FRY STREET QUARTET

Hailed as "a triumph of ensemble playing" (The New York Times), Fry Street Quartet has perfected a "blend of technical precision and scorching spontaneity" (Strad). Since securing the Millennium Grand Prize at the Fischoff National Chamber Music Competition, Fry Street Quartet has reached audiences from Carnegie Hall to Sarajevo and Jerusalem, exploring the medium of the string quartet and its life-affirming potential with "profound understanding, …depth of expression, and stunning technical astuteness" (Deseret Morning News).

Early Endeavors

Founded in Chicago in 1997 under the mentorship of Marc Johnson, cellist of the Vermeer Quartet, Fry Street received rave reviews as prizewinners at the Yellow Springs Competition and the Banff International String Quartet Competition. The quartet traveled to Israel to participate in the International Encounters Chamber Music Seminar in 2000, where they studied with Isaac Stern. He invited the quartet to the Isaac Stern Chamber Music Workshop in New York City and subsequently arranged for the quartet's Carnegie Hall debut in 2001.

The Quartet's early years were also defined by a three-year "Rural Residency" in Hickory, NC, sponsored by Chamber Music America and the National Endowment for the Arts. It was during this period that the quartet cut its teeth winning competitions, building a local audience for the first time, and becoming relevant to the community with music making. The FSQ is proud that the residency in Hickory continues to this day without national grant support.

Milestones

Fry Street Quartet began its international career as cultural ambassadors to the Balkan States, sponsored by Carnegie Hall and the U.S. Department of State. This tour featured the European debut of J. Mark Scearce's Y2K, commissioned for Fry Street with a grant from Meet the Composer. Subsequent international appearances have included the ProQuartet Academy at Pont-Royal, France, the Prague Chamber Festival and Trutnov Autumn Festival in the Czech Republic, Kulturvereinigung Oberschützen in Austria and three visits to the Oficina de Musica de Curitiba, Brazil.

A recent defining endeavor was the quartet's first complete Beethoven Quartet Cycle. "These works put players to the test in terms of interpretation, technique and musicianship. And the Fry Street Quartet made it look easy. They exhibited the highest standards of their craft both weekends. Solid technique, wonderful musicality and fabulous artistry combined to make the six concerts they played special. The Fry Street Quartet is without question to be reckoned with among today's quartets. It has arrived" (Deseret News). A sold-out event with pre-concert lectures by renowned scholar Robert Winter, the Cycle was presented at Utah State University over the course of two weeks, offering the audience a Beethoven-immersion experience.

"Equally at home in the classic repertoire of Mozart and Beethoven or contemporary music" (Palm Beach Daily News), the quartet created an innovative series called From Prodigy to Master, pairing early and late works of Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, and Mendelssohn with engaging modern compositions inspired by these masters of the quartet genre. Modern works included complete string quartets of Benjamin Britten, as well as a world premiere of st qt, dedicated to Fry Street by composer Thomas McFaul.
New Works, Ideas, and Collaborations

In response to the issues of global sustainability, the Fry Street Quartet, alongside physicist and educator Dr. Robert Davies, present Crossroads: an evocative performance blending music, information, imagery -- and a dash of theater. Crossroads is a deep-seated and visceral contemplation of the choices before us, the paths they forge, and the dramatically different landscapes to which they lead. A full-length concert version featuring a commissioned work by Laura Kaminsky alongside projections of paintings created for the project by artist Rebecca Allan will debut later this year.

The Fry Street Quartet enjoys a continuing residency with the Salt Lake City-based NOVA series. Projects include the Schoenberg Chamber Symphony under the direction of Thierry Fischer, and the premiere of a string quartet by Michael Ellison inspired by combining traditional Turkish and American themes.

March of 2013 will mark the premiere of yet another commissioned work involving the FSQ. This time for string quartet and chamber orchestra, this new work, by Brazilian composer Clarice Assad, will be performed with the San Jose Chamber Orchestra.

Teaching

In 2002, at the invitation of Utah State University and the Caine Foundation, the Fry Street Quartet arrived in Logan. The task was to build a performance-based approach to a string program in its infancy. In 2012, the landscape is much transformed. This marks the tenth season for what has become an extraordinary collaboration. What was once a very small and undeveloped area is now a vibrant center for string performance in the Intermountain Region; what was an emerging group of performers is now an established and internationally recognized ensemble; what was a collection of artistic departments is now a College in its own rite. The Fry Street Quartet is pleased to be the Resident Quartet and String Faculty at the Caine College of the Arts at Utah State University.

Cultivating authentic and creative artistic voices alongside collaborative skills through chamber music is central to the quartet's teaching. As guest faculty, the quartet has made repeated visits to Madeline Island Music Camp, the Oficina de Musica in Curitiba, Brazil, The Virginia Suzuki Institute, the David Einfeldt Chamber Music Seminar, and the Intermountain Suzuki String Institute.