



VICTORIA
CONSERVATORY
OF MUSIC

Young Artists Program



Nurturing Excellence in a Community of Emerging Musicians

2024 Program Evaluation Summary of Results

Major Conclusions

Did the Victoria Conservatory of Music Collegium Program for Young Musicians achieve its intended outcomes?

- 97% of all respondents found the program quite valuable or incredibly valuable. Only two people rated it 'somewhat valuable'. Note that the survey response rate was 91% so these are very reliable results.
- In the section measuring the impact on the student by various goal areas of the program, every section has a positive score - whether measured by teachers, students or parents.

Did the Collegium Program offer appropriate challenges to students, and did the program meet the needs of those who were involved (e.g., students, parents, and teachers)?

- 83% of all respondents thought the program was appropriately challenging.
- 93% of respondents would recommend the program to others; plus another 6% might recommend it = 99%.

“There is nothing else like it in our city and it offers something important to serious developing music students.”

TEACHER

“Overall, it’s an excellent program and my child benefits from it greatly, musically and interpersonally.”

PARENT

Collegium Artistic Director: **Simon MacDonald**

Collegium Animateur: **Micki Stirling**

Survey designed by Dr. Jamie Syer and Micki Stirling

Updated and executed by Micki Stirling via SurveyMonkey: a web-based electronic survey tool May-June 2024

Evaluation Rationale

We undertake this evaluation annually to assess our educational effectiveness and to give students, teachers and parents an opportunity to provide feedback on all aspects of the program. This is the eighteenth year of conducting this full-spectrum evaluation - part of an ongoing process to ensure that those involved with the Collegium have regular opportunities for creative input.

We believe that it is crucial to regularly evaluate this unique program to assess its relevance and quality, and to incorporate new ideas and constructive responses from those who are most involved. Program evaluation results also help determine whether the Collegium is offering appropriate challenges to its participants and meeting the needs of the Greater Victoria community.

Program Description

The Collegium Program for Young Musicians was inaugurated in January 2006. The program was designed to provide an enriched and comprehensive curriculum for young pianists, instrumentalists, and singers between the ages of approximately 12 and 18 years who have reached at least a Grade 9 performance level, and who are notable for their musical achievement and promise. Starting in September 2011, we added a Junior category for students at a performance level of Grade 6-9 who show promise and dedication, but who are not yet at an age or proficiency that qualifies them for Full membership; and a Postsecondary category for VCM/Camosun students wanting to participate in chamber music at an advanced level. 2020-22 we did not offer the Vocal Collegium Program due to the high risk of spreading Covid-19 through aerosols in shared air. In 2022 Voice Collegium was restarted as a program of the Voice Department and is hence, not included in this evaluation.

Students who participate in the Collegium Program already have a growing awareness that music is a valuable component in their lives and show strong self-motivation to devote their energy and time to developing their musical potential and talent.

Auditions are required for both new and returning students. Students are required to perform two contrasting solo works for their audition and may be tested on technique and sight-reading appropriate to their grade level; they are also asked to describe why they would like to be a member of the Collegium and what their commitment level is. Students' performances and responses to interview questions are considered together in decisions made regarding participation in the program. Also considered is the mix of instrumentation for chamber ensembles.

Applicants May 2023

Full members 17 | Junior Members 13 | Postsecondary 1 | Total 31

Strings 20 (Violin 14; Viola 1; Cello 5) | Piano 5 | Winds 6 (Clarinet 1, Flute 5) | Total 31

2023-24 Enrolment

Full members 16 | Junior Members 9 | Postsecondary 2 | Total 27

Strings 15 (Violin 9; Viola 1; Cello 5) | Piano 5 | Winds 7 (Clarinet 1; Flute 5; Oboe 1) | Total 27

Program Objectives

One of the main objectives of the Collegium is to allow students to explore their artistic talents and develop their musical skills in a challenging yet nurturing musical community. The Collegium provides a comprehensive curriculum consisting of the following components: private studio lessons, chamber music ensembles, master classes, Soundings seminars, instruction in theory, history, or composition, work with accompanists; and special performance opportunities with other students, Conservatory faculty, and guest artists.

The Collegium Program also seeks to fulfill objectives beyond developing a student's musical potential.

These objectives include:

- Offering a supportive community where the love and aptitude for classical music is shared by students' peers;
- Providing students with experiences and life-skills that are transferable to effectiveness as individuals working together towards a common purpose;
- Creating a growing sense of community among students, their families, and their teachers;
- Building bridges between the Conservatory and the wider musical constituency.

Tuition Fees and Program Costs

In its efforts to make the Victoria Conservatory of Music more viable for all students of all ages and abilities, VCM has made changes in two areas over the past few years: 1. The subsidies for the Collegium Program have been eliminated and 2. Fundraising has increased the amount of scholarships and bursaries available, meaning that all students pay less than the true cost and families with financial need pay significantly less: only 30% of the true cost of the program.

2023-24 Tuition fees were:

- **Full membership**
\$5,430 - \$2,000 scholarship = \$3,430/year;
Less Charman Bursary \$1,620 = \$1,810.
There was a premium assessed for several students whose private lesson teacher was in a higher fee group.
- **Junior members**
\$2,737 - (\$69 discount + \$1,150 Scholarship)
= \$1,518/year; Less Charman Bursary \$815
= \$703.
- **Postsecondary members**
\$1,151 less tuition paid to Camosun \$781
less scholarship \$100 = \$270.

Evaluation Process

With the assistance of Graduate Student Externs Rachel Yeung & Ed Chow from the University of Victoria we designed and implemented the first Collegium evaluation in the spring and summer of 2007.

Questionnaires were designed for each group (students, parents, faculty) with similar questions appropriately targeted. The questions have been updated in each of the subsequent eighteen

years. These questionnaires were translated to on-line surveys via SurveyMonkey. Collegium staff are able to see who has responded, but we do not tie responses to individuals, hence assuring as much confidentiality as possible within a small sample group. Follow-up of non-respondents is done by email and phone.

The surveys were sent out May 27, closed June 25, and the results tallied as included in this report.

Results: Data Analysis and Interpretation

Surveys were sent to 79 'internal' members of the Collegium community: **25 faculty members, 27 students and 27 parents**. They were not sent to guest artists and visiting faculty. Student feedback was also gathered in person at end of year evaluation sessions. Notes of these sessions are available on request.

Of the three groups, 23 faculty members, 25 students and 24 parents responded. That is a response rate of 92% for faculty; 93% for students

and 89% for parents with a **combined response rate of 91%**. Last year the response rate was 94% for faculty; 92% for students and 94% for parents with a combined response rate of 93%. In 2022 it was 91.5%.

Collegium staff thank all 72 respondents for their support of and participation in this evaluation.

From the Artistic Director

We are in July of 2024, and another successful year for the Young Artists Collegium at the Victoria Conservatory of Music has come to an end. As you can see from the statistics gathered from the survey, over 97% of the respondents found the program "quite" or "incredibly" valuable, with 99% of the respondents willing to consider recommending it to their friends, peers, and Colleagues.

The survey also asks what respondents like least and what they would like improved in the Collegium. Although the comments are often conflicting, we take this feedback very seriously; and as a result, have planned a major scheduling change for the Junior Collegium 2024-25. When reviewing the changes we did try to make from 2022-23 to 2023-24, I note that we've been able to continue external concerts (Salt Spring Island in both years) and expand to another location up island (Chemainus in 2024-25), and have continued to have a presence performing for councillors at City Hall before the Victoria City Council meetings. We have not found the financial or manpower resources to get into the care homes and hospitals that have been suggested in some evaluations, but we will continue to look into those avenues for outreach to the community.

The Junior and Senior Collegium both had success in the local festival, with five chamber groups (one junior and four senior) being chosen to represent Victoria at the Provincials in Fort St. John. However with the cost of flying to the location with instruments and support (parents etc.), none of the Collegium ensembles were able to take advantage of the invitation to travel to compete. Even so, we had a soloist from the Collegium win the Provincial Excellence class at the Provincial competition, and several Collegium Alumni winners at the Provincials. Collegium students also had an excellent showing at the National Qualifying Rounds, those details are first below:

National Festival Local Qualifying Stream Competitors, all listed have been recommended to the finals (Developing Artist Stream is a recorded competition (virtual), the Emerging Artists Stream is in person in New Brunswick):

- **Developing Artist Stream:** Janou Boutilier (violin) 3rd, Michaela Yee (violin) 2nd
- **Emerging Artists Stream:** Max Francis (violin) 1st, Luke Kim (cello, Alumni) 3rd (strings) Camilo Aybar (clarinet), 2nd (woodwind)
- **Composition:** Max Francis 1st in Ensemble composition

National Festival Local Qualifying Stream Competitors continued...

- **Chamber Ensemble Intermediate:**
Kimbros String Quartet (Alumni) (Elijah Kim, Evan Kim, Luke Kim, Theodore Kim)
- **Roberto and Mary Wood Scholarship Competitors:** Elana Lin (violin), Carey Wang (Alumni)

BC Provincial festival results:

- **Provincial Excellence Woodwinds Winner:**
Camilo Aybar (clarinet)

Collegium Alumni at the BC Provincial Festival:

- **Intermediate Instrumental Duet, Senior Instrumental Duet:** Winner – Kimbros Duo (Elijah Kim & Luke Kim)
- **Intermediate Chamber Group:**
Runner-up – Kimbros String Quartet

Here are notable Collegium students with success in regional performances/competitions:

- **Don Chrysler Concerto Competition:**
Filbert Zhang (piano) winner, Max Francis (violin) runner up
- **Appearing as soloist with the Victoria Symphony Orchestra Summer Season 2024:** Elana Lin (violin)

Postsecondary institution acceptances for current Collegium members:

- University of Ottawa, McGill (Schulich School of Music), University of Toronto, UBC, UVic, Glenn Gould School of Music, Toronto.

Summer Festival Placements:

- Collegium students and alumni are once again in various summer festivals around Canada and Europe, including but not limited to Verbier (Switzerland), PRISMA (Powell River), Quartet Fest West (Victoria), National Youth Orchestra of Canada (Ontario, with a western tour).

Simon MacDonald

Collegium Artistic Director and Head, VCM Strings Department

Our students said:

“I think performing/preparing chamber music is definitely different to performing solo or with a larger ensemble. There’s a lot more active listening and room for exploration and nuance. Working with individuals in a small setting really makes you feel like all of the members get to shine and perform something everyone in said group will be proud of.”

“I got more exposed to classical music, I got to learn to play in ensembles better and be a better person in general as well.”

Why I recommend the Collegium: *“It is a good program that allows musician that are maybe less familiar to the music circle be more included, also it’s a lot of fun having opportunities to play with other people.”*

“This year my chamber group members also just really clicked in terms of collaboration with one another and that added a whole new level of value to my experience in this program, and even beyond the program, since we are still rehearsing, learning new music, and performing in the community. I’m really grateful that Collegium brought us together.”

Our parents said:

Why I recommend the Collegium: *“Very good program. Students meet great musicians at masterclasses. They gain a good sense of commitment, teamwork, responsibility, belonging. It offers the opportunity to perform and to give back to their communities.”*

“This has been an incredible experience for our child, and the Collegium program has added a lot of value.”

Why I recommend the Collegium: *“It’s a really motivating environment, being part of this group and working all year with your chamber ensemble and orchestra.”*

Our teachers said:

“I think making music with others is crucial for becoming a well-rounded musician.”

What I liked most: *“The opportunity for students to really develop strong friendships within their groups and to meet a similar peer group.”*

What I liked most: *“Opportunities to work seriously on advanced chamber music over a period of time, and to explore the music deeply and to polish the performance.”*

Last on this summary is a chart listing responses regarding desired outcomes/ goal areas of the program. The last right-hand column shows the overall ratings of each of ten statements concerning the Collegium.

Colour coding: Students Teachers Parents

Ratings out of 5	JUNIOR		SENIOR		ALL
	Response Count	Rating Average	Response Count	Rating Average	Rating Average
The Collegium program has helped me/my student/ my child improve my/his/her music skills.	9	4.25	16	4.81	4.61
	10	4.8	13	4.92	4.87
	9	4.78	15	4.73	4.75
I/ My student(s)/my child(ren) has/have a better appreciation for music as a result of my/his/her/their involvement in the Collegium.	9	4.13	16	4.69	4.49
	10	4.4	13	4.95	4.71
	9	4.56	15	4.67	4.63
The Collegium has helped me/my student(s)/ my child to improve my/his/her/their communication skills with others.	9	4.11	16	4.38	4.28
	10	4.4	13	4.77	4.61
	9	4.11	15	4.53	4.37
The Collegium Program has helped me/my student(s)/ my child(ren) to understand how to work as a team member.	9	4.22	16	4.63	4.48
	10	4.6	13	4.69	4.65
	9	4.78	15	4.71	4.74
In the Collegium Program, I/my student(s)/ my child(ren) was exposed to powerful musical experiences.	9	4.33	16	4.56	4.48
	10	4.4	13	4.91	4.69
	9	4.44	15	4.73	4.62
Participation in Soundings sessions broadened my/ his/her/their knowledge of the world of music.	0		16	4.25	4.25
	0		13	4.50	4.50
	0		16	4.25	4.25
The Collegium Program has increased my/his/her/their sense of value as a musician.	9	4.00	16	4.38	4.24
	10	4.6	13	4.75	4.68
	9	4.11	15	4.60	4.42
The Collegium Program has made me/my student(s)/ my child(ren) more visible to the community as a musician.	9	4.00	16	4.19	4.12
	10	4.20	13	4.62	4.44
	9	4.22	15	4.53	4.41
In my opinion, the Collegium Program is successful in building bridges between VCM and the wider music community.	9	4.25	16	4.31	4.29
	10	4.20	13	4.62	4.44
	9	4.22	15	4.60	4.46
27 Students					
25 Teachers	Total 79				
27 Parents					