

When I was young, my mother sang along with the local jazz station, WNOP—not well, mind you, but enthusiastically, and constantly—and her passion for music clearly imprinted on me at a tender age. As early as eighth grade, I had settled on trumpet as a career. I began to read biographies of famous composers and performers and decided that my dream was to live the life of Anton Rubenstein as described in his memoir, *My Younger Years*.

Many of Rubenstein's successes have eluded me—I never did hire a manservant or dine with royalty—and yet music has been good to me. While most of my high school classmates still live in or near the small Ohio town in which we grew up, music has taken me on tours through Italy, Germany, Switzerland, and Austria; to summer concerts in Nantucket (MA), Astoria (OR), Long Beach (WA), and Denver (CO); and to make my home in Boston, Mexico, and now the Pacific Northwest. The one major life decision that was not dictated by music was my move to Washington State in 1997—my wife Susan made her acceptance of my marriage proposal contingent upon my willingness to relocate to the Pacific Northwest. I maintain that she needed to return to her native stream to spawn, and I consider our children (Maddy, and Julian) proof of this assertion.

I don't expect to write a memoir like Rubenstein, though music has provided me with some good stories: I've squeezed a trip in the funicular up to Harder Kulm between a rehearsal and concert in Interlaken; had to bribe Italian customs to get my instrument out of the airport in Rome; I've watched in amazement as a conductor in Mexico fired the concertmaster on stage during a concert; and I've dressed in my share of goofy costumes (jockey, court jester) to play wedding fanfares. Collecting stories is fun, but the real joy comes from playing music. Performing in an orchestra is the greatest job in the world—a large group of very different people working toward a common goal, bathed in beautiful sound. Life doesn't get any better than that.