



# Dawson White, Violist/Teacher

[dawsonwhiteviola.com](http://dawsonwhiteviola.com) [aspireviola.com](http://aspireviola.com)

## **Professional Profile**

Artist-teacher with extensive experience teaching viola and chamber music at undergraduate/graduate level with students at Oberlin Conservatory, Royal Conservatoire of the Hague, and University of Michigan. Violist in the Houston Grand Opera & Ballet orchestras and Cabrillo Festival Orchestra. Strong background in chamber music with two university string quartet residencies. Additional expertise in program building, entrepreneurship, and arts organization development.

## **College Teaching Experience**

### Presentations and Masterclasses

Northwestern University, invitation, Evanston, IL  
Rice University, TX  
Ankara Music & Fine Arts University, invitation, Turkey  
Baylor University, TX  
University of North Texas, TX  
Sam Houston State University, TX  
Houston Viola Society, TX  
Virtuosi Chamber Orchestra, Houston, TX

University of St. Thomas, Adjunct Professor of Viola & Chamber Music, 2013-current  
Private Teaching: Viola

- Teach undergraduate, graduate, liberal arts, and non-major viola lessons
- Repertoire: Krzysztof Penderecki, Ralph Vaughan Williams, Kevin Day, Rebecca Clarke, Eduard Pütz
- Focus on authentic viola sound, natural approach to playing, finger action, rebalance, healthy performance mindset (meditative/analytical brain), tension identification, and entrepreneurial skills (networking, studio teaching development)

### Chamber Music

- Former violist of Axiom String Quartet with university concert season
- Regular coachings with string and string/voice ensembles, recital preparation
- Repertoire: Johannes Brahms, Charles Ives, Frank Bridge, Zae Munn, Max Bruch
- String duos, trios, quartets and groups with voice, piano, and strings
- Focus on democratized sound/rehearsal techniques, historical context, compositional style, leadership, and emulating the voice

## Pedagogy

- Independent study course for graduate string students, ex. topic "Viola & the Voice"

## Recruitment

- Increased viola studio by 500% over 3 years
- Recruited first masters string students in history of university
- Organized All-Region/State Festival, first string recruiting event w/ 45 students
- Viola clinics/sectionals at Atascocita, Klein, and Katy ISD

## Entrepreneurship

- Developed university's first course in music entrepreneurship: Resume development, recordings, business plan, grant writing, networking, developing a music studio

## Sam Houston State University, Adjunct Professor of Viola & Chamber Music, 2013-17

### Private Teaching: Viola

- Taught undergraduate and non-major viola lessons
- Repertoire: Schubert, Walton, Hoffmeister, Schumann, Vieuxtemps
- Focused on scale, arpeggio, and etude development, tension identification, audition preparation, and pedagogical practice

### Chamber Music

- Former violist of Kolonneh String Quartet with university concert season
- Regular coachings with string ensembles and preparation for quartet masterclasses
- Repertoire: Mendelssohn, WF Bach, Dvorak, Mozart
- String duos, trios, quartets
- Focus on group sound, score study and memorization, projection, cuing, leadership

### Recruitment

- Grew viola studio by 300% in 3 years
- Coached area high schoolers in 7 All-Region/State workshops

### Orchestral Excerpts

- Lead violists through the symphony/opera/ballet excerpt cannon with mock audition
- First string orchestral excerpt course at the university

### String Methods Lessons

- Taught Viola lessons for music education majors in string methods course

## Lone Star College, Adjunct Professor of Strings, 2012-13

- Taught Viola, Violin lessons, Music Fundamentals - music theory course for non-majors

## Rice University, Viola Instructor, 2011

- Taught Viola lessons for non-music major violists, jury preparation

## ***Student Accomplishments***

### *International Conservatories*

McGill University  
Royal College of Music - London  
Royal Conservatoire - The Hague

### *US Conservatories/Colleges*

Baylor University  
Cleveland Institute of Music  
DePaul University  
Juilliard School  
Manhattan School of Music  
Oberlin Conservatory  
University of Michigan  
University of Tennessee - Knoxville  
University of Texas at Austin  
University of Oregon

### *Music Festivals*

American Festival for the Arts  
Aspen Music Festival  
Domaine Forget  
Heifetz Music Institute  
Sewanee  
Tanglewood Institute  
Texas Music Festival

### *Classroom and Private Teaching*

Cy-Fair ISD, Conroe ISD, College Station ISD, Fort Bend ISD, Katy ISD, Spring ISD, Spring Branch ISD

### *Professional*

Brazos Valley Symphony (TX)  
Brazosport Symphony (TX)  
Firelands Symphony (Ohio)  
Houston Civic Symphony  
Obiora Ensemble (Montreal)  
Rogue Valley Symphony (Oregon)  
Symphony of Southeast Texas

### *High School*

High School for the Performing & Visual Arts - Houston  
Houston Youth Symphony  
Texas State Solo & Ensemble  
Texas All-State Orchestras  
Texas All-Region orchestras  
Virtuosi Chamber Orchestra  
Young Artist Award

## ***Community Engagement***

Cabrillo Contemporary Music Festival, Presenter and Violist

- String Quartet Presentation and instrument demonstration for children

Houston Viola Society, Viola Day, Director and Presenter

- Masterclasses, educational workshops & classes reaching 150+ violists

Aspire Viola Academy, Solo and Ensemble Studio Class

University of St. Thomas, State/Region Workshop, first string recruiting event for UST

University of St. Thomas, ChamberFest, Organizer and Chamber Coach

- Intensive summer festival for high school/college students with weekly coachings and performance.

## **Adjudication**

UIL Texas State Solo and Ensemble Viola Adjudicator, University of Texas at Austin  
Music Teachers National Association - South Central Division Competition - Strings,  
University of Houston  
Houston Civic Symphony Young Artist Competition  
High School for the Performing and Visual Arts Concerto Competition, Houston  
Solo and Ensemble Regional String Judge, Klein ISD

## **Other Teaching Experience**

Musiktage am Rhein Music Festival, Germany

- Guest Principal Viola, soloist, and faculty coach of Mainzer Virtuosi Chamber Orchestra
- Discussed 3D aspects of sound, the role of each musician, listening across the group, leadership, compositional style, and placement of beat
- Repertoire: Bartok, Vivaldi, Hummel, Waxman, Granados

Casalmaggiore International Music Festival, Italy

- Viola Faculty and Chamber Coach
- Cancelled due to COVID-19

Aspire Viola Academy, Founder and Teacher

- High level, international viola studio focused on big goals: college/professional auditions, repertoire work, technical facility, performance mindset

Aspire Career Coaching, Founder

- Private practice helping musicians advance careers
- Topics include finding your 'why', musical and extra-musical skills, networking

Texas All-State Camp

- Viola Artist Faculty
- Rigorous sessions in All-Region and All-State etudes/excerpts for advanced high school players
- Development of refined sound, reliable pitch/rhythm, finger pattern and hand frame

University of St. Thomas Music Preparatory School, Viola Faculty

Private Lesson Teacher - Fort Bend, Klein, Cy-Fair, Katy, Waco, and Hewitt ISD

- Taught Viola, Violin, and Fiddle to students aged 8-81, hobbyist to professional

## **Performance Experience**

### ***Orchestral Performance Highlights***

Houston Grand Opera, Houston, TX, 2016-current  
Section Viola, rotating  
Houston Ballet, Houston, TX, 2014-current  
3rd chair viola  
Cabrillo Contemporary Music Festival, Santa Cruz, CA, 2018-current  
Section Viola, rotating  
San Antonio Symphony, San Antonio, TX, 2018-current  
Substitute Viola  
Kaleidoscope Chamber Orchestra, Los Angeles, CA, 2017-current  
Principal Viola, Rotating

### ***Additional Orchestral Experience***

YouTube Symphony, Carnegie Hall, 2009  
Assistant Principal Viola  
Austin Symphony, Austin, TX, 2008-14  
Substitute Viola  
Opera in the Heights, Houston, TX, 2013-current  
Guest Principal Viola  
Symphony of Southeast Texas, Beaumont, TX, 2012-13  
Section Viola

### ***Chamber Music Performances***

#### ***International:***

Namedy Castle, Andernach, Germany  
Concert Shell, Koblenz, Germany  
St. Martins Cathedral, Engers, Germany  
Casting Hall, Sayner Hütte, Bendorf Germany

#### ***United States:***

Walt Disney Hall, Los Angeles, CA  
Museum of Fine Arts Houston, TX  
Zilkha Hall, Hobby Center of Performing Arts, Houston, TX  
Cullen Hall, Wortham Theater Center, Houston, TX  
Pepsico Hall, Texas Christian University, Fort Worth, TX  
Midtown Arts & Theater Center, Houston, TX  
Liberty Theater, Astoria, OR  
St. Andrews Methodist Church, Dallas, TX  
Miller Outdoor Theater, Houston, TX

## **Recordings**

Hansel and Gretel. Houston Grand Opera, Patrick Summers; 2021  
O'Regan: The Phoenix (Live). Houston Grand Opera, Patrick Summers; Pentatone Music; 2020  
Complete Works of Gustavo Navarre. Kolonneh String Quartet; Cantys Label, 2014  
Already Won. Already Won; Essen Hiort; Grind Records; 2017  
One More Kiss. Blänk; 2017  
A Sign of Life. Signs of Life; Jonas Lundvall; Rexus Records; 2017  
Building Bridges. The Willy Collins Band, Axiom Quartet; CD Baby Label; 2013  
Goodbye. Girl Friday, Axiom Quartet. Girl Friday Label, 2013  
Rise with Him. Peace; Story Worship; 2019

## **Education**

University of North Texas, Doctor of Musical Arts, ABD May 2022  
Viola Performance and Music Entrepreneurship, Dr. Susan Dubois & Scott Tixier

Shepherd School of Music, Rice University, Master of Music, 2012  
Viola Performance, Ivo van der Werff

Baylor University, Bachelor of Music, 2010  
Viola Performance, Dr. Kathryn Steely

<i>Principal Teachers</i>	<i>Chamber Music</i>	<i>Masterclasses</i>	<i>Conductors</i>
Helen Callus	Desmond Hoebig	Roberto Diaz	Cristian Macelaru
Susan Dubois	Cho-Liang Lin	Hsin-Yun Huang	Robert Spano
Kathryn Steely	Enso Quartet	Samuel Rhodes	Patrick Summers
Ivo van der Werff	Catalyst Quartet	Peter Slowik	Michael Tilson Thomas

## **Publications and Presentations**

Northwestern University, Music Entrepreneurship, invitation, 2022  
Rice University, Music Entrepreneurship, 2015  
University of North Texas, Strategies for Audition Preparation and Performance, 2021  
Baylor University, Bullet Journaling for Music Practice, 2021  
Baylor University, Creating an Authentic Viola Sound, invitation 2022  
Sam Houston State University, Pedagogy Workshop for Music Educators, 2018-19  
Houston Viola Society: Viola Day, Masterclass, 2017  
Entrepreneurship, Studio Blog - Rice University, American Viola Society, 2013  
YouTube Symphony Summit, American Viola Society, 2009

## **Organizational Leadership**

University of St. Thomas, Coordinator and Curriculum Developer

- Developed curriculum for new proposed Bachelor of Music degree
- Organized All State/Region String Festival, clinic for 45 high school students
- Organized ChamberFest, chamber music program for high schoolers
- Organized a study abroad for music students to attend Casalmaggiore Festival.

Houston Ballet & Houston Grand Opera Committees

- Union orchestra LGBTQ+ representative for HGO Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee. Drafting core values and formation of a diversity statement
- Served on numerous orchestra and audition committees.

Houston Viola Society, Co-Founder, Director of Viola Day, Board member

- spearheaded two Viola Days at the University of St. Thomas, attendance of over 150 violists from Central Texas to Louisiana.
- Cofounder of the organization, recruited a board, attained 501(c)3 non-profit status and led marketing, membership and artistic programming initiatives.
- Past Vice President and Co-President

Axiom String Quartet

- Developed concert series at University of St. Thomas and throughout Houston and Texas, marketing, programming, outreach, and obtained 501(c)3 non-profit status

New Art/New Music, Rice University

- Coordinated concert series, commissioned composers, publicity campaign, website development, coordination of graphic design of web/flyer materials.
- Obtained Sviatoslav Richter Grant for Music Outreach
- 400% concert attendance improvement, use of website content for Rice Gallery website, and trademarking the New Art/New Music name.

## **Awards, Scholarships, and Grants**

Grant, Sviatoslav Richter Grant for Music Outreach, Rice University, TX, 2011

Scholarship, College of Music, University of North Texas, 2021-22

Scholarship, Mimir Chamber Music Festival, Fort Worth, TX, 2013

Full Tuition Scholarship, Rice University, TX, 2010-12

Scholarship, Astoria Music Festival, OR, 2010

Donald I. Moore Award for Outstanding Performance, Baylor University, TX, 2010

Dean's Award Outstanding Musical Performance, Baylor University TX, 2009

Scholarship, Aspen Music Festival, CO, 2008

Scholarship, Austrian American Mozart Festival, AT, 2007

Full Tuition Scholarship, Baylor University, TX, 2006-10

## ***Music Entrepreneurship***

- Entrepreneurship Presentations at Rice University, Baylor University and invitation to Northwestern University
- Development of career coaching practice and resources through Aspire Coaching and Aspire Viola Academy
- Developed course "The Entrepreneurial Musician" at University of St. Thomas
- Doctor of Musical Arts Related Field in Music Entrepreneurship & Business at University of North Texas
- Extensive college coursework completed:
  - The Musical Entrepreneur
  - Performing Arts Management Internship
  - Special Problems: Creative Business Mindset
  - Marketing for Musicians
  - Technology Entrepreneurship
  - Business of Music
  - Career Skills
- LinkedIn Learning Certifications:
  - Marketing Foundations
  - Writing a Marketing Plan
  - Social Media Promotion For Musicians, Artists, and Engineers
  - Introduction to Content Marketing
  - Marketing Foundations: The Marketing Funnel
  - Pricing Strategy: Value-Based Pricing
  - Finance for Non-Financial Managers
- Participation in development of numerous entrepreneurial projects: Aspire Viola Academy, Houston Viola Society, Cypress Symphony, Axiom Quartet, New Art/New Music.
- Performing Arts Management and Education Internship with KINETIC conductorless ensemble

## ***Professional Affiliations***

American Federation of Musicians, Local 65-699 (Houston, TX)  
American String Teachers Association  
American Viola Society - National board nomination  
College Music Society  
Houston Viola Society - Cofounder, Board Member  
Network of Music Career Development Officers