

Week 2 is...

Collaboration and family are the buzzwords for the second week of the Rockport Chamber Music Festival. Family pairings abound: Thursday's sonata recital features pianist Heng-Jin Park and cellist Jonah Ellsworth, the mother/son combination that also forms two-thirds of the Boston Trio. On Friday and Sunday, the Jupiter String Quartet takes the stage, not only featuring the sister combination of Megan (violin) and Liz Freivogel (viola), but Daniel McDonough (cellist, and husband of Meg). Jupiter shares the stage on Friday with the Jasper String Quartet, whose first violin J Freivogel is brother of Megan and Liz. J's wife Rachel occupies Jasper's cello chair.

By Keith Powers / Correspondent

Posted Jun 7, 2017 at 11:13 PM

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If you go...

WHAT: Jupiter String Quartet, part of Rockport Chamber Music Festival

WHERE: Shalin Liu Performance Center, 37 Main St., Rockport

WHEN: Friday, June 9, 8 p.m. and Sunday, June 11, 5 p.m.

TICKETS: \$47-\$69. Visit www.rockportmusic.org or call 978-546-7391.

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Toss in a visit from clarinetist Richard Stoltzman for Sunday's concert, and the weekend gets packed with intimate relationships and maybe even some family feuds.

The music for both concerts is rich, at times challenging, and potentially quite rewarding — things probably everyone considers a family to be, at one time or another.

Friday's concert sees Jasper playing one of Haydn's final quartets (Op. 77, no. 2), Jupiter performing Ligeti's "Métamorphoses Nocturnes," and the quartets joining together for the great Mendelssohn octet.

On Sunday, Jupiter shares the stage with the eminent Stoltzman, making one of his increasingly rare classical music appearances (his jazz playing has dominated in recent years). After Jupiter performs Beethoven's "Harp" quartet and Osvaldo Golijov's "Yiddishbbuk," Stoltzman joins them for Mozart's A major quintet.

It's quite a collection of music, packed into two performances.

"We thought the Mendelssohn was the perfect piece for David's last season," says Jupiter's first violinist Nelson Lee, referring to outgoing RCMF artistic director David Deveau. Deveau has brought Jupiter back to the festival many times over the course of the group's 15 seasons together.

"We wanted to share the bill," Lee says; "the fact that we have these family connections seems appropriate to the occasion."

Lee says the Golijov's "Yiddishbbuk" — which is gradually creeping into the "must-play" repertory for contemporary string quartets, "is vivid and colorful. We've begun playing it this year, and it's exciting and appealing to audiences." ("Yiddishbbuk" was written for the St. Lawrence String Quartet in 1992, whose second violinist at the time was incoming RCMF artistic director Barry Shiffman.)

On the surface, Ligeti's "Métamorphoses" — his first quartet — might be intimidating. Written in multiple short, intense sections — reminiscent somewhat of Bartok's "cells" — the work unfolds dramatically over the course of some 20 minutes.

"We've been playing it a lot lately," Lee says. "There's something about the structure that really speaks to people. I'm not sure what it is — some of the movements only last a minute or two — but audiences really respond."

Pianist Russell Sherman also gives a rare performance this weekend, on Saturday evening, an all-Beethoven program featuring three of the late sonatas.

For complete information and tickets visit www.rockportmusic.org or call 978-546-7391.

Keith Powers covers music and the arts for GateHouse Media and WBUR's ARTery. Follow [@PowersKeith](https://twitter.com/PowersKeith); email to keithmichaelpowers@gmail.com

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