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This photo depicts Nathaniel Ayers with his "Little Walt Disney Concert Hall - Beethoven." It's his name for his portable cart, containing his musical instruments, which he can move from place to place. Image taken October 2, 2005. Copyright, *LA Times*, all rights reserved. Online, via [LA Times](#). Small version of the image provided here as fair use for educational purposes.

Nathaniel Ayers likes to play his music in LA's [2nd Street Tunnel](#), at Hill. Like an echo chamber, the tunnel provides great acoustics, and Mr. Ayers isn't bothered by traffic noise. In a way, at least for him, all the other sounds add to his performance.

He doesn't play for money, although sometimes people leave tips. He plays for himself, to improve his skills. He remembers what his world-class teachers told him: "Practice, practice, practice. That's how you become great."

The 2nd Street "performance hall" isn't far from LA's real concert forum—[Walt Disney Hall](#). Opened in 2003, the new music center is stunning to behold during the day and at night. Taking a [virtual video tour](#), one can readily see that [Lillian Disney](#) (widow of Walt Disney) achieved her goal of giving a [beautiful gift](#) to the people of [Los Angeles](#).

Disney Hall is one of the most acoustically superior [musical settings](#) in the world and is home to the [Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra](#). It is a place which attracts many world-class musicians.

Nathaniel Ayers also wished to perform there, but the reality of his world did not seem to mesh with that of his neighbor. Recognizing his limitations, Mr. Ayers opened [Little Walt Disney Hall](#)—a portable transport system in which he could load his instrument and the rest of his earthly belongings. In case anyone misses the point, a sign on the shopping cart—"Little Walt Disney Concert Hall—Beethoven"—identifies its owner's intent.

The good thing, about Little Walt Disney Hall, is it can go anywhere. If Mr. Ayers wants to play for Beethoven, at Pershing Square, he can. If he wants to change locations, and perform in the 2nd Street Tunnel, he can. And while his music may not be layered with the lush texture derived from an acoustically superior concert hall, it is still soulfully played by a musician who loves what he's doing.

While living on the streets of LA, not far from the city's new architectural gem, Nathaniel used his violin for more than making music. Propping-up the encased instrument against the wheels of his portable concert hall, Nathaniel turned the case into his pillow. Within reach were his two sticks—Beethoven and Brahms—which kept the rats away. He wouldn't brutalize the rodents ... he'd just tap the sticks, to chase them away.

Then ... a completely unexpected gift came his way. Members of the LA Philharmonic, like so many other Angelenos, were reading Steve Lopez' columns about Nathaniel. Some kind citizens of the city had already given Mr. Ayers a new cello, and two violins, but this gift was an invitation—to Disney Hall.

Would Nathaniel Anthony Ayers like to attend a concert?

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Walt Disney Hall - At Night

Photo, described above, by Aaron Logan.

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Lillian Disney - Benefactor of Walt Disney Hall

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Disney Hall with a View of Los Angeles

Photo by Geographer, online courtesy Wikimedia Commons.

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The Soloist - Interior of Walt Disney Hall

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Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra in Concert

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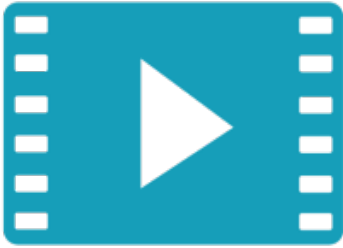
The Soloist - Little Walt Disney Concert Hall

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The Soloist - 2nd Street Tunnel

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