Covered in dead flowers
And the Hazmat-suited man
hands us a key
The lock's like a gunshot

Turn on the shower
Make it wild, make it burn,
Make it scream.

Room 813: St. Vincent Hotel

Rocks glass and cordless, the drawer with a bible, digital clock,
But not one ballpoint pen.
Well, hey, this isn't the first time I've done it,
Making a map of sorrow in my head.

God bless the Sisters at St. Vincents
Who sing and minister to our wounds.

Flew through the night with my eyes to the window
Watching the winter sky grow workbook blue
Wondering who else might have died in the interim
And burrowed into the earth or maybe the moon

God bless the Sisters at St. Vincents
Who sing and minister to our wounds.

We pay respects, dry our eyes, and apply our
Make-up to face the night, hey driver, drive
Back down on Christopher, dreams of a future
Where all of the boys we've lost come back to life.

Room 2232: Put It In May Valise

Spoken:

Hi guys! Welcome to another episode
Of the only travel tips podcast you need,
Put It In... My Valise, Hey-o!!!

Today, I'm recording
In a deluxe king room
At the Doubletree in Denton, TX
A few miles off of 77, in the green zone.
Solid mini-bar, good thread count,
Can't complain.

Okay, friends of the pod,
Today we're answering your questions,
Geoff from London, in the year 2011, asks,
"How has frequent travel changed your habits?"

Great question, Geoff.
Let's go.

Sung:

I used to be a chronic overpacker
My suitcase always made my lower back hurt
Now I only travel with a little rollaboard
Tube chapstick, black dress, laptop power cord.

Put it in my valise,
Put it in my black bag
Put in in my Dereon knapsack
Put it in my valise,
Only flying first class,
Burst past all the other riff raff..

Spoken:

Yes! I am feeling SO pumped, you guys.
Your energy is just magnificent.

Okay, next question.
Joan from Sacramento,
In the year 1967, asks:

“I’m going on a seven-day trip to Los Angeles.
What should I bring?”

OMG, so jelly, Joan!
We loooooove L.A.!
Let’s go to it. Girls?

Chanted:

Capsule wardrobe is the way,
Five, four, three, two, one, okay?
Don’t go emptying out that shelf
Cause everything goes with everything else!

Sung:

Five pairs of underwear and crew socks,
Four t-shirts, cardigans, or tank-tops,
Three caftans or dresses and two pairs of shoes,
And one floppy hat that you better not lose girl!

Put it in my valise,
Put it in my black bag
Put in in my Dereon knapsack
Put it in my valise,
Only flying first class,

Burst past all the other riff raff...

Spoken:

Okay, friends of the pod, we have time for one more question.
Let's get to that mail bag. Here we go.

Bill from Vermont writes:

"I increasingly experience climate grief
When I fly, do you have any tips?"

Bill — my God, do I hear you.
It is so important to connect
To your feelings, especially when
We're under the stress of travel.

And yes: climate grief.

Airplanes
can be
so cold,

And that forces us to *layer*,
And I'm sorry, but layering is—
It *can* be—
So basic.

But never fear, my little valise monsters,
When we just have to layer, we *can* make the best of it.

Sung:

Sometimes you're stuck in a cylindrical ice cube
And your tushy is literally freezing.
It's just too much and baby you don't know what to do
Do you suffer for fashion though your sneezing?

Spoken:

Yes! But only slightly!

Sung:

Start with a sexy pair of underwear,
Ride 'em low so folks don't even know you got 'em there,
Add some Lululemon leggings and a flannel skirt,
Plus Louis V cashmere, Burberry sweatshirt

Put it in my valise,
Put it in my black bag
Put in in my Cucinelli knapsack
Put it in my valise,
Only flying first class,
Burst past all the other riff raff..

Put it in my valise,
Put it in my black bag
Put in in my Dereon knapsack
Put it in my valise,
Only flying first class,
Burst past all the other riff raff..

The Rack of Time

I think maybe my father sang that melody to me
When I was even smaller than you are now.
Sound of the ocean. Sirens & muscle cars.
Here, in the fuzzy dark...

I have reached an age
Where my heart breaks
When I think of not being here
To navigate the rude curvature
Of the earth with you.

Rock you back to sleep
How you cling to me
With your fingers on my collarbone
While I flick through the day's tragedy
In the dark.

Light, and then your eyes,
And the rack of time
And you asking when we're going home,
The truth, my love, is I don't know,
But when we do we'll dance our way
To the elevator, and we'll walk
Into the sun.

Sophomore Record

Late afternoon, white knuckle tongue, beneath
The blue and cotton clouds, and sweating
Black balaclava'd soldiers laughing at the checkpoint
With their guns, directing

All of the traffic toward the center

Of town, the neon street where we'll load-in
Three hundred miles, six hours,
Poaching in California heat, the hills golden

I'm singing songs in secret rooms for those
Who dream of light and dust and freedom
Eyes on the back of our heads, never know
When someone we can't trust might walk in

It's said that every sophomore record
Is a diary of shows and motels,
You've got your bomb threats over lobby coffee,
Everybody knows, but oh well...

The strip mall suicides, the
Rental cars we pack like Tetris
Guitars and amps and backpacks

Follow the road
Follow the flame
Follow the figure
in the blue black distance

They take your home
They take your name
They take your picture
While you stand there, listless

The sound the lock makes as the key drops
In the slot oh the relief of not dying
Deadbolt the door and draw a bath
And throw your backpack on the bed, you're crying

Hot Tub

I love a hot tub.
I'm a connoisseur.
I slip into the water;
Chill the fuck out.

I'm happy to be in the hot tub,
Oblivious, tuned to a different frequency,
That is until I see a dead cockroach,
Floating next to me.

And then a brownish cloud,
Following the cockroach,
And I look up to find a man
Blasted off his tits,

Spilled whiskey in his midst.

He says, "hey man, I've got
Some girls coming over later,
Do you wanna party, bro?"

*He was so excited
That the hotel had a hot tub
It wasn't a particularly nice hotel
But it had a hot tub
And now he had a problem...*

So this guy asks this
Incredibly strange question,
Am I going to be around
Later on when some mysterious
Company of girls show up,
I politely decline, while making
Spur of the moment calculations.

*Don't get out abruptly,
Take a chill pill,
Spend the minimum
Socially acceptable time
Then get out of the hot tub
While making it seem normal.*

But everything I said to him
Seemed to make him angry
And then he was like
"Let me tell you something!"
And began speaking loudly
About his military tours
And said that his wife
Had left him for the postman.

He grows increasingly agitated
I leap out of the hot tub, hurrying
And he's like... "you never saw me.
I was never here."

Not Even the Dead Will Be Safe

Man alive in the dead of night
A wolf within the headboard,
Your mind

No relief, a circuit of grief
Fused around your ribcage,
A wreath at yuletide

Not even the dead will be safe
At this banquet
Where nobody knows what to celebrate
But anger

Saw a child look you in the eye
You were only following orders,
Like me

Bright flash and and fire
Blood bank, chicken wire
Not a cloud on the horizon line
Just blue for miles
And miles to the sea...

Not even the dead will be safe
At this banquet
Where nobody knows what to celebrate
But anger

The brass bands blaring
Wandering with open mouths,
gleaming fangs tearing

Three hours to pace,
The car, the plane, the base, your heart
A black boot, rotting fruit,
Your dog tags in the rain.

Memory Burn

In this hotel bar
Bottles backlit like movies stars
Slide the napkin out from under my gin
Write an account of everything
We couldn't fit into the car.

The antique lime green cabinet
It seemed we'd always had
With the crystal rocks glass

We stole by accident
On the night we met

My mother's battered upright
At midnight she would play
Her Chopin just the same as it was in her heyday
Though she didn't remember our names

Does anyone ever learn
The temperature where memory will burn?

The old map of the subway
We bought for our first flat
The only art we had, it followed us
All over town, and then across the country

And in the midst of clenched-fist arguments
The map became the face
Of the life that we gave back

And if next week we should return to it
To see what all remains,
Will our love be mixed with ash?

Does anyone ever learn
The temperature where memory will burn?

Six floors up the hotel,
Where the boys and David sleep
A fragile sideways peace,
The couch and the cot on the floor,

In a large, cream-colored folder
By the lamp that's to the left
Atop the wooden desk
Are the papers from the lawyer

The Elevator Operator

As long as I can remember, I have lived in this elevator,
Traveling from floor to floor to floor to floor.
Witnessing birth, death, fistfights, suicide,
Heartbreak, revelations, the recitation of offertories,
The godhead skipping off to the rooftop bar,

Philosophers fingering fistfuls of morphine
To snuff out their lives on the Franco-Spanish border,
California novelists hauling Olivetti typewriters
Half their size to the thirteenth floor

To record the progression of a breakdown
That began on the balcony of a room that looked
Over the blue of the The Baltic Sea, and from whose waves
They could dictate all varieties of wonder and grief and ecstasy,

The construction of rumors around an airplane that had ripped through
The ribcage of black magic in Lower Manhattan,
The way those rumors hardened
Into fact as details slowly were filled in,

Bloodshed, bloodletting, blood root, blood sport,
Neighbors maiming neighbors in an endless war,
I believe that God is love, and love is peace,
Someone bring me a branch of an olive tree.

Bodies clawing their way into the car to cool themselves
To try to survive, attorneys in expensive suits
Headed to expansive suites to prepare for the trial of the century:
Greed versus life.

I'm speaking of the 23rd century, the 27th century,
Ehe end of days, for which I vaguely prepare
And when it comes, this elevator will be consumed,
Gilded mirrors and iron will twist in flames,
All that is solid will melt into air.