

Steve Gamble

Steve Gamble and his daughter, Ruth

Steve Gamble joined the TSO in 1989 as second trombonist and now holds the position of bass trombone. Steve wears another hat at the TSO as well. He has been the librarian since 1991.

Steve began playing the trombone in grade school in Phoenix. "My father wanted to conduct a family band," Steve explains. "There were five kids and my mother didn't play anything. My father played piano and accordion. My oldest sister played trumpet, my brothers played clarinet, sax and drums." The family played combos briefly, but Steve is the only member who continued in music. "I was drawn to the trombone," he recalls with a hearty laugh, "in the third grade after hearing the trombonists from the school band making rude noises with their instruments. They were making such a racket I knew it was for me."

After attending Arizona State University, he moved to Chicago where he was a founding member of the Chicago Chamber Brass. He was a member of that ensemble for ten years and made five recordings with them for the Pro-Arte and Crystal labels. His contributions included a large number of successful arrangements for brass quintet, many of which have been published. As a result of his association with CCB, Steve has performed in nearly every state in the U.S. as well as in Europe. He has held positions in the Santa Fe Symphony Orchestra and the Arizona Opera Orchestra as bass trombonist and is bass trombonist of the Tucson Pops Orchestra.

Steve describes his job as TSO librarian as "a heckuva lot of detail and some research." He acquires the music, proofreads it, prepares it for the conductor and musicians to play, distributes it, and then collects it to return to rental companies and the library shelves. He also annotates the score to facilitate the rehearsal process for the conductor. "As a performer, I am interested in enhancing the performance," Steve explains. "Everyone in the TSO Operations Department is a musician and wants to work in music. The thing that makes it a desirable job is that I can really contribute to the product. The music on the stage can be affected by what I do. If, for example, I, or my assistant Carla Ecker, don't prepare the string parts carefully, the rehearsal has to be stopped, wasting precious minutes. There's a lot of grunt work: if you're doing a Mahler score it's going to take about three weeks. You can't get bored. You have to like the solitude of it. When things go smoothly you're the only one who knows that it happened. No one is thanking you but all the reward we need is that we play well."

In addition to his performing career, Steve has been involved extensively in education. He has appeared at many significant state and national music educators conventions across the U.S. as both clinician and performer and has held teaching positions at Elmhurst College (IL), Mesa Community College (AZ) and the University of New Mexico.

Steve has lived in Tucson since he entered the U of A as a grad student and got his job with the TSO. He is the proud papa of a starving artist in New York City. Trained in theater arts, 28 year old Ruth Gamble is currently paying her dues by appearing in commercials and taking auditions. Patrons may remember she was the house manager for the TSO in the 2001-02 season. Steve lives with his dog, a cocker mix, Mr. Wilson (named after his teacher at ASU).