

# SCHERZO

Interviews with the notable musicians & fascinating personalities of our day

with **WESLEY FERREIRA**

## MICHELE ZUKOVSKY

*As the longest-serving female woodwind player in the history of the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Michele Zukovsky has performed worldwide and influenced a generation of clarinetists. She continues to teach at several colleges in California and happily sits down to answer some questions.*

**What's the best part about being a musician?**

Getting out of dull family gatherings.

**What's the hardest part about being a musician?**

Practicing.

**Who was your hero growing up, and who's your hero today?**

My father, Kalman Bloch (who was also principal clarinetist of the LA Philharmonic).

**Is there a musician/artist that you admire?** Artur Schnabel.

**When you were young, other than music, what did you want to do when you grew up?**

I love the idea of curing or saving another person and so I had always wanted to become either a nurse or a doctor. My favorite form of study was paleontology. As an adult, teaching the clarinet was a close second. I asked my dad why he wanted to teach and why he enjoyed it so much, and his answer was "I want to help." We were the same that way.

**What worries you about the world?**

Worries? Ask my cardiologist!

**What's the first piece of music you remember falling in love with?**

I fell in love with Prokofiev's 5th Symphony.

**What's an unforgettable musical memory?**

I once came in a measure early in the 3rd movement of Tchaikovsky's 4th Symphony. I can tell you that that was an unforgettable memory, something you never forget!

**Do you have a superhuman or fun human trick?**

I can whistle blowing through my hands.

**If you were given a million dollars right now, what would you do with it?** Fill up my car with gas. With the price of gas these days in California, I'd have to then see how much I'd have left. But seriously, I would like to help the homeless in Los Angeles.

**What is your favorite vegetable?**  
Artichokes.

**If you had to be stuck on a 10-hour flight sitting next to anyone, who would it be and why?**  
Someone who didn't want to talk to me!

**What other art form resonates with you?** 19th- and 20th-century literature. I also love the Royal Shakespeare Company.

**What is your favorite trait in a conductor?** Deceased.



**What is your cocktail or adult beverage of choice?**  
Anything with Tito vodka in it.

**Do you have a favorite place in the world?**  
Florence, Italy, but ideally without any people in it.

**What do you love most about your life right now?**  
I love my new husband.

**How would you sum up your musical career in the LA Philharmonic?**  
Really lucky!

# CODA

**If you hadn't been a clarinet player, what would have been your profession? If I wasn't a clarinet player, I would play the piano.**

**If you had a time machine, where would you visit?**  
I'd go to the Roaring Twenties.

**If you could give your 10-year-old self one piece of advice, what would it be?**  
**To continue practicing more!**

**If you could meet any one living person tomorrow, who would it be?**  
**MFK Fisher, a great writer and cook.**

**If you had a superpower, what would it be? I would love to read minds or have the ability to fly.**

**If you could create a perfect day for yourself, what would you do?**  
**A perfect day would be one by a lake with fine French baguettes, lovely wine, and close friends.**