



May is the month we celebrate Mother's Day and the Conservatory's Mother's Day Musical Garden Tour. This tour has always had a special place in my heart, and it was such a delight to host the tour on its 40th anniversary. I hope you enjoyed this year's fantastic, featured gardens and musical performances from our students.

The Mother's Day Musical Garden Tour, like all good things, takes the nurturing support of a whole

◀ **Gary Karr**, Honourary Chair,
Encore Legacy Society.

community of people. Please consider joining us in becoming a member of the **Encore Legacy Society** so we can continue to enrich the lives of many generations of Victorians!

I wish you a beautiful and uplifting summer and look forward to seeing you at one of the Conservatory concerts.

Very warmest regards,

Gary

The Annamaria Bamji Award for Emerging Artists

Established in 2022 by Dr. Pervez (Perry) Bamji in memory of his wife, the Annamaria Bamji Award for Emerging Musicians grants \$1,000 each year to a Conservatory student with outstanding promising ability, to support and encourage young musicians interested in making a career in music.

Annamaria was born in Milan Italy and grew up in an apartment where she would spend hours listening to her upstairs neighbour singing opera, none other than the American-Greek Soprano Maria Callas! This, and frequent visits to La Scala with her mother, would spark Annamaria's love of opera and classical music.

In 1966 Annamaria went to Oxford, England to study English, where in 1967 she met Dr. Perry Bamji. They married in 1970 in Bodicote, Oxfordshire. The newlyweds had little money as they were repaying their student loans. Once Perry received a call from the bank manager, saying he was 25 GBP overdrawn and that it

should not happen again!

They emigrated to Canada in 1981 when Perry was transferred to Kingston, Ontario by his employer - Alcan International. Annamaria obtained her MA in Art History from Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario where Perry was a professor. Canada had been good to them in several ways so, when they finished paying off their mortgage, they decided to help other students follow their dreams in their chosen careers, establishing eight endowed scholarships at Queen's University. Perry will tell you with a smile that when they married, neither of them could boil an egg, but they learned together and enjoyed entertaining, often inviting students for dinner, and always making sure they left with a meal for the next day.

Having lived in England, Japan, and Canada, in 2006 the Bamji's chose Victoria as a retirement place. They supported many organizations, including not only the Victoria



Conservatory of Music but also Pacific Opera Victoria, Queen's University, Ballet Victoria, Victoria Symphony, and the Belfry Theatre.

Annamaria loved historical research, focusing especially on the lives of Italians who came to Victoria during the mid-1850s gold rush. This research resulted in a series of articles in The Observer, a newspaper for residents of Fairfield and Gonzales. Prior to her passing in 2020, Annamaria greatly expanded these articles and had compiled a final draft of a book which she planned to



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publish, entitled “Veni, Vidi, Vici” (I came, I saw, I conquered), referencing the immigrant families who came to Victoria penniless, saw the opportunities, and conquered poverty and adversity, each one giving back to the community in their own way. This book was posthumously published in 2021 and can be borrowed from the Greater Victoria Public Library.

Annamaria was a true patron of the Arts. We are honoured and delighted that Perry has chosen to commemorate Annamaria’s achievements and passion for the arts by establishing an endowed scholarship through the Victoria Foundation. May its legacy inspire and provide for others working towards their dreams.

Our most sincere thanks.

The Conservatory’s Endowment Fund

Another way to think of the future of music in our community.

The Victoria Conservatory of Music Operating Endowment Fund was established to provide long-term sustainability for the Conservatory and is actively managed by our trusted partners at Victoria Foundation with annual disbursements going toward our operating budget. This means that the Conservatory can rely on a steady

stream of annual income so we can continue to support the needs of our students. The more that goes into the endowment, the greater the annual distribution.

All donations to this permanently endowed fund are eligible to be matched by granting agencies such as the Cultural Investment Fund

through the Department of Canadian Heritage, so your gift will have a much greater impact and reach, supporting our cherished heritage building, and the educational and community programs that make the Victoria Conservatory a renowned centre of excellence. Please consider making a legacy gift to the Conservatory’s Endowment Fund.

We are here to provide support should you wish to include the Conservatory in your Legacy Planning. It would be our pleasure to talk with you and learn more about your connection with the Victoria Conservatory of Music.

Development Department

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Please consult your own financial advisor when considering the Legacy Gift most appropriate for you.

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