

Musician Spotlights, Issue 7

Carlos Valdez, Bass

Happy August, everyone! As we near the one month mark from our first return to a concert hall (woo-hoo!) we want to use August to spotlight our bass players, starting with Carlos Valdez.



Could you tell me a little bit about yourself?

My name is Carlos Valdez and I am from Lima, Peru. I just finished my master's degree at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music and I am planning to pursue a post-graduate degree at SFCM as well. Currently, I am spending my summer break with my family in Peru.

What brought or inspired you to pursue bass? If you'd like to share one of your favorite pieces of music as well, I'd like to know!

I used to play electric bass with my high school friends in a rock band. After I graduated from high school, I decided I wanted to play electric bass as a career, but since the only professional school was the Conservatory of Music, I began studying the double bass.

One of my favorite pieces is Johannes Brahms Symphony 1. It was the first piece I played with a guest conductor and it was the first time I realized that I wanted to play in the orchestra for my entire life.

What do you enjoy most about being with the Rogue Valley Symphony?

I enjoy playing with my bass colleagues. Everyone is so welcoming at the orchestra, from the staff members, musicians, conductors, sponsors, audiences. I am very grateful to everyone. The fact that we can play 3 times each repertoire in different cities is great! Driving up to Ashland from the Bay Area is beautiful! Watching Mount Shasta on the road is something I really enjoy.

What do you do when you're not playing music i.e. what are your hobbies or interests?

I am a sports fan. I play soccer when I can and I watch English soccer games all the time. I really enjoy walking large distances around every city I visit. I would not call it hiking necessarily. I enjoy teaching orchestra repertoire to my bass friends in Lima. With the pandemic, it has been easy to get used to doing online teaching.

Finally, one unusual fact, story, or tidbit about you or your instrument?

Since I live in San Francisco, it takes almost 6 hours to drive to the Rogue Valley so my friend and I spent all that time listening to entire symphony cycles to make the time shorter.

Unusual fact: I do enjoy listening to rap and stand-up comedy podcasts.