

ASPEN FESTIVAL ORCHESTRA

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT



Goodman is sitting in the cello section, first stand, inside chair.

LUKAS GOODMAN *cello*

“Everybody knows about it. It’s kind of a big deal,” laughs twenty-one-year-old Lukas Goodman when talking about the Aspen Music Festival and School. “Richard Aaron and Wolfgang Schmidt are two of the best teachers in the world and I knew I really wanted to study with them this summer.”

Goodman is going into his fourth year at Rice University’s Shepherd School this fall. Not only is this Goodman’s first summer in Aspen, but it is his first time being in Colorado after having lived in Boston most of his life. “It’s absurdly beautiful here compared to anywhere else I’ve ever been to for an extended period. Just waking up in the morning and walking outside and seeing a giant mountain—is a good feeling.”

At the age of eight, Goodman started playing the piano by ear. He was never formally taught—he would simply try and mimic the songs that he heard on the radio. Goodman noted that he was constantly playing stuff from the Pirates of the Caribbean because he loved that movie as a kid. “I eventually started taking lessons and my teachers would get upset that I was not able to read music that well because I would just learn everything by ear,” Goodman said.

After coming to the realization that it was more fun playing with an ensemble rather than solo, Goodman attended an instrument petting zoo in high school, and he was immediately drawn to the cello. “It’s the best instrument for singing, I think, other than the voice. The way one can sing a melody on the cello is just the best,” Goodman said. “The cello offers the best tone range. It’s got the biggest range of any instrument, other than the piano. There’s nothing better than a cello. That’s what everyone wants to listen to.”

In addition to the cello, Goodman is also extremely passionate about basketball. “There’s a million great basketball players in the backyard or at the pickup game, but there’s only a select few that can play at the highest level,” Goodman said. “You know you have practiced everything to the simplest form when you can perform under pressure to that degree.”

Goodman translates this basketball knowledge to help enhance his music studies. “Performing is always much different from the practice rooms and you have to account for that when you’re preparing for stuff if you want to be the best that you can be.”

Goodman is most excited to play *The Rite of Spring* at the end of the summer—a piece he played a lot in his high school orchestra. “It’s one of my favorite pieces of all time. It’s the most bizarre work of complete original genius,” Goodman said. “I feel like it’s so great because it breaks all the rules. It just amazes me that anyone was able to come up with it.”

When asked what his favorite piece for the cello was, Goodman responded without hesitation. “Definitely the Dvorak Concerto. It’s been one of my favorite pieces since I started listening to the cello,” Goodman said. “I used to listen to it all the time, but I couldn’t play it. I was not good enough to play it. Then this year, I played it the whole year and I even played it with the orchestra.”

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– LUKAS GOODMAN