

Sophie Parker, Viola



Q: What instrument(s) do you play?

A: Viola, violin

Q: When and how did you get started in music?

A: At home, as my mother used to play piano and my parents both listened to a lot of classical music and opera. My introduction to music study made a circuitous route first through movement and dance classes. I started dancing when I was three, and studied ballet from second through ninth grade, and I still dance for fun. Instrumental study began in third grade when I studied piano for a year. In the fifth grade, we all took recorder for a year in our music class. I finally started playing the viola in the 6th grade, as part of a grade wide orchestra program at my elementary school. I still love it!

Q: When did you begin playing with the SOST?

A: I began playing viola with SOST in 2003.

Q: Educational background?

A: I have a DMA in Music Education and Viola from University of Houston, an MM in Viola Performance from the Conservatory of Music at Brooklyn College, CUNY, and a BA in Music from CU Boulder.

Q: Who has been your greatest influence in music?

A: My private viola teachers have all been the ones who influenced me most directly. My first private teacher, who played violin in the NYC Ballet orchestra, was a sweet and patient teacher, and encouraged me to continue. My last former teacher, Rita Porfiris, who played in the Houston Symphony, pushed me harder than anyone had before, and expected a lot, and made me grow both technically, and as a musician. I appreciate all her hard work! For musical heroes, I would say the cellist Yo Yo Ma, and the violist Yuri Bashmet.

Q: What is your “day job?”

A: I currently teach violin and viola to kids from many different countries at the Awty International School in Houston, ages 4 through 18. I also play freelance viola in other regional orchestras and as a chamber musician for weddings and other special events.

Q: Hobbies or activities outside of SOST?

A: Spending time with my sons, ages 4 and 7, playing chamber music with friends, dance and yoga.

Q: Favorite music?

A: Here is a short list: Bach Cello Suites, Caetano Veloso, Bill Evans, Beethoven String Quartets.