

ASPEN FESTIVAL ORCHESTRA

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT



Today Mason Soria will play principal tuba.

MASON SORIA *Tuba*

The dream to become a musician can blossom from a myriad of places. Some might have parents who were professionals in the industry, others started lessons before they could even walk, but oftentimes it's actually the middle school band that sparks the initial interest. That was the case for twenty-two-year-old Mason Soria.

If it weren't for band tryouts in sixth grade, Soria may have gone down a different career path entirely. "I remember my dad taking me to try out instruments," Soria recalls. "I went in there wanting to play the saxophone and my dad wanted me to play the trumpet. I got very low ratings on both those instruments so the band director suggested I try the tuba. My dad was so upset because I chose the biggest one of them all. He quickly realized that my band director was right and I was a natural on the tuba."

It wasn't until Soria became a principal tuba musician of the Greater Dallas Youth Orchestra in high school that he realized he wanted music to be a part of his life forever. "While I was a junior and senior in high school, I was fortunate to perform repertoire such as Mahler No. 1, Till Eulenspiegel, Tchaikovsky's Fourth Symphony, and *Scheherazade*," Soria says. "Being able to perform professional literature with other talented and like-minded peers convinced me that being the tuba player in an orchestra and sharing music with the world was my higher purpose in life."

The tuba's rich and robust sound is what intrigues Soria the most. "I love being the foundation for an entire orchestra to be able to sit comfortably on. I thoroughly enjoy being able to pick out my sound in the orchestra. There is only one tuba, making you the lone timbre that glues the brass to the basses, as well as the low woodwinds."

In 2020, Soria graduated with his bachelor's degree in music performance from the University of North Texas. He is currently halfway through his master's degree in music performance at the University of Miami. This summer, Soria is studying with Warren Deck and playing with the Aspen Festival Orchestra.

Soria is thrilled to be back for his second summer in Aspen. "There are so many reasons I wanted to come back: Deck is simply the best teacher and mentor, the orchestral experience is unmatched as you get the opportunity to perform side-by-side with faculty members, the nature is so fulfilling and peaceful, and the friends you meet here will last a lifetime," Soria says. "It's the best combination of things to perfect your craft while also making wonderful memories."

In the future, Soria hopes to win a principal tuba position in a world-class orchestra. "The audition circuit is about to come back to life so I plan on taking as many orchestral auditions as I can until I win a job I'm happy with," Soria says.

Soria is a recipient of the Seth Kahn Scholarship for Brass and a Maestro's Circle Scholarship.

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