

ASPEN FESTIVAL ORCHESTRA

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT



Today, Jazmin Pascual Flores is E^b Clarinet.

JAZMIN PASCUAL FLORES *clarinet*

A longstanding family heritage and hometown tradition were the foundation for clarinetist Jazmin Pascual Flores's journey to the Aspen Music Festival and School.

Pascual Flores comes from a long line of clarinetists. In her hometown of Aguascalientes, Mexico, Pascual Flores's father plays clarinet professionally in the city's orchestra, her mother in the symphonic band; even her grandfather played clarinet. Although Pascual Flores started her musical studies on violin, she ultimately followed in her parents' footsteps and took up the clarinet, an instrument which Pascual Flores loves for its versatility. "You can do so much: you can [play] so soft and delicate; on the other hand, you can also be super fun and fast," she says.

Whereas one might consider violin or piano one of the standard instruments to take up as a child in the U.S., in Oaxaca, Mexico—where her dad's family is from—it's the clarinet. "It's because of the big musical tradition [there]," she says. "It's mostly symphonic band, [so] the main instruments are wind instruments," says Pascual Flores.

"Growing up, I wasn't very drawn to being a musician," she admitted, but that changed around the age of 14. After a visit to Oaxaca and a chance to play clarinet in her family band, Pascual Flores knew she wanted the clarinet to be a part of her life forever. She found herself drawn to orchestral playing, growing up attending her father's classical orchestra concerts and solo and chamber music recitals.

If growing up in a musical family introduced her to the clarinet, an experience at an orchestra camp in Mexico as a high schooler, which afforded Pascual Flores the chance to tour around the country performing in a high-level youth orchestra, solidified an orchestral position as her "dream job," she says.

A recent graduate of the Cleveland Institute of Music, she credits her undergraduate teacher, Afendi Yusuf, as being a crucial mentor in her path towards a professional musical career. One pocket of wisdom that Pascual Flores took to heart was his tagline, "There are no shortcuts." In other words, dedication and hard work are essential qualities to have as a successful musician. "We have to work our way to things," she explains, acknowledging that it's still important to enjoy the journey.

This summer—Pascual Flores's second in Aspen—is an experience that she sees as a bridge between the academic and professional world. The rigorous concert schedule that mirrors that of a professional orchestra is "a great opportunity to practice the professional side of music. We have to prepare so much music and be ready from the very first rehearsal," she says, a skill that she'll carry with her when she heads to McGill University for her master's degree in the fall.

Outside of her busy rehearsal and practice schedule, Pascual Flores enjoys spending time outdoors: biking around town, stopping by Paradise for a cup of coffee, hiking, and soaking in the beauty of Aspen.

"Being here is a great opportunity to practice the professional side of music."

—JAZMIN PASCUAL FLORES

JAZMIN PASCUAL FLORES IS A RECIPIENT OF THE VINCENT WILKINSON FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP.