

AN ARTIST'S CORNER

featuring

Lauren Husting



Lauren Husting, trombone, is an established presence in the Minneapolis-St Paul music scene. She is a founding member of [Brass Lassie](#), a 10-piece traditional folk band boldly combining brass and jazz arrangements with Celtic, Scottish, Irish, and French-Canadian tunes; plays bass trombone in local big band the [Adam Meckler Orchestra](#), and serves as both trombonist and horn arranger for R&B/soul cover band [The Satellites](#).

As a freelancer, she has played with such diverse groups as Exultate Chamber Choir, Festival Brass, Josh Groban, Kenwood Symphony Orchestra, Bill Simenson Orchestra, the Civic Orchestra of Minneapolis, the Minneapolis Trombone Choir, the Sheldon Theatre Brass Band, Winona Chamber Winds, The RI Project, and Minnesota Symphonic Winds.

Lauren serves as low brass instructor for both Hamline University and Century Collge, and teaches through Community Education in Chanhassen. She also teaches in the communities of Edina, St Louis Park, and NE Minneapolis. She has been [BrassChix's](#) Celebrity Trombonist in from 2013 to present. Her students have performed with GTCYS, MYS, Minnesota Junior Winds, Minnesota All State Bands, and either continue to play for enjoyment past high school or go on to major in music at prestigious schools such as the University of Iowa and UW-Eau Claire.

Prior to Minnesota, Lauren played with the Santa Fe Symphony, Denton Community Theatre, the Copper Street Brass Quintet, and numerous North Texas lab bands and ensembles, including the prestigious UNT Wind Symphony. She can be heard on that group's recordings *Homage* and *Urban Dreams*, available through GIA Windworks. A champion of new music, Ms Husting commissioned and premiered a solo work for trombone, *Portal*, by Dajeong Choi, in the spring of 2007. In the fall of 2009 she performed a guest artist recital and held masterclasses at Lincoln Memorial University in Harrigate, TN.

Lauren holds degrees from the University of North Texas and the University of Wisconsin-Madison,

and has studied with such diverse performers and educators as Jan Kagarice, Tony Baker, Vern Kagarice, William Richardson, and Sean Reusch.

Lauren Husting's Website – www.laurenhusting.com

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

I started playing trombone in 7th grade- after I had been playing flute since 5th. There were too many flute players and not enough trombonists, and I wanted to be different- so I switched!

What equipment do you primarily use?

Tenor: Edwards, Griego 5
Bass: Holton 180, Wick 1AL

What are some of the highlights of your career?

Starting my college teaching career at Hamline University in St Paul, MN; everytime Brass Lasse performs; recording with the Adam Meckler Orchestra at Pachyderm Studios (famously, Nirvana recorded In Utero here); funding scholarship lessons for low-income students; connecting female musicians to one another and creating new networks of diverse musicians.

What were your practice habits in high school, college, post-college, pro career?

I was not very good at practicing in high school or undergrad. I would just kind of try to figure things out and then hope that I remembered them when it came time to perform. During my masters degree, Jan Kagarice really taught me how to do deep learning, and work toward creating a flow experience as I 'practiced performing'. Now, I identify sections or concepts that need improvement and do detailed, slow work, always using a metronome! My focus is on the musical idea I want to communicate- all technical aspects and challenges are a part of that vision, not the other way around. I believe that 'slow practice equals fast progress' and hope to instill the same in my students.

With whom did you study?

In middle school and high school I studied with two amazing teachers, Jack Erb and Sean Reusch. My undergrad in Wisconsin was spent studying with William Richardson. At North Texas, I worked primarily with master teacher Jan Kagarice, and took lessons regularly from Vern Kagarice and Tony Baker as well.

Who are some of your musical heroes?

I feel like I am inspired daily by someone new - there are so many different ways to be a musician! But I always come back to performers like Thom Yorke, of Radiohead, for his incredible sense of phrasing and timing; Neko Case, for the purity of her voice and the intensity to which she can use it; Sergei Prokofiev, because of how different and dark his music sounds from everything else of that era and beyond; and Abbie Conant (gotta have a trombonist in here) for her bravery and trust in her skill in the face of discrimination.

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

I was a senior in high school -17- and it hadn't been something I thought I would do until I auditioned for one of the schools I was applying to on a whim- I got in! I want to say the rest was history, but to be honest I don't think I decided I was truly a professional until my 30s, when I started to really do my own thing and stopped caring so much about what everyone else thought or did.

How much do you practice on a typical day?

It varies- I wear a lot of hats as a freelancer and educator, so I'm often very busy. I always practice for at least an hour in the mornings, going through my routine and just enjoying making music, and then reserve afternoon time for things I have to practice for upcoming work.

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

Yes! <http://laurenhusting.com>. I also have a professional page on facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/LaurenHustingTrombone/>

What are some of your favorite etude books?

I love the Bordogni/Rochut, the Slama key etudes, and the Blume F-Attachment studies. For my grad school students I like introducing them to musical concepts through the Hering 40 Progressive Etudes.

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

I am a huge reader, and many of my ideas and philosophies come from my favorite authors. I love Ursula K Le Guin, Kurt Vonnegut, and Gabriel Garcia Marquez. The philosophies of Buddhism and Taoism also really ring true for me, and I try to live as simply and kindly as I can.

Please give some tips for freelancing.

Don't take things personally if you don't get a gig. Just keep doing your best: show up on time, be a decent human being. Don't talk down to anyone or talk yourself up, and play from your heart. It's not a zero sum game- pay it forward and be generous with your recommendations when you are asked. We are all in this together even if it seems like we're competing with one another. Make your own gigs! Start organizing and promoting projects that are important and exciting to you, and be creative. The music industry is becoming more and more grassroots, and that is an exciting thing.

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

To be honest, I think the music programs offered these days need to adapt to reflect the ways in which the music industry is changing. Both performance and education majors should get a healthy dose of pedagogy, music business, marketing, and composition and improvisation training. Future educators should really want to bring music to young folks in ways that are relevant to them, and performers should be flexible about what their career will look like.

What is your favorite place that you have performed?

The Minnesota State Fair- with my band Brass Lassie- was some of the most fun I've had on stage in my career. There's nothing like a big, receptive audience, a hot summer day, and great music to bring everyone's mood up.

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

Look for a program that has its finger on the pulse of adapting young musicians for success in the 'real world'- not just conservatory style training for future orchestra musicians (but if that's your thing- go for it!). Find an applied teacher you trust, and who respects you as an individual without you having to prove yourself as a musician. Collaborate with anyone and everyone- and not just other music majors- to build relationships both during and after school. Don't get too buried in your practice room- get your work done, and then go enjoy all the things your school has to offer.

What are you listening to currently?

Mostly podcasts! I love 99% Invisible, Radiolab, 2 Dope Queens, and Nancy. I find it hard to listen to music for fun when I play and teach so much daily. I like to expand my brain and my interests in as many directions as possible. I do really love the new album from St Vincent, and I've been on a Brahms kick lately.

Please list some of your favorite websites for musicians.

I just discovered the Brass Chicks blog: <https://brasschicks.wordpress.com>. It's a great community for female brass players, but the advice is for everyone. I have two friends who write incredibly insightful, holistic posts about staying healthy and balanced in a music career: <http://www.rebeccahass.com> & <https://leahpogwizd.com>

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

I think I would be a park ranger or some other career where I could be outside all the time.

How could we make music education better?

Focus less on training performer-interpreters, and more on developing musicians that can improvise, compose, and inspire. Take music back to its creative roots and give its artistic potential back to the masses, instead of weeding out all but the talented few.

Do you like to teach? Why or why not?

Teaching is everything! I feel so honored that I get to guide young musicians and be inspired by their drive, intelligence, and creativity. My students astound me every day. I want to give them the opportunity to find their voice and the confidence to use it.

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

Attention and Motor Skill Learning, Wulf

How Popular Musicians Learn, Green

Making Money Teaching Music, Newsam/Sprague

The Poetics of Music, Stravinsky