



# *Report to the Community*

2024/2025

**VSO**

VANCOUVER  
SYMPHONY  
ORCHESTRA

VSO  
SCHOOL  
OF MUSIC



Cover: National Tour at Toronto's Roy Thompson Hall  
Above: Tan Dun conducts the Canadian Premiere of *Buddha Passion*

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VSO SCHOOL OF MUSIC  
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Maestro Otto Tausk

## *A Message from the Music Director*

Dear music lovers,

This past season, the musicians of the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra unleashed the power of music across the Lower Mainland and beyond. Each concert brought music that moved our audiences on a personal level, and also collectively as a community. Whether audiences joined us for an ambitious classical Masterworks concert, or for a free and accessible event like Symphony at Sunset, they would have been touched by the artistry, dedication, and remarkable musicianship of our orchestra.

With so many artistic highlights, it's difficult to name just a few. Our opening concerts showcased the VSO's innovative spirit with the North American premiere of Symphonic Cinema's *The Firebird*, a captivating short film that accompanied Stravinsky's masterpiece. In October, we were thrilled to welcome the legendary Lang Lang to perform Saint-Saëns' Second Piano Concerto, drawing a sold-out audience. November brought the Canadian premiere of Tan Dun's epic choral work, *Buddha Passion*, a powerful and beautiful piece that left a lasting impression. Throughout the season, the VSO has championed contemporary works by living composers. A personal highlight for me was conducting the Canadian premiere of Steve Reich's *Jacob's Ladder*, alongside works by Philip Glass, John Adams, and Linda Catlin Smith. These concerts demonstrate our audiences' curiosity to discover and explore new compositions, and their enthusiastic response further proves their ability to embrace innovative music. The season concluded with packed houses for Beethoven's joyous Ninth Symphony, a fitting end to a remarkable year.

Over the course of the 2024/25 season, we had the honour of presenting incredible soloists like Angela Hewitt, Leila Josefowicz, Behzod Abduraimov, Bruce Liu, Steven Hough, Rihab Chaieb, Thomas Hampson, and so many more. I was also excited to share the podium with some inspiring guest conductors including Han-Na Chang, Alpesh Chauhan and Andrey Boreyko, among others.

In March 2025, the VSO embarked on a bold national tour to Toronto's Roy Thomson Hall, the National Arts Centre, and Isabel Bader Theatre in Kingston, where we were received with sold-out halls and standing ovations. It was a privilege to share the artistic excellence of our orchestra with new audiences across Canada, alongside our guest soloists Vadim Gluzman, Stewart Goodyear and Marion Newman. This was the orchestra's first tour since before the pandemic, and an important step before our ambitious European Tour coming up in April 2026. Not only is Vancouver home to the most breathtaking natural surroundings, but our city can be equally proud to have its very own world-class symphony orchestra. I can't wait to showcase our phenomenal orchestra to audiences across Europe.

As Artistic Advisor to the VSO School of Music, I'm delighted to share that the school continues to thrive, inspiring the next generation of musicians through our exceptional faculty and educational offerings. We are one of the few orchestras in the world to have our very own school, and I'm incredibly proud of the achievements of our gifted students, and inspired by the dedication and brilliance of our faculty.

With the 2025/26 season well underway, there is a myriad of musical masterpieces and composers waiting to be discovered. I invite you to ignite your imagination and dive into the unexpected – see you in the concert hall!

**Otto Tausk**

Music Director, Vancouver Symphony Orchestra (Alan and Gwendoline Pyatt Podium)  
Artistic Advisor, VSO School of Music

Beethoven 9: "Ode to Joy"



## A Message from the President & CEO



Throughout 2024/25, society experienced pervasive uncertainty and anxiety. At times such as this, we turn to music because music has a profound ability to comfort us during challenging times. Music provides emotional expression, connection, community, stress relief, motivation, inspiration, nostalgia, and healing. In essence, music serves as a powerful tool for emotional support, helping us to navigate the complexities of uncertainty with greater ease and comfort, providing solace and connection through challenging times.

We sincerely hope our 24/25 VSO Season of “classic vibes and endless possibilities” offered all of this to you, and more. Whether it was Stravinsky’s powerful *Firebird*, or Beethoven’s joyful Ninth Symphony, or international superstars such as Lang Lang and Bruce Liu, or fun with video games such as *Final Fantasy*, or Tony DeSare performing songs of Cole Porter, or one of the fabulous Movies with the VSO, or perhaps holiday favorites such as *Traditional Christmas* or *Home Alone*. All of

these programs were curated just for you and performed by the outstanding musicians of your Vancouver Symphony Orchestra.

A personal highlight for me was experiencing VSO community concerts that we performed for over 100,000 people, all totally free of charge, including the TD Community Concert, The Path Forward, Day of Music, Symphony at Sunset, and Symphony to Deer Lake. We are so proud of our accessible and affordable platform.

In some ways, this season was a season of both joy and challenge. Our months of collective bargaining resulting in a labour dispute was very difficult for the musicians of the VSO, for staff, for management, for the Board of Directors, for donors and sponsors, for volunteers, and mostly for you, our beloved community. We are sorry for the disruption but are pleased to have come to a satisfying agreement which confirms the VSO’s commitment to invest in our talented musicians. This labour dispute was juxtaposed against the joy and inspiration of a VSO Canadian Tour performing to sold-out venues in Toronto, Ottawa and Kingston, resulting in standing ovations and positive reviews.

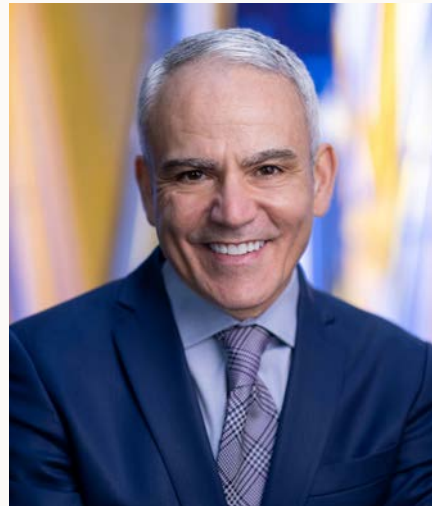
We truly have so much for which to look forward. As the lyrics say, “We’ve only just begun.” We are optimistic and inspired by our 2026/27 Season artistic plans and cannot wait to share these with you.

I offer heartfelt thanks to the marvellous musicians of the VSO, to our directors, donors, sponsors, subscribers, staff, management and everyone in our collective community.

With sincere gratitude,

**Angela Elster**  
President & CEO  
Vancouver Symphony Orchestra & VSO School of Music

# A Message from the Vancouver Symphony Society Board Chair



Dear Members of our VSO Community,

It has been a year of remarkable momentum for the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra. As Chair of the Board, I am deeply grateful for – and genuinely inspired by – the sustained commitment of our musicians, staff, volunteers, donors and patrons during a year of both challenge and opportunity.

Together we achieved a truly significant milestone – our national tour, which took our orchestra to audiences beyond Metro Vancouver for the first time in seven years. As we made new connections across Canada and elevated our profile, our musicians and artistic leadership delivered performances of international quality that reflect our collective ambition. The Canadian tour inspired several stakeholders to generously donate to future tours. We also learned much throughout this tour and are committed to constant improvement. We now look ahead to an even greater leap: in April 2026 we will embark on a

residency at the Salzburg Festival and a multi-city European tour. This will place our orchestra on the global stage among the very best, showcasing Vancouver's cultural leadership to the world.

We recognise, too, that this has been a year of disruption. The impact of the work stoppage was felt across our musicians, staff, volunteers, patrons and community. We reaffirm our commitment to constructive collaboration, sustainable investment in our talent, and the kind of organisational culture that enables artistic excellence to flourish

On behalf of the Board, let me extend my deepest thanks to our musicians, our administrative and production staff, our many selfless volunteers and patrons, subscribers and ticket-buyers. I also very much appreciate my fellow board members who donate countless hours of their time, energy and personal financial resources to the life of the Society. Your collective generosity and wise counsel add tremendous value to everything the VSO does.

With warm gratitude and conviction,

**David Garofalo**  
Chair, Board of Directors  
Vancouver Symphony Society

# A Message from the VSO School of Music Board Chair



The 2024/25 year at the VSO School of Music was marked by bold exploration, expanded programming, and the creation of key new leadership roles. Under the direction of Natasha McEwen, newly appointed Vice President of the VSO School of Music and VSO Education, we welcomed an invigorated academic structure. Carla Birston (Director, String Studies), Jodi Proznick (Director, Jazz Studies), and Bogdan Dulu and Greg Casley (Co-Directors, Keyboard Studies) stepped into newly established positions designed to strengthen collaboration between faculty and administration and place artistic leadership at the centre of the School's strategic direction.

Under Carla's guidance, we successfully advanced the case for Sinfonietta to tour Ontario alongside the VSO in March 2025 – an extraordinary milestone for our talented and hard-working young musicians. Watching them perform with Jonathan Crow at The Royal Conservatory of Music was a moment of immense pride, and it was

deeply rewarding to hear Toronto audiences remark on the calibre and professionalism of our players.

Meanwhile, Jodi has propelled our jazz programs into exciting new territory, including expanding offerings into Surrey schools and increasing daytime jazz opportunities for adults. A particular highlight of the year was hearing our Jazz Faculty perform in Pyatt Hall during the May 24 Day of Music, where hundreds of visitors experienced firsthand the artistry and energy of our faculty and students.

This year's Future of Excellence Concerto Competition – won by percussionist Valerie Lin, a student of Aaron McDonald (VSO Principal Timpani), with additional finalists on piano and violin – demonstrated the School's depth and breadth of talent. Our programs continue to evolve in response to the needs of our community. For learners unable to visit us in person, many lessons and classes are now available online, and the Learn Music platform offers flexible asynchronous learning. Truly, there is *something for everyone*.

**Elisabeth Finch**  
Board Chair  
VSO School of Music

# Artistic Highlights

The Vancouver Symphony Orchestra's 2024/25 concert season kicked off with Stewart Goodyear performing Rachmaninoff's Third Piano Concerto, paired with the late Jocelyn Morlock's *Night, Herself*, and Symphonic Cinema's innovative film that accompanied Stravinsky's *The Firebird*. Later, in October, international piano superstar Lang Lang joined his wife, pianist Gina Alice, to perform Saint-Saëns' cherished *Carnival of the Animals* to a sold-out audience. Autumn also saw the VSO welcome another iconic artist, A.R. Rahman, for an evening of conversation and music presented in partnership with the Vancouver International Film Festival.

Throughout the season, we were introduced to memorable new works from such international composers as Tan Dun, Britta Byström, Camille Pepin, Pēteris Vasks, Zoltan Almashi, Thomas Agerfeldt Olesen, and Carlos Simon, alongside brilliant Canadian compositions from Kelly-Marie Murphy, Linda Catlin Smith, and the VSO's very own Marcus Goddard, who premiered *Mountain Visions* as part of the VSO's National Tour. The Canadian premiere of Steve Reich's *Jacob's Ladder* with Synergy Vocals was accompanied by Philip Glass' 11th Symphony, Linda Catlin Smith's *Mountain*, and John Adams' *Gnarly Buttons*, showcasing VSO Principal Clarinet, Jenny Jonquil, as soloist.

Our 2024/25 season also welcomed many of the leading guest soloists and conductors on the stage today. Highlights included performances from the acclaimed Canadian pianist Angela Hewitt in Mozart's Piano Concerto No. 15, violinist Leila Josefowicz with Stravinsky's Concerto for Violin, pianist Stephen Hough with Grieg's Piano Concerto, Behzod Abduraimov in Beethoven's "Emperor" Piano Concerto, and Prokofiev's scintillating Third Piano Concerto with Bruce Liu. The season also featured inspiring performances from the VSO's very own

Nicholas Wright, David Lakirovich, and Vern Griffiths who took to the podium to lead Tony DeSare's *Let's Misbehave*.

Maestro Tausk welcomed several guest conductors to the podium, including brilliant performances from Tan Dun, Han-Na Chang, Antony Hermus, Andrew Litton, Andrew Crust, Daniel Raiskin, Christian Kluxen, Alpesh Chauhan, Valentina Peleggi, and Stanislav Kochanovsky, Andrew Boreyko, and Giordano Bellincampi.

From *Star Wars: The Empire Strikes Back* to Disney Pixar's *Coco*, Movie Nights with the VSO presented by Telus continue to introduce new audiences to live orchestral music. With the ongoing support of series sponsor London Drugs, the VSO Pops series celebrated the musical legacies of The Beatles, Gene Kelly and Hollywood soundtracks, the Harlem Renaissance, Cole Porter, and Paul Simon. The VSO's RBC Assistant Conductor, David Bui, concluded his three-year tenure and took the lead on both our Kids Concerts Series, as well as PARC Retirement Living Tea & Trumpets. Always an audience favourite, Tea & Trumpets' host Christopher Gaze continued to engage the audience with his signature blend of stories and educational insights.



Lang Lang

# 2025 National Tour

For the first time in seven years, the VSO led by Maestro Otto Tausk embarked on a bold National Tour across Canada.

The tour commenced at the Isabel Bader Centre for the Performing Arts in Kingston with the VSO's powerful rendition of *O Canada*, setting a tone of unity and national pride right from the start. The evening proceeded with the World Premiere of *Mountain Visions*, written by composer and VSO Associate Trumpet, Marcus Goddard, and featuring mezzo-soprano, Marion Newman. Celebrated violinist, Vadim Gluzman, performed a moving interpretation of Brahms' Violin Concerto. The highlight of the evening's program was perhaps the roaring finale: Shostakovich's Symphony No. 5, bringing the audiences to their feet for multiple standing ovations.

The reception was just as enthusiastic during the second stop of the tour at Roy Thomson Hall in Toronto as part of the TSO's regular season programming.

Following such a warm reception, the VSO headed north to Ottawa for the third performance at the magnificent National Arts Centre. VSO Indigenous Council Chair, Dennis Thomas-Whonoak, along with his two daughters sang the Coast Salish Anthem followed by its symphonic rendition. The evening continued with the late Jocelyn Morlock's *Night, Herself*, and Stewart Goodyear's performance of Rachmaninoff's Piano Concerto No. 3.

The Tour came to an official close in Vancouver this weekend at the Orpheum, with performances of *Mountain Visions*, Nicolas Wright in Bruch's *Scottish Fantasy*, and Dvořák's monumental "New World Symphony."

The VSO was thrilled to share the Power of Music with communities across Canada and showcase the artistic brilliance of VSO musicians and British Columbian composers.



Maestro Tausk and the VSO at the National Arts Centre

# Philanthropy at a Glance

We are grateful to our community of individuals, corporations, small businesses, foundations, and government that collectively provide invaluable financial support to help sustain our core values at the VSO: Education, Outreach & Touring, Youth & Access and our People. Thanks to these investments in the power of music, the VSO was able to provide exceptional musical experiences, music education, and community engagement initiatives throughout our 2024/25 season.

## INDIVIDUAL GIVING

Over 3,000 individuals generously supported the VSO with an annual, monthly, or added donation at the time of their ticket purchase. Of this group, 113 were new donors and 223 donors upgraded their donation amount to expand their support to the organization. We had 22 donors in our Major Gift category, generously supporting our endowment fund, operations and organizational initiatives. We extend special thanks to Honorary Life President Gerald A.B. McGavin, CM, OBC, and TELUS, who collectively contributed \$200,000 in matching funds.

## CORPORATE GIVING

The VSO is grateful to its committed sponsors who support the VSO's season and our many additional initiatives. In 2024/25, the VSO was supported by a total of 58 regular sponsors, 24 of which were newly acquired, representing \$320,000 in new corporate revenue. After several years of steadfast involvement and funding, BMO became our title sponsor for the 2025 BMO Day of Music, an annual community event that reaches over 20,000 people across the downtown core. In addition, TELUS used their annual donation as a matching gift, being the first of our corporate partners to do so. We are grateful for our long-standing partnerships with our corporate partners and extend our deepest gratitude for their on-going support.

## POWER OF MUSIC GALA

Our 2025 Power of Music Gala was an elegant and lively evening at the historic Orpheum Theatre that

welcomed over 600 guests. Hosted by George Stroumboulopoulos, auctioneer Fred Lee, and co-chaired by Bruce Munro Wright, OBC and Kerrie Sayer, the evening was full of grandeur, grace and inspiration. Our guests were dazzled by musical performances from the Orpheum stage featuring the VSO, Feist, and Angela Hewitt, who was honoured with a Gold Baton Award for Leadership in Music – as was corporate leader Brandt Louie. Performers from the VSO School of Music amazed our guests when playing in various curated locations throughout the Orpheum. The philanthropic leaders of our community came together and raised over \$1.1 million in support of the VSO and VSO School of Music. We are deeply appreciative of the members of the Power of Music Gala committee, attendees, and the many sponsors and donors for their support of this annual event.

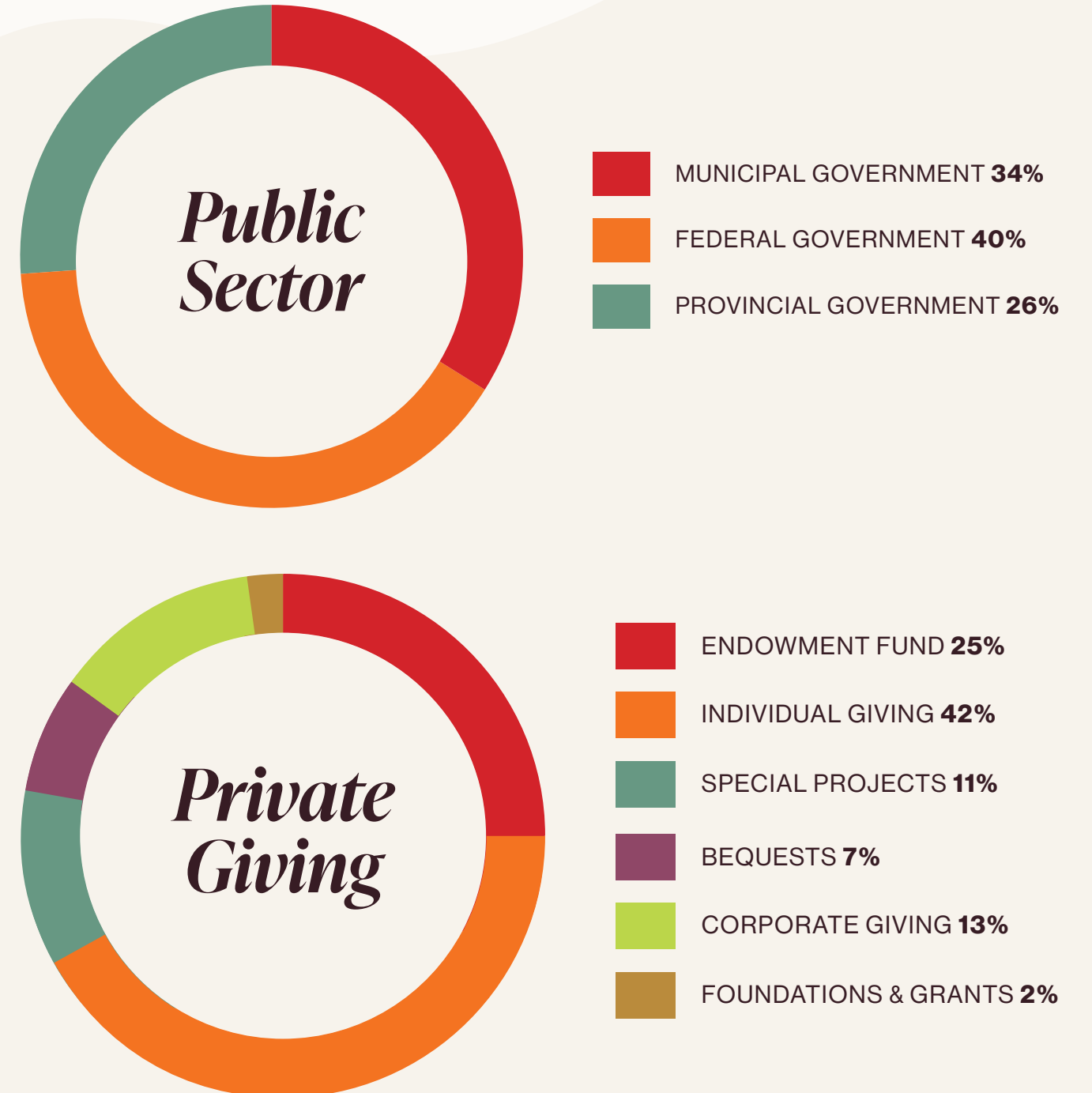
## LEGACY GIVING

We are extremely grateful to all those who consider the VSO in their legacy gift estate planning, ensuring the sustainability of the orchestra for future generations. As of 2024/25, the Stradivarius Legacy Circle included 125 members, 10 of whom were new last season. We felt fortunate to receive 5 legacy gifts, totaling \$404,000, most of which went to our Vancouver Symphony Foundation. The VSO is honoured to have the support of so many thoughtful individuals who want to ensure that as part of their legacy the power of music continues to play for years to come.

## ENDOWMENT FUNDS & FOUNDATIONS

Last year, the VSO was supported by 16 total foundations and granting bodies, with new notable support from the Azrieli Foundation for our Education initiatives. We are grateful for gifts from charitable foundations and granting bodies who provide an integral component of our funding revenue each year.

A heartfelt THANK YOU to all our supporters for their vital role in the VSO's music-making, education and community engagement initiatives.



# Financial Report

The 2024/2025 season ended in a deficit of \$688,422 which reduced the accumulated surplus down to \$487,293 at June 30, 2025. Total revenue increased 3.5% over the previous year. Concert expenses increased 6.8% as we hosted a wide variety of national and international guest artists and presented many movies with live orchestra. As we move forward into 2025/2026 we have prepared an austerity budget to lead us to success in the 2025/2026 season and beyond.



Symphonic Cinema's *The Firebird*



- EARNED REVENUE **41%**
- CONTRIBUTED REVENUE **26%**
- GOVERNMENT **19%**
- ENDOWMENT **12%**
- OTHER **1%**



- PERSONNEL **65%**  
(INCLUDING MUSICIANS)
- CONCERT PRODUCTION **17%**
- MARKETING **9%**
- FUNDRAISING **3%**
- ADMINISTRATION **5%**

# Education Highlights

VSO Education & Community Engagement provides programs tailored towards all ages and experience levels to increase access to music and music education and provide meaningful opportunities to engage with symphonic music.

## CHERNIAVSKY JUNIOR CLUB ELEMENTARY CONCERT SERIES

- Attended by over 10,000 elementary students from over 50 schools across the Lower Mainland
- Study guides with strong curriculum links provided

### The Spirit Horse Returns

*The Spirit Horse Returns* was presented as the first education concert of the year for elementary students (K-7). This program engaged young audiences through powerful Indigenous storytelling, vibrant visual art, and orchestral music, bringing the story of the Ojibwe Horses of the Prairies to life while fostering meaningful discussions on reconciliation and care for the land.

### Lights, Camera, Orchestra

Produced and presented by the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra in collaboration with BC-based composers Caleb and Brian Chan (*Angry Birds: Summer Madness, Fairly Odd Parents: A New Wish*), this concert engaged students in grades 3 to 8 with an exploration of how music enhanced films by shaping characters, building emotion, and deepening storytelling. Through live orchestral performance and industry insights, students gained educational benefits including increased media literacy, creative inspiration, and awareness of career pathways in music and film. A teacher remarked, "This is such an amazing and affordable way for students to experience the VSO for the first time. Some of my students are already talking about wanting to go to more symphony concerts!"

## KIDS CONCERTS

An innovative array of programming delighted young audiences at our fun-filled 5-concert series on Sunday afternoons:

- *The Spirit Horse Returns*
- *Platypus Theatre: How the Gimquaat Found Her Song*
- *Classical Kids Live! Vivaldi and the Ring of Mystery*
- *Dan Brown's Wild Symphony*
- *Daughter of the Inner Stars*

## SYMPHONIC ENCOUNTERS

Symphonic Encounters is the VSO's open rehearsal program, taking students, teachers, and community groups behind the scenes of a working rehearsal. In 2024/25, over 1,500 students from 60 different Schools and community groups across the Lower Mainland attended one of our six Symphonic Encounters events. A highlight of the program is an intimate meet and greet with VSO musicians that provides an opportunity for students to ask questions.

## JEAN COULTHARD READINGS AND MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

Led by Maestro Otto Tausk and Mentor Composer Edward Top, the Jean Coulthard Readings and Mentorship Program expanded over an eight month residency, providing five emerging BC-based composers the opportunity to learn from accomplished Guest Composers such as Caleb Chan, Dr. Jennifer Butler, Dr. Dorothy Chang, VSO musicians, RBC Assistant Conductor David Bui, and Conductor and Composer Tan Dun. The program culminated in a reading and professional recording of the participants' works by the orchestra. Additionally, composers attended exclusive open rehearsals and VSO performances. One participant remarked, "I learned so much from the variety of guests and how the careers in music and composition can look like. Tan Dun's chat was inspiring and such a unique experience that we would never have had. The pieces were played and recorded by the VSO, super cool to hear the piece live and with feedback from the musicians."

## VSO CONNECTS

VSO Connects Secondary provides music students with the unique opportunity to refine their instrumental skills through multiple sessions with VSO musicians. VSO Connects Elementary offers younger students an engaging introduction to the VSO and orchestral music, while also connecting them to various forms of art.

In 2024/25 the VSO Connects program was delivered at six elementary and five secondary schools, including Newton Elementary and Frank Hurt Secondary in Surrey, Capitol Hill Elementary and Byrne Creek Community School in Burnaby, Franklin Elementary, Alexander MacKenzie Elementary and David Thompson Secondary in Vancouver, Central Elementary and Riverside Secondary in Coquitlam, and Delta Secondary in Delta. With 64 visits and four Connects Open Rehearsals, the program reached 1,300 elementary students and 290 secondary students. One elementary participant shared, "I learned so much from watching the musicians play and then trying the instruments."

## GIVING BACK

The VSO provided over 1,500 free and discounted tickets to schools and community groups to attend educational events, along with tickets to concerts and performances. The Giving Back program engages under-accessed community groups and schools in our educational and symphonic Programming.

## TUTTI: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SYMPOSIUM FOR MUSIC EDUCATORS AND TEACHERS

In 2024/25, Tutti: Professional Development Symposium for Music Educators and Teachers was launched. Over 50 teachers from 8 districts across the Lower Mainland attended this full-day workshop to gain practical insights to enhance their teaching. The day included a talk by Dr. Shannon Leddy on key principles and pedagogies for Indigenous education, a VSO open rehearsal, and a variety of instrument-specific clinics, and info sessions for band and string ensembles. Sessions were facilitated by VSO musicians, VSO School of Music Faculty, and other professionals in the field.



Lights, Camera, Orchestra at the Orpheum

# The Path Forward

On June 13, 2024, our community came together to honour Indigenous People's Day and experience the third annual *The Path Forward* at the Orpheum. Curated by the VSO's Indigenous Council, this celebration showcased the powerful voices of the Coast Salish Peoples from the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh Nations, alongside talented Indigenous artists from across Turtle Island.

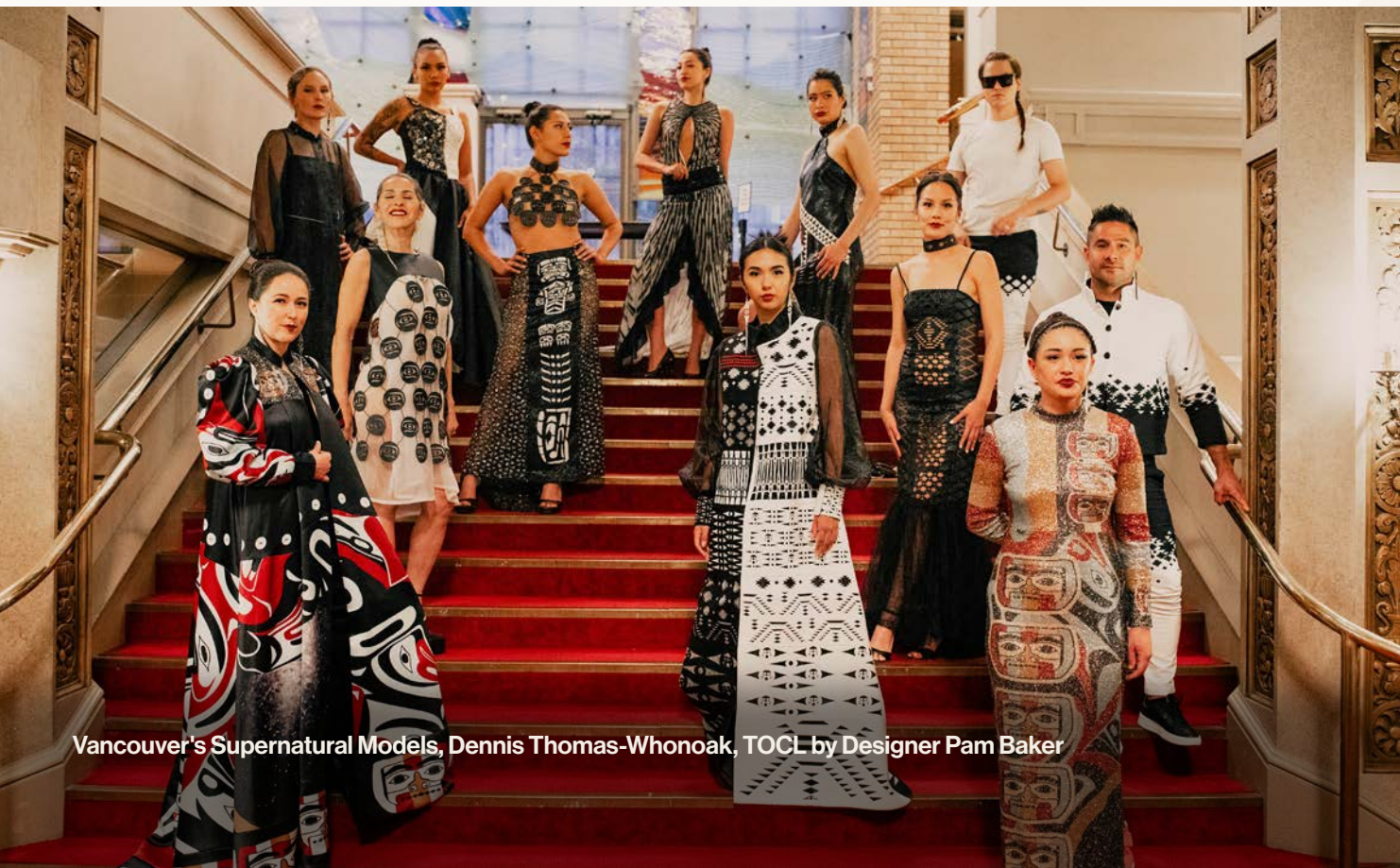
With complimentary admission, the event welcomed everyone, making art and music accessible to all. Before the concert, attendees savoured bannock from Bannock Queen Bakery and engaged in hands-on activities at the VSO School of Music's playzone.

The mainstage concert, hosted by the charismatic Geena Jackson, featured extraordinary VSO collaborations, including the Musqueam Paddle Song performed by Nova Charles and the Coast Salish Anthem and Eagle Song performed by Dennis Thomas-Whonoak.

The VSO Indigenous Council's heartfelt welcome of the Tla'amin Nation was a highlight of the day, marking a significant addition to the festivities. This collaboration illuminated the contributions of Tla'amin singers, who joined forces with Prisma Music Festival students and VSO musicians, enriching the musical tapestry of the event.

The celebration culminated in a dazzling fashion show on the Orpheum stage, spotlighting the creativity and innovation of Indigenous designer Himikalas Pamela Baker with the Touch Of Culture Legends House of Design, complemented by music from DJ O Show.

The VSO and VSO School of Music extend their heartfelt gratitude for this profound collaboration, and we are proud to share *The Path Forward* with our community. We are also grateful to our presenting sponsor, TD Ready Commitment.



Vancouver's Supernatural Models, Dennis Thomas-Whonoak, TOCL by Designer Pam Baker



Tla'amin Nation Traditional Singers, Drew Blaney (top right)



# Day of Music 2025

Day of Music 2025, presented by BMO, was the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra and VSO School of Music's flagship community engagement event, reaffirming our commitment to free and accessible musical programming for British Columbians.

Held on May 24, this extraordinary celebration featured 12 hours of free music, performed by over 100 musical groups across 11 stages, along with a variety of online workshops. Concerts took place at iconic venues including the Orpheum, the VSO School of Music, Christ Church Cathedral, Deloitte, Telus Garden, BMO branches, Arts Umbrella, and an outdoor stage at Yaletown's Helmcken Plaza.

Day of Music brought the power and joy of music to more than 25,000 people – all for free.

The VSO was front and centre, headlining the spotlight evening performance at the Orpheum. Faculty and students from the VSO School of Music also shone on the Orpheum stage:

- Michael Dirk, organist and faculty member, thrilled audiences with the Mighty Wurlitzer organ.
- The VSO School of Music Jazz Big Band energized the hall with swing-era classics.
- Jimmy Lee, VSO School student and winner of the 2024 Future of Excellence Concerto Competition, performed as guest soloist with the VSO, playing a movement from Grieg's Piano Concerto.

Throughout the day, Pyatt Hall and classrooms at the School were packed for solo and ensemble performances, masterclasses, trials of the School's Digital Learning platform, VSO Learn Music.ca, and Mini Music Maker workshops.

The vision of Day of Music is to unite communities and musicians from across British Columbia to celebrate the joy, fun, and healing power of music-making. Of the 100+ performances, more than 25 featured VSO musicians, VSO School faculty and students.

We extend our sincere thanks to Presenting Sponsor BMO, Community Engagement Partner TELUS, Vancouver Civic Theatres, and the Jane McLennan Fund for Free and Accessible Music. Special thanks also to the Province of British Columbia, City of Vancouver, Downtown Vancouver BIA, Deloitte, Morguard, Arts Umbrella, and our partners at Vancouver Civic Theatres for their generous support.

Above: Helmcken Plaza Community Stage  
Below: Free concert with the VSO at the Orpheum  
Right: TELUS Garden Stage



# Our Community

## DEPTH OF PARTICIPATION

- 990 in private lessons
- 573 in group classes
- 565 in summer camps
- 270 in ensembles

## MUSIC FOR ALL AGES

The VSO School of Music welcomes students of all ages and skill levels to participate in lessons, group classes, ensembles, and performances.

2,508 students studied at the VSO School of Music in 2024/25:

- 832 aged 0–6
- 514 aged 7–12
- 538 aged 13–19
- 402 aged 20–54
- 233 aged 55+

Our youngest student was 3 months old and our oldest student was 91.



Future of Excellence Winner Da-Wei Chan performing at the VSO's Tea & Trumpets concert

## ENSEMBLES

The VSO School of Music's ensembles offer students inspiring opportunities to make music with their peers, led by coaches and conductors at the highest artistic level. This experience builds new skills in musicianship, leadership, and teamwork, while leading to unique performance opportunities. In 2024/25, the ensembles continued to grow in size.

### CLASSICAL

- 120 students in String Ensembles
  - Adult – Camerata
  - Advanced Youth – Sinfonietta
  - Intermediate Youth – Intermezzo & Concertante
  - Beginner Youth – Preludio
- 50 students in Chamber Groups

### JAZZ

- 66 students in Jazz Combos
- 20 students in Big Band

### TRADITIONAL CHINESE

- 21 students in Azalea Chinese Music Ensemble

### OTHER ENSEMBLES

- 2 Adult Guitar Ensembles
- 3 Youth Cello Ensembles
- Aureum Winds (Adult Ensemble)
- Recorder Ensemble
- Children's Choir

# Signature Programs

## EARLY CHILDHOOD LEARNING

Our Mini Music Makers classes are taught by highly experienced and qualified Early Childhood music instructors and musicians, and are full of singing, moving, playing, and learning.

In 2024/25, we were able to expand our Mini Music Makers program beyond the downtown core to satellite locations in Coquitlam and New Westminster.

We offered several Meet the Instrument group beginner classes. These small classes give participants a solid foundation on the violin, piano, ukulele or voice while building musicianship skills.

Out of 832 VSO School of Music students age 0–6 years old:

- 699 in Mini Music Makers
- 75 in summer, spring break, & pro-d day camps
- 22 in private lessons
- 71 in group beginner classes



Meet the Flute

## YOUTH EMPOWERMENT PROGRAM

The VSO School of Music's Youth Empowerment Program is a donor-funded education initiative providing at-risk youth with a safe space to explore different avenues of making music.

The program is based around weekly creative music making drop-in sessions that include instrumental music instruction, jamming, composition, and music production. The two-hour classes are tailored based on the interests of the participants, and are followed by a free meal. A regular faculty member supplements the programming with guest artists from a variety of musical disciplines. Participants also have the opportunity to take private lessons.

Over 30 youth took part in the program and several students went on to study guitar, harp, cello, clarinet, voice, and songwriting in their weekly private lessons.

Based on research about the cognitive, social, health, and emotional benefits of making music, and the added benefits of working musically as a group, the Youth Empowerment Program develops life skills while providing at-risk youth with access to the arts.

In 2025, YEP expanded to Surrey with offering community oriented jazz classes as free after-school programming in multiple schools of complex need in the Surrey School District.

The VSO School of Music works with community partners, such as Covenant House, St. James Music Academy, and the Surrey School District to support attendance and access to the Youth Empowerment Program.



Azalea Chinese Music Ensemble

# Signature Programs CONT

The VSO School of Music's Signature Programs exemplify our commitment to excellence, innovation, and access in music education. These cornerstone initiatives provide transformative and inspirational experiences for students, foster artistic growth, and strengthen our community impact. Each initiative plays a vital role in shaping confident, expressive, and engaged musicians.

## SINFONIETTA CANADIAN TOUR

A highlight of the year was the Sinfonietta Canadian Tour, a groundbreaking initiative that brought 33 students on a multi-city performance journey across Eastern Canada. As the school's first national tour, it offered young musicians the chance to perform at the Royal Conservatory of Music in Toronto, with mentorship from the Toronto Symphony Orchestra's concertmaster Jonathan Crow, the Spire in Kingston, and the National Arts Centre in Ottawa. Sinfonietta returned to Vancouver and performed a side-by-side of Dvorak's New World Symphony with the VSO. This was a seminal opportunity for our advanced string players, who had the opportunity to learn from internationally recognized coaches, collaborate with peers, and represent the VSO School on a national stage – an unforgettable milestone in their musical development.

## PERFORMANCE PREP PROGRAM

The Performance Prep Program equips students who are about to embark on careers as professional musicians with the skills, confidence, and stage presence needed for successful auditions and public performances. This year-long program

provides scholarships that cover group classes for the PPP cohort, individualized coaching and real-life performance opportunities. Students refine their artistry and receive career mentorship in a supportive, professional environment.

### 2024/25 Performance Prep Program students:

- Saige Adams, Jazz Guitar
- Gee Lee, Jazz Voice
- Jimmy Lee, Piano
- Quinn McDonald, Percussion
- Siobhan Powlowski, Classical Voice
- Joshua Tom, Violin

## FUTURE OF EXCELLENCE

The Future of Excellence Concerto Competition spotlights emerging talent, offering the senior division winner the rare opportunity to perform as a soloist with the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra. This program not only fosters and celebrates exceptional talent of but also nurtures the next generation of Canadian musical leaders. This is unique opportunity is available exclusively to VSO School of Music students.

### Senior Division

Winner: Valerie Lin, percussion (student of Aaron McDonald)

Finalists: Bohan Zhang, piano (Dr. Sergei Saratovsky); Nevé Frid, violin (student of Carla Birston)

### Junior Division

Winner: Yuki Kirikae, piano (student of Sergei Saratovsky)

Finalists: Katherine Fang, violin (student of Carla Birston); Rachel Wright, violin (student of Carla Birston)

## STRINGS INSTITUTE

The Strings Institute on the Sunshine Coast offered an immersive retreat-style experience, combining intensive instruction with the restorative beauty of nature, and bonding experience with peers. Over 100 students, aged 8 through 18, deepened their technical and ensemble skills while building lasting musical friendships in a unique coastal setting, at the YMCA's Camp Elphinstone in Gibsons.

## SISTERS IN JAZZ

Sisters in Jazz Day was May 18, 2025 and celebrated the power and creativity of women in jazz, who are typically underrepresented in the music industry on the whole, and jazz specifically. Bringing in internationally acclaimed women-artists from across the globe as facilitators, Sisters in Jazz offering female and non-binary identifying jazz students workshops, performances, and mentorship opportunities. This vibrant event fostered inclusivity and encouraged female-identifying musicians to explore jazz in a welcoming and empowering space.

## FESTIVAL FOR PIANO & STRINGS

The VSO School of Music String and Piano Festivals provided vital performance platforms for students of all ages and levels. These festivals emphasize growth, feedback, and celebration, reinforcing the joy of music-making and the value of shared artistic experiences.

## FESTIVAL FOR PIANO

### PRIMARY

**First:** Emily Jang (student of Estelle Copéry); Ryan Martin (student of Bernard Duerksen)  
**Second:** Claire Liu (student of Karin Wang)

### JUNIOR

**First:** Lauren Emelyanova (student of Elisabeta Podut)  
**Second:** Zachary Chua (student of Elisabeta Podut)  
**Third:** Owen Hui (student of Nadia Petriw)

### INTERMEDIATE

**First:** Sebastian Wong (student of Alan Crane)  
**Second:** Emilia Kliber-Pissavan (student of Sergei Saratovsky)  
**Third:** Sophie Yang (student of Keiko Alexander)

### SENIOR

**First:** Bohan Zhang (student of Sergei Saratovsky)  
**Second:** Cynthia Lian (student of Rosemary O'Connor)  
**Third:** Charles Wang (student of Sergei Saratovsky)

## FESTIVAL FOR STRINGS

### PRIMARY

**First:** Emily Zeng, violin (student of Carla Birston); Lauryn Press-Yates, violin (student of Ashley Plaut); Olivia Wang, violin (student of Jennie Press)

### JUNIOR

**First:** Katherine Fang, violin; Sophie Yang, violin (students of Carla Birston)  
**Second:** Sherwin Ma, violin (student of Carla Birston); Sebastian Moreau, cello (student of Cristian Markos)

### INTERMEDIATE

**First:** Paloma Martins, cello (student of Harold Birston)  
**Second:** Abigail Lui, violin (student of Carla Birston)  
**Third:** Frannie Hwang, violin (student of Carla Birston); Alex Zeng, cello (student of Olivia Blander); Edwin Yang, cello (student of Harold Birston)

### SENIOR

**First:** Xenia Huang, violin (student of Carla Birston); Da-Wei Chan, violin (student of Carla Birston); Carl Teng, cello (student of Henry Shapard)

### JUNIOR CHAMBER

**First:** Trio Woah (Ayla Ko, violin; Sophie Hu, cello; Alan Tang, piano. Coached by Jonathan Lo)

### SENIOR CHAMBER:

**First:** Astral Quartet (Da-Wei Chan, violin; Xenia Huang, violin; Carl Teng, cello; Emma Sha, viola. Coached by Nicholas Wright)



Sinfonietta National Tour performance at the RCM with Jonathan Crow

# International Master Teacher Program

Our International Master Teacher Masterclasses welcomed world-renowned artists to work directly with students, providing high-level instruction and global perspectives. These sessions inspire excellence and connect our learners to the broader international music community.

## 10 International Master Teacher events took place in 2024/25

- Jazz Piano Masterclass with Benny Green
- Chamber Masterclass with Pražák Quartet
- Piano Masterclass with Vanessa Benelli Mosell
- In Conversation with Otto Tausk, Alex Wide and Zach Masri
- Cello Masterclass with Henry Shapard
- Piano Masterclass with Stephen Hough
- Jazz Trombone Masterclass with Aubrey Logan
- Voice Masterclass with Thomas Hampson
- Piano Masterclass with Bruce Liu
- Violin Masterclass with Simone Lamsma

Jimmy Lee and Bruce Liu



Isla Stewart and Thomas Hampson



Jimmy Lee and Bruce Liu

# Faculty

At the very heart of the VSO School of Music, you will find a team of over 120 dedicated faculty members, including musicians of the VSO. The diverse faculty team spans instruments and musical styles and their high standards of pedagogical instruction, artistic excellence and passion for music education elevate the life experiences of our students.

Faculty members are the driving force behind many special opportunities for students. They take steps such as enrolling ensembles in competitions, planning festivals, collaborating with each other to create a concert of student compositions, and inviting each other to work with their students as a special guest. In many cases, teachers create bespoke arrangements or compositions to help motivate a student with repertoire that balances the challenges, strengths, individual needs and aspirations of each student. In these, and many other ways, our faculty support students in soaring to new and exciting heights!



Vince Mai, Miles Black, and Jodi Proznick

# Bursaries & Scholarships

## BURSARIES

The VSO School of Music provides classes, lessons, and opportunities to participate in ensembles to students in need, of any age or ability.

### 61 students received bursaries

In 2024/25, bursaries have been provided by:

- The HSBC Bursary Fund (for students aged 5–12)
- Saint James Music Academy
- The George & Mary Anne Sigal Fund (for students up to age 18)
- The Leon & Joan Tuey Bursary Fund (for youth)
- Youth Empowerment Program
- The Höing Family Foundation

## SCHOLARSHIPS

Each school year, scholarships are awarded as part of the Future of Excellence Competition and the VSO School of Music Festivals for Strings and Piano, in addition to many more opportunities. Scholarships are awarded purely on the basis of musical achievement.

### 67 scholarships were awarded

In 2024/25, scholarships have been provided by:

- The Höing Family Foundation:
  - Surrey High School Student Fund
  - Exceptional Talent Fund
- Peter and Mary Brunold Award for Excellence in Classical Music Making
- The Santa Cecilia Scholarship
- The Jean H. Eilers Violin Scholarship

#### Scholarship Recipients

Performance Prep Program Scholarship: Saige Adams, jazz guitar

Jean H. Eilers Concertmaster Award: Da Wei Chan, violin

Peter and Mary Brunold Award for the Advancement of Classical Music Making: Andrea Yap

Santa Cecilia Scholarship: Da Wei Chan, violin



Jazz Orcas Combo

# Outstanding Achievements

Individuals and Ensembles from the VSO School of Music consistently placed highly in local and international events. Some examples include:

- 3 Big Guys Trio (Ukiyo Trio) (Timothy Li, violin; Da-Yong Chan, cello; Bohan Zhang, piano) coached by Bogdan Dulu & Hung-Wei Huang, won their Provincials Excellence Chamber Music class and Adjudicator Choice Award for Most Outstanding performance in the Grand Prize Provincials Excellence Winners Concert at the 2025 BC Performing Arts Provincials, and represented British Columbia in the Canada West Competition in Saskatchewan.
- Astral String Quartet (Da-Wei Chan, violin; Xenia Huang, violin; Emma Sha, viola; Carl Teng, cello) coached by Nicholas Wright, won 1st Prize in Chamber Music Ensembles at the Canadian Music Competition: BC Chapter, and represented British Columbia in the CMC Nationals Finals in Sherbrooke, Quebec.
- Da-Wei Chan (violin), student of Carla Birston and member of the VSO School of Music Sinfonietta, soloed with the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra at the Tea and Trumpets: Beethoven & Friends concert where he played Jean Sibelius' Violin Concerto, one of the most challenging violin concertos ever written. Da-Wei was also featured in the Surrey Now-Leader.
- Jonas Embley (drums), student of Jesse Cahill, Jamie Hall and Tristan Webb, piano students of Alan Crane, were all finalists in the Fraser MacPherson scholarship awards.
- Kira Gill (violin), student of Yi Zhou and a Performance Prep Program participant, won 1st Prize in Strings at the Canadian Music Competition: BC Chapter, and represented British Columbia in the CMC Nationals Finals in Sherbrooke, Quebec.
- Xenia Huang (violin), student of Carla Birston, won the Senior Strings Solo class at the 2025 BC Performing Arts Provincials.
- Jimmy Lee (violin), student of Bogdan Dulu, who was also a Performance Prep Program participant and Future of Excellence Winner, is studying at Berklee College of Music in Boston, MA.
- Lauren Lee (drums), student of Jesse Cahill, Big Band member Luka McInnes-Cann (saxophone) and Allison Louis, were awarded scholarships and spots in the MusicFest Canada Honour Jazz ensembles in Toronto, ON.
- Allison Louis (piano), student of Miles Black, won the Fraser MacPherson High School Jazz Scholarship and received a full scholarship to Berklee College of Music.
- Leo Teixeira (voice), student of Leah Giselle Field, won the Intermediate Classical Voice Class, received the Honourable Mention in the Intermediate Vocal Variety Class and won the Outstanding Performance of a Canadian Work in the Vocal Variety Class at the 2025 BC Performing Arts Provincials. Leo also studies with Kevin Zakresky (theory), Julian Borkowski (jazz piano) is in a jazz combo coached by Jodi Proznick and was in the Big Band.
- Carl Teng (cello), student of Harold Birston and Henry Shapard, won the Provincials Excellence Strings Solo class at the 2025 BC Performing Arts Provincials.
- Owen Yuen (violin), student of Carla Birston, achieved 94% and the gold medal on his ARCT exam in violin.
- of Excellence Competition had a high level of performance on display in both the junior and senior divisions.

# Financial Report

The VSO School of Music embarked on an ambitious year, marked by bold initiatives and strategic growth. Notable undertakings included the launch of a new digital learning platform and a landmark student tour to Eastern Canada – our first of its kind – featuring 33 participants.

Overall revenues increased by 22%, with instructional income rising 4% year-over-year. A focused effort to cultivate a culture of philanthropy resulted in a 43% growth in contributions, reflecting strong community support and engagement.

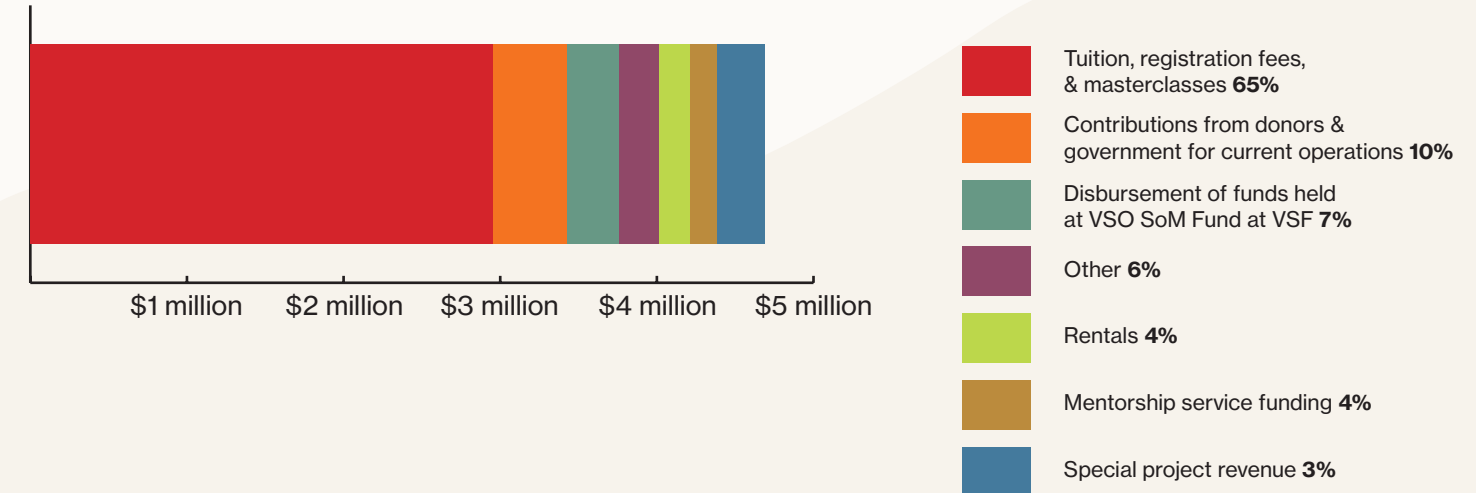
Strategic investments were made to enhance organizational capacity. A revised staffing model expanded the Programming, Registration, and Events teams to better support faculty and students. Additionally, development staff were added to strengthen fundraising efforts and drive long-term growth.

While rising operational costs introduced unexpected challenges, management responded with diligence and adaptability throughout the fiscal year. The year concluded with a very modest operating deficit of 0.33%, offset by surpluses from previous years, ensuring continued financial stability.

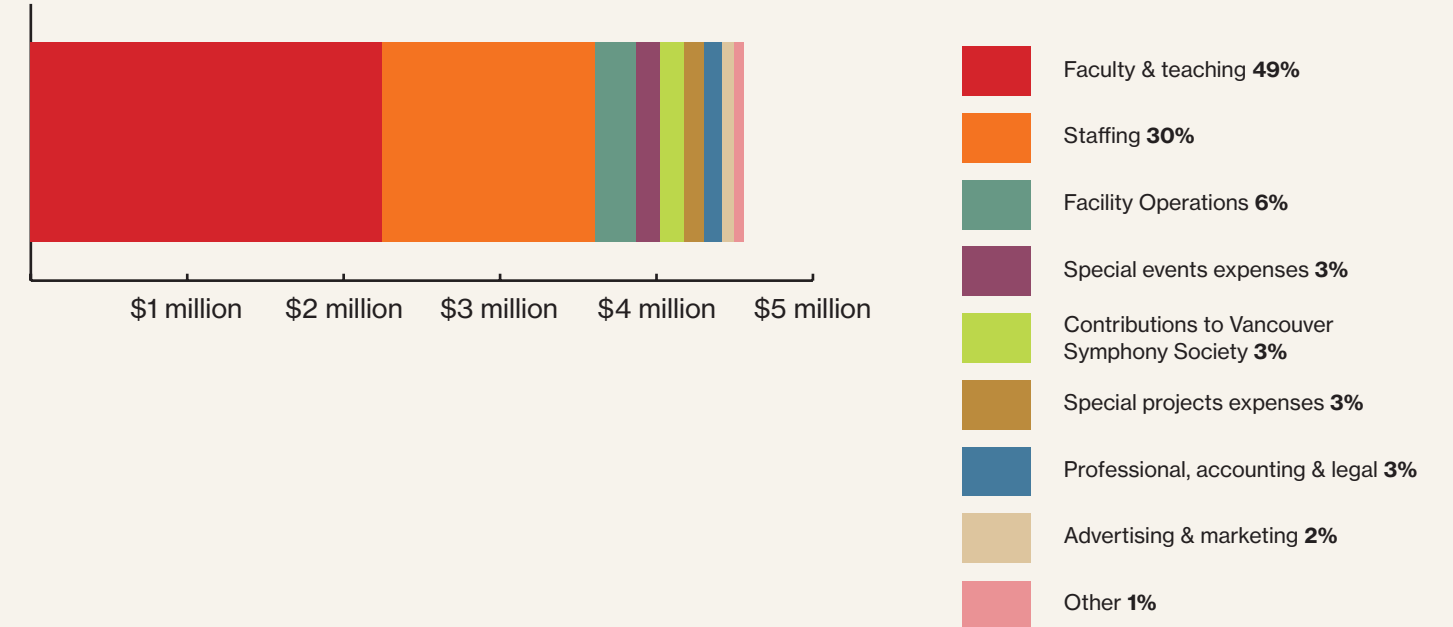


VSO School of Music Big Band, led by James Danderfer at Day of Music

## Revenues



## Expenses



# Vancouver Symphony Orchestra \*

**Otto Tausk**  
Music Director  
Alan and Gwendoline Pyatt Podium

**Kazuyoshi Akiyama**  
Conductor Laureate

**David Bui**  
RBC Assistant Conductor  
Marsha and George Taylor Chair

## FIRST VIOLINS

Nicholas Wright  
Concertmaster  
Ron and Ardelle Cliff Chair

Timothy Steeves  
Associate Concertmaster  
William and Irene McEwen Chair

David Lakirovich  
Assistant Concertmaster  
Robert G. and Suzanne Brodie Chair

Jennie Press  
Second Assistant Concertmaster

Jae-Won Bang

Cassandra Bequary

Sunny She

Xue Feng Wei

Rebecca Whitling §  
Mrs. Cheng Koon Lee Chair

Yi Zhou

## SECOND VIOLINS

Sam Milner  
Principal

Karen Gerbrecht §  
Associate Principal  
Jim and Edith Le Nobel Chair

Jeanette Bernal-Singh  
Assistant Principal

Blythe Allers  
Acting Associate Principal

Manuel Lok

Daniel Norton

Ann Okagaito

Ashley Plaut

Carina Vincenti

## VIOLAS

Hung-Wei Huang  
Principal

Jacob van der Sloot  
Associate Principal

Andrew Brown  
Associate Principal Viola Emeritus

Emilie Grimes §  
Assistant Principal

Katrina Chitty Assistant Principal

Vacant  
Estelle and Michael Jacobson Chair

Angela Schneider  
Professors Mr. and Mrs. Ngou  
Kang Chair

## CELLOS

Henry Shapard  
Principal  
Nezhat Khosrowshahi, OBC and  
Hassan Khosrowshahi, CM, OBC  
Chair

Janet Steinberg  
Associate Principal

Zoltan Rozsnyai  
Assistant Principal

Natasha Boyko  
Mary and Gordon Christopher Chair

Christopher Chan

Luke Kim

Dr. Malcolm Hayes and Lester  
Soo Chair

Johnathan Lo  
Gerhard and Arian Bruendl Chair

Cristian Márkos  
Tim Wyman and Susan Gabe Chair

Albert Seo

## BASSES

Dylan Palmer  
Principal

Noah Reitman  
Acting Associate Principal

David Brown  
Acting Assistant Principal

Malcolm Armstrong §

Harrison Dearman Δ

J. Warren Long

Jesse Lu Δ

## FLUTES

Christie Reside  
Principal  
Ron and Ardelle Cliff Chair

Rosanne Wieringa  
Second Flute  
Michael and Estelle Jacobson Chair

Julin Cheung  
Assistant Principal

## PICCOLO

Julin Cheung  
Hermann and Erika Stölting Chair

## OBOES

Joo Bin Yi  
Principal  
Wayne and Leslie Ann Ingram Chair

Karin Walsh  
Second  
Paul Moritz Chair

Mayu Isom Δ  
Assistant Principal

## ENGLISH HORN

Mayu Isom Δ  
Chair in Memory of John S. Hodge

## CLARINETS

Jeanette Jonquil  
Principal  
Robert G. and Suzanne Brodie Chair

Michelle Goddard  
Assistant Principal/Second/E-Flat  
Clarinet/Bass Clarinet  
Taryn Brodie Chair

Aidan Wong  
Utility/Bass Clarinet

## BASSOONS

Julia Lockhart  
Principal

Thalia Navas  
Second

Sophie Dansereau  
Assistant Principal/Contrabassoon

## HORNS

Alexander Wide  
Principal  
Werner and Helga Höing Chair

Oliver de Clercq  
Associate Principal

Andrew Mee  
Second

William Loveless  
Assistant Principal/Third

Holly Bryan §  
Fourth  
Winslow and Betsy Bennet Chair

## TRUMPETS

Larry Knopp  
Principal

Vincent Vohradsky  
Second

Marcus Goddard  
Associate Principal/Third

## TROMBONES

Ethan Shrier  
Principal

Andrew Poirier  
Second

Ilan Morgenstern §  
Bass Trombone  
Arthur H. Willms Family Chair

Griffin Cutaia Δ  
Bass Trombone

## TUBA

Peder MacLellan  
Principal

## TIMPANI

Aaron McDonald  
Principal

Zachary Masri  
Assistant Principal

## PERCUSSION

Vern Griffiths  
Principal  
Martha Lou Henley Chair

Zachary Masri

## HARP

Alyssa Katahara §  
Principal

## PIANO

Principal Piano (Occupied by  
Bogdan Dulu & Grace Huang)  
Jemini Foundation Chair

Δ Temporary Contract  
§ Leave of Absence

\* As of June 30, 2025

# Vancouver Symphony Administration \*

**Angela Elster**  
President & CEO

**Komal Kaur**  
Executive Assistant & Government  
Relations Officer

## FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION

Mary-Ann Moir  
Vice President, Finance &  
Administration

Saba Alam  
Employee Experience Senior Officer

Khang Do  
Payroll Officer

Diane Chen Liu  
Director of Finance

Debra Marcus  
Director, Information Technology

Michael Nikulin  
IT Specialist

Hedieh Noroozi  
Payroll & Accounts Payable Senior  
Officer

Zachary Zimmerman  
IT Application & Systems Specialist

## MARKETING, SALES & CUSTOMER SERVICE

Cameron MacRae  
Vice President, Marketing & Sales

Santiago Arcila  
Communications Officer

Taylor Beaumont  
Box Office Manager & FOH  
Coordinator

Jason Ho  
Box Office Manager

Rumi Kodama  
Junior Marketing Officer

Clare Narver  
Customer Service Team Lead

Rana Zokai  
Customer Journey  
& Business Intelligence Manager

Minji Son Δ  
Box Office Captain

Madison Farrell Δ  
Customer Service Representative

Tsega Koochin Δ  
Customer Service Representative

Lilly Lester Δ  
Customer Service Representative

Yuna Nakamura Δ  
Customer Service Representative

Elora Nandi Δ  
Customer Service Representative

Nilsa Nilli Δ  
Customer Service Representative

Amy Nguyen Δ  
Customer Service Representative

Monique Rodrigues Δ  
Customer Service Representative

Chloe Yue Δ  
Customer Service Representative

Julia Samper Zamorano Δ  
Customer Service Representative

## DEVELOPMENT

Broek Bosma  
President, Vancouver Symphony  
Foundation & Chief Advancement  
Officer

Charlie Bailey  
Development Team Assistant

Brent Cowan  
Senior Officer, Data Analyst

Vicki Cummings  
Senior Director, Corporate Programs  
and Annual Gifts

Maira Hosain  
Grants & Foundations Officer

Esther Mahmoud  
Development Coordinator

Andy Moon  
Annual Giving Officer Patrons Circle

Grace Newson  
Stewardship Officer

Paris Simons  
Planned Giving Senior Officer

Emily Schwartz Δ  
Volunteer Experience & Retail  
Assistant, Junior Officer

Graeme Thompson  
Volunteer, Retail & Lottery Officer

**Estelle and Michael Jacobson Chair**

Colin Upright  
Manager, Special Events

Sherry Waters  
Annual Giving Officer Friends

Oliver Zihlmann  
Acting Director, Major Gifts

## ARTISTIC & PRODUCTION

Dr. Adrian Fung  
Vice President, Artistic Planning

Paul Beauchesne  
Director of Production

Cathal Folan  
Director of Artistic Operations

Marcus Goddard  
Composer in Association

Neil Robertson  
Head Music Librarian

Nick Saber  
Head Props

Laurel Spencer  
Orchestra Personnel Manager

Laurie Townsend  
Assistant Librarian

## EDUCATION & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Natasha McEwen  
Vice President, VSO School of  
Music & VSO Education

Dr. Ava Shadmani  
Director of Education & Community  
Engagement

**Ken and Patricia Shields Chair**

Janie Sinn  
Education Administrator

Weijin Ross  
Teacher Services & Education  
Assistant

# VSO School of Music Administration \*

**Angela Elster**  
President & CEO

**Natasha McEwen**  
Vice President, VSO School of  
Music and VSO Education

## REGISTRATION & PROGRAMMING

Sophia Ahola  
Junior Registration Officer

Kira Bennett  
Senior Officer, Programming  
Operations

Amy Takahashi Brown  
Senior Registrar

Nat Chew  
Junior Programming Officer

Daphne Guan Δ  
Junior Registration Officer

Chloe Kwok Δ  
Junior Registration Officer

Regista Seubelan Δ  
Junior Registration Officer

## FACILITIES & OPERATIONS

Amanda Lawrence  
Senior Officer, Events & Engagement

Allen Lee  
Venue Technician Lead

Isabella Marcus  
IT & Logistics Junior Officer

James Marshall  
Facilities & Operations Manager

Pablo Romero  
External & Internal Events,  
Junior Officer

## DEVELOPMENT

Broek Bosma  
President, Vancouver Symphony  
Foundation & Chief Advancement  
Officer

## MARKETING

Cameron MacRae  
Vice President, Marketing & Sales

Jake Huang  
Marketing & Communications  
Junior Officer

Stephanie Yip  
Marketing & Communications  
Senior Officer

## FACULTY LEADS

Carla Birston  
Director, Strings Studies

Dr. Greg Caisley  
Co-Director, Keyboard Studies

Dr. Bogdan Dulu  
Co-Director, Keyboard Studies

Madie Graham Δ  
Jazz & Winds, Brass, Percussion  
Administrator

Laura Jay  
Early Childhood Music  
Education Officer

Jodi Proznick  
Director, Jazz Studies

Chloe Tantowi Δ  
Strings & Keyboard Administrator

Alex Wide  
Artistic Lead, Brass

## FINANCE

Kateryna Vernigorova  
Accounting Assistant

Δ Part Time

\* As of November 2025

# VSO School of Music Faculty \*

## EARLY YEARS

Laura Jay  
*ECME Officer*

Callum Alden  
Rishima Bahadoorsingh  
Kira Bennett  
Marie Calvert  
Libby Donald  
Lou Latil  
Grace Lee  
Kat Stamnes  
Gergana Velinova  
Alice Wong

## JAZZ

Jodi Proznick  
*Director, Jazz Studies*

Miles Black  
Julian Borkowski  
Jesse Cahill  
Bill Coon  
James Danderfer  
Itamar Erez  
Noah Franche-Nolan  
Cam Henderson  
Daniel Hersog  
Vince Mai  
Alan Matheson  
Tristan Paxton  
Dr. Ardeshir Pourkeramati  
Shruti Ramani  
Jennifer Scott  
Ingrid Stitt  
Cameron Wilson

## GUITAR, HARP & UKELELE

Stanton Jack  
*Department Head*

Kyle Hawkes  
Lani Krantz  
Louise Southwood  
Derek Sterling  
Elizabeth Volpé Bligh

## KEYBOARD

Dr. Greg Caisley

*Co-Director,  
Keyboard Studies*

Dr. Bogdan Dulu  
*Co-Director,  
Keyboard Studies*

Keiko Alexander  
Marie Calvert  
Estelle Copery  
Alan Crane  
Michael Dirk  
Dr. Carla Dodek  
Bernard Duerksen  
Dr. Rosa Hong  
Dr. Rachel Iwaasa  
Maria Jung  
Kiandokht Nouri  
Rosemary O'Connor  
Eileen Padgett  
Nadia Petriw  
Elisabeta Podut  
Dr. Sergei Saratovsky  
Jammy Smith  
Laytuan Tan  
Karin Wang  
Sylvia Yee

## STRINGS

Carla Birston  
*Director, Strings Studies*

Jae Won Bang  
Cassandra Bequary  
Harold Birston  
Christopher Chan  
Dr. Catherine Chen  
Robin Copas  
Dr. Maggie Hasspacher  
Cyrena Huang  
Hung-Wei Huang  
Luke Kim  
David Lakirovich  
Eva Lakirovich  
Georgina Leo  
Jonathan Lo  
Manuel Lok  
Mark Luchkow  
Cristian Markos  
Vinh Nguyen  
Ann Okagaito

Bo Peng  
Nadia Petriw  
Ashley Plaut  
Jennie Press  
Noah Reitman  
Dr. Lucia Roh  
Albert Seo  
Dr. Ava Shadmani  
Sunny She  
Timothy Steeves  
Jacob Van der Sloot  
Rebecca Whitling  
Nick Wright  
Yuri Zaidenberg  
Yi Zhou

## THEORY, HISTORY & COMPOSITION

Dr. Eileen Padgett  
*Department Head*

Noah Franche-Nolan  
William Kuo  
Mark Marinic  
Alan Matheson  
Rodney Sharman

## VOICE

Diane King  
*Faculty Chair*

Libby Donald  
Dr. Leah Field  
William George  
Sydney Trotter  
Dr. Kevin Zakresky

## WINDS, BRASS, PERCUSSION

Alex Wide  
*Artistic Lead, Brass*

Rosanne Wierenga  
*Department Head*

Joo Bin  
Marea Chernoff  
Julia Chien  
AK Coope  
Sophie Dansereau  
Katherine Evans  
Michelle Goddard

Vern Griffiths  
Jenny Jonquil  
Anne-Elise Keefer  
Julia Lockhart  
Zach Masri  
Aaron McDonald  
Aaron M. McDonald  
Andrew Mee  
Graham Middleton  
Candice Newberry  
Dr. Julia Nolan  
Christie Reside  
Vincent Voradsky  
Katherine Watson

## WORLD MUSIC

Zhimin Yu  
*Department Head*

Mohamed Assani  
Jessica Huang  
Nicole Ge Li  
Min (Maggie) Lin  
Charlie Lui  
Gloria Wong  
Zhongxi Wu  
Qiu Xia He  
Sharon Zhang

# VSS Board of Directors \*

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

David Garofalo  
*VSS Board Chair*

Suzanne Anton, K.C.  
*VSS Board Vice Chair/Government Relations Committee Chair*

James Carter  
*VSS Board Vice Chair*

Dr. Holden Chow  
*Marketing Committee Chair*

Manijeh Colabella  
*Co-Chair, Governance, Nominating & HR Committee*

Edward Wang  
*Integrated Development & Events Committee Chair*

Jaci Edgeworth  
*Co-Chair, Governance, Nominating & HR Committee*

Andrew Gubbels  
*VSS Board Treasurer/Finance Committee Chair*

## BOARD MEMBERS

Jonathan Berkowitz  
Dr. Stephanie Cheung  
Timothy Cuffe  
Dino Di Marco  
Russell Foster  
Vincent Kam Sun Yip  
Jan Laishley  
Ben Mink  
Beverly Pao  
Rianna Ritchie  
Yuan Shi  
Dennis Thomas-Whonoak  
Feisal Dedhar

## MUSICIAN REPRESENTATIVES

Carina Vincenti  
*Chair, Orchestra Players' Committee*

Vern Griffiths  
*Chair, Artistic Advisory Committee*

## HONORARY LIFE PRESIDENT

Gerald A.B. McGavin, CM, OBC

## HONORARY LIFE VICE-PRESIDENTS

Nezhat Khosrowshahi, OBC  
Ronald N. Stern  
Arthur H. Willms

# VSO School of Music Board of Directors \*

Elisabeth Finch  
*Board Chair*

Daniel Chow  
*Treasurer*

Manijeh Colabella  
*Secretary*

Anne Caraan

# VSO Indigenous Council \*

Dennis Thomas-Whonoak, *Chair*  
*Tsleil Waututh Nation Representative*

Orene Askew (Tumáliya)  
*Squamish Nation Representative*

Charleen Grant  
*Musqueam Nation Representative*

Rosie Johnnie-Mills  
*Urban & Youth Representative (Haida & Cowichan)*

Cristian Markos  
*VSO Musician Representative*

Angela Elster, *President & CEO*  
*VSO & VSO School of Music*

\* As of November 2025

# Annual Giving:

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\* As of October 2025

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