



Joy Mast

City/Town of Residence: Whitefish Bay

Instrument: 'cello

How long have you been playing in Concord?

I joined CCO shortly after moving to the Milwaukee area in 2019.

What is your earliest musical memory?

I remember seeing Mozart's opera "The Magic Flute" at UWM with my family at a very young age. I also remember my parents playing French classical duets on recorders.

What got you interested in music, and what was your involvement growing up?

I was allowed to begin piano lessons as soon as I was able to read, so in first grade. I began learning the 'cello at the end of 4th grade at through a WFB summer program with Mr. Chase (the HS orchestra teacher). I took private lessons in middle school and high school with Liz Tuma, then 'cellist in the Milwaukee Symphony (who retired about 3 years ago from MSO). I went to UW-Madison's summer music camp for 4 years, then played 'cello in their symphony as an undergraduate. During this time, I was also very involved in chamber orchestras and choirs.

My professional life led me to a science career studying forests, first with graduate school at the University of Colorado-Boulder and then with professor job at Northern Arizona University. During that time I continued to sing with symphonies and play 'cello with smaller ensembles. I joined a symphonic orchestra again as a 'cellist when I moved back to Wisconsin for a professor position at Carthage College, playing 16 years with the Lake Geneva Symphony. A highlight of that time was playing all 9 Beethoven Symphonies, ending performing the 9th with full 150-person choir at UW Whitewater. When we moved from Kenosha County to Milwaukee, I happily joined the large and congenial CCO 'cello section. I also sing with the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra.

Why do you perform with Concord?

I greatly enjoy ensemble playing and challenging myself to perform more difficult repertoire with a full orchestra, as well as playing with other 'cellists in both the regular season and the January small group concerts.

What has been the high point of your involvement with Concord?

I enjoyed our 'cello octets at the January concerts as a time to focus on the beauty of the 'cello sound and bond with the section. As for the full CCO concerts, playing in The Basilica of St. Josaphat was a treat for the sheer beauty of the space. The May 2022 concert brought the fun

of playing Florence Price's Dances in the Canebreaks which was a new piece to me. My favorite CCO piece to play overall was Symphony No. 9 ("New World") by Antonín Dvořák.

What do you do for a living?

For over 30 years, I have been a Professor teaching college undergraduate and graduate courses in forest ecology, biogeography, geology, field methods, and many other similar courses. My research focuses on forest disturbances in the Southwest related to crown fires, insect epidemics, and severe droughts.

Tell us about your family?

I have been married for 34 years (and counting). My husband is also a Professor with a specialty in environmental policies and American government. We have two adult "kids", one following my husband's interest graduating with a degree in political science with the other focusing on forestry in graduate school.

What are your hobbies besides practicing and playing?

Besides enjoying playing with the CCO, I spend two nights a week rehearsing with the Milwaukee Symphony Chorus. I also spend a lot of time walking and hiking our 10-month old Newfoundland puppy. When possible, we spend our vacation time either exploring national parks and forest or camping in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan near the Porcupine Mountains Wilderness.

What is your favorite recording?

Because it is my favorite to play, I enjoy listening to Beethoven's 7th Symphony, particularly the second movement, performed by the Los Angeles Symphony and conducted by Gustavo Dudamel.

Who is your favorite composer?

I suppose it depends on my mood, but if I had to pick one I would chose J.S. Bach. Yo-Yo Ma's performance of Bach's 'Cello Suites is also a favorite recording, and I learned to be a 'cellist with these suites.

What is one thing most people don't know about you?

I am an avid gardener, volunteering at my local community garden to raise food to donate and enjoy replacing our lawn with native plants.

What is your advice for kids who are interested in music?

I recommend taking advantage of your school's music program and sticking with your instrument even if you do not chose music as your profession. It brings joy to through the years and feeds your mind and soul.