

I'm Dan Foran. I like to think that I first began singing in utero. I grew up in a very musical family, we were singing in church every single week so it was normal for me to always have music around me. I have been told I could carry a tune ever since I was about two. I believe it was my family, ultimately, that got me into music.

Q: Do you have a favorite composer?

There are so many great ones and if I had to choose one I personally liked all the way around I would have to say Mozart and you can never go wrong with Mozart. The way he writes for the voice, he's very good at it. The way he writes for the instrumentation, the way he orchestrates everything it's so complete. And I love listening to his opera music just as much as I love listening to his piano concertos or his symphonies, it's (he's) fantastic just as a composer! As a singer, he writes so well for the voice. I like to think that he does all the work and I get all the credit. So I would have to go with Mozart there.

Q: You have performed with piano and orchestra. Do you prefer one over the other?

To me, it depends on the situation, on what song I'm singing, or performance I'm giving. If I am giving a recital I love the piano! That's my favorite instrument, I love performing with the piano. If I am singing an aria... "Che gelida manina," from La Boheme, there's nothing in the world like having the orchestra behind you for that and I wouldn't want it any other way. That is just, I mean, of course, it's my opinion and it can be argued with by different people, but to me... I love both of them!

Q: How long does it take you to learn music?

(Laughing) Apparently, it takes me longer to learn music than every other musician I went to school with! I would have to say that for me to learn an opera role, it takes me about a full month. That's working pretty-darn-hard and that is to learn the entire role and to have it memorized and everything.

If I'm learning a piece in English, it could take me as little as (I would say) a day, two days to completely memorize it, to as much as several months.

Q: Do you have a dream role?

My favorite role is Rodolpho, in La Boheme. That is the first opera that I ever saw at the Met and I was so in awe of every single aspect of that opera. It was so great and so moving!

Q: What is the hardest part about performing/the easiest part?

To me, the hardest part of performing has always been tapping the character, finding that little niche that I can use to identify with the person I'm playing, the person that I have become onstage. The easiest part and the most enjoyable is getting out in front of the audience and performing. There is not a greater thrill, to me, in music, than that, being able to get out in front of the audience and performing.

Q: There's an interesting story about your birth, can you tell us about it?

I'm the ninth child, seventh son, born in my family. My mom had just begun her third trimester. The first full day down there [The Outer Banks of North Carolina, the family's annual vacation spot] mom didn't want to go into the water and my dad didn't know why.

He came out [of the water-from swimming] and he asked if everything was okay and she said she wasn't sure, she didn't know. Something wasn't right, my dad knew it. My dad proceeded to ask mom if she wanted to go home. She said immediately, without even thinking about it, "yes, I want to go home!"

Mom's water broke and the nearest hospital was about a hundred miles away. My dad had eight kids and an airport limousine that had eight doors; he had to transport his eight kids, following behind the ambulance about 120-miles-an-hour. You're (He's) flying down the highway and all the intersections are closed off by the police because people are taking pictures and they want to keep the roads clear for the ambulance, followed by the airport limousine, with the eight heads in the doors. And I was born in the evening! That's a very condensed version of the story. (Laughing)

Kindergarten and first grade I went to Catholic school. Second grade I was moved into public school. Third grade, I was taken out of public school and my parent's began homeschooling me. I was homeschooled all the way through high school. I went to college a little later (in life) I was 24 when I first went to college.

Q: Hobbies?

When I get time, I like to play hockey and rollerblade! I love to hike, or walk and I love mowing lawns and shoveling snow! I just like, I'm a glutton for punishment, I suppose, but I love being outside doing stuff!

Q: When was your first public performance?

My first live, I would say, pseudo-professional performance, was when I was 24, shortly after I was introduced to classical music and the classical repertoire and classical training and I got to perform with orchestra. I sang two pieces, I sang "Oh! Holy Night," (it was a concert in January, so it was mixed with Christmas music) I sang "Oh! Holy Night" and I sang the Cesar Franck, "Panis Angelicus." It was, literally, life changing for me! When I finished the performance I realized, wow, this is it! This is what I want to do! I wouldn't be happy doing anything else.

Q: Do you have a favorite singer?

I mean, how can you not love Juan Diego Flórez? His voice, the timbre is so sweet and it's just so open and free and forward and gorgeous! You just have to love listening to him.

Q: What advice would you give to an aspiring singer?

If I were to give advice to an aspiring singer who is ready to start in the business, I would say, put your working boots on! Put your working boots on because it's incredibly hard! It's a hard business to find a niche! There are so many singers in this business, so many great performers, but you have something very unique to offer and you have to find out what it is so you can bring it to the forefront.