

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Thursday, December 4, 2025 – 4:00pm

Alix Goolden Performance Hall, Victoria Conservatory of Music
900 Johnson Street, Victoria, BC

Agenda

1. **Call to Order** – Governor Shelley Williams, Chair
2. **Approval of Agenda**
3. **Approval of Minutes of December 3, 2024 AGM**
4. **Chair’s Report** – Governor Shelley Williams, Chair
5. **Management Reports**
 - a) CEO’s Report
 - b) Dean’s report
6. **Financial Report**
 - a) Treasurer’s Report – written report of Governor Alison McCluskey, Treasurer
 - b) Presentation of 2024/25 Audited Financial Statements
7. **Appointment of Auditor for 2025/26**
8. **Election of Governors and Representatives**
 - a) Election of incoming Board Nominees
 - b) Re-election of Governor
 - c) Re-election of Faculty Representative
9. **Other Business**

Adjournment

Governors present: Shelley Williams, *Chair*; Michael McEvoy, *Vice Chair*; Geri Hinton; Amanda Wilson; Neil Barman; Erica Mattson; Shannon von Kaldenberg (*Past Chair*); Jennette Toews (*Incoming*)

Honourary Governors

Present: Ed Chwyl, *Honourary Governor*

Staff/Faculty present: Nathan Medd, *CEO*; Stephen Green, *Dean*; Jayne Hammond, *Director of Development*; Erin Fraser, *Marketing Coordinator*; Kyrton Basu (*Incoming Faculty Rep*); Bruce Craigie (*Incoming Staff Rep*); Kelsey Gilker, *Assistant Registrar*.

Scribe: Diana Merlano, *Executive Assistant*

Number of Members present: 19

1. Call to order

Governor Shelley Williams, *Chair*, acted as Chair of the meeting and the meeting was called to order at 4:05pm. Governor Amanda Wilson acted as Recording Secretary. The Chair introduced Governor Erica Mattson, Nathan Medd, *CEO*, Stephen Green, *Dean and Chief Artistic Officer*.

The Chair confirmed that written notice of the Annual General Meeting had been given to all members entitled to receive such notice in accordance with the Bylaws and that she had been advised that there was a quorum present. The Chair accordingly declared the meeting regularly called and properly constituted for the transaction of business described in the Notice.

2. Approval of Agenda

Motion: that the Agenda be adopted as distributed.

Moved by Governor Wilson. Seconded by Governor Hinton. None opposed, motion carried.

3. Approval of Minutes of December 5, 2023 AGM

Motion: that the minutes from the last Annual General Meeting on December 5, 2023 be approved as distributed.

Moved by Governor Mattson. Seconded by Governor von Kaldenberg. None opposed, motion carried.

4. Chair's Report

- Under our CEO, Nathan Medd, the Conservatory continues to thrive as Western Canada's largest music school, offering programs from classical and contemporary music to music technology, post-secondary studies, early childhood music education, and the largest not-for-profit music therapy service in Canada.
- A core commitment to advancing diversity in programming and in fostering an inclusive community was demonstrated through impactful artistic events to celebrate inclusivity and equity.
- Accessibility remains another core priority. Thanks to the generosity of our donors, the Conservatory provided over 200 students with financial assistance through scholarships and bursaries in 2024. Accessibility was further extended through free music education outreach programs which benefited an estimated 1,000 students across dozens of schools and community centres.
- In 2024 the Board focused on key governance initiatives, including the development and adoption of the new three-year strategic plan, the creation of a comprehensive Board Orientation Package and the implementation of a Board and CEO assessment process.

- The Board expressed deep gratitude to two retiring Governors, Brock Campbell and Geri Hinton, as well as to Jeremie Grandbois on his retirement as the Staff Representative.
- The Board acknowledged retiring Chair, Shannon von Kaldenberg, for her nine years of exceptional service on the Board, including four years as Chair. In recognition of her distinguished service, the Board has unanimously approved her appointment as an Honourary Governor.
- The Chair extended sincere thanks to the Board of Governors, the management team led by CEO Nathan Medd, and the staff and faculty for their commitment to ensuring that the Conservatory remains an accessible centre of excellence in music education, performance and therapy.
- Gratitude was expressed to the members, donors, and Conservatory families for their support.

Motion: that the Chair's Report be received as presented.

Moved by Governor McEvoy. Seconded by Governor Barman. None opposed, motion carried.

5. Management Reports

a. **CEO's Report – Nathan Medd, *CEO***

- The year was notable for the publication of a new strategic plan and the development of new governance guidance tools, including an annual evaluation process for the Board and CEO.
- The Conservatory's creative work gained national exposure as the documentary *Ari's Theme* played at film festivals in Toronto and Vancouver, with a premiere in Victoria anticipated this coming February. Our music therapy centre will be unveiled with a new name and brand identity.
- Facility enhancements are in progress, including the installation of new heritage-inspired gates and numerous internal upgrades, made possible by donor support.
- Two significant architectural studies were commissioned: one to assess the redevelopment potential of the Victoria site, and a second, in collaboration with Our Place Society, Pandora neighbours, and the City of Victoria, to re-envision Pandora as a vibrant and inclusive public space.
- The departure of CFO and COO Chris Kask was acknowledged, recognizing his ten years of transformative impact and work in securing the Conservatory's financial health. The organization reached an all-time high in scholarships and bursaries awarded in the 2023-24 year, a direct result of the unprecedented growth in long-term funds over the past decade.
- Gratitude was expressed for the service and dedication of the retiring Governors.

Motion: that the CEO's Report be received as presented.

Moved by Governor Barman. Seconded by Joan Peggs. None opposed, motion carried.

b. **Dean's Report – Stephen Green, *Dean***

- The 2023-2024 academic year culminated during the Conservatory's 60th-anniversary celebrations, marking a decade of significant growth since its 50th anniversary. Initiatives launched over the past ten years, including the Chwyl Family School of Contemporary Music, the School of Music Technology and Creativity, and the Langford satellite location, have now established themselves and flourished.
- The Conservatory has successfully navigated significant community challenges, including increased cultural diversity, affordable housing shortages, and the lingering effects of the pandemic. The strategic diversification of programming over the past decade was noted as a key factor in building the resilience required to meet these challenges and ensure music remains a transformative force for all.
- **The Chwyl Family School of Contemporary Music** achieved major public visibility, participating in the Rifflandia Festival, and featuring as performers at Langford's Light Up The Hills festival, reaching thousands of community members.
- In a strategic response to safety and access restrictions around the main building, the annual Daniel Lapp's **Home for Christmas** concerts were moved to the Royal Theatre. This resulted in the

largest audiences in the event's 20-year history, near sell-out shows, and record net revenue, demonstrating the ability to adapt successfully to external challenges.

- The **ChoirKids** program relaunch expanded to three elementary schools and the Langford location, where it was immediately over-subscribed. A culminating performance in the Alix Goolden Performance Hall with the Arbutus Singers celebrated the program's success, which received a record \$20,000 in support.
- **The School of Music Technology and Creativity** dramatically expanded its SonicPi music coding program, tripling its instructional hours and reaching 220 students across five schools with generous funding from the Telus Friendly Future Foundation.
- **The Ann & George Nation Conservatory School of Classical Music** Voice Department, under the leadership of Colin Doroschuk, saw a 20% enrollment increase. It also launched the innovative "Opera Quest" initiative with the world premiere of *The Soldier and the Sea*, a project that offers paid opportunities for emerging artists, supported by the RBC Foundation.
- The Dean expressed sincere appreciation to the faculty, staff, and leadership, whose dedication maintains the Conservatory's reputation as a leading institution for music education and performance.

Motion: that the Dean's Report be received as presented.

Moved by Nathan Medd. Seconded by Joan Peggs. None opposed, motion carried.

6. Finance Report

The 2023/24 Audited Financial Statements were previously distributed.

a. Treasurer's Report – Governor Erica Mattson, on behalf of Governor Alison McCluskey, *Treasurer*

- Governor Mattson read the Treasurer's Report, which commented in some detail on the audited Financial Statements. The Financial Statements were reviewed and approved by the Board of Governors at their November Board meeting. A copy of the Financial Statements was posted on the website, and copies are available today.
- The Financial Statements were prepared by staff in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles. The Financial Statements have been audited by Doan Grant Thornton LLP, who have issued an Unqualified Audit Report.
- The Conservatory reported an overall excess of revenues over expenditures of \$789,160 for the year ending August 31, 2024. This strong result was primarily driven by a significant endowment bequest designated for scholarships and bursaries. There is an Operating Fund deficiency of revenues over expenses of \$180,788 (\$109,368 after interfund transfers) due in part to the impacts of the neighbourhood, resulting in lost facility and event revenue and the need for increased security and related costs.
- A major milestone is on the horizon: the Conservatory is nearing becoming debt-free. The mortgage balance on the property was reduced to just \$216,223 at year-end, and a subsequent payment has lowered it further to just over \$100,000, thanks to a generous donor who has helped pay down the mortgage over the years.
- The endowment funds held at the Victoria Foundation saw substantial growth:
 - The Operating Endowment Fund grew to \$5 million (an increase of approximately \$1.1 million).
 - The Scholarships and Bursaries Endowment Fund grew to \$4.1 million (an increase of approximately \$1.5 million).
- This growth was due to new bequests and matching contributions from the federal Canadian Cultural Incentive Fund. These endowments provide a critical, steady future income stream, with a 5% distribution rate applied in 2023/24.

Motion: that the Treasurer's Report be received.

Moved by Governor Wilson. Seconded by Governor Hinton. None opposed, motion carried.

b. Presentation of 2023/24 Audited Financial Statements

- The Financial Statements were reviewed and approved by the Board of Governors at last week's Board meeting. A copy of the Financial Statements was posted on the website, and copies are available in the meeting room.

Motion: that the 2023/2024 Audited Financial Statements, together with the report of the auditors, Doane Grant Thornton LLP, be received.

Moved by Governor von Kaldenberg. Seconded by Governor Barman. None opposed, motion carried.

7. Appointment of Auditor for 2024/25

Motion: that the firm of Doane Grant Thornton LLP be re-appointed as auditors of the Society for the 2024/2025 fiscal year.

Moved by Stephen Green. Seconded by Governor Wilson. None opposed, motion carried.

8. Election of Governors

In accordance with our Bylaws, nominations for new Governors and Representatives were made and submitted to the Chair not less than 15 days prior to the AGM. Board members are elected for a term of three years and Representatives are elected for a term of one year. Nominee Biographies were posted on our website for review.

a. Election of Incoming Board Nominee

The Board has nominated Jennette Toews to serve as a Governor for a term of three years.

Motion: that Jennette Toews be elected as a Governor of the Society to hold office for a term of three years.

Moved by Governor Hinton. Seconded by Governor McEvoy. None opposed, motion carried.

b. Election of non-voting Staff Representative

Bruce Craigie from the Facilities Department has been nominated by his peers to serve as the non-voting Staff Representative on the Board for the coming year.

Motion: that Bruce Craigie be elected as the non-voting Staff Representative on the Board of Governors for a term of one year.

Moved by Governor von Kaldenberg. Seconded by Nathan Medd. None opposed, motion carried.

c. Election of Faculty Representative

Kyron Basu from the Voice Department has been nominated by his peers to serve as the Faculty Representative for the coming year.

Motion: that Kyron Basu be elected as the Faculty Representative on the Board of Governors for a term of one year.

Moved by Governor McEvoy. Seconded by Stephen Green. None opposed, motion carried.

9. Other Business

- No other business was raised.

10. Adjournment

Motion: that the December 3, 2024 Annual General Meeting be adjourned.

Moved by Governor Mattson. Seconded by Honorary Governor Ed Chwyl. None opposed, motion carried.

As 2025 draws to a close, I am pleased to present my Chair's report to our Annual General Meeting and to share that this has been another outstanding year for the Victoria Conservatory of Music.

Highlights from 2025

- Early in the year, the Conservatory proudly hosted the Victoria premier of the acclaimed documentary *Ari's Theme* and celebrated the launch of our expanded **Centre for Music Therapy and Wellness**. Our music therapy program is the largest of its kind in all of Canada, serving over 1900 participants this past year.
- Our **Music Outreach Program** continues to grow, reaching more than 1,000 children across 69 Greater Victoria schools, childcare centres and community facilities. These tuition-free programs ensure that every child can experience quality music education, regardless of their circumstances.
- Enrolment continued to rise, with notable increases of over 24% in our Contemporary, Voice and Collegium (recently renamed the **Gary Karr Young Artists Performance Academy**) programs. Approximately 3,400 students studied with 145 faculty members across our two campuses this year.
- Our **Scholarships and Bursaries** programs continued to grow. In the 2024-2025 Academic Year, we awarded over \$150,000 in Bursaries and over \$150,000 in Scholarships to over 250 recipients, helping ensure that financial barriers never stand in the way of exceptional music education.
- Significant facilities improvements were completed. The **Alix Goolden Performance Hall** received upgraded sound equipment, a refinished stage, new pew cushions, and restoration of its beautiful stained-glass windows. Externally, custom heritage-inspired gates, restored heritage doors, a new front entrance sign, and a custom mural by acclaimed Kwakwaka'wakw artist Frances Dick were added, enhancing both accessibility and beauty.

Board Governance

The Board of Governors was engaged in a wide range of governance and strategic development, including:

- Acting on the findings of the comprehensive 2024 Board Assessment, including governance enhancements and Board recruitment and succession planning.
- Reviewing and updating our risk register, insurance coverage, and related matters.
- Expanding Board recruitment efforts through a public call for expressions of interest and enhanced online outreach, leading to three new nominees for election at this AGM.
- Conducting a comprehensive policy review with the guidance of an external consultant, leading to the updating and strengthening of some policies
- Participating on the selection committees for several senior leadership roles, including the Dean and Chief Financial Officer.

As we gather for this AGM, I extend sincere thanks, on behalf of the entire Board, to Bruce Craigie, who has served as the Administrative Representative on the Board this past year. We are grateful to Bruce for his thoughtful reports, insights and contributions to the Board.

The Conservatory Today

When people unfamiliar with the Conservatory ask me, “*What kind of music do they teach there?*” my answer is always, “*Just about everything you can imagine!*”

Students of all ages and abilities participate in programs ranging from classical to contemporary, early childhood education to post-secondary studies, and from theory to technology. Across 70 studios at our two campuses, instruction includes individual lessons, group classes, and ensemble work.

Our studios and performance halls feature outstanding instruments including Steinway, Yamaha and Grotrian-Steinweg grand pianos. Instrumental students study with many of Victoria’s leading musicians and can experience the joy of playing in an ensemble, band or orchestra. Voice students can explore numerous genres including opera, pop, rock and hip hop, all through individual lessons, small groups and choral ensembles. Other studies include percussion, brass, woodwinds, composition, recording and production, and much more.

As we like to say, ***Music Lives Here.***

In Appreciation

I wish to express my heartfelt gratitude to all who make the Conservatory’s continued success possible:

- our Board of Governors, whose dedication, expertise and generosity sustain the Conservatory’s growth and governance;
- our management team, faculty and staff, led by CEO Nathan Medd, for their unwavering commitment to ensuring that the Conservatory remains an accessible centre of excellence in music education, performance, therapy and wellness;
- and to our members, donors, sponsors and families, whose steadfast support enables the Conservatory to continue to thrive and to serve our community for generations to come.

As I retire having completed my term as Chair, I look back on my six years on the Board of Governors with deep gratitude. It has been both a privilege and an honour to serve this remarkable organization.

Respectfully submitted,

Shelley Williams

Board Chair, VCM Board of Governors

By glancing at the Chair's Report, as well as the reports on programming, the Victoria Conservatory membership can see that in 2024-25, this organization was driving full speed at its mission of music education, performance and wellness. This year revealed extraordinary possibilities for our work in community as the Conservatory enters its seventh decade.

Thank You to the Chair

As we approach Shelley Williams' final days as Chair of the Society, I offer heartfelt appreciation for Shelley's immense contributions throughout the past six years, but especially as Chair for two years following the retirement of Hon. Governor Shannon von Kaldenberg. Shelley's wisdom and warmth have been matched by her generous gift of time and attention – not only to governance matters but also to the students, faculty, staff, and supporters who make up the Conservatory community. On behalf of my partner Adrienne and myself, we offer three cheers to Shelley for her role guiding the Conservatory towards a strong future.

Welcome to the Dean and Director of Events, Partnerships and Rentals

The year marked the arrival of two key programming leaders: Tricia Baldwin as Dean, and Mhiran Faraday as Director of Events, Partnerships and Rentals. With clear vision and active community engagement, these two have wasted no time energizing our activities in studio, on stage, and around town. Their reports speak for themselves, and I am pleased to share that public participation continues to increase significantly this year.

A Welcoming and Well-Known Conservatory

Our advocacy for students and visitors reached vividly across Canada this year, in two ways. First, through the incredible success of the documentary film, *Ari's Theme*, which began broadcasting and streaming amid its appearances at film festivals, including the sold-out gala opening of the 2024 Vancouver International Film Festival, at the Vancouver Playhouse last fall. Congratulations to composer and longtime music therapy participant Ari Kinarthy, music therapist Allan Slade, and department director, Dr. Johanne Brodeur, for this success.

Second, following local interviews in the Victoria Times-Colonist on our work to enhance the Conservatory site, we helped instigate an extensive series of reports this year by the Globe and Mail on severe challenges in downtown Victoria. Our wager was that A) readers in cities across Canada would relate to the critical issues that impact the Conservatory and our community members; B) part of the solution to these issues involves federal policy, and a nationwide conversation would hasten this work; and C) our local leaders would face the issues more urgently and effectively if a spotlight was placed on Victoria. This clear-eyed series earned reporter Nancy Macdonald a Webster Award, and coincided with the City launching a Community Safety and Wellbeing Plan, with an initial \$3.75 million in 2025 toward a "comprehensive rebuild" of the public space along Pandora Avenue to the north of our site. I am confident we are playing the strongest role we possibly can on these challenges, while also keeping focused on supporting the good work of our students, teachers and staff. The effort continues, and I thank everyone who has offered donations large and small during the past year as the Conservatory moves forward with tremendous potential as a creative and healing force in our community!

Respectfully,
Nathan Medd
CEO

The Victoria Conservatory is a beautiful organization with a beautiful heart, and its faculty are bursting with talent and vision. As we forge ahead, we are standing on the shoulders of giants, and we are grateful for the superb legacy as one of the leading community music schools in all of Canada. We are proud of and for our students and faculty, and 2024/25 marked a very busy and accomplished year. There were 153 Victoria Conservatory student winners of the Greater Victoria Performing Arts Festival (GVPAF) in 2025 alone, and more winners of different competitions.

The Gary Karr Legacy - The Gary Karr Young Artists Performance Academy: We said goodbye to our dear friend Gary Karr who transformed the world of music and upon arriving in Victoria, transformed the Victoria Conservatory. His wisdom, kindness, experience, and insight touched so many people, and his generous spirit lives on in the newly named Gary Karr Young Artist Performance Academy that will continue to evolve from its strong foundation of the Conservatory's former Collegium program.

Farewell to Dean Stephen Green: This past season, VCM congratulated Stephen for his impact on young artists and on the whole community. 2024/25 marked a time of great transition with the retirement of Dean Stephen Green after a distinguished 13-year tenure at the Conservatory. Under Stephen's leadership was the founding of the Chwyl Family School of Contemporary Music with Daniel Lapp, which celebrated its tenth anniversary this past winter, and the School of Music Technology and Creativity, led by Daniel Brandes.

Victoria Conservatory Welcomes New Dean Tricia Baldwin: The appointment of new Dean Tricia Baldwin followed a highly competitive, international search led by Martin Bragg & Associates. The search committee was comprised of the late Gary Karr (Honorary Board Governor), Shelley Williams (Board Chair), Colin Doroschuk (Director of Classical and Contemporary Voice), Kyron Basu (voice instructor and Board Faculty Rep), and Michael McEvoy (Board Vice Chair) who advised Conservatory CEO Nathan Medd. Tricia Baldwin was welcomed as Dean on June 1, 2025. Director of Post-Secondary Studies, David Visentin, took on an expanded advisory role as Associate Dean of Victoria Conservatory.

2024/25 Spark to Flame Competition Winners: The annual Spark to Flame concert is presented by the Ann & George Nation Conservatory School of Classical Music. This program supports emerging artists' development and is open to all current students of the Victoria Conservatory of Music. We heartily congratulate the winners of the 2024/25 Competition: Joanne Jiang, Emilia Vozian, Michelle George, Jack Yang, Simi Luttrell, Isidora Uhlman, and Sylvan Wilkinson. **BC Registered Music Teachers Association (BCRMTA) Student Composer Competition Winners** included: Xavier Burgers, 1st, Division C; Nathan Syyong, 1st, Division A; and Max Francis, 1st, Division D.

Looking Ahead

What's next? Our inspired priorities are to reach for the stars to dramatically increase **ACCESS** and **EXCELLENCE** for exceptional music education while supporting our committed team of VCM educators and students. Our major initiatives will be the development of the Gary Karr Young Artist Performance Academy, the future creation of a Centre for Early Childhood Music, and the expansion of certificates, diplomas, and microcredentials to support credentialled lifelong learning in our rapidly evolving world including Early Childhood Music teacher certifications. We are focused on Operation Enrolment for both campuses, and the rekindling of our pedagogy. We are thrilled with CEO Nathan Medd's leadership in the healthy development of our downtown campus neighbourhood, expansion of our Langford presence, and the exploration of new

and renewed space (including expanded uses of the Metro Theatre), to vastly increase the Conservatory's impact for generations.

ACCESS: Every last child in Victoria should have access to quality music education. Music belongs to everybody. Music making is an essential part of a child's development and necessary for human and musical burgeoning. We will build relationships with public and independent school music programs to contribute to student music education, ensure our First Peoples are directing new First Nations cultural programs at VCM for First Nations youth, boost our recruitment efforts to increase our impact within our community, increase opportunities for professional development for our faculty, empower our diverse students as creative producers to bring music to the community and on multiple platforms, and develop remarkable community collaborations with our talented, committed colleagues in Victoria and across the country.

EXCELLENCE: We all celebrate the highest achievements of humankind when we make and listen to music together. We are developing the means to rekindle our pedagogy to impart essential technical skills and musical qualities a 21st-century context that demands excellence, ensures flexibility with the students' interests and ways of learning, and fosters a collaborative relationship between the student and teacher to achieve their goals together. We will collaborate with experts in different disciplines to impart the art of inspiring performance practice and stage presence. As we have one of the top music therapy programs on the continent, we are exploring mentorship programs to develop the next generation of excellent music therapy practitioners. We will assist our post-secondary students in developing a vision for their cultural career paths – and given the 900,000+ jobs in Canada's cultural industries – the possibilities for a life and career in the arts are bountiful.

Classical Keyboard

Artistic Director Robert Holliston is bursting with pride with the accomplishments of so many talented young players. Filbert Zhang (studio of May Ling Kwok) won First Place in the Don Chrysler (now the Norman and Jenny Nelson) Competition and played Beethoven Piano Concerto no. 2 with the Sooke Philharmonic. Carey Wang (studio of May Ling Kwok) was awarded 2nd Prize in the BCRMTA provincial Competition and later won 1st place in the National Festival Emerging Artist Stream. Simi Lutrell (studio of May Ling Kwok) won the Cowichan Concerto Competition. Carey Wang won the First Prize of the Emerging Artist Stream of the Federation of Canadian Music Festivals' National Music Festival. Malak El Ouadghiri was the recipient of the Millicent Lavoy Piano Scholarship (2025) – VCM, Senior Piano Baroque Award – GVPAF 2025, and Merited Participant Nominee in the 2025 Provincial Festival. Amani El Ouadghiri was the recipient of the Millicent Lavoy Piano Scholarship (2025) – VCM, Senior Piano Adjudicator's Choice Award – GVPAF 2025. Easton Roy (from the studio of May Ling Kwok) won the Johann Strauss Competition, enabling him to study at the Salzburg Mozarteum during its summer program. Jack Yang took part in the UVic Summer Program; Lorna Bjorkland and Simon Eskildsen (from the studio of Robert Holliston) took part in a summer piano intensive given by James Lisney at Hindhead, in the English county of Surrey.

Winds and Brass

Emily Nagelbach, Artistic Director of Winds and Brass, had her faculty and student team engaged in many activities including Three Collage Concerts in November, March, and June with performances by 65 students from the department; a Faculty Concert on May 21, 2025 which raised money for the Woodwinds and Brass Summer Intensive Program, and the introduction of percussion to the Woodwinds and Brass Summer Intensive Program. Flutist Miya Doak (from the studio of Emily Nagelbach) was accepted to McGill University on scholarship.

Greater Victoria Performing Arts Festival: The following students were nominated from the local festival to the Provincial Festival: Junior Woodwind Competitors - flutist Daniel Sanabria Torres (Collegium), oboist Lorna Shen (from the studio of Russell Bajer), and flutist Ellie Ryu (studio of Mary Jill McCulloch/Mary

Byrne); Intermediate Woodwind Competitors - Flutist Miya Doak (studio of Emily Nagelbach) and flutist Emilia Vozian (studio of Mary Byrne); Junior Chamber Music Competitors - Winds Plus (Collegium); Merited Participants - Flutist Celine Liu (studio of Mary Byrne) and saxophonist Declan Paul (studio of Alexander Richards); Provincial Junior Chamber Music Competitor - VCM Junior Brass Quartet (students of Joanne Allers). BC Music Festival: The following students were nominated from the BC Music Festival to the National Music Festival: Emerging Artists Stream - Flutist Tyler Evans-Knott (studio of Emily Nagelbach); Developing Artist Stream - Flutist Miya Doak (studio of Emily Nagelbach) and flutist Daniel Sanabria Torres (Collegium); Intermediate Chamber Ensemble - Jubilee Flute Quartet with Tyler Evans-Knott (studio of Emily Nagelbach), Miya Doak (studio of Emily Nagelbach), Emilia Vozian (studio of Mary Byrne), and Daniel Sanabria (Collegium); Non-Competitive Education Stream: Oboist Lorna Shen (studio of Russell Bajer). National Music Festival: Winners of this competition included: Tyler Evans-Knott (studio of Emily Nagelbach) - Emerging Artist Stream, 2nd place; Daniel Sanabria (Collegium student) - Developing Artist Stream, 1st place; Jubilee Flute Quartet, Ensemble Stream, Intermediate, 1st place.

Classical Strings

The 2024-2025 academic year brought many exciting achievements for students in the Classical Strings Department. Max Francis (violin), Troy Rees (violin), Isidora Uhlman (violin), and Joanne Jiang (cello) were nominated to compete at the Provincial Festival, with Max receiving an Honourable Mention. At the National Music Festival, both Joanne and Max earned Second Place in their respective categories. In the Louis Sherman Concerto Competition, Walter Rees won First Place and performed Mozart's Violin Concerto No. 4 with the Victoria Chamber Orchestra; he was joined in the finals by Celina Holt (cello) and the duo of Max Francis and Joanne Jiang. At the Sooke Philharmonic Orchestra's Jenny and Norman Nelson Concerto Competition, Joanne received Second Place and Max an Honourable Mention. Following an unanticipated vacancy in departmental leadership, Müge Büyükçelen (violin), Brian Yoon (cello), and Michael Dias (guitar) assumed responsibility for guiding the department and have since been appointed to their roles on a permanent basis. Three new violin instructors, Jeremy Potts, Cory Balzer and Emma Reader-Lee were welcomed. We also celebrated the retirement of Carol Maclsaac (violin, viola), honouring her many years of dedicated service to the Conservatory and her lasting impact. In May, the department came together for its first-ever departmental concert, which showcased the full breadth of our community—from our youngest students to members of the Adult String Orchestra.

Voice

Colin Doroschuk, Department Head of Voice under the Ann & George Nation Conservatory School of Classical Music and Director of the Voice Program for the Chwy! Family Contemporary School of Music, is happy to report that the 2024/25 Competition Cycle was an exciting success! Registration numbers were excellent and the Conservatory averaged 40+ competitors per competition, breaking 2023/24's record of 36. The registration fee was raised to \$20 and the Voice Department ended up with a modest surplus which went towards prizes and gift certificates for the students. **Classical Competition Cycle:** English Art Song Competition October 23, 2024; Musical Theatre Song November 27, 2024; German Lieder Competition January 22, 2025; Italian/Spanish Song Competition March 5, 2025; French Song Competition April 30, 2025; Opera Aria/ Sacred Song/Oratorio May 28, 2025. **Contemporary Competitions:** Henwood Original Song Competition 2025 and Henwood Performance Competition 2025. Two new competitions were premiered in May 2025: The Grand Opera Aria Competition (Cash prizes of \$1500 and \$1000 generously donated by The Henwood Foundation) for which students also had to produce recordings; and The Sacred Song /Oratorio Competition. Both proved to be very popular with the students and made for an exciting evening of singing. The Season finished off in creative style in June 2025 with VCM's production project Opera Quest 2025 producing the World Premiere Creation of *JÉHANNE*, an original opera by Colin Doroschuk, featuring a cast that was a mix of professional mentors, emerging artists, and VCM students.

Chwyl Family School of Contemporary Music

Led by Artistic Director Daniel Lapp, the Chwyl Family School of Contemporary Music transformed what began as a traditional conservatory with classical roots into a hub of music education with a truly contemporary scope.

The 2025 Canadian Grand Masters Fiddling Competition is a prestigious national event held on August 23, 2025, at the Sagebrush Theatre in Kamloops, BC, where roughly 30 of Canada's top traditional fiddlers compete through preliminary and final rounds for the title of Canadian Grand Master Fiddling Champion. Daniel Lapp brought members of the BC Fiddle Orchestra to Kamloops, and they all celebrated many wins. VCM student Max Francis became the youngest ever Canadian Grand Masters Fiddle Champion and wins the US Junior Championships and the Ward Allen Memorial Award for Best Waltz, the People's Choice Award sponsored by Calvin Vollrath. BCFO became a Canadian Fiddle Hall of Honour Inductee for its lasting contributions to BC's vibrant fiddle community. The sold-out 21st annual Home For Christmas concerts in the Royal Theatre celebrated 182 musicians simultaneously onstage, most of whom were VCM students. Other Contemporary School highlights included the creation of the Metro Big Band - the first VCM Jazz Orchestra of its kind; the expansion of the BC Fiddle Orchestra (BCFO) program to include both Danceband and Fiddleharmonic; a season of successful Masterclass series open to the community that offered opportunities to people of all backgrounds in a wide variety of genres; student Tia Greenwood was given full tuition scholarship to Boston's Berklee College of Music; and various faculty released new recordings and completed international tours.

Centre For Music Therapy and Wellness

2024/25 saw the expansion of the Music Therapy department to the launch of the **Centre for Music Therapy and Wellness** that also includes adaptive learning. The Centre for Music Therapy and Wellness is Canada's Leading Centre for Music Therapy, dedicated to improving lives through the transformative power of music. Led by Dr. Johanne Brodeur, this Centre offers innovative programs in music therapy, wellness, and adaptive learning. *Ari's Theme*, a Salazar Film Production directed by Jeff Lee Petry and Nathan Drillot, had screenings at many film festivals across Canada and USA in 2024/25. The film profiles Ari Kinarthy, a Canadian composer suffering from type-2 spinal muscular atrophy, as he creates an epic musical composition that will serve as his artistic legacy. The film also showcases the life-changing impact of music therapy (Ari has worked with the Conservatory's music therapist Allan Slade for many years). The Conservatory hosted the Victoria premiere screening of *Ari's Theme* in partnership with Salazar Film and the Victoria Film Festival.

School Of Music Technology and Creativity

The School of Music Technology and Creativity (SMTC), led by Artistic Director Daniel Brandes, offers innovative and engaging programming that inspires students to discover and explore their own creative voices. In 2024/25, SMTC successfully launched the first Hip Hop outreach in schools program. New SMTC Faculty member Nicole Ermineskin led programs at Craigflower and Quadra Elementary schools from October 2024 through May 2025. Thanks to funding from Dick and Lina Auchinleck, four music videos featuring original songs by each class were written, recorded, produced, and published on YouTube. They were premiered at an event in Wood Hall and later as part of VCM's Day for Truth and Reconciliation. VCM student Naomi Triebwasser's composition *Hutlilala gaxan* premiered at NeuzTec 9. SMTC's Creative Coding and Composition on Sonic Pi program was brought to over 200 SD61 students. SMTC formed a new partnership with the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria where participants were coached to transform prints of works from the AGGV collection into interactive electronic music instruments. Additionally, we had 5 VCM student composers compose new works inspired by AGGV's *The View from Here* collection that were recorded and will be associated and available in view the artwork until 2028.

VCM Postsecondary Studies

The Postsecondary Studies academic year is always most notably marked by the quality of our term-end showcases and by our graduating class walking across the Camosun convocation stage and receiving their credentials with all the ceremonial pomp and circumstance that the college does so well. The April 2025 Combo Showcase (now known as Bandemonium) brought the level and standard of showmanship to new heights and gave us real opportunity to envision Bandemonium, going forward, as a public ticketed and important VCM performance event. 2024-2025 graduates included **AIMS (Advanced Independent Music Studies)**: Student Sylvan Wilkinson is now proceeding with a scholarship into Masters graduate studies at McGill University; **CAMOSUN Certificate in Music Creativity and Performance Foundations**: Zamira Beckford, Anthony Schenk, Raj Kumar Gaire; and **Diploma in Music Performance**: Zac Day, Simon Eskildsen (is now working as Piano Faculty at the VCM), Cale Hernandez, Jude Lemay, and Ileine Puentes Romero.

Tricia Baldwin

Dean, Chief Artistic and Academic Officer

I am pleased to submit my treasurer's report for the year ended August 31, 2025. The financial results reflect a busy year across the entire organization. Tuition revenue, which is the core of the VCM, has continued to increase, as program offerings are expanded. Fundraising activities brought in approximately \$1.8 million in operating revenue and \$550,000 for capital projects. Overall fundraising revenue is down when compared to 2024, due to a large bequest in 2024 of approximately \$870,000 for the Scholarships and Bursaries Endowment.

Over the past several years, there has been a focus on growing the Endowment Funds, which are held at the Victoria Foundation. The distributions from these funds provide a significant and stable source of revenue. In the current year, endowment distributions grew to almost \$800,000 – of which \$460,000 supports operations and \$340,000 provides bursaries and scholarships.

The financial results for the year also reflect purposeful investments in staffing, to strengthen core capacity.

The Financial Statements of the Victoria Conservatory of Music were prepared by staff in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles. The financial statements have been audited by Doane Grant Thornton LLP, who have issued an Unqualified Audit Report.

For the year ending August 31, 2025, there is an operating fund deficit of \$277,734 (\$73,390 after interfund transfers). The operating fund deficit is offset by an excess of revenues over expenditures in the other funds, for overall positive net earnings of \$91,071.

The operating fund deficit is in part due to the impacts of the issues in the neighborhood resulting in lost facility and event revenue and the need for increased security and related costs. In addition, wages and benefits have increased as a result of strategic investments in capacity building.

The VCM owns the beautiful heritage building, in which it operates, and the mortgage is very close to being paid off, with just under \$80,000 remaining.

In addition to the \$6.2 million of assets shown on the Statement of Financial Position, the VCM has an Operating Endowment Fund and a Scholarships and Bursaries Endowment Fund at the Victoria Foundation. The value of those funds on August 31st, 2025 were \$ 5.6 million and \$ 4.5 million, respectively. In addition to these two Funds, the VCM is also the designated beneficiary of the grant distributions from several other significant Endowment Funds at the Victoria Foundation. Note 10 to the Financial Statements provides the details of these Funds. The 2024/25 annual distribution rate from these funds is 5%.

Alison McCluskey, CPA-CA

Treasurer, VCM Board of Governors

8. Election of Governors and Faculty Representative

a) Election of incoming Board Nominee

Thorsten Hanisch is an economist, executive coach, and former senior executive at Bertelsmann, the German global media group and parent company of BMG Music and Penguin Random House. During his 25 years of international leadership experience, he has worked at the intersection of digital transformation, corporate governance, and customer experience strategy. His career began with the nonprofit Bertelsmann Foundation before he moved into corporate leadership roles within the group, ultimately serving on the executive management board of Arvato, Bertelsmann's services division. Thorsten is also a co-founder of the I2A Network, an international team of independent coaches and advisors, where he focuses on supporting executive leaders through digital and organizational change.

Originally from Germany, Thorsten immigrated to Canada in 2021 with his Canadian wife and two children, relocating family and businesses to Victoria. As a long-time "music parent," he supported his daughter's violin studies from early childhood through competitive youth orchestra programs in Germany and her years at the Victoria Conservatory of Music. This experience has shaped his appreciation for the Conservatory's mission and its role in the cultural life of Victoria, which he and his family are proud to call home.

Debbie Hlady has a long career in educational leadership and teaching. She served as the Dean of the School of Arts and Science at Camosun College, where she had the privilege of working with Conservatory staff promoting and developing post-secondary programs, and celebrating students pursuing their musical education. Prior to becoming Dean, Debbie served as the Chair of the College's English Department, and taught English at Camosun, the University of Victoria, and overseas in Kitakyushu, Japan.

Debbie's administrative and leadership experience includes being the Chair of the BC Deans of Arts & Science group; a member on Camosun's Board of Governors and Education Council; a systems liaison for the BC Council on Admissions and Transfer; and a committee member on Degree Quality Audit Board reviews for the Ministry of Advanced Education. She has a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Manitoba, a Graduate Diploma in Education from Monash University, and a Master of Arts degree from the University of Victoria.

Debbie's lifelong love of music began with participation in school choirs and bands, and she believes in the power of music to enhance everyone's education and wellbeing.

Cameron Rice-Gural is a Chartered Professional Accountant with significant experience working with not-for-profit organizations. Cameron is currently a Senior Manager in audit at KPMG. Her portfolio serves over 40 clients with a focus on not-for-profit and government entities. As an auditor she understands the importance of financial integrity in building trust in stakeholders and building long-term organizational resilience. Cameron has spent most of her life in Victoria, and as a child, spent most of her time studying piano at the Conservatory. She credits her time on the keyboard as a critical factor in shaping who she is today. Cameron appreciates how music connects people, enriches cultures, and supports youth –it's an essential part of life for her.

b) Election of Faculty Representative

Kyron Basu is a voice teacher and baritone. He has taught voice at the Victoria Conservatory of Music since 2016 and at the University of Victoria since 2020. He works with students with a broad range of experience levels and ages, and strives to create supportive and encouraging learning environments to nurture students' love of music. In addition to one-on-one voice lessons, Kyron has taught vocal pedagogy in the VCM's AIMS program, as well as Lyric Diction (substituting for Kiiri Michelsen).

An active performer in the Victoria area, Kyron has appeared as a soloist with groups such as Victoria Baroque, the Victoria Philharmonic Choir, the Sooke Philharmonic, Pacific Baroque Festival, Bach on the Rock, CapriCCio, and the Victoria Children's Choir.

Kyron holds an MA in Musicology with Performance and a BMus from UVic, where he studied under Benjamin Butterfield. During his MA, Kyron was a recipient of the SSHRC CGS-M scholarship for his musicological research, exploring the relationship between phonetics and crafting singable translations, particularly of German lieder. Kyron completed his Diploma in Music and AVCM in Vocal Pedagogy at the VCM, where he studied with Ingrid Attrot (voice) and Nancy Argenta (pedagogy).