

## MATTHEW GARBUTT, PRINCIPAL TUBA



Born in Los Angeles, Principal Tuba Matthew Garbutt began his musical studies on the tuba at age 10 and conducting at age 16. He attended the Idyllwild School of Music and Arts, the Music Academy of the West in Santa Barbara, California State University-Northridge and the California Institute of the Arts. He also attended the Academy for Music and Dramatic Arts in Vienna and completed studies at Indiana University. His principal tuba teachers included Tommy Johnson (a highly sought-after teaching and studio artist in LA), Roger Bobo (Principal Tuba in the Los Angeles Philharmonic), Leopold Kolar (Vienna Philharmonic) and the legendary Harvey Phillips (Indiana University).

In the years before he came to San Diego, Mr. Garbutt performed with the San Fernando Valley Symphony, the Burbank Symphony and (as a substitute on a few occasions) the Los Angeles Philharmonic. In 1973, Matthew Garbutt became the Principal Tuba for the Israel Philharmonic (under the direction of another legend, Zubin Mehta) at the age of 21. Garbutt's audition for Maestro Mehta took place on the stage of Carnegie Hall. Even though Matthew forgot his sheet music that day (!), he was able to perform all of the requested excerpts perfectly from memory, winning the position.

Matthew Garbutt maintained his Israel Philharmonic position for three years, but a strong desire for conducting opportunities eventually brought him back to southern California. Matthew joined the San Diego Opera orchestra in 1976, becoming Principal Tuba of the Opera shortly thereafter. In 1977, he auditioned for and won the Principal Tuba position with the San Diego Symphony. Matthew Garbutt has also been the San Diego Symphony's Principal Summer Pops conductor for almost 30 years, and he also frequently conducts Winter Pops and Family Festival concerts.

Matthew Garbutt performs on a 1927 Conn Double B-flat tuba (purchased in mint condition in 2000 from the son of the original owner) and a Mirafone Double C tuba (purchased way back in 1986).

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### ***Getting to know Matthew Garbutt...***

**Q: How did you choose your instrument?**

A: At the age of 5, my parents took me to a 1956 taping of a popular show on LA's KTLA called Polka Parade. The studio tuba player allowed me to touch his horn and play some notes, which came out rather loud for such a little boy! Needless to say, I was permanently hooked on the tuba.

**Q: What are three of your favorite movies?**

A: Gosh, for the Garbutt family nothing really beats all of those *Star Wars* movies!

**Q: What are your favorite travel destinations?**

A: Our favorite is Siesta Key Beach in Florida. The sand on this beach is unbelievable: pure white, made from 99% crushed quartz crystal, very cool to the touch, like walking on powdered sugar!

**Q: What is your favorite San Diego Symphony memory?**

A: Well, this is more properly a *conducting* rather than performing memory, but in the Summer of 1983, at the grand finale 1812 Overture concert, the stage crew managed to put my podium on a scissor-lift without my knowing. (This was at Hospitality Point, our first summer of concerts there.) Sure enough, near the end of the piece when all the horns and strings are really blowing and going, I start to RISE above the orchestra, ending 15 feet up in the air! I couldn't believe it, and the audience just went nuts. Fantastic!