11-15-2016

Fry Street Quartet and Friends

Fry Street Quartet

Brant Bayless

Kathryn Eberle

Jason Hardink

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fry street quartet and friends

7:30 PM
NOKV 15, 2016
CAINE PERFORMANCE HALL, USU CAMPUS

Gabriela Magallanes
The Fry Street Quartet
with guest artists
Brant Bayless, viola; Kathryn Eberle, violin;
Jason Hardink, piano

Tuesday, November 15, 2016
7:30pm - Caine Performance Hall

Concertpiece for viola and piano
George Enescu (1881 - 1955)
Bradley Ottesen, viola; Jason Hardink, piano

Theme and Variations for violin and piano
Olivier Messiaen (1908 - 1992)
Rebecca McFaul, violin; Jason Hardink, piano

String Quartet in G minor, Op. 10
Claude Debussy (1862 - 1918)
Animé et très decide
Assez vif et bien rythmé
Andantino, doucement expressif
Très modéré - En animant peu à peu - Très mouvementé et avec passion

The Fry Street Quartet - Robert Waters, violin; Rebecca McFaul, violin; Bradley Ottesen, viola; Anne Francis Bayless, violoncello

Intermission

Piano Quartet in G minor, Op. 25
Johannes Brahms (1833 - 1897)
Allegro
Intermezzo: Allegro ma non troppo
Andante con moto
Rondo alla Zingarese: Presto

Kathryn Eberle, violin; Brant Bayless, viola; Anne Francis Bayless, violoncello; Jason Hardink, piano

The Fry Street Quartet holds the Endowed String Quartet Residency at Utah State University’s Caine College of the Arts. We gratefully acknowledge Dan C. and Manon Caine Russell for their generosity in establishing this endowment. The FSQ is represented by the management firm Jonathan Wentworth and Associates.
Concertpiece for Viola and Piano

GEORGE ENESCU (1881-1955)
Duration: 10 minutes.

George Enescu was known as one of the great musical prodigies of his era, and as a child he toured Europe as a performer on the violin and piano. As he matured, he gained international renown as a composer and conductor, and became a national hero of Romania - to the degree that his birthplace of Liveni was eventually renamed the village of “George Enescu.”

The viola began to emerge as a solo instrument around the turn of the 20th century, and composers of every nationality began to recognize its expressive potential. Enescu, who spent much of his career in Paris, wrote the Concertpiece in 1906 for the first viola professor of the Paris Conservatory, Theophile LaForge, as a piece to test the ability of his students. This lyrical, rhapsodic work looks back to the French romantic era, yet is innovative in pushing the boundaries of the instrument. Enescu himself was an accomplished violist, understood the instrument, and in the Concertpiece fully explores the tonal range and unique coloristic palette of the instrument.
- notes by Bradley Ottesen

Theme and Variations for Violin and Piano

OLIVIER MESSIAEN (1908-1992)
Duration: 10 minutes.

Olivier Messiaen married Claire Delbos in 1932, shortly after he was named organist at Sainte-Trinite. Delbos was a violinist and composer and, as a member of the new music society La Spirale, an important Parisian musician in her own right. The couple performed together often during the 1930s and, before long, began to compose works for one another as well. She wrote organ pieces for him and he created musical poems for her, but the first gift was meant specifically for their recitals. Theme and Variations was composed by Messiaen as a wedding present for Delbos in 1932 and they premiered it together during that same year. The conventional instrumentation and formal structure of the work set it apart from everything else in Messiaen’s catalogue, though commentators often have drawn generous comparisons to the Quartet for the End of Time. Regardless of where it now “fits” into his long and important list of contributions to the 20th century, Theme and Variations was an early success for Messiaen and it appears that he wrote another similar work for Delbos a year later. This latter effort was entitled Fantasie. Sadly, there is no sure indication that the two ever performed it. © Jeff Counts
String Quartet in G Minor, Op. 10
CLAUDE DEBUSSY (1862-1918)
Duration: 25 minutes in four movements.

The 1890s were a very important decade for Debussy. His inclusion into the Parisian artistic elite had, by then, exposed him to the greatest creative minds of his day and prepared him to take music fully into the “modern” world of the impressionist painters and symbolist writers. If the 1894 Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun was Debussy’s first great masterstroke in this regard, then the string quartet from one year before must be seen as a partial blueprint for the revolution. Since composers at their most formative moments often reach both backward and forward into time, there is much about the quartet that reads traditionally but the impulse toward Faun is also very obvious. The process of creating this music was not without difficulty for Debussy. He claimed that the last movement gave him particular trouble and told friend and original dedicatee Ernest Chausson that he was forced to start from scratch on it no less than three times. Paris didn’t love the quartet when it premiered in 1893 but Brussels raved about it a week later. Chausson, sadly, agreed with Paris and Debussy promised to write him another one. He never did, and we are left today with this one magnificent essay into the quartet form and the thrilling question of what the mature, post-Faun Debussy might have had to say on the matter. © Jeff Counts

Piano Quartet No. 1 in G Minor, Op. 25
JOHANNES BRAHMS (1833-1897)
Duration: 40 minutes in four movements.

Though Brahms was never in a hurry to tackle the symphony genre, it could be said that nearly everything he wrote in his early maturity was a glimpse into that inevitability. Certainly the Op. 25 and 26 piano quartets, both under construction in 1861, displayed a scale and gravity that predicted the symphonic giant Brahms would someday become. Chamber music, by the mid to late 19th century, was becoming a “concert” rather than “salon” experience and, by technical necessity, also less of an amateur endeavor. The challenging G Minor quartet marks a period in Brahms’ life when he was just beginning to transition from his life in Hamburg to a professional foothold in Vienna. His relationship with Clara Schumann, always a complex web of platonic emotions, continued to be very strong after Robert’s death. There is likely much of this complicated personal scenario in the grand ambitions of the G Minor piano quartet. Given the amazing balance Brahms struck between the superficially diverse characteristics of the piano and string instruments, you wouldn’t know that he always found the combination daunting as a composer. One thing he never found difficult, however, was the seamless integration of important Central European cultural influences into his music, and the Gypsy rondo finale of the Op. 25 quartet is among the most famous of his many notable examples. © Jeff Counts
ABOUT THE CREATIVE TEAM

FRY STREET QUARTET - The remarkable Fry Street Quartet - hailed as “a triumph of ensemble playing” by the New York Times - is a multi-faceted ensemble taking chamber music in new directions. Touring music of the masters as well as exciting original works from visionary composers of our time, the Fry Street Quartet has perfected a “blend of technical precision and scorching spontaneity” (Strad). Since securing the Grand Prize at the Fischoff National Chamber Music Competition, the quartet has reached audiences from Carnegie Hall to London, and Sarajevo to 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).

Reaching in new directions, The Fry Street Quartet has commissioned and toured new works by a wide range of composers. Pandemonium by Brazilian composer Clarice Assad received its Fry Street premiere with the San Jose Chamber Orchestra; Michael Ellison’s Fiddlin’ was co-commissioned by the Arizona Friends of Chamber Music Series and the Salt Lake City based NOVA series; Laura Kaminsky’s Rising Tide was commissioned especially for the quartet’s global sustainability initiative, The Crossroads Project, toured with projections of paintings created for the project by artist Rebecca Allan, talks by physicist Dr. Robert Davies and photographs by acclaimed environmental photographer Garth Lenz. The quartet’s 2014-2015 season included its premiere of Kaminsky’s new chamber opera, As One with soprano Sasha Cooke and baritone Kelly Markgraf at the Brooklyn Academy of Music, as well as a new work by Libby Larsen entitled emergence, which anchors the Crossroads Project’s Second Chapter, Crossroads: Emergence for string quartet, film, and actor.

For a full biography of the FSQ and its members, schedule of upcoming events and project descriptions, please visit frystreetquartet.com

BRANT BAYLESS - Brant Bayless is principal violist of the Utah Symphony. During the summer months he regularly performs at the Grand Teton Music Festival, and has appeared as principal violist with the Mainly Mozart Festival, Bellingham Festival of Music, and Strings in the Mountains. Formerly a member of the Arcata Quartet, with which he appeared in venues such as Carnegie’s Weill Recital Hall, New York City’s Town Hall, and the famed Wigmore Hall in London, Brant continues to enjoy chamber music collaborations on the NOVA and Intermezzo series, has performed and taught at the Killington Festival and International Musical Arts Institute, and has been guest violist with the Muir and Fry Street String Quartets. He has performed as soloist with the Utah Symphony multiple times, most recently in a performance of the Mozart Sinfonia Concertante at the Deer Valley Music Festival in July 2016.
KATHRYN EBERLE - Violinist Kathryn Eberle is the associate concertmaster of the Utah Symphony. Previously, Ms. Eberle was a violinist with the St. Louis Symphony and served as Guest Concertmaster with the Richmond and Omaha Symphonies. She served extensively as Concertmaster of the Juilliard Orchestra, including the ensemble's tour of China as well as performances in Avery Fisher, Alice Tully, and Carnegie Halls. Ms. Eberle made her solo subscription series debut with the Utah Symphony in April 2014 performing Leonard Bernstein's Serenade. The Salt Lake Tribune described her performance as "marrying unimpeachable technical skill with a persuasive and perceptive voice." Other solo performances include appearances with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the Louisville Orchestra, the Nashville Symphony, the National Academy Orchestra of Canada, and the Bahia Symphony in Brazil.

JASON HARDINK - Pianist Jason Hardink is the artistic director of the NOVA Chamber Music Series and principal symphony keyboard of the Utah Symphony. His performances include a wide-ranging repertoire of music by living composers and works of the historical canon. Mr. Hardink's leadership of the NOVA Chamber Music Series has created a dynamic environment through which audience and performers experience music both new and old; the 2016.17 season of NOVA includes important Utah and world premieres of works by Simon Holt, John Costa, Eric Wubbells, William Bolcom, and Michael Hersch. Hardink holds a DMA from Rice University, where he studied with Brian Connelly; his Doctoral thesis "Messiaen and Plainchant" explores the varying levels of influence that Gregorian chant exerted on the music of Olivier Messiaen.