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**August 9, 2019**



The Miró Quartet. From Left: Joshua Gindele, cello; John Largess, viola; William Fedkenheuer, violin; Daniel Ching, violin.

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**Miró Quartet lets its hair down**

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**Candid talk before La Jolla concerts**

*By*[*Garrett Harris*](https://www.sandiegoreader.com/staff/garrett-harris/)

According to their website, “The Miró [String] Quartet took its name and its inspiration from the Spanish artist Joan Miró, whose Surrealist works — with subject matter drawn from the realm of memory, dreams, and imaginative fantasy — are some of the most groundbreaking, influential, and admired of the 20th century.”

The Miró is appearing for two concerts at the La Jolla Music Society Summerfest. Their concert on Saturday, August 10, is an all-Beethoven concert featuring an early, middle, and late string quartet. This concert is a part of the Summerfest Beethoven Complete String Quartets cycle which will conclude during the 2020 Summerfest. Their second concert features music by contemporary composers on Sunday, August 11. Both concerts are at the Conrad Prebys Performing Arts Center in La Jolla.

I was able to sit down and get to know the members of the quartet on Tuesday, August 6. You can hear the entire conversation [here](https://youtu.be/90TXbHTLnPM).”

**Miro Quartet in conversation**

[](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=90TXbHTLnPM&feature=youtu.be)

Garrett Harris asks the questions

The first topic we discussed was the art of listening. Violist John Largess explained, “Often in our rehearsals we will discuss different ways of listening, or different parts—of the four—to make the leader or priority. It’s not always the tune. We end up discovering a lot about the music that way. We certainly don’t do it one way all the time. We play our pieces quite often. We’ll tour a piece over the season and play it tens of times. For us to discover it new on stage every time is great. So some of our more interesting experiences of listening happen during concerts when we let go of what we rehearsed and discover something spontaneous and new.”

Is it possible to plan such moments? John continued, “No. But you can plan to be open to it.”

Violinist Daniel Ching went on to explain, “The more organized we are during rehearsal allows us to be more free on stage.”

Near the end of the conversation I asked each member of the quartet to choose one word which currently defines their relationship to music.

Violinist William Fedkenheuer: “Grateful. Currently I can see how much music has given not just to my own life but to other lives which circle out from my experience such as audiences, colleagues on stage, students, and young quartets, I’m so grateful for the way it has been moved through the world that I am in.”

Violinist Daniel Ching: “Curious, because we are getting to that place in our career where we are playing Beethoven Quartets for the umpteenth time. However, the four of us have found a way to stay curious about the music. We’re also remain curious about the things we haven’t played.“

Cellist Joshua Gindele: “He stole mine. That’s exactly the word I was thinking of. Curious, for those very reasons.”

Violist John Largess: “Joy. We just rehearsed Beethoven Opus 59 No. 2 and there’s a lot of suffering in that but there’s a joy in bringing that emotion out. I enjoy making people in the audience suffer! It’s such an enjoyment to make something happen emotionally—something that is so much more than the notes on the page.”