

## *My Alternative Biography: Stuart Beard, Tuba*

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**“Since completing his five years of study at the Royal Academy of Music, London under the tutelage of Patrick Harrild, Stuart has been busy managing a freelance player career.”**

Not long after he finished studying, Stuart found it difficult to really leave the Royal Academy behind, constantly returning to feel reassured in the world that he had entered into. Partnered with difficult neighbours making home practice always feel intrusive and rude, this made post-study life feel especially unnerving. Then, when he thought enforced separation from his place of study, by means of a pandemic, had allowed Stuart to feel more comfortable post-conservatoire - he took a job there! Maybe necessary for the wallet, but less so for the mind! Seeing current students completing their studies in an environment not reflective of the outside world was equally inspiring as crushing. Envious of the playing opportunities, educational provision and musical focus of the institution, all whilst perpetual tiredness and the bleakness of the outside world continued to take effect. Although feeling more confident in the world after music college, Stuart constantly wonders whether he should return to study. Reasonings can range from having ‘a space away from home for work’ or to feelings of incompetence and even sometimes to hypothetical financial motivations. The safety net and support network of music college can feel so immense in comparison to the outside world but Stuart believes it shouldn't be the root of one's reason to stay in education.