

FRY STREET QUARTET

(main biography)

Hailed as “a triumph of ensemble playing” (*New York Times*), the Fry Street Quartet has perfected a “blend of technical precision and scorching spontaneity” (*Strad*). Since securing the Millennium Grand Prize at the Fischhoff National Chamber Music Competition in 2000, the 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*).

Fry Street Quartet began its international career in 2002 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 and Kulturvereinigung Oberschützen in Austria.

Over the years, Fry Street’s collaborations have included performances with pianists Misha Dichter, Wu Han and Joseph Kalichstein, and performances this season with Cleveland Quartet founding cellist Paul Katz and pianist Robert McDonald. Other memorable collaborations include performances with the Mendelssohn String Quartet at the 92nd St. Y, Donald Weilerstein at the New School in New York, and with pianists Jerome Lowenthal and Ursula Oppens, violinist Nurit Pacht, and soprano Toni Arnold as the quartet-in-residence with New York City’s Alliance Français.

FROM PRODIGY TO MASTER

Fry Street Quartet has held the position of faculty quartet-in-residence in the Caine School of the Arts at Utah State University in Logan, Utah since 2002. The quartet enjoys frequent visits to Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, as Market Square’s “Summermusic” artists-in-residence, as well as the Mozart Gemeinde chamber music series in Austria, where they have recently forged an exchange relationship between the University of Carinthia in Klagenfurt and Utah State University.

“Equally at home in the classic repertoire of Mozart and Beethoven or contemporary music” (*Palm Beach Daily News*), the quartet recently debuted its innovative “From Prodigy to Master” series, pairing early and late works of Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, and Mendelssohn with engaging modern compositions inspired by the featured “masters” of the quartet genre. Modern works include the lesser-known complete string quartets of Benjamin Britten, as well as a world premiere of “st qt,” dedicated to Fry Street by Thomas McFaul, a composer known throughout the world for his instantly-recognizable *Meow Mix* advertising jingle. This series provides a unique and intimate setting for concert-goers, with lectures, discussions, and audience involvement.

BEETHOVEN QUARTET CYCLE

An exciting milestone in the 2008-09 season was the quartet’s first complete Beethoven Quartet Cycle with pre-concert lectures by renowned scholar Robert Winter, presented at Utah State University. In collaboration with cutting-edge sound designers Ray Kimber and Graemme Brown, Fry Street Quartet’s fifth commercial recording presents an early and late quartet of Beethoven in audiophile recording quality that utilizes revolutionary IsoMike™ and SACD technology.

EARLY BEGINNINGS

Founded in Chicago in 1997 under the mentorship of Marc Johnson, cellist of the renowned 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.

“Fry Street” was the location of the quartet’s first rehearsal space in the Chicago neighborhood once ruled by Al Capone