

SPOLETO FESTIVAL USA

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Note: Images are available for download from our [media photo gallery](#).

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Spoletto Festival USA Annual Auction to feature live music by McKenzie Eddy and Elliot Smith for an elegant evening to benefit the Spoletto Festival USA Orchestra

Friday, February 24, 6:30pm | The Cedar Room at the Cigar Factory, 701 East Bay St.

February 7, 2017 (CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA)— Spoletto Festival USA's 39th Annual Auction will take place on Friday, February 24, in The Cedar Room at the Cigar Factory to support the Spoletto Festival USA Orchestra. The evening begins with a cocktail reception, before guests are invited to enjoy a seated dinner, live auction, and an onstage orchestra audition. Charleston-based singer/songwriter McKenzie Eddy's soulful vocals with keyboardist Elliot Smith will provide an elegant backdrop for the affair. Event tickets are available online at spolettoauction.com or by calling 843.720.1114. Tickets are \$225 per person, or \$3,000 for a table of 10. The dress code is cocktail attire and all tickets include complimentary valet parking.

The Annual Auction benefits the Spoletto Festival USA Orchestra—one of the country's most prestigious ensembles for young musicians. Each year, Spoletto Festival USA Resident Conductor and Director of Orchestral Activities John Kennedy auditions hundreds of candidates and handpicks each artist to perform during the Festival's many operatic and orchestral programs. The 2017 Spoletto Festival USA Orchestra will be comprised of more than 80 musicians who will perform in a wide range of works, including Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin*, Vivaldi's *Farnace*, Mozart's Great Mass, Mahler's fourth symphony, and contemporary Icelandic composer Anna Thorsvaldottir's *Dreaming*, in addition to taking center stage during the special Spoletto Celebration Concert on May 30. Select musicians will also play during the US premiere

of Luca Francesconi's *Quartett* at the Memminger Auditorium and highlight the varied Music in Time series.

During the Annual Auction on February 24, John Kennedy will introduce violinist Alice Hong, a musical arts doctoral candidate at the University of Toronto and member of the 2016 Spoleto Festival USA Orchestra, who hopes to again join the Festival's distinguished ensemble.

"Spoleto Festival USA's Annual Auction is something my husband and I look forward to every year," says Auction Committee Chair Alicia Gregory. "It's a wonderful evening celebrating the Festival and the orchestra members. I love watching John Kennedy's audition; it's a treat to hear the musician's story and music. Each member brings such extraordinary talent and expertise to the Festival, and their enthusiasm is compelling."

Live auction items on February 24 include works from locally and nationally acclaimed visual artists, an exclusive dinner for 12 with award-winning chef Mike Lata, extravagant trips, as well as a post-Festival-performance meet-and-greet with bluegrass band Della Mae. Guests may also bid to sponsor individual members of the Spoleto Festival USA Orchestra for their residency during the 2017 season. In addition to the live auction, a silent auction will run online at spoletoauction.com from February 20 to March 5 that will feature exquisite Charleston vacations, dining experiences, and more.

Prior to the Annual Auction, a selection of the available artwork will be on display in the gallery of luxury home and design collective Fritz Porter (located in the Cigar Factory, 710 East Bay St.) beginning February 16. The public is welcome to join Spoleto Festival USA for a preview party from 6:00pm to 8:00pm on the 16th to highlight the pieces to be part of the live and silent auctions. The work will remain on view at Fritz Porter through February 24.

The 41st season of Spoleto Festival USA begins May 26 and runs through June 11 in Charleston, South Carolina. Tickets for all performances are available now from spoletousa.org or by phone from the box office at 843.579.3100.

Annual Auction tickets and online auction bidding are available at spoletoauction.com.