

AN ARTIST'S CORNER

featuring

Misa Mead



Misa Mead was born in Kumamoto city, in the south west of Japan. She graduated from Tokyo College of Music. Misa won the unanimous Gold Medal at the European Solo Competition for Young Soloists in Luxembourg, as well as winning many other solo competitions. Misa graduated with Honors at the Regional Conservatory of Paris. After Misa returned to Japan, she appeared as a guest artist at festivals in Thailand and the USA. Since 2013, Misa moved to the UK, and performed many concerts in more than twenty countries and with more than forty ensembles. In 2014, her debut album *Journey*, was released and in 2018 her second solo album *Souvenir* was also met with great critical acclaim. Since 2016, she contributes regularly to the Japanese brass magazine 'Pipers'. In 2017, the duet CD with Steven Mead, *Love's Joy* was released. This CD was voted Duet CD of the Year 2017 by the UK's Brass Band World Magazine. Misa is active as a freelance composer and orchestrator. Many of her works are published by ASKS Winds (Japan) and Bocchino Music (UK) and distributed world-wide. Misa has also served as a jury member at several prestigious international solo competitions. In May 2019 Misa released her book

Misa's Technicals which has become a much sought-after book by students and teachers. Misa is a Besson Euphonium Artist and a Denis Wick Performing Artist and they support many of her activities including workshops and masterclasses around the world.

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

I started playing euphonium when I was 9 years old in my school band. Before, I had been playing piano since I was 4 years old.

What equipment do you primarily use?

Besson Sovereign 967T in Lacquer

What are some of your favorite highlights of your career?

I have traveled and played concerts in about 25 countries. The experience from each are all my highlights.

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

Waltz for Debby by Bill Evans is my favorite album. I think it's not an influential album for my playing but I feel so relaxed when I listen to it.

Who inspired you to play your instrument?

It's my sister. She was playing alto horn in the school band and I wanted to play the same instrument. But she said, alto horn is a bit boring because it has too many backbeat notes. She recommended that I play euphonium as it looks similar but has more melodic notes.

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

Yes, I do. I want to play like singing.

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

It's being happy yourself.

What do you want your legacy to be?

I want to give little happiness to the people.

What do you enjoy doing in your spare time?

I like taking the photos. I just started kayaking too.

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

I make deadlines. If I have to do something, it doesn't matter if I have motivation or not, because I have to do it so I do.

With whom did you study?

Noriaki Okamoto, Shoichiro Hokazono, Takashi Yamamoto, Ayano Iwakuro, Philippe Legris, Philippe Fritsch, David Maquet, Jacques Mauger and Roger Bobo.

What qualities do you think are important in a student?

I think it's a total balance.

Do you remember when you decided that you were going to be a professional musician?

Not directly, but when I won the All Japan solo competition for students when I was 14 years old, I decided I go to music way.

How much do you practice on a typical day?

About 2 to 3 hours in this pandemic. When I have concerts, I practice about 3 to 4 hours.

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

I have Japanese website but not using it now.
I use Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and Twitter.
<https://www.facebook.com/misamead>
<https://www.facebook.com/euphoniumisa/>
<https://www.instagram.com/euphoniumisa/>
<https://www.youtube.com/user/euphoniumisa0610/>
<https://twitter.com/EuphoniuMisa>

What are some of your favorite etude books?

Arban, The Brass Gym, Daily Exercises by Eric Klay, La Flexibilidad by Nicolà Esteve Colomina, 40 Studies by Werner, etc. I made my etude book, Misa's Technicals Book.1, I practice from it a lot too.

What are some ways to improve one's rhythm?

I think it's a good idea to move your body according to the rhythm of dancing and conducting.

If you could go back in time and give yourself any advice, what would it be?

Of course it's not always good but any experiences made me now so I'm satisfy.

What is your favorite place that you have traveled to?

Japan as I'm Japanese.

Who are some of your heroes in life?

My mother.

How old were you when you first began transcribing solos?

When I was 14 years old.

How do you suggest balancing life with being a musician?

I think it's really up to people. I am married to a professional euphonium player and I have no children so music is my life and my life is music. If I have children, I may use half of my time to them. Everyone has different happiness.

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

I think it's depends of the countries and schools. I think both are important but depends on the students what they want to study too.

Is anyone else in your family a musician?

No. My sister had played piano, alto horn and tenor saxophone but she doesn't play it anymore.

What are some of your favorite places that you have performed?

Anywhere I like perform to audience.

What are your favorite things to do that make you happy?

Working as a musician.

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

I think it's like a treasure time when you can study what you like full time.

What are you listening to currently?

I usually listen Classic FM. I remember today I listened The Seal Lullaby by Eric Whitacre from Classic FM, because I played this piece before.

Do you have a favorite genre of music?

I like Classical, Jazz, Bossa Nova, Movie and Disney music.

What projects are you working on right now?

I just composed new piece 'Contest Piece for Euphonium and Piano'. This is 4 minutes piece and highest note is A so especially good for young students.

Do you ever get anxious for a performance? What advice would you give for dealing with nerves?

Yes, I do. My advice is practice like a concert, perform like a practice. Preparing for nerves is important. I learn about it a lot from mental training for sports.

To become a great musician, what are things that you think a young musician should focus on when they practice?

My advice is think about why do you do it and how will you want to be for the future. If you want really get your dream, I think you know what you have to do now.

What advice can you give about mental wellness?

Do some exercises, eat healthy food with good balance, sleep well in right time and work well. Appreciate many things and be kind to the people.

Who are your favorite composers?

Antônio Carlos Jobim, Alan Menken, Claude Debussy, etc.

Do you like to teach? Why or why not?

Yes, I do. I like to work together and see students progress.