



Kirsten Whitson (1990)

Kirsten Whitson was raised in Chicago until her senior year in high school when her family moved to Sarasota, Florida. That year she joined the Florida Orchestra as its youngest player. She trained at Indiana University with Fritz Magg and Jonas Starker, receiving a bachelor of music degree and an artist diploma, as well as winning the coveted Performer's Certificate. During her last 2 years there she was Fritz Magg's assistant instructor.

Kirsten has played and toured with the Minnesota Orchestra, the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, the Milwaukee Symphony and the Bergen Philharmonic in Norway. As an orchestral or chamber musician she has performed in Japan, Cuba, France, Germany, England, Scotland, Norway, Finland, Spain and Italy, as well as throughout the United States.

Her strangest gigs have been playing for a fish boil, a clay stomp, and at a nudist colony.

In 2002 Kirsten was awarded a Minnesota State Arts Board Fellowship to pursue her interest in improvisation. This continues to be an inspiration and a work-in-progress – stay tuned for more. She commissioned a piece by the McKnight-winning composer Carl Witt that was based on their collaborative improvisations.

Kirsten loves to teach and has an active studio in Saint Paul. She is trained in Suzuki Pedagogy and has taught in Suzuki programs at MacPhail and in Milwaukee and Green Bay, Wisconsin. She has also taught at Carroll College, St. Olaf College, and in a Norwegian fishing village accessible only by boat.

A year ago, Kirsten formed the Ambassador Trio with violinist Ray Shows and pianist Ned Kirk. They performed in France last June and they are the Artists-in-Residence for the renowned Minnesota Beethoven Festival in Winona.