

# AN ARTIST'S CORNER

*featuring*

## Scott Sutherland



A life-long resident of Southern California, Scott Sutherland has been hailed as “the second craziest tuba player I know” by famed American composer, Joan Tower. He is a member of the Redlands Symphony, Riverside Philharmonic and has been spotted in the back row of the Chicago Symphony, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Colorado Springs Philharmonic, and San Diego Symphony. Likely due to clerical errors, Scott has performed at the front of the stage as a soloist with the San Diego and Idyllwild Arts Symphony Orchestras, as well as the Riverside and Burbank Philharmonics. He has also recorded for film, television and video game soundtracks, including the major motion pictures *Pearl Harbor* and *Batman vs. Superman* (which are the only accomplishments notable to his younger private students).

For 11 years, Scott was a founding member, tubist and pianist of the international touring ensemble, Presidio Brass, for which he continues to work with as a consultant and music arranger. During his time with the quintet, he performed in over 40 states, Canada and China.

Scott can often be found behind his MacBook Pro, slaving away for hours on end adapting music. His arrangements have been performed by ensembles throughout the world, including the Principal Brass of the New York Philharmonic, famed tubist and conductor Roger Bobo, as well as chamber groups from the West Point Band and the "President's Own" Marine Band. Scott's "Fantasy on Porgy and Bess" for trumpet and orchestra was commissioned by soloist Barry Perkins and has been performed with the Pacific Symphony (California) and the Aguascalientes Symphony (Mexico).

He began a popular YouTube Channel in 2016 which includes multitrack videos of film, television and video game music, featuring Scott playing euphonium, tuba, cimbasso, piano and percussion. To date, the channel has been viewed over 2 million times.

Beyond his performance career, Scott is a passionate and dedicated teacher. He is currently on the faculty at the University of Redlands and Idyllwild Arts Summer Program.

Despite all of this, Scott's foremost identity, besides being an avid beer and whiskey snob, comes as a husband and father to his beautiful family and he is grateful to come home to Carlsbad, CA where it never fails to be 70 degrees and sunny all year round.

Scott Sutherland is proud to be an Artist and Clinician for the Eastman Music Company.

<https://www.scottsutherlandmusic.com>  
<https://www.youtube.com/scottsutherlandmusic>

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

I began my tuba journey when I was 16 (11th grade). Like a lot of folks, I took piano lessons as a kid and played trombone a little here and there (sadly, we never knew if we were going to have a functioning band program from one year to the next while I was in school in Los Angeles).

***What equipment do you primarily use?***

I am currently playing an Eastman 632 4/4 CC for my primary tuba. I also play an Eastman 853 Eb, Eastman 836 6/4 CC, Eastman 526 Compensating Euphonium, and an old beat up sousaphone the local high school doesn't want anymore.

## ***What are some of the highlights of your career?***

I've been lucky enough to perform with some major symphony orchestras, like Chicago and LA. Recording for major motion pictures is always a blast (often quite literally)! I like to joke that between Pearl Harbor and Batman v. Superman, I have a specialty for playing on soundtracks starring Ben Affleck, with music by Hans Zimmer, that gets tanked by the critics. I was a founding member of Presidio Brass, a quintet that I performed around the world with. Playing with the group in China in 2013 was a highlight.

## ***If you were stranded on a desert island and could only have 10 albums, what would they be?***

So hard to do!! Here's a mix of albums I love and/or really inspired me growing up:

1. Sinatra at the Sands
2. Billy Joel: Greatest Hits
3. Doc Severinsen and the Tonight Show Band Vol 1
4. Two Men with the Blues (Wynton Marsalis and Willie Nelson)
5. Roger Bobo: Bobissimo
6. The Beatles: 1
7. Harry Connick, Jr: Red Light, Blue Light
8. NYPO, Mehta: Mahler 5
9. SFSO, Blomstedt: Hindemith
10. John Williams Greatest Hits

## ***What are your favorite solos written for another instrument?***

Right now I've been enjoying the Bach Cello Suites, Schumann's Adagio and Allegro, the Korngold Cello Concerto and Andy Akiho's 21. Maybe I should have picked up cello....

## ***With whom did you study?***

I took my first tuba lessons with Norm Pearson of the LA Philharmonic my senior year of high school. He got me on the right path right away and told me to study with Tommy Johnson. Got into USC and graduated with a Bachelors, then studied with Mr. Johnson again at UCLA for graduate school.

## **Who are some of your musical heroes?**

I like to say the sound in my head when I play the tuba is a combination of Tommy Johnson, Roger Bobo and Gene Pokorny. But among those three, Mr. Johnson was my primary influence and certainly my biggest hero. It saddens me that so many students today do not know who he is or know very little of his impact on our community.

Hey you, yeah YOU, reading this. Go do yourself a favor and Google "Tommy Johnson." Then go watch E.T., Silverado, Back to the Future, Jaws, Beetlejuice, The Tigger Movie and Star Trek: The Motion Picture and keep an ear out for the tuba, though that's not hard, as Mr. Johnson always knew how to get on the mic. You can thank me later.

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

Finally, a questions that doesn't require any thought!! I'm a lazy tuba player...

<https://www.scottsutherlandmusic.com/>

Also, my YouTube channel (with multitrack videos of mostly film music):

<https://www.youtube.com/c/scottsutherlandmusic>

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

Sean Reusch! Who needs more influence than that?

## **Please give some tips for freelancing.**

These are all lessons I've learned through the years. I will still fail to meet some of these standards from time-to-time, but I'm working on it!

1. Remember, someone else played the gig before you and someone else probably is out of work because you took this gig. Work doesn't come out of thin air and there are a lot of people that depend on the very limited work out there. Worse yet, most musicians feel, at least in some small way, entitled to certain work.

Practice humility. The best musical colleagues are the ones who keep their egos in check.

2. This is going to sound harsh, but shut up! Don't speak just to try to impress people or remind them you are there. Don't ask questions that are better asked during a break or could be figured out simply by listening or looking over at your neighbor's part. Keep your head down and do a good job.

3. Be patient. It's incredibly rare for a single gig to be THE GIG that propels your career. 99% of the time, it's only through doing a great job gig after gig after gig that people will come to rely on you as a colleague and refer you for work.

4. Be prepared. Don't show up on time, show up early, so the contractor is never worried about you. Have a pencil. Warm-up ahead of the gig. Be considerate of others, which goes along with the humility from before.

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

If you do not like teaching, PLEASE don't major in music education as a fall-back to performance. Learn to love teaching before you consider a career in shaping young minds and inspiring the next generation of musicians.

***What is your favorite place that you have performed?***

Disney Hall. It's just so beautiful and very special to me personally as I have been an audience member countless times in that venue. To be on stage means a lot to me.

***If you were on a desert island, what are your top 3 etude books for your instrument, solos for your instrument, as well as etudes/ solos/albums not of your instrument?***

Etudes- Bordogni, Gregoriev, Blazhevich

Solos- Broughton Sonata, Vaughn Williams Concerto (2nd Mvt), Madsen Sonata

Others- Schumann Adagio and Allegro, YoYo Ma Bach Cello Suites, Dennis Brain Mozart Horn Concertos

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

Our career is unique in many ways. Majoring in music at great schools, working hard, practicing long hours, winning competitions, and participating in top festivals do not guarantee a successful career in music. You can follow the well-trodden path that so many walked before, have tremendous success on paper, but never make a true living as a musician. I'm not discouraging these aspects of thoughtful and meaningful preparation for a career in music, but always keep in mind that you are never entitled to a career in music

## ***What are you working on right now?***

I am diving back into orchestral excerpts for the first time in a long while now that I have access to a large orchestral CC tuba (Eastman 836). I'm learning the Broughton Sonata on Eb, plus studying Andy Akiho's 21 for a performance with a steel drum playing colleague, which requires me to master a looping station. Oy vey!! What a headache that is!

## ***Do you have any tips for preparing for auditions?***

Lot's of folks will talk about the weeks or months leading up to an audition, so I'll just give a couple of tips for the day of an audition or big performance. Avoid all sugar, caffeine and alcohol for at least 24 hours before your performance. Eat plenty of protein, drink a ton of water and be sure that you have something in your stomach within two hours of the show. This will all ensure healthy blood-sugar levels and that your body will not be reacting negatively to hunger, dehydration and artificial stimulants or depressants. Get plenty of sleep for at least few days leading up to the show. And lastly, practice visualization just before falling asleep every night for at least a week. Picture the entire successful performance/audition thoroughly and include every detail possible. The more detail, the more you include, the more you will benefit from this exercise. In essence, you are tricking your mind into believing you have done this performance successfully many times, preventing the fear of failure (coming out as nerves) from creeping into the picture and negatively impacting your playing. I'm sure everyone knows the fear of falling you experienced the first time you rode a bicycle. Like most folks, you probably didn't feel that same fear the last time you rode because of the confidence that comes with experiencing the repeated success of not failing (falling).

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

I'd open a restaurant with simple pub food and a killer bar and beer list on tap. Open jam sessions every night.

## ***Do you like to teach? Why or why not?***

I love it. It can be a drag when students are not engaged and actively pursuing their studies, but when the student is fired up and focused, teaching can be some of my most rewarding work. I get so much satisfaction from light bulb moments. That look in the students' eyes is priceless.

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

I am a big proponent of music entrepreneurship, though the word is overused right now. I like students thinking outside of the box. For this reason, I recommend *The Savvy Musician* from David Cutler, *Beyond Talent* from Angela Beeching and the amazingly insightful talk Seth Godin gave to young musicians at Carnegie Hall a couple of years ago has been transcribed by Andrew Hitz. You can get it free on his website and signing up for his newsletter: <http://www.andrewhitz.com/sethgodinbook>