

Kevin Mills, Cello

Last but not least in our cello spotlights our Principal Cello, Kevin!



Could you tell me a little bit about yourself?

I am a southern California native and after getting my Masters at The Juilliard School, I have been residing in Los Angeles. Although I live so far away from Rogue Valley, my parents live in Bend. So every time I come to play with the symphony, I make a detour to visit with them which is a very nice treat.

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

I was always interested in the arts at a very young age. I sang, danced, and acted in a variety of shows. No one in my family is musical, but in the 4th grade I chose to play the cello in the school program. The only reason I chose it, truthfully, was because there were hardly any other cellists and they always sat

in the front for performances, which is where I wanted to sit. But I discovered almost immediately that I had a talent for the cello and I really did love to play it. I didn't take private lessons until the summer before high school, but after that first lesson I knew that it was what I wanted to do for the rest of my life.

My dream piece to perform one day is Don Quixote by Richard Strauss. It gives me everything I want in one piece of music and I think it is just one of the most amazing pieces of orchestral music ever written!

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

The thing I enjoy most about playing with RVS is the sense of community. It may not be the biggest or well known orchestra out there, but every time I play with everyone else there is such a sense of love and musical spirit towards one another. It makes every concert very special.

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

I've always thought of the cello as being both my career and my hobby. I genuinely love to practice and sit with my instrument. But I guess when I'm not doing that, I do like to be active. I love to ski whenever I'm able to, and I love to be in the kitchen cooking.

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

So the instrument I play on, a Renault & Chatelain made in Paris in 1779, belonged to my first cello teacher. She retired from performing a few years ago and wanted it to continue to be used so in an incredible act of generosity, she gifted it to me. But the funny thing is, she was a member of the Honolulu Symphony for a number of years, and she found this instrument being kept in someone's attic! I have no idea how this cello made its way from France all the way to the Hawaiian Islands, but it's fun to think about anyways.

