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Triumph Over Tragedy

The Fry Street Quartet

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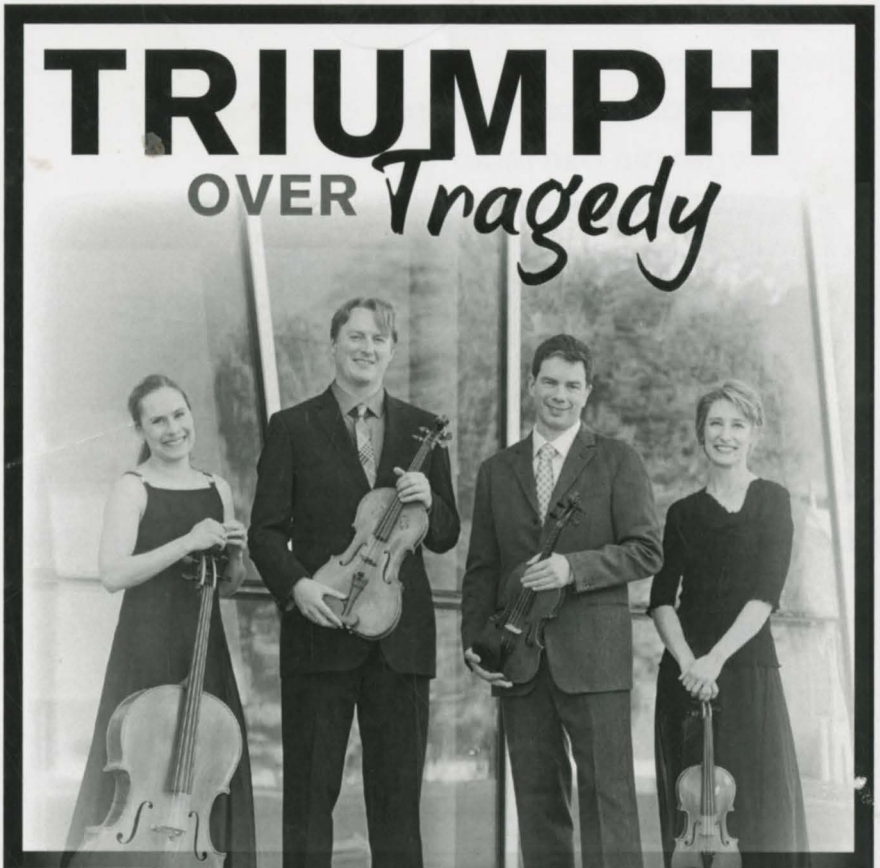
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FRY STREET QUARTET

— SEPTEMBER 19, 7:30 PM
CAINE PERFORMANCE HALL, USU CAMPUS

TRIUMPH OVER *Tragedy*



frystreetquartet

The Fry Street Quartet

Robert Waters, violin; Rebecca McFaul, violin;
Bradley Ottesen, viola; Anne Francis Bayless, violoncello

Tuesday, September 19, 2017
7:30pm - Caine Performance Hall

String Quartet in A minor, Op. 132

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)

Assai sostenuto - Allegro
Allegro ma non tanto
Molto Adagio; Andante
Alla Marcia, assai vivace
Allegro appassionato; Presto

Intermission

String Quartet no. 1

Béla Bartók (1881-1945)

Lento
Allegretto
Allegro vivace

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.

String Quartet No. 15 in A Minor, op. 132

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN (1770-1827)

Duration: 44 minutes in five movements.

All five (or six if you include the Grosse Fuge) of Beethoven's "late" string quartets were written within two years of the 9th Symphony and like that orchestral landmark, they enjoy a holy status today in their respective genre. The first three (op. 127, op. 132 and op. 130 chronologically) were written in 1825-26 on a commission from the Russian Prince Nikolai Golitzin. The second of the set (though third to be published) was No. 15. Its completion was delayed by a serious bout of illness for Beethoven. Accordingly, the occasional nickname of the work is "*Heiliger Dankegesang*" ("Hymn of thanksgiving") and it comes from a longer phrase Beethoven applied to the quartet's central movement, which translates as "Hymn of thanksgiving to the divinity, from a convalescent, in the Lydian mode." Aside from the technical musical terminology at the end, these words paint the picture of a man grateful to be recovered at last from his sickness. As emotional counterpoint, there are musical moments in the quartet that display suffering akin to what Beethoven must have felt while so terribly ill, and his respect for his own mortality seems to watch over the entire score. The work was premiered in November of 1825 by the Schuppanzigh Quartet. © Jeff Counts

String Quartet No. 1

BELA BARTOK (1881-1945)

Duration: 29 minutes in three movements.

Bartok's 1st String Quartet has the somewhat dubious distinction of being the tamest member of a famously adventurous set of pieces. It's not unlike being called the world's most gentle boxer, and the fundamental content of Quartet No. 1 is not well-served by such an equivocation. Bartok wrote the work in 1909, after a period of folk study in his own homeland that would forever change the way other Europeans thought of Hungarian music. He and Kodaly knew the sounds they sought, the authentic ones, were in the countryside, not in Budapest, so they set out in the earliest years of the 20th century to collect the music of their people on wax cylinders. Bartok proved with his works from the period that the established musical notions of Hungary provided by Brahms and also Liszt, though certainly thrilling, were only loosely referential at best. In terms of harmony, rhythmic structure, and a true sense of national place (as opposed to simple exoticism, however respectful), he was breaking truer ground and newer ground. There are indeed early references to Beethoven and Wagner in Quartet No. 1 which, in another light, must have seemed like traditionalism, but they were actually subtle acknowledgments of what was about to be left behind. It is also interesting to note that Bartok meant the work as a romantic tribute to violinist Stefi Geyer. He had already written her a violin concerto a few years prior but, as it was then, his love for her went unreturned. No matter. His love for Hungary, displayed so genuinely in the folk influence of the 1st String Quartet, was repaid ten-fold. © 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 Fischhoff 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 Markgraff 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