

# Carpe Diem String Quartet Collaborations

Original works for Mandolin and string quartet, blending Folk, Americana, and Classical. Available for concerts, workshops and residencies. Fee range, contact Aileen Rohwer, GLPAA 734.665.4029 [glpaadirector@greatlakespaa.org](mailto:glpaadirector@greatlakespaa.org)

The Carpe Diem String Quartet and mandolinist Jeff Midkiff appeared at the Vinton War Memorial...it (the quintet) falls loosely into four movements, and effectively allows each player to shine.

The audience's enthusiastic response to the Quintet prompted an encore called "Run for Your Life." Here, the down-home style was expertly finessed, and provided an appropriate ending to the concert. – *The Roanoke Times*

*Jeff Midkiff:*

## MUSIC for MANDOLIN and STRING QUARTET

"Wow, really terrific— damned impressive!!  
Gorgeous middle movement. Bravo Jeff, a  
real accomplishment both pragmatically  
and artistically." *David Royko, Chicago  
Tribune*



QUINTET NO. 1 "FROM THE BLUE RIDGE"

QUINTET NO. 2 "GYPSY"

"RUN FOR YOUR LIFE"

JEFF MIDKIFF, MANDOLIN

CARPE DIEM

STRING QUARTET



## About Jeff Midkiff

A mandolinist, fiddler, classical clarinetist and composer, Jeff Midkiff is an outstanding musician who feels comfortable in more than one setting—musically and personally. “I feel at home in the Blue Ridge Mountains playing fiddle tunes,” Jeff Midkiff says, “but then again, I feel at home in a professional orchestra as well.” Jeff grew up where bluegrass and traditional string band music thrived. Given his first mandolin at the age of 7 by a neighbor, he moved quickly into the world of fiddlers’ conventions and contests, winning his first mandolin competition before reaching his teens. As he grew older, he added the fiddle to his instrumental arsenal and joined the New Grass Revue—yet at the same time, he took up the clarinet and began to perform with his high school’s symphonic band. In 1981 Midkiff began studies at Virginia Tech, eventually earning a degree in music education and performance. Yet even as he was immersing himself in the classical repertoire, he continued to gain attention as a mandolin and fiddle player with the McPeak Brothers, a widely respected bluegrass group with whom he made his first serious recording in 1982. In 1983 he joined the Lonesome River Band, which would eventually become one of bluegrass’s most acclaimed groups. For the next five years he performed with the LRB, recording two albums with the group, including its self-titled Rebel Records debut in 1987. Shortly after that, he enrolled in graduate school at Northern Illinois University, earning his Master’s degree in clarinet.



The quintet, “From the Blue Ridge”, for mandolin and string quartet, began life as a concerto for mandolin and orchestra, composed in 2011, a commission from Music Director David Stewart Wiley and the Roanoke Symphony Orchestra. The first performance of the concerto was opening night of the Roanoke Symphony Orchestra's Fall 2011 season, and the Concerto has subsequently been performed with the Rochester Philharmonic, the Shreveport Symphony, and the Williamsburg Symphonia, the Boulder Philharmonic, and the Northwest Florida Symphony. After hearing a performance of the concerto, Carpe Diem commissioned Jeff to arrange the work for quintet. The quintet was premiered in Columbus, Ohio and can be heard on Carpe Diem’s demo DVD “Special Projects/Collaborations”. Quintet No. 2, “The Gypsy” was premiered in Columbus, Ohio at the McConnell Arts Center and subsequently has been performed in Colorado and Virginia.

**Carpe Diem String Quartet** seeks out, and is sought after by, artists from many different genres for collaborations. Carpe Diem’s diverse musical partnerships include American singer/songwriter/ guitarist Willy Porter—the CD of their live concert debut continues to receive accolades—as well as Latin Grammy winner/bandoneón player Raul Juarena, klezmer clarinetist David Krakauer, banjo virtuoso and Canadian Folk Music “Artist of the Year” Jayme Stone, Dixieland trumpeter Tom Battenberg, Chinese pipa player Yihan Chen, and world master of the Persian santoor Dariush Saghafi.

The recording of Mr. Midkiff’s music with Carpe Diem String Quartet can be found at [www.carpediemstringquartet.com](http://www.carpediemstringquartet.com) or on Amazon, iTunes, and all the major music websites.