

GREGORY COHEN, PRINCIPAL PERCUSSION



Gregory Cohen joined the San Diego Symphony as Principal Percussionist in October, 2008, after serving as acting principal for the previous season. A native of St. Louis, Missouri, Gregory received his B.M. in percussion performance from Boston University and his M.M. from the New England Conservatory, also in percussion performance. Gregory has performed with such notable orchestras as the Boston Symphony Orchestra, the Chicago Symphony, the LA Philharmonic, the St. Louis Symphony, the Pacific Symphony and the Kansas City Symphony.

Prior to his work with the San Diego Symphony, Greg was privileged to work and train at several music festivals, including the Tanglewood Music Center, the National Repertory Orchestra, the Schleswig-Holstein Music Festival and the National Orchestral Institute. Throughout his career, he has played for many conductors including Jahja Ling, James Levine, Kurt Masur, Christoph Eschenbach, Valery Gergiev, Robert Spano, Seiji Ozawa and David Robertson. He has travelled across the Atlantic to perform in renowned halls such as the Konzerthaus in Berlin and the Gewandhaus in Leipzig. Greg has performed all over the United States, including Carnegie Hall. As a graduate student of the New England Conservatory, he gave a solo recital in Boston's Jordan Hall. Gregory has recorded on Telarc, Reference Recordings, Albany Records and Mode Records labels and is a Zildjian orchestral artist.

In addition to his work at the San Diego Symphony, Gregory became a studio faculty member at San Diego State University in the fall of 2009. He also maintains an active private percussion studio in San Diego. His students have won numerous competitions and have achieved many accolades.

In his spare time, Gregory enjoys cooking new recipes with his wife, Courtney, and sailing the fine waters of San Diego Bay.

Getting to know Gregory Cohen...

Q: How did you choose your instrument?

A: When I was young I used to beat on anything I saw, so the doctor told my parents to give me a pair of drumsticks. The rest is history.

Q: What is your favorite travel destination?

A: Colorado

Q: What is your choice for dining in San Diego?

A: I like Pokéz at 10th and E Street in downtown San Diego. They have the best mahi burrito in the city.

Q: Where do you find me on a Saturday night if I'm not performing with the Symphony?

A: On the rare Saturday night that I'm not working, you'll find me cooking a new recipe with my wife Courtney and streaming a movie over Netflix®.

Q: The non-musical accomplishment you are most proud of is...?

A: My non-musical accomplishment that I am most proud of is marrying my wife Courtney, who is currently the Principal Librarian of the Orchestra.

Q: What is your favorite San Diego Symphony memory?

A: I had quite a good time playing the Hammer part in Mahler's 6th Symphony. The wooden box that I struck measured 4 feet x 4 feet x 6 feet tall. I live for parts like this.