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# musicalamerica WORLDWIDE

It Takes A Special Person To Play The Double Bass...

BY DANNY FRANK



Madalena Kozol, 14 of Boston (Roslindale), Massachusetts, receives the Kolstein Double Bass donated from Barrie Kolstein (left) and Manny Alvarez, President of Kolstein, Inc. This Kolstein Grand Panormo was awarded to Madalena by the International Society of Bassists

Madalena Kozol, 14 of Boston (Roslindale), Massachusetts, was surprised to be awarded a Grand Panormo model double-bass (which normally retails for \$25,000) donated by Kolstein ([www.kolstein.com](http://www.kolstein.com)) at the International Society of Bassists Convention this past June 5-10, 2023. Kolstein, one of America's top three luthier manufacturers of fine quality string instruments celebrating its 80th anniversary, based in Baldwin and New York City, New York, has been an enthusiastic contributor providing this instrument in an annual tradition. This bass was partially completed by Samuel and Barrie Kolstein in 1972 and fully completed by Barrie Kolstein in 2023, expressly made for the ISB Young Bassists Program.

Madalena is a ninth grade student at the Boston Arts Academy, the city's only public high school for visual and performing arts. She also studies at Project STEP ([www.projectstep.org](http://www.projectstep.org)), New England Conservatory Prep program and Berklee's BREO program. Madalena has two private double bass teachers: Pascale Delache-Feldman for classical music and Brad Barrett for jazz music. Ms. Delache-Feldman, who performed at this year's ISB Convention, encouraged Madalena to attend the event's Young Bassists Program. Project STEP sponsored Madalena to be able to attend.

The week included opportunities for Madalena to see and work with many accomplished bass players who offered advice, guidance, and mentoring. "I was in the Convention's *young bassists program*, studying with great teachers and playing with other really inspiring young bassists. I played with a jazz bass combo, a classical bass orchestra and I got to take master classes with Robert Hurst, Steve Bailey and other amazing professional bassists. I performed 'Ornithology' by Charlie Parker at a bass recital and with the jazz bass combo and the bass orchestra at the final concert," Madalena explains. She looks forward to attending more ISB Conventions.

"I figured that when my name was called for the Samuel Kolstein Memorial Award, I would be given a certificate," Madalena continues. "I had no idea that the ISB and Kolstein made this annual award of an actual fine quality bass."

"Being awarded this Kolstein bass really did not hit me until I was called to the front of the stage," Madalena exclaims. "This Kolstein bass has truly enhanced my playing. I am more connected to it...it looks really amazing apart from the rich, big sound, which can fill up the whole room. When I first saw this bass I felt so lucky to be given this instrument. I felt so proud with my teacher, my dad, and the rest of the audience and the other bassists cheering me on."

As a child, Madalena played the piano for about a year before discovering the bass, which she was inspired to play when she was nine years old after watching a video of renowned bassist Esperanza Spalding, who she has since seen perform live a few times.

She fell in love with the instrument, developing a passion for it. Madalena describes how: "I enjoy the sound of it. Over and above violins and cellos, the bass has a certain distinctive sound which is deeper and more reflective of its wood. I feel more connected when playing it because your whole body becomes involved. I can put my personality into the double bass when compared to a different string instrument. You have to be in a positive mood playing the bass--- your playing can show if you are not in a good mood!"

Some of Madalena's favorite music includes 'Gavotte in G Major' by François Joseph Gossec and 'Nostalgia In Times Square' by her favorite bass player and composer Charles Mingus.

She is now studying Vivaldi's Sonata #5 in e minor.

"I try to practice ninety minutes to two hours a day." Through Project STEP, Madalena studies in a chamber ensemble, music theory and in New England Conservatory's Junior Repertory Orchestra. She also is in an NEC Prep Jazz Ensemble, the Berklee Really Eclectic Orchestra (a Berklee College of Music group for high school string players) and in multiple school groups at the Boston Arts Academy.

Madalena is interested in participating in many classical and jazz music opportunities and plans to audition for the LA Phil's YOLA (Youth Orchestra Los Angeles) National Festival next summer with conductor and music director Gustavo Dudamel.

Music appears to be Madalena's career ambition. She conveys to all of her friends how she loves playing the bass every day. So far, colleges on Madalena's radar include: Berklee College of Music and the University of Michigan (where she was able to meet some faculty members when she attended the ISB).

Madalena hopes to also study and play the cello: "I think this is a cool instrument and I have one that was passed down from my great grandfather."

"I would like to thank all my teachers for their guidance, my parents for their support, and Project STEP for all their work with me and for sponsoring me to attend the ISB Convention. And, special thanks to Manny Alvarez and Barrie Kolstein for their amazing gift of this beautiful instrument. All of this has been a milestone experience in my life," Madalena concludes.

*Here are two videos of Madalena Kozol playing the Kolstein Grand Panormo bass with her father, Kenny Kozol's band, Ten Tumbao, on October 4, 2023 at the Shalin Liu Performance Hall in Rockport, Massachusetts. The first song is "Maria das Mercedes" by the Brazilian musician Djavan, who comes from the city Maceió, where Madalena's mom,*

*Sandra Kozol, is from. The second song is "Obsesión" by the great Puerto Rican composer Pedro Flores.*

*Maria das Mercedes by Djavan: <https://youtu.be/gZrs9zqK1B8>*

*Obsesión by Pedro Flores: <https://youtu.be/v-PTFASsrSo>*

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