



Photo Credit: Travis Anderson Photo

Kenneth Freed is an orchestral player, conductor, chamber musician, educator, and social entrepreneur.

A violist and violinist, Freed's early musical training was at the Henry Street Settlement Music School with Elizabeth Weickert and the Juilliard Pre-College Division with Louise Behrend. He earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in English Literature from Yale College and a Master of Music from Yale School of Music where he studied violin with Syoko Aki Erle and was awarded the William Waithe Concerto Competition Prize, the Broadus Earle Memorial Prize for Violin, and the Tokyo String Quartet Prize for Chamber Music. He then studied in London with Helen Dowling.

Orchestral music has been the focus of Freed's career. He has performed with the Minnesota Orchestra viola section since 1998. Before joining the orchestra, he played second violin in the internationally acclaimed Manhattan String Quartet.

Freed's conducting training includes the National Symphony Orchestra's Conductor's Institute under Leonard Slatkin and master classes with Jorma Panula. For the 2005-06 season, he served as the Minnesota Orchestra's assistant conductor under music director Osmo Vänskä.

For 12 seasons, Freed was Music Director of the Mankato Symphony Orchestra, where he raised the orchestra's artistic level and collaborated with staff and board to enhance community engagement. Thanks to his innovative programming, the orchestra was awarded three NEA Fast-track awards and received a transformational bequest of \$500,000.

Freed helped found Learning Through Music Consulting Group, a nonprofit organization that used music as a teaching tool to improve children's learning outcomes and with public and private support with Minneapolis Public Schools, the University of Minnesota, the MacPhail Center for Music, and Greater Twin Cities Youth Symphonies. He is currently working with a community music school in Vietnam to broaden the reach of music in public and private education.

Outside of music Freed is a triathlete at the sprint level and once participated in the London AJ Bell Triathlon while on a Minnesota Orchestra tour. He and his wife Gwendolyn have three children: Zachary, Eleanor and Jonah.