



Introduction to the Amernet String Quartet. 6:18 min.

# Musically Speaking: The Amernet String Quartet

By Elman + Skye + Cheek

Franz Felkl, Violin

Michael Klotz, Viola

Misha Vitenson, Violin

Jason Calloway, Cello

**P**raised for their “intelligence” and “immensely satisfying” playing by the New York Times, the Amernet String Quartet has garnered recognition as one of today’s exceptional string quartets. Their sound has been called “complex” but with an “old world flavor.” The Strad magazine described the Amernet as “...a group of exceptional technical ability.”

The Amernet String Quarter is the Ensemble-in-Residence at Florida International University in Miami.

The Amernet’s performance schedule has taken the quartet across the Americas and to Asia, Europe, and the Middle East. They have collaborated with many of today’s most prominent artists and ensembles including the Tokyo and Ying quartets as well as Shmuel Ashkenasi, Robert deMaine, Roberto Diaz, Gary Hoffman, Ida Kavafian, Anthony McGill, Sherrill Milnes, Michael Tree. Internationally, the quartet has appeared at major festivals around the world, including Cervantino, San Miguel de Allende, Aviv (Israel), and Colima (Mexico), while in Germany a critic commented that their playing was “fascinating, with flawless intonation, extraordinary beauty of sound, virtuosic brilliance and homogeneity of ensemble.” (Nürnberger Nachrichten). The Amernet’s U.S. engagements have included the Kennedy Center, the Tilles Center, Caramoor, Sunday Afternoons of Music in Miami, Ensemble Music Society, the Great Lakes Festival, Newport, Friends of Chamber Music in Arizona and Friends of Chamber Music in Syracuse, LPR in New York City, Chamber Music Society of Louisville, Music on the Edge in Pittsburgh, the University of Maine – Collins Center, and Market Square Concerts. The Amernet has also appeared as quartet soloist with the Cincinnati Symphony and Alan Gilbert. Earlier in their career, the Amernet won the gold medal at the Tokyo International Music Competition before being named first prize winners of the prestigious Banff International String Quartet Competition.

Prior to their current position at Florida International University, the Amernet held posts as Corbett String Quartet-in-Residence at Northern Kentucky University and at the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music. Additionally, the ensemble served as the Ernst Stiefel Quartet-in-Residence at the Caramoor Center for the Arts.

The Amernet has always been committed to the music of our time and has commissioned works from many of today’s leading composers, working closely with artists including Anthony Brandt, Guillermo Carbo, John Corigliano, Orlando Garcia, John Harbison, Toshi Ichimyanagi, Bernard Rands, Gerhard Samuel, Morton Subotnick, Dmitri Tymoczko, and Chinary Ung. Additionally, the group has made many recordings, among which are the Concerto for Clarinet, Oboe, String Quartet and Bass by John Harbison with Sara Lambert Bloom and Charles Neidich as soloists; The Butterflies Began to Sing, a work for string quartet, bass, MIDI keyboard and computer by Morton Subotnick; an album of quartets by the American composer Stephen Dankner; the string quartet and double bass quintet of Dmitri Tymoczko; and a pairing of the Debussy String Quartet and the Chausson Concert for Piano, Violin, and String Quartet, with James Tocco and Yehonatan Ariel. In addition, the Amernet is keen on exploring collaborative projects and has recently appeared with Cantor Netanel Hershtik, jazz pianist Steve Allee, José Garant Dance, and the Kruger Brothers. The Amernet actively advocates for neglected works of the past and aims to enliven the concert experience through its innovative programming.

The videos below are organized by topic and run between 30 seconds and 8 minutes. Click on any video. You must be connected to the Internet to view the videos.

**INSIGHT & INSPIRATION:**  
6:26 min.



*Was there a certain moment when you knew you wanted to be a musician?*

**OVERCOMES CHALLENGES TO SUCCEED:** 0:47 sec.



*What was it like growing up in Alaska and being removed from the centers of music?*

**INSIGHT & INSPIRATION:**  
0:42 sec.



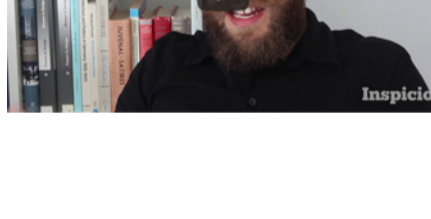
*What was it like playing for Joseph Primavera and the youth orchestra?*

**SELF CONFIDENCE:**  
1:39 min.



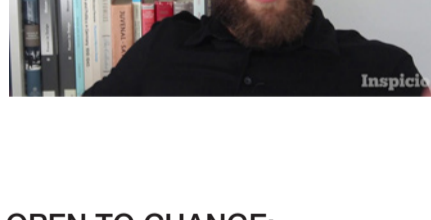
*Performing artists have a variety of motivations that provide stimulation — what are those factors for you when you are performing?*

**CRITICAL THINKING:**  
2:31 min.



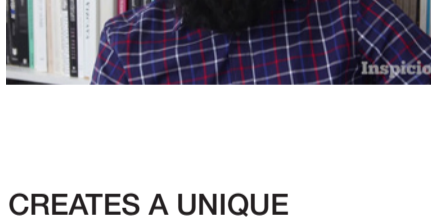
*When did you join the Amernet and what do you contribute to the ensemble?*

**CREATIVE FLEXIBILITY:**  
2:49 min.



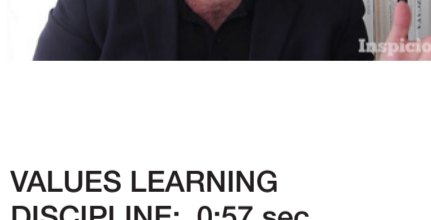
*What are your thoughts regarding the future of contemporary avant-garde music?*

**EXPOSURE TO BROAD INFLUENCES:** 1:49 min.



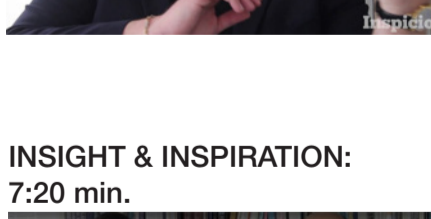
*When playing traditional classical music, do you feel boxed in, as contrasted with playing challenging new music?*

**OPEN TO CHANGE:**  
1:38 min.



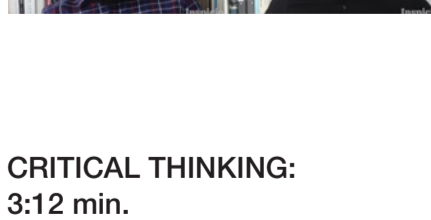
*What kind of technology do you use and how does it help you when playing in the Quartet?*

**CREATES A UNIQUE PERSONAL BRAND:** 2:02 min.



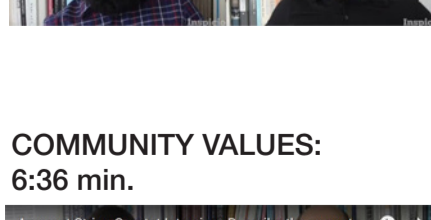
*What's it like to rehearse in an open environment like FIU's Miami Beach Urban Studios (MBUS)?*

**VALUES LEARNING DISCIPLINE:** 0:57 sec.



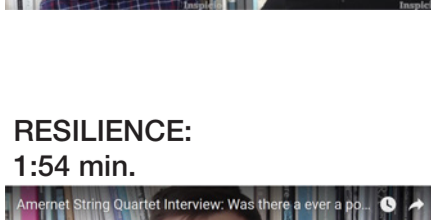
*What's your reaction to the instruments made on the 3-D printers at MBUS?*

**INSIGHT & INSPIRATION:**  
7:20 min.



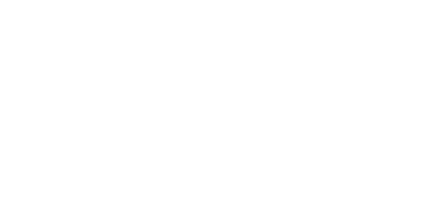
*Who was your biggest influence and why?*

**CRITICAL THINKING:**  
3:12 min.



*What are the qualifications for playing in a good quartet?*

**COMMUNITY VALUES:**  
6:36 min.



*Describe the current Miami classical music scene, and Amernet's role in helping Miami music advance to the next level.*

**RESILIENCE:**  
1:54 min.



*Was there a ever a point in your life when you considered not being a professional musician?*