

## Preview

### **Kent/Blossom Festival launches on June 26 with Miami Quartet, Spencer Myer & CD release**

by Daniel Hathaway



“It's bigger than ever, and we're really excited about it,” exclaimed Danna Sundet, who along with cellist Keith Robinson, is one of the co-artistic directors of the Kent/Blossom Festival. This year's festival officially begins on June 26 with a concert featuring the Miami String Quartet and pianist Spencer Myer in Ludwig Recital Hall on the Kent State University Campus. “We're releasing our first-ever Kent/Blossom CD at a gala party afterward,” Sundet said during a conference call. Robinson jumped in with more news. “We're also having our first Kulas Guest Artist, clarinetist David Shifrin, who used to play in The Cleveland Orchestra before he went on to fame and fortune with the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center.”

Those concerts are only two of the seventeen events Kent/Blossom will offer between now and July 27. There will be six performances by Cleveland Orchestra members and friends (who make up the faculty for the chamber music-oriented summer festival which began when the Blossom Music Center opened in 1968), and six concerts by students — three at the end of each of the two-week chamber music sessions. At the end of the festival following an orchestral week, the Kent/Blossom Chamber Orchestra will play Ravel's *La Valse* in a side-by-side concert with The Cleveland Orchestra on July 27 preceded by its own set under the baton of James Feddeck, who will lead the student ensemble in Beethoven's *Symphony No. 8* and Debussy's *Clair de lune*.

The four remaining events are new. German pianist Alexander Schimpf will play a solo recital on July 16 under the aegis of the Kent Piano Institute, which runs concurrently with Kent/Blossom and is headed up by Jerry Wong and Donna Lee. “It's their first presented event,” Robinson noted, “and will be ticketed through Kent/Blossom so people can save by buying a subscription.” A festival finale is planned for July 26, and for the first time, students will play free community concerts at the Hudson Library on Sundays, June 30 and July 14 at 2 pm.

Sundet and Robinson, who accepted the helm of Kent/Blossom just a few years back, participate both as administrators and musicians. Robinson plays cello in the Miami String Quartet and Sundet will perform on the faculty series. The two have fallen into an efficient routine, assisted this year by some helpful software. “We have forty-four stu-

dents coming, the bulk of them from CIM, but also from Juilliard, Curtis and abroad. We're now using a program called Decision Desk that started with some students at CIM and is an easy way to keep tabs on good players and helps us coordinate groups," Robinson said. "But otherwise, we just dive in and start swimming," Sundet added. Asked what they've learned from their experiences over the years, Sundet says "there's a solution to everything. Things happen all the time. Last summer we lost a few key players due to hand injuries at the last minute, but we plugged the holes and the people we found as replacements were fine and were thrilled to be there."

For more details about the Kent/Blossom Festival, including subscription and ticket information, visit the Festival's [website](#).

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