

FRY STREET QUARTET

Russell Fallstad, viola

Hailed for his “glorious strength” and “elegance” (*New York Concert Review*), Russell Fallstad has blazed an impressive trail as violinist and violist since beginning Suzuki lessons in the Minnesota public school system. Founding violist of Fry Street Quartet, Russell has performed and recorded internationally in venues including Carnegie Hall, Aspen Music Festival and the Jerusalem Music Center and has performed with notable colleagues Pinchas Zukerman, Lynn Harrell, and Donald Weilerstein. As a principal player in the Civic Orchestra of Chicago, Russell performed under the batons of world-renowned conductors Daniel Barenboim, Pierre Boulez, and Sir Georg Solti with summer seasons in the Spoleto Festival Orchestra.

Russell’s eclectic musical interests have marked his trajectory as an artist. An active performer in the new music scene, Russell debuted many performances of new works at the Chicago Museum of Contemporary Art, the University of Chicago, and with the Cube Ensemble. He also enjoyed performing on period instruments and bows with renowned Baroque ensembles Apollo’s Fire and Ars Musica. Dedicated to stretching the confines of the classical genre, Russell performed as bass guitarist and singer-songwriter for ‘80s rock bands Fruity Dog and IMU, additionally performing in the Latin-jazz combo Macondo Stew.

Russell currently teaches on the string and chamber music faculty in the Caine School of the Arts at Utah State University and has previously held positions at DePaul University, Northwestern University, and North Carolina School of the Arts. A passionate advocate of music education for young children, he has been instrumental in the successful development of Utah State University’s String Academy pre-college program. Russell performs on a Carl Becker viola made in 1975 and a Simon bow made in 1862.