

AN ARTIST'S CORNER

featuring

Dr. Brad Edwards



With a style that has been described as "passionate," "fiercely vigorous," and even "humorous," **Brad Edwards** has appeared as a soloist before audiences in the United States and Europe. His solo credits include radio and television broadcasts, premieres of new music, guest recitals at colleges and regional workshops, and concertos with student and professional orchestras and wind ensembles. He has twice been featured as a soloist with "Pershing's Own" Army Band at the American Trombone Workshop in Washington D.C. As a member of the Air Force Concert Band he was twice featured as a soloist.

His CD, "*Trombone And...*" features concert duets pairing the trombone with other instruments. It includes several works written for and premiered by him as well as one of his own compositions, Five American Folksong Sketches. Of this recording, Audiophile magazine wrote, "Trombonist Brad Edwards is an accomplished musician. The performances are all excellent, and the pairings with other instruments, particularly the marimba are quite interesting."

Dr. Edwards began teaching trombone at Arizona State University in Fall, 2016. Previously, he taught at the University of South Carolina and the University of Northern Iowa. Other teaching positions have included Franklin and Marshall University and Kinhaven Music School.

He is best known for his pedagogical books including, Lip Slurs, Lip Slur Melodies as well as the Trombone Craft and Simply Singing for Winds series. His latest books is Patterns and Snippets: A Musical Approach to Scales and Arpeggios (available for both tenor and bass trombone). He has published a number of pieces through the International Trombone Association Press (available from Warwick Music) including Blue Wolf which has been recorded three times and Four Impromptus for Low Bone Alone, which was selected for the national solo competition of the American Trombone Workshop. More recently, he was commissioned by the state of South Carolina to compose all-state audition solos for all woodwinds and brass on a three-year cycle. He has extended this project into a website, AuditionSolos.com.

In addition to the Air Force Band, Dr. Edwards has held positions as Principal Trombonist of the South Carolina Philharmonic, Symphony Orchestra Augusta and the Waterloo/Cedar Falls Symphony. He has also been the bass trombonist of the Cedar Rapids Symphony and the Arlington Symphony in Virginia. He has performed with such ensembles as the Phoenix Symphony, Baltimore Symphony, the Kennedy Center Opera Orchestra, the brass choir of the National Symphony, Hartford Symphony, the Charleston Symphony, the Charlotte Symphony and the Baltimore Opera Orchestra as well as the Wintergreen and Cabrillo Festival Orchestras.

He has shared the stage with such diverse artists as Al Jarreau, Ray Charles, Dave Brubeck, Ben Folds, Jean-Yves Thibaudet, Olivia Newton John, Bela Fleck, the Gatlin Brothers, Robert Merrill, Big Bad Voodoo Daddy and Roger Daltry. In 2007, he was selected to be participant at the prestigious Alessi Seminar in New Mexico.

Dr. Edwards holds degrees from the Peabody Institute of Johns Hopkins University, the Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music and the Hartt School of Music. His primary teachers have been Jim Olin, Tony Chipurn, Ronald Borrer and Henry Schmidt. He has also studied with Joseph Alessi, Arnold Jacobs, Dave Fedderly and Milt Stevens.

For more information as well as resources, please visit the TromboneZone.org website.

How old were you when you began playing your instrument? Did you start playing another instrument before your current one?

I began trombone in 5th grade. Before that, I took piano lessons.

What equipment do you primarily use?

I've been playing a Shires large-bore trombone since the 1990's. Add to that a Yamaha alto, a beautifully restored Conn 6H smaller bore tenor and an older Bach bass. For most horns, I'm using Greg Black mouthpieces.

What are your favorite solos written for another instrument?

Hard not to go with the Bach cello suites. My wife plays horn so I'm also fond of the Mozart Horn concertos.

With whom did you study?

In high school I studied with Dr. Henry Schmidt, an Eastman/Remington grad. College began with Ron Borrer who studied with John Swallow. For Master's I studied with Tony Chipurn of the Cincinnati Symphony and, for my doctorate,

James Olin of the Cincinnati Symphony. I also took quite a few lessons with Dave Fedderly, a tubist who was a big disciple of Arnold Jacobs. I was fortunate enough to get in two lessons with Jacobs before he passed.

Discuss your early musical experiences. Why did you pursue music?

At the age of 15, I was a last-minute replacement to fill in at a 7-week music camp in Vermont, Kinhaven Music School. That place blew my mind and changed my life. I went for four summers and, later, was able to return as a teacher. I still teach there some summers at the Kinhaven Young Artist Seminar, a college program focusing on chamber music.

How old were you when you decided that you were going to be a professional musician?

It was actually near the end of my Bachelor's degree. I entered college as a double major between music performance and music management.

How much do you practice on a typical day?

There is no meaningful answer to this question. Some days are really busy with precious little time or energy for practicing. On other days, I'm able to dig in more.

Do you have a website? If so, what is the address?

My main website is TromboneZone.org. I have two other websites: AuditionSolos.com with a big batch of one-minute audition pieces and ASUBones.org which is focused on the trombone studio at Arizona State University.

What are some of your favorite etude books?

Well, given that I write a lot of books, I'm not sure how to answer that question. From my own stuff, it would probably be Lip Slur Melodies or whatever book I'm working on at the moment. Away from my stuff, I'm still a big fan of the Voxman Selected Studies and the Bordogni vocalises (*don't* call them Rochut studies!).

Who are your main influences in your life (not just music!)?

At times I've been inspired by the Constructive Living movement and the writings of David K. Reynolds ("Playing Ball on Running Water") From this I have developed my "Four Rules of Anything"...

1. Relax
2. Pay Attention
3. Accept What has Happened
4. Do What Needs to Be Done

What are some of your favorite albums?

Instead of entire albums, I have favorite musical moments, and not just classical ones.

...an organ note in The Planets

...a Miles Davis lick in Freddie Freeloader

...the low sound effect in Hamilton on the words "My heart went boom!"

...the first piano entrance in Brahms 1st piano concerto

...the opening phrases of the Prelude to Bach's 2nd Cello Suite

Please give some tips for freelancing.

1. Show up on time. 2. Listen like crazy. 3. Be pleasant and mostly silent.

You don't want to make the contractor look bad for hiring you. Their reputation is also on the line.

What are your feelings about students majoring in music education versus music performance?

Whatever you pursue, you should be moving towards a positive and not away from a negative. Don't go into music because you "didn't like any other subjects in school." Don't go into music education because you "don't think you can make it as a performer."

Is anyone else in your family a musician?

No. My father loved opera. That's about it.

What advice would you give to someone interested in majoring in music in college?

1. Have a teachable spirit
2. Be highly observant
3. Be relentlessly patient
4. Be polite

What are you listening to currently?

The Haugtussa song cycle by Edvard Grieg brilliantly performed by Anne Sofie von Otter.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hz_CG6047KA&t=526s

Do you have a favorite genre of music?

No but I tend to avoid really dense textures in favor of clarity. Anything with thoughtful nuance.

What are you working on right now?

Well, another book but I think it's bad luck to reveal anything in advance. I just look around and see what isn't there but should be.

Please list some of your favorite websites for musicians.

Honestly, Youtube.

Do you have any tips for preparing for auditions?

Professional auditions: Until you can deliver a convincing performance for a recorder, save your travel money.

All auditions: Store up 'good moment deposits' ...moments when you were nervous but still played well. When the nerves hits, go to your bank vault of positive memories and observe that, yes, you felt nervous then but it still went well.

If you couldn't have a career in music, what would you do instead?

Computer programming. Even in college I once stayed up all night writing a program in Basic that delivered a music history quiz. Just for fun.

Who are your favorite composers?

Can't narrow it down. See above for favorite moments.

How could we make music education better?

Give the lower-voiced instruments the melody!

Do you like to teach? Why or why not?

I love it, especially when I connect with a student. It is endlessly fascinating.

What are your favorite solos for your instrument?

There are lots of them. I'll point one or two that are more off the beaten path..
Stekke Variations in F-sharp minor.
Bassett Suite for Unaccompanied Trombone
Jorgenson Romance

What are some of your favorite books that are helpful for musicians?

Sound in Motion by David McGill
The Talent Code by Daniel Coyle