



BRAZOS CHAMBER ORCHESTRA



AUTUMN

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Mark Sanchez, Violin

Mark Sanchez, BCO violinist, was a military kid living overseas in Germany and the Philippines. At 8, he moved to Cleburne to live with his grandparents. This is when he first showed an interest in music by banging on the piano all the time. His grandparents decided to get him lessons, and found a sweet old lady in town who charged only \$5 a lesson. Mark's biggest fans were his grandparents who went with him to all of his musical events.

At 12, he moved to Fort Worth and joined the orchestra class in middle school. Mark thought that by joining the orchestra, he could continue playing piano. In his mind, since the piano has strings, orchestra class would be the right fit. However, that wasn't the case. When he had to choose an instrument, violin was the only thing he had ever heard of, so that was his choice, and it stuck.

At that time, Mark's violin was equivalent to a high quality cardboard box which carried him all the way from middle school through his undergrad at Baylor University. He currently performs with a French violin made in the 1800s.

Mark received his Bachelor's in Music Ed from Baylor University and his Masters in Music in Instrumental Studies with a Concentration in Violin Performance from SWBTS. He is currently in pursuit of a Performers Certificate in violin at SMU.

Mark joined BCO in 2016. He also performs with San Angelo Symphony, Temple Symphony, Las Colinas Symphony, Mansfield Philharmonic, and subs for the Plano Symphony. Playing with orchestras, freelancing, and teaching private lessons is the path he has been blessed with.

Greetings

This October begins the 2026/2027 Season of the Brazos Chamber Orchestra. This marks the 28th year of "Fostering harmony in our communities through free concerts, since 1998."

Cleburne	Burleson	Granbury
Mon Oct 12	Sun Oct 18	Mon Oct 19
Mon Dec 7	Sun Dec 13	Mon Dec 14
Mon Feb 15	Sun Feb 21	Mon Feb 22
Mon May 3	Sun May 2	Mon May 10

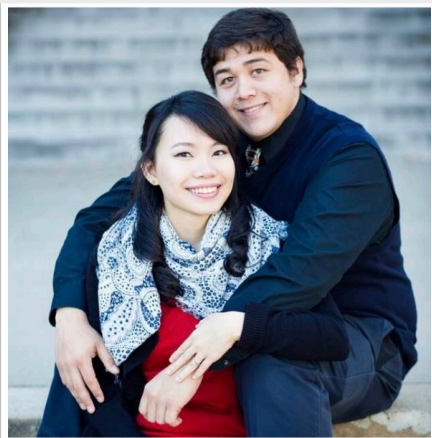
Richard Estes, Double Bass

Richard Estes, BCO bass, string bass, or double bass—your choice, same instrument—has been involved in making music from his childhood in Kentucky when, at the age of 3, his parents bought him a toy ukulele. He studied strings from early grade school onward—first with violin, then cello, and finally double bass.

He continued his musical studies throughout his secondary school years in North Carolina. While in high school, he performed with the Charlotte Symphony, Augusta Symphony, and Charleston Symphony. This must have been such an exciting time for a young teen.



Richard's musical journey took him to Stetson University in Florida (not the Western hattery) where he majored in voice while serving as principal double bass in the university symphony. Richard completed graduate school at Catholic University of America, and the elite Juilliard School.



Mark's wife, Keji—a pianist—is Chinese, so they try to visit her folks in Beijing once every few years. Mark and Keji were selected to perform for the prestigious annual Stephen Barr Memorial Concert Series at Texas Wesleyan University.

When time allows, Mark participates as an orchestral musician during the conducting institutes hosted by Miguel Harth-Bedoya and UTA.

Dr. Kurt Sprenger, BCO Concert Master, has been a vital part of Mark's musical development. They first met when Mark was in high school playing with the Fort Worth Civic Orchestra. Mark attributes Dr. Sprenger's involvement in the community and his wonderful playing as an inspiration to push his own practices.

Mark says, "The musicians in BCO are great people and it's a low stress environment." He adds, "Catering to the musical tastes of the people of Cleburne, Granbury, and Burleson, the repertoire BCO performs often steers away from strict classical norms to pieces that celebrate the American culture."



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During the Vietnam Era, Richard sang with the US Air Force Singing Sergeants and played bass with the Symphony in Blue every spring season.

After his extensive training and experience, Richard began an operatic singing career at Santa Fe Opera, Western Opera Theater in San Francisco, and many other opera companies around the US. His singing career required an intense dedication of time and energy, so Richard took a 50 year hiatus from playing double bass.

TCU brought Richard, his wife and 2 daughters to Fort Worth where he was a Professor of Voice and Director of Opera for 27 years. Since retiring from TCU, he has had the time to become active again playing bass—20 years with Fort Worth Civic Orchestra and 8 years with BCO.

Richard has many notable accolades and is a member of Actors' Equity Association (AEA), American Guild of Music Artists (AGMA), National Association of Teachers of Singing (NATS), and has been a national officer of The College Music Society.

Richard has 4 grandchildren, 7 ukuleles, a 1925 Steinway piano, and 2 double basses—a 200 year old Tyrolean bass and a modern Romanian bass with a low C extension for those pieces that require those extra low notes.

Richard says he loves playing with BCO because of the first rate musicians who are also first rate people, and adds that he appreciates the unapologetic Christian stance that Maestro David Anavitate upholds with BCO. "I am so grateful to David for giving this old man with a musically checkered past an opportunity to continue to make music."



Your Voice Matters

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BCO survey:

