

Miami Quartet and Spencer Myer at Kent/Blossom Music Festival (July 5)

by Samantha Spaccasi



The audience at Ludwig Recital Hall received a treat on July 5 when pianist Spencer Myer and the Miami String Quartet deftly performed an enjoyable program for the second faculty recital of the Kent/Blossom Music Festival.

The Miami took to the stage first, beautifully performing of Mozart's *String Quartet No. 14 in G*. From the outset the group

created a joyous springtime atmosphere, playing the bouncy music with appropriate levity. The Quartet played like a well-oiled machine — tightly and with great blend, giving vivacity to the individual voices. Violinists Benny Kim and Cathy Meng Robinson communicated playfully, while cellist Keith Robinson interpreted his cascading passages with artistry. The Quartet played the third movement with a dreamy lushness without sounding timid, and violist Scott Lee showed off his smooth, liquid tone especially well. The fourth movement found Kim elegantly dancing with the melody, accompanied by furious playing from all members.

The ensemble changed the mood with Mendelssohn's *Quartet in E flat*, performing with emotional profundity and conveying senses of anxiety mixed with brief flashes of calm. Each member's robust playing made the group sound much louder than four musicians, though the violins occasionally sounded muddy. This was rectified in the third movement, in which the violist and cellist tempered their playing with vibrant subtlety, which allowed Kim and Meng Robinson to better showcase their individual voices and artistry. The piece was physically demanding for all musicians, especially Kim, who played the last passage of the fourth movement with excellent phrasing and intonation.

After intermission, Spencer Myer joined Kim, Lee, and Robinson for Brahms' *Piano*

Quartet in A. Myer's focused and expressive playing was a perfect match for his three colleagues. Lee and Myer blended especially well, with Lee's buttery tone accentuating the fullness of the pianist's phrasing. Myer kept the work moving, launching into bold explosions at the climax. In the third movement, Myer twirled with the melody, providing passion and color — a nice juxtaposition against the neatness of the strings. A fleeting moment of dubious intonation in the finale detracted little from Robinson's excellent playing. Although Myer isn't an official member, his performance Wednesday evening made it sound as if he were a bona fide Miami.

Published on ClevelandClassical.com July 11, 2017.

Click here for a printable copy of this article

[Return to the Front Page.](#)