



Amici String Program

Amici

2026-2027

**Student and Parent
Handbook**





Welcome to the Amici String Program. We hope you will find this a place where everyone can grow in a positive and nurturing environment, where high standards of playing are expected and all students have access to fine teaching.

Amici students are invited to participate in weekly masterclasses and technique classes, weekly chamber music coaching workshops with guest clinicians, monthly solo recitals and summer programs.

This handbook is intended to provide the basic administrative information you will need for the year. A copy of it is posted on the Amici website at amicistringprogram.com, and you can always look there for up-to-date information about the program.

Please be aware that the policies described in this handbook continue to evolve and are subject to change without notice.

Please advise of absences in advance by emailing to amici.stringprogram@gmail.com. Absences may also be reported by texting Stu White (587-224-1297) or Fiona Carnie (403-805-7360).

Mission Statement

The Amici String Program was developed to:

- ◆ Provide a positive and inclusive atmosphere for string students to develop their skills, their love of music, and their friendships.
- ◆ Provide quality musical education in a non-judgmental environment, where all students, parents, and instructors are treated respectfully and equitably.
- ◆ Provide opportunities for students to fulfill their full potential, but musically and personally.
- ◆ Provide opportunities for students to interact with the community through music.

Expectations For Students

In order to make the program a positive, productive, and fun experience for all participants, students should be aware of the following expectations.

◆ **Students must be respectful** of other students and faculty to bring a positive attitude of expecting to learn and to enjoy music.

◆ **Students and parents should have an email address** that they check regularly. If you are not receiving Amici emails, it is your responsibility to inform us at amici.stringprogram@gmail.com.

◆ **Students should be on time, tuned, and ready to play** each week at the designated hour of rehearsal or class.

◆ **Absences much be reported** to amici.stringprogram@gmail.com. Last minute absences should be reported by text to Stu White (587-224-1297) or Fiona Carnie (403-805-7360).

◆ It is important to make every effort to attend class, recognizing the impact of absences on others. Early notice of absences is important. Amici students who miss chamber music without notice or due cause may forfeit their chamber music placement.

◆ The programs are intended to enrich the musical education of string students currently studying privately. **All students are required to be studying on a regular basis with a private teacher.**

A good quartet is
like a good
conversation among
friends listening
to each others' ideas.
- Stan Getz

◆ Students must not bring snacks or any other sort of food into the sanctuary.

◆ Students are responsible for preparing and learning their individual chamber music parts at home and should feel free to ask their Amici program coach or private teacher if they have any questions or need additional guidance.

◆ **Students are expected to participate in the set-up of rooms** in which they are practising and performing, and in the clean-up at the end of sessions, under the direction of the instructor of the class. This will involve helping to move music stands and chairs. Students must be respectful of the facility, taking care not to damage or dirty any part of the building.

◆ **Chamber and music group parts are the responsibility of each student.** In the event of lost music, contact Stu at amici.stringprogram@gmail.com or Tokie Onoda at tokie@calgaryclassical.ca. A replacement fee may be levied.



How Amici Works

The Amici program accepts violin, viola, and cello students playing from an intermediate to an advanced level. Minimum requirements for admission to the program are:

- ◆ repertoire level of approximately **RCM Grade 6**
- ◆ knowledge of at least one 3 octave scale
- ◆ well-established skills in shifting and vibrato
- ◆ skills in note and rhythm reading

Placement in classes will be at the discretion of the directors in consultation with the student's private teacher.

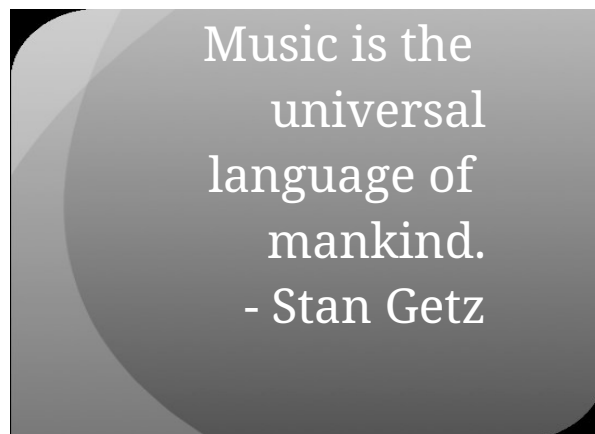
Volunteering

Volunteers are the heart of Amici. The time that parents give to the program is the ingredient that the Amici String Society needs to offer high-quality classes at affordable rates.

All families must provide a volunteer bond cheque of \$250, dated October 1 **2027**. If families are not able to volunteer in 2026-2027, then the cheque will be cashed in October 2027.

Volunteers are needed throughout the year. There is a volunteer sign-up form available for parents. Volunteers may choose, for example, to help with weekly classroom setup, to help clean up after a end of semester reception, or to take a shift at the casino fundraiser. Some parents will join the Amici board and help run the program. Others will take tickets and provide help at festival concerts. We have lots to do and many places where people can contribute.

More information about volunteering will be distributed at the beginning of the semester and at the Annual General Meeting in October 2026.



Collaborative Artist Funding

One of the goals of the Amici String Program is to support students in their study of solo repertoire, by providing weekly masterclasses and access to guest clinicians.

Amici students registered in weekly masterclasses may take advantage of a subsidy for rehearsals with an approved accompanist.

Students have **four hours** (240 minutes) of subsidized accompanist time. A minimum of two rehearsals before any performance is strongly recommended. We encourage Amici students to work with one of our approved accompanists listed in the handbook. Should the student wish to play with an accompanist other than one designated by the Amici program, the student must pay the accompanist for the performance as well as for any rehearsals incurred.

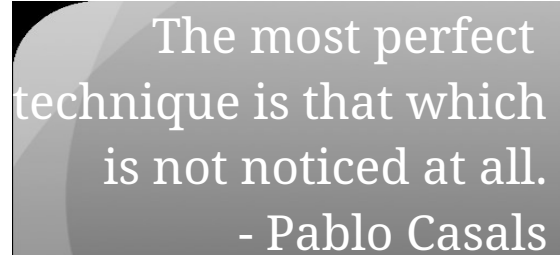
NB: Family members may not be approved as accompanists paid by Amici. Please email if you have questions.

Technique and Masterclass

Students enrolled in the technique/masterclass portion of the Amici program should be ready to play a piece or part of a piece in masterclasses on a weekly basis. Listening critically is an important part of the masterclass experience. Students should have a notebook and pencil at all classes to take notes. Masterclasses will alternate with technique classes at the discretion of the instructors. Students should be prepared to play three octave scales using the Galamian pattern, in various bowings, for the technique classes.

When guest clinicians are invited to Amici, students must email amici.stringprogram@gmail.com in advance with their piece, composer and requested time to play. Students will be selected to perform based on readiness and equality of opportunity, at the discretion of the director. Some clinicians will be available only to older students. Students selected to perform for guests will be notified a week in advance.

Please see the schedule posted on the Amici website at www.amicistringprogram.com for updates on guest artists throughout the year.



The most perfect technique is that which is not noticed at all.
- Pablo Casals

Students must dress appropriately when playing for guest clinicians (no jeans or running shoes). In most cases, this will involve bringing a change of clothes from school. If in doubt about appropriate attire, ask one of the Amici instructors. Students who are not appropriately dressed will not be permitted to play.

Students who are not selected to perform in the masterclass with guest clinicians are expected to listen to the class and take notes.

Parents and the general public are encouraged to attend masterclasses and classes with guest clinicians.

*If I were not a physicist, I would probably be a musician.
I often think in music. I live my daydreams in music.
I see my life in terms of music.*
- Albert Einstein

Recitals

Playing in public is an important part of becoming a musician, and Amici's public recitals are an important part of our musical outreach to the community.

Amici recitals are held Sundays at either Bethany Chapel of Calgary (between 1:30 and 3:30 pm) or Scarboro United Church (between 1:00 and 3:00 pm). Students must sign up for recitals, which are encouraged but not mandatory. Exact recital time assignments will be sent out via email and scheduling will be arranged according to the needs of the collaborative artists.

Any Amici student with a performance ready piece may sign up to play in the recitals, which are held approximately monthly. Registration fees are \$20 per student for each recital in which the student wishes to participate. Payment can be made through Zeffy or directly to Amici by email transfer to treasurer.amicistring@gmail.com. Registration typically closes on the last Monday before the recital. To ensure that each piece is ready for performance, students may not sign up for recital more than a month in advance.

We encourage Amici students to work with one of our approved accompanists listed in the handbook. Should the student wish to play with an accompanist other than one designated by the Amici program, the student must pay the accompanist for the performance as well as for any rehearsals incurred.

All pieces to be performed in recitals must be fluently memorized and polished (except sonatas, which can be played from music). Students must dress appropriately for each recital. Students in casual clothing will not be permitted to participate in the recital.

Students outside the Amici program who are at a Grade 6 standard and above may also participate if there is room, subject to the discretion of the Artistic Director. These students will pay a registration fee of \$30 for each recital.

Amici Solo Recital Dates

(Subject to change)

October 18, November 15, December 6, January 17, February 21, March 14, April 11

Amici Chamber Recital Dates

Bethany Chapel,

Student rehearsals at 4:30 pm, performance beginning at 5:00 pm

December 7, April 12

Faculty Biographies

Fiona Carnie, violin, Artistic Director

Fiona Carnie is much in demand as an adjudicator and clinician. She played for many years with organizations such as the Canadian Opera Company Orchestra, Esprit Orchestra and the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra. Fiona was also a member of the College of Examiners of the Royal Conservatory of Music for 20 years. She holds a B. Mus (with distinction) in Violin Performance from the University of Calgary and a M.M. in Violin Performance from Yale. A noted pedagogue, whose current and former students are competition winners, members of many professional orchestras and teach at musical institutions across the continent, she continues to maintain a sizable private studio and to direct the Amici String Program, now established as a leading organization in education for young string players. Fiona is honored to have received the Alberta Music Education Foundation Recognition Award in 2023.

Andrea Case, cello

Andrea Case is Co-Artistic Director of Calgary's Kensington Sinfonia and performs as principal cellist with this group along with Astralis String Quartet and baroque ensembles String Theory Music Collective and Early Music Voices. Kensington Sinfonia released its 35th Anniversary recording, Forces of Nature, in 2023, celebrating the voracity of the music scene in Southern Alberta and has an upcoming new album titled Tapestries with celebrated trumpeter Adam Zinatelli. Andrea is co-founder and cellist of the Lily String Quartet, a group that has completed multiple tours across Canada, has performed for CBC Radio and released a jazz CD titled Hollow Trees with the award-winning Hutchinson Andrew Trio. She records in multiple genres including pop, folk, jazz and classical, maintains a large and vibrant teaching studio in Calgary and adjudicates regularly. Andrea has played at festivals and with orchestras in Canada, Asia and Europe.

Christine Chen, violin

Christine is a versatile violinist and educator, performing in classical, pop, EDM, and beyond. She plays with the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra, the Red Deer Symphony, and is Guest Concertmaster of the Calgary Civic Symphony. She is now on the violin faculty at the Mount Royal University Conservatory.

An alumna of the Mount Royal University Conservatory Academy and Calgary Youth Orchestra, she holds Bachelor's and Master's degrees from the University of Calgary, where she studied with Edmond Agopian. She refined her artistry at the Boston Conservatory at Berklee with Paul Laraia and Lynn Chang, winning the 2021-2022 Honor Chamber Music Competition and making her Carnegie Hall debut as a first-prize winner of the Concert Artists International Competition. She also performed the Sibelius Violin Concerto with the Boston Conservatory Orchestra.

Olena Kilchyk, cello

Olena Kilchyk, native of Odessa, Ukraine, graduated from the Odessa State Music College and the Odessa State Conservatory. Since the age of 14, Olena has won numerous concerto competitions. While in Ukraine, she was the principal cellist and soloist of the Academia Odessa Chamber Orchestra and Virtuosi of the Odessa Chamber Orchestra.

After immigrating to Canada, Olena received a Master of Music Degree in Cello Performance from the University of Calgary. In 2000 she was the winner of the Department of Music Concerto Competition and performed with the U of C String Quartet.

Olena has been a member of the Prince George, Okanagan, Red Deer and Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra as well as Sinfonia Alberta Chamber Orchestra, Baroque Modern Chamber Orchestra,

Players Chamber Ensemble and Saint Crispinis Chamber Ensemble.

Ms. Kilchyk toured extensively throughout Russia, Ukraine, Europe, Canada and China. Many of her performances have been broadcast on CBC and other radio and television networks and she had the opportunity to play with such artists as Michael Buble and 2Cellos.

Sora Kim, violin

Sora has enjoyed an active career for the past 11 years as a Calgary-area teacher and performer. In addition to her private studio, she has been a regular clinician via the MRU Conservatory workshop program, strings instructor at Rundle College, and adjudicator for local festivals. Sora is an alumnus of the MRU Conservatory Academy, and is currently pursuing a BSc/BMus with Edmond Agopian at the University of Calgary, where she also serves as co-concertmaster of the University of Calgary orchestra. She holds a special interest in non-profit, accessible, and equitable strings education.

Diane Lane, violin, Amicini & Junior Amici Co-ordinator

Born in Claresholm Alberta, Diane began her violin studies in Lethbridge before attending the Mount Royal Conservatory in Calgary. Diane graduated from McGill University with her Bachelor of Music degree under the tutelage of Yehonatan Berick. She continued her studies with Edmond Agopian at the University of Calgary and graduated with a Master's degree in violin performance. Diane is a founding member of Calgary's Lily String Quartet. The quartet has performed across Canada, participated in seminars in North America and has released several cross-genre CDs. Diane has 20 plus years of teaching and coaching experience from Mount Royal Conservatory and Amici String Program. Diane is a highly sought-after orchestral and chamber performer, performing with various ensembles in and around Calgary.

She is currently the Assistant Concertmaster of the Red Deer Symphony Orchestra, a member of Kensington Sinfonia and also performs regularly with two baroque ensembles, String Theory Music Collective and Rosa Barocca. Diane has adjudicated at numerous music festivals throughout Alberta and British Columbia.

John Lowry, violin

John Lowry has been Associate Concertmaster of the Calgary Philharmonic since 1987, and has also served as guest concertmaster in Edmonton, Winnipeg, and Adelaide, South Australia. As a former freelancer, he appeared frequently with the Toronto Symphony, National Arts Centre Orchestra, Canadian Opera Company, National Ballet, Boston Pops, Opera Company of Boston, Esprit and New Haven Symphony. John was the founder and first artistic director of the Kensington Sinfonia in Calgary, and has appeared as soloist with orchestras in Calgary, Edmonton, Toronto, Halifax and others; with conductors including Mario Bernardi, Hans Graf and James Judd.

He began his violin studies in Edmonton with Ranald Shean, continuing on to graduate from the University of Toronto (BM), and Yale University (MM). His principal teachers included George Neikrug, David Zafer and Oscar Shumsky. Other important mentors included Steven Staryk, Rafael Hillyer, Joseph Silverstein, Szymon Goldberg, and members of the Orford and Tokyo Quartets.

John was the founder and first Artistic Director of the Kensington Sinfonia in Calgary, and was founder and violinist of Land's End Ensemble for 24 years, touring extensively and winning the WCMA for Outstanding Classical Recording in 2005 and 2006, as well as a Juno Award in 2014. He has given premieres of dozens of chamber works by composers such as R. Murray Schafer, Omar Daniel, Alexina Louie, Allan Gordon Bell, Jocelyn Morlock and Peter Maxwell Davies. He performed at the International Society for Contemporary Music

World Music Days in Vancouver in 2017. He has collaborated with James Campbell, Evelyn Glennie, Robert Aitken, Barry Shiffman, Joel Sachs, Angela Cheng, Rivka Golani and many others. He has performed with Aventa Ensemble, Athabasca Quartet, Trio Haydn de Montréal, and Yale Contemporary Ensemble. He is currently Artistic Director and first violinist in Astralis. His violin was made by Carlo Ferdinando Landolfi in Milan in 1769. He was previously on the faculty of U of Manitoba and U of Lowell (MA), and has also taught at U of Calgary. He currently teaches at MRU Conservatory and Amici String Program. He has been on the faculty of summer programs at the Banff Centre, Comox Valley Youth Music Centre, Langley Community Music School, SUNY Potsdam, JVL Summer School, Spencer Brook String Program in Massachusetts, and Vancouver Island Music Academy. He is an expert in the Dounis violin method and a frequent audition coach. Recipients of his coaching have won positions in professional orchestras, and his students have earned top prizes in local and national festivals and competitions.

Jesse Morrison, viola

Canadian born Jesse Morrison enjoys a diverse career as a soloist, chamber musician and orchestral player. Currently in his sixth season as a member of the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra, Jesse expresses his keen desire to help form the minds of young artists by maintaining a private teaching studio, as well as teaching masterclasses and chamber music at Mount Royal University and through the Amici String Program. Recently awarded a grant from the Canada Council for the Arts, Jesse has recorded his upcoming debut solo viola album, “Transitions”, which includes a commission by his friend and composer Derek David for a new solo viola Partita. The album also features a debut recording of “Skizzen für Siegbert” by Brett Dean, as well as works by Telemann and Kurtág.

A devoted chamber musician, he formed both the Neruda Quartet in Boston and Arkadas Quartet in Toronto. He has participated as artist in residence at the Capital City Concerts, Classical Music Institute, Chamberfest West, Concerts in the Barn, Continuum Concerts, Ottawa Chamberfest and NEXUS Chamber Music and is also alumnus of festivals such as the Hindemith Foundation led by Tabea Zimmermann, Yellow Barn, Kneisel Hall, the Banff Centre and Domaine Forget. His music collaborators include Donald Weilerstein, Joel Krosnick, Pekka Kuusisto, the Amici Ensemble, and members of the Arditti, Brentano, Chilingirian and Takács Quartets.

Jesse graduated from the New England Conservatory (NEC) with an M.M. under Kim Kashkashian, the Glenn Gould School with an A.D. under Steven Dann and the University of Toronto with a B.M. under Teng Li. Jesse was awarded first prize for both concerto competitions at NEC, the Borromeo String Quartet Guest Artist Award, as well as the honors award with the Neruda Quartet, all featuring performances in NEC's Jordan Hall. Mr. Morrison has been a representative for “Music for Food” since 2015, a musician-led initiative founded in Boston that has created more than 2 million meals across North America since 2009. Outside of his musical endeavours, Jesse loves exploring his hobbies which includes tea drinking, cooking and travelling. Jesse currently plays on a 1971 Otto Erdesz Viola and a modern bow by Kaspar Pankow.

Andrea Poon, viola

Andrea Poon completed her BMus in performance with honours from the University of Toronto, her MMus in performance, as well as her Pre-Doctorate Diploma (D.E.P.A) from l'Université de Montréal. Andrea has been very fortunate to have studied with Fiona Carnie, Katharine Rapoport, and Jutta Puchhammer-Sédillot.

As an avid ensemble musician, Andrea has had the opportunity to play with many diverse

chamber ensembles and orchestras across the country and Europe. In 2019 Andrea, along with Timepoint Ensemble, premiered *Ghost Opera* as after completing a residency at the prestigious Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity.

Ronelle Schaufele, viola

Canadian violist Ronelle Schaufele is an active solo, chamber, and orchestral musician who performs frequently throughout Western Canada as well as in Cuba, Brazil, the United States, New Zealand, and Europe. She is a founding member of Rosa Barocca, an ensemble that specializes in baroque repertoire performed on period instruments. In 2022 Rosa Barocca recorded *Early Italian Cello Concertos*, a collaboration with Elinor Frey, which received the 2023 Juno Award for Classical Album of the Year (small ensemble). Solo performances include concerts at the Arts & Letters Club of Toronto, the Euro Festival in Leipzig Germany, and the Music by the Sea Festival. In addition, she was a founding member of the Sage String Quartet and is currently assistant principal violist in the Red Deer Symphony Orchestra. Ronelle also completed an Artist in Residency program at Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity and has been delighted to be the Artistic Advisor for the Youth Quartet Program in cooperation with the Banff International String Quartet Competition since 2021. An active instructor, Ronelle is currently on faculty at the Amici String Program and founded the Banff String Academy of Music.

Liza Scriggins, viola

Violist Liza Scriggins is a graduate of Williams College and the New England Conservatory. An active freelance musician, she is a member of Kensington Sinfonia and has performed with Calgary Philharmonic, Red Deer Symphony, the National Ballet, and Theatre Calgary. Liza also teaches both violin and viola at the Mount Royal University Conservatory. In recent years, she has ventured into writing as the founder of StoryMusic, which presents storytelling chamber music concerts, and has performed for numerous children at immigrant service centres, libraries and schools, thanks to grants from the Alberta Foundation for the Arts and the National Arts Centre. Calgary Philharmonic selected Liza's version of *Little Red Riding Hood*, set to Beethoven's Quartet Op. 95, for their 2021 Education Concerts. StoryMusic's second recording is in Education Concerts. StoryMusic's second recording was released in early 2025.

Amici at a Glance

Please retain these pages for reference

Absences

In advance: amici.stringprogram@gmail.com
On Monday afternoon: 587-224-1297 (Stu)

Masterclasses with Guest Artists:

- ◆ You must email amici.stringprogram@gmail.com in advance with your piece, composer and requested time to play. NB: Students who are flexible (i.e., being available at 4:15 pm) will have a greater chance of playing.
- ◆ There is **no** charge to play for a guest artist in a regular Monday masterclass. Lessons during a residency will have an extra charge.
- ◆ Recital dress (eg: no jeans or running shoes) is required to play for a guest artist or in a Sunday solo recital. There is no dress requirement for regular classes.
- ◆ Students will be selected to perform based on readiness and equality of opportunity at the discretion of the Artistic Director.

Lost Music:

- ◆ In the event of lost music, email Stu at amici.stringprogram@gmail.com or Tokie Onoda at tokie@calgaryclassical.ca. A replacement fee of \$2 a page may be levied.

Recitals:

Amici Solo Recital Dates

October 18, November 15, December 6, January 17, February 21, March 14, April 11

See the Amici calendar for times and venues.

- ◆ Registration and payment must be completed the Monday *before* the recital (e.g., Monday, October 12 for the October 18 recital).
- ◆ Pieces must be memorized. Sonatas are the only exception.
- ◆ If you are using an Amici Collaborative Artist, a minimum of *two* rehearsals is recommended beforehand.
- ◆ If you are registered in Amici Masterclass, you receive **four free hours** with an Amici Collaborative Artist to rehearse. The contact information is on the registration form. Please contact them and begin scheduling as soon as possible.

Amici Would Like to Thank:

Individual donors

Anonymous	Noreen Linton
Jen Adria	Sonya Lowe
Paul Beke	John Lowry & Liza Scriggins
Linda Gael Blackhall Estate	Asako Perejma
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