

ASPEN FESTIVAL ORCHESTRA

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT



Kai Bryngelson plays the violin in the Aspen Festival Orchestra.

KAI BRYNGELSON *Violin*

When Kai Bryngelson asked his parents if he could play the cello, they told him no. “They said, ‘We have to travel a lot, pick something smaller,’” Bryngelson remembers.

And so, at the age of seven, Kai started playing the violin. In his small town in southern Chile, there wasn’t even a violin teacher—he had to get his first lessons, ironically, from a cellist.

Soon, Bryngelson required a higher level of education. Thus began his monthly commute to Santiago, the capital of Chile, which required a 3.5-hour flight each way. He would take a lesson at the university and spend the rest of the month at home soaking in the advice and practicing as much as he could. When he was 13, he spent the summer at the Meadowmount School of Music in Upstate New York, which he said was when he started to get serious about the violin.

That year, when he put on an informal recital for his family, one of Kai’s older brothers was especially impressed. So much so, in fact, that he suggested Kai move in with him and his wife in Portland, Oregon, so he could experience musical and educational life in the United States. Kai accepted, moving away from home for the year. He says the change—of culture, school system, and language—was as jarring as it was rewarding. “It was definitely very hard at first, but it was also probably one of the most important events in my life,” Bryngelson says. “Living away from my parents and experiencing all of these new things helped me grow in all sorts of aspects in my life. It helped me develop my learning, personality, music, everything.”

But his journey was far from over. After a year in Portland, Bryngelson’s brother had to move to a new city for work. His experience had been so formative, though, that he resolved to stay in Portland however he could. Eventually, the family of a friend from youth orchestra allowed him to move in with them.

Through this family, Bryngelson came upon his next destination. “After a year, the host family I was living with decided to have their daughter apply to the Cleveland Institute of Music Young Artist Program for high schoolers,” Kai said. “They asked me, ‘Do you want to apply as well—maybe we could all get in and move to Cleveland.’ That’s exactly what happened.”

For his junior year of high school, Kai called Cleveland home. He studied at the Cleveland Institute of Music until his teacher moved to the Colburn School in Los Angeles. Before leaving, she told Kai about a high school program through Colburn where students could study at the school and live in the dorms. That’s what he did: for his senior year, he packed his bags and moved to Los Angeles. After his senior year, Bryngelson moved back to Cleveland, where he is now an undergraduate at the Cleveland Institute of Music.

His most recent journey has been back into the mountains—not the Patagonias, where he first began, but the Rockies. This summer—his first at the Aspen Music Festival and School—Bryngelson is studying with David Halen and Alexander Kerr. He said he heard about Aspen through friends, all of whom recommended it enthusiastically.

Regardless of where his career takes him next, he will be thanking his parents for one piece of advice: choosing an instrument easy to carry.

Kai Bryngelson is a recipient of the Neuman Family Foundation Scholarship

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— KAI BRYNGELSON

DID YOU KNOW?

The Aspen Music Festival and School is one of the world's leading training institutions for emerging young musicians. The talented students perform side-by-side with our artist-faculty to make up the Festival's summer orchestras and ensembles, including the one performing for you today.

The AMFS's diverse body of **470** students hails from the world's top conservatories and schools of music. While the average age of students is **23**, many have already started promising careers and return to Aspen for further professional development with sought-after mentors from the world of classical music.

Artist-faculty members for the 2022 season, numbering more than **100**, are the leading performers and teachers in the field today, coming to Aspen from **31 major orchestras**, **9 opera houses**, and **49 music schools and conservatories worldwide**, including the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the Chicago Symphony, the Metropolitan Opera orchestra, The Juilliard School, the Shepherd School at Rice University, and the Houston Grand Opera.

2022 STUDENT SNAPSHOT

470
TALENTED
STUDENTS

Nearly
1 1/2 RECEIVE
FELLOWSHIP
SUPPORT

From
31
COUNTRIES
and
40
STATES

More than
\$3.1 million
IN FINANCIAL AID

