

IN MY EXPERIENCE

Player

MITTENWALD INTERNATIONAL
DOUBLE BASS MASTERCLASS,
GERMANY



Martijn Korteknie double bass

I wasn't actively looking to go on a course when I came across this one on Facebook. When I saw that Jeff Bradetich was leading it, I knew I had to sign up. That was back in 2015, and summer 2019 was the third time I took part. There are no more than 20 students and players of all levels are equally welcome – people would only be turned away if the course was already full. The students' levels range from beginner to professional, with adults just starting out playing alongside technically very impressive teenagers.

The mornings start with a 90-minute technical class, with exercises that incorporate Jeff Bradetich's own method. After that there are solo lessons and masterclasses with different teachers, giving you the opportunity to try out different approaches, and some jazz as well as classical playing. We spend the evenings rehearsing for a concert we give for local people on the final Saturday of each course. As well as a bass orchestra that involves everyone, people play solos and in smaller chamber groups.

Of course, travelling with a double bass – especially by air – can be very tricky. One of the best things about this course, however, is that you have the opportunity to borrow an instrument for the whole week from Michael Pöllmann, a local luthier who makes the most fantastic basses. It's the only course I've been on that has offered this kind of service, and it makes a huge difference. As well as giving us access to these excellent instruments, the course's atmosphere and its location in a beautiful part of Bavaria make for a really great week of music.