

AN ARTIST'S CORNER

featuring

Cesar I. Pimentel Ortiz



BECAUSE OF HIS PASSION FOR HUMAN CONNECTION AND CONTINUOUS LEARNING...

Cesar I. Pimentel Ortiz started his journey in music at the age of fifteen. Under the mentorship of his teacher and mentor in middle school, Eduardo Alicea, he started his first music lessons on the trombone. When noticing the passion for music that Cesar was showing, Mr. Alicea did everything he could to allow Cesar to audition for the Escuela Libre de Musica de Caguas (Free Music School of Caguas, Puerto Rico.) After being admitted to the Free Music School, Cesar started an enriching journey in music that led him to take lessons with his mentors Hector "Luty" Maldonado and Miguel Rivera. Additionally, the Free Music School gave Cesar a platform to play with different small and large ensembles, with Latin Music singers such as Cheo Feliciano, Andy Montañez, Charlie Aponte, etc. From this school, Cesar also started his professional career in music, playing with the Municipal Band of Caguas, his church (First Baptist Church of Caguas), and the classical music scene, where he had the opportunity to play the Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's Requiem.

With the guidance and mentorship of Miguel Rivera, Cesar attended as an auditor to the Alessi Seminar in 2007. This experience was crucial to his decision to

study music at the college level in the Puerto Rico Music Conservatory in 2008. Under the mentorship of Dr. Luis Fred, he had the opportunity to play for renowned trombone players such as Joseph Alessi, Michael Mulcahy, Harry Waters, Jon Whitaker, among other mentors. In addition, it was at the Conservatory that Cesar had the opportunity to play on the 2011's edition of the Casals Music Festival of the Puerto Rico Symphony Orchestra. He also continued his professional appearances with ensembles such as the National Wind Symphony of Puerto Rico, sharing stages with singers such as Danny Rivera, Lucecita Benitez, Nydia Caro, and other renowned artists.

After he graduated from the Conservatory of Music of Puerto Rico in 2015 and a brief pause in his career in music that provided him a new and much-needed perspective of life, Cesar Pimentel had the opportunity to teach in the Department of Education in Puerto Rico. After being the music teacher at the Cayey School of the Arts, he had the chance to be the Folkloric Ballet Brumas de Borikén's music director in Cayey, Puerto Rico. With that ensemble, Cesar performed in different cities in Puerto Rico and various cities in France. In the 2017's edition of the Casals Festival, Cesar Pimentel had his last appearance on a musical stage in Puerto Rico before accepting a Navy Fleet Bands Program position as a trombone instrumentalist. From December 2017 to 2021, he was a member of the Navy Band Southeast, in Jacksonville Florida. In this period, Cesar has performed in different stages and accepted invitations as a Guest Artist in many educational institutions around Florida, including the University of Central Florida, in Orlando. In this same institution, he started his Master's Degree under the mentorship of Dr. Luis Fred. From 2019 to the present, Cesar Pimentel has been under the mentorship of Karen Cubides. With this agency, he continues to gain perspective that has helped him to define his mission. Also, he has been a participant of the two editions of the Body, Mind, Spirit workshops, led by Jeremy Wilson and Karen Cubides.

Currently, Cesar Pimentel is a member of the Fleet Forces Band in Virginia while also continues his formation as a trombonist under the mentorship of James Markey, Jeremy Wilson, Dr. Luis Fred, among others.

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

I was fifteen years old when I started playing the trombone.

What equipment do you primarily use?

Edwards T396 AR/Griego Alessi 1C

What are some of your favorite and most influential albums that you have heard?

Perspectives (Jeremy Wilson) Trombonastics (Joseph Alessi) Off Road (James Markey) Basso Profondo From Old Russia (Orthodox Singers Male Choir) Blood Wedding (Simone Kermes). Beethoven Cello Sonatas (Mischa Maisky – Martha Argerich) Oye Como Va! The Dance Collection (Tito Puente)

Who inspired you to play your instrument?

My first teacher: Eduardo Alicea

What are some of the silver linings of the pandemic that you have found?

Had the opportunity to start my master's degree and to create the foundation of my brand as teacher and clinician.

What are your thoughts on the social justice movement in regards to music and music education?

This is what art is all about: to provide the world a sense of justice and belonging from the lens of music as meaningful art and aesthetic force.

What are some of your favorite solos written for another instrument?

Rachmaninoff Piano Concerto no. 2. Samuel Jones Tuba Concerto. Do you have any tips on becoming better at transcribing?

How have your practice habits changed over the years?

From a "just physical approach" to a more holistic approach that also includes mental practice and always be in touch with why I do music in the first place.

Do you like to sing when you practice? Why or why not?

Yes. It is the most effective way to connect the sound in my mind to the sound in my chops.

What is your definition of success?

To create a plan and successfully arrive from point A to point Z, no matter the outcome.

What qualities do you think are important for being successful in life?

Being grateful every day we can wake up. Keep our mind on the pre- sent (which is our most precious gift,) and to keep our calling closer to our heart each day. Life will give us the steps to follow.

What do you enjoy doing in your spare time?

To read, cook, spend time with friends and family, and outdoors activities.

How do you stay motivated when you get frustrated or down? Do you have any tips to help stay motivated?

By turning down our “mean coach voice” in our minds and turning up our “empathetic voice,” we can distinguish the difference between procrastination and the need to rest and regroup.

Do you meditate? If so, what benefits do you get from meditating?

It helps me to keep my mind focused on the present and to keep listening to my body and mind.

With whom did you study?

Dr. Luis Fred, Miguel Rivera, Hector “Luty” Maldonado, and Eduardo Alicea

What qualities do you think are important in a student?

To stay curious and to acquire an infinite mindset.

How has being a musician changed you as a person?

It has given me a life perspective that has helped me to understand different cultures, people, and social issues.

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

I was pursuing belonging and a circle of friends. In the process, I had very great experiences because my work ethic. Those include to play with various

celebrities of Latin Music and to be part of a concert where I played the second trombone of Mozart's Requiem before I was eighteen.

How much do you practice on a typical day?

Active practice: hour and a half. Passive practice and visualization: four hours and a half.

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

tromborican.com

What are some of your favorite etude books?

Bordogni, Arban's, Blazhevich.

Do you use any apps when you practice?

Tonal Energy (an all-in-one app)

Do you listen to any podcasts and if so, which ones?

Dare to Lead and Unlocking Us (Brené Brown.) The Tim Ferriss Show. The Musician's Guide (Karen Cubides.) Conversaciones Simbióticas.

Where is your favorite place that you have traveled to?

The Eiffel Tower

Who are some of your musical heroes?

Martha Argerich, Simone Kermes, Jacqueline du Pré. Jascha Heifetz. James Markey. Jeremy Wilson.

How old were you when you first began transcribing solos?

Sixteen

How could we make music education better?

By trying more emphatic every day, to stay curious, and to provide answers to what students do rather to create false, but hurtful illusions of what students are.

Do you like to teach? Why or why not?

I will say that teaching is the calling that I will pursue until I die. What are your favorite solos for your instrument?

What is your favorite food?

Mexican Food in general. And, of course, Puerto Rican food.