

WCAMS 43rd Summer Music Camp 2026



Class Descriptions

Vocal classes:

SATB choir (Patricia Plumley): Here is a chance to explore, expand and enjoy your choral journey at camp. SATB stands for "Soprano Alto Tenor Bass", and so anyone who can sing (that's everyone!) can join this class. Women with low voices are welcome to sing tenor. A mix of technique, reading and musical fun learning various songs. Join us and sing as if no one is watching!!!

Vocal Celtic (Amy Stephen): Vocalists of all levels are welcome and music reading is not essential as many of the songs will be learned following the 'oral tradition' (with lyrics provided). Learn the stories behind the songs and even a little Gaelic!

Vocal jazz (Frances Roberts): Explore swing, Latin, blues and a cappella vocal jazz styles in three- to six-part harmony. If you want to groove a bit while you sing, go ahead! No previous jazz experience necessary. Double bass and drum-set players also welcome!

Barbershop choir (Kinza Tyrrell): Let's wear our pinstripes, grab a hat and cane and sing some 4-part a cappella harmony together! Instead of forming a barbershop quartet, we will be a VLQ (very large quartet) or choir. All voice types welcome - we will find a part for you. Let's doo-doo-doo this!

Large Choir (Geordie Roberts): Everyone is encouraged either to sing in the large choir or to play in the orchestra (see 'Choral Orchestra') which accompanies it. This year the group will perform the Brahms *Schicksalslied*.

Choral sectionals (Patricia Plumley, Frances Roberts, Geordie Roberts): These rehearsals focus on helping singers in each of the four choral sections (soprano, alto, tenor, bass) to learn the notes, to work on phrasing and to practise the pronunciation of their individual part of the choral work.

Drop-in singing (Frances Roberts): A mix of global music: rounds from around the world, some 3- and 4-part African songs. It will be primarily a cappella singing, improvising and harmonizing. No experience necessary.

Voices Only (Geordie Roberts): The A, B, C's of vocal technique. Monday: breathing, posture, alignment. Tuesday: placement, vowels. Wednesday: increasing range. Thursday: applying concepts to repertoire. Friday: vocal health. If you would like to come to only a few sessions, that is OK.

Vocal Masterclass (Geordie Roberts): We will work on performance aspects of singing, including technical considerations, performance anxiety, level of expressiveness, diction and languages, historical conventions and singing outside the box. Auditors welcome, but be warned: we will try to coerce you into singing something!

Instrumental classes

Beginner/Intermediate Celtic (Amy Stephen): For C instruments – violin/fiddle, penny whistle, flute, recorder, cello, viola, acoustic guitar and ukuleles (mainly using G / Em / D / Bm / C / Am & related chords). Tunes are all played at a slow speed and are repeated daily for learning. Sheet music will be provided, but there will also be an option to learn a tune traditionally (by ear!). Learn about the different kinds of Celtic tunes and how to ornament them.

Advanced Celtic (Amy Stephen): We will learn about the different kinds of Celtic tunes and how to ornament them, typical Celtic keys, scales and progressions, and what to expect if you participate in a traditional session, with a focus on learning by ear.

Orchestra 101 (Ajtony Csaba): This is for people without orchestral experience or for experienced musicians who are playing a second (or third, fourth, or more!) instrument.

Orchestra (Ajtony Csaba): This group will play three symphonic pieces. Seats for wind and brass are limited; their coaches will decide on seating on Monday morning.

Choral Orchestra (Ajtony Csaba): This group accompanies the large choir performing a work from the major choral/orchestral repertoire. All string players can attend (subject to musical balance), but seats for wind and brass are limited; their coaches will decide on seating on Monday morning.

Advanced string ensemble (Nancy DiNovo): This group performs without a conductor. Participants need to have strong sight reading and mixed meter reading skills, and be able to play a three-octave scale in any key.

Intermediate string ensemble (Ajtony Csaba): This is for players from grade 3 to grade 7. Repertoire has varied from the Baroque (Bach's 3rd Brandenburg concerto), through the Classical (Mozart's Eine Kleine Nachtmusik) and Romantic (Grieg's Holberg Suite), to Modern (arrangement of Abba songs). Two contrasting pieces are usually chosen each year. The final performance will be conducted by the coach.

Wind ensemble (Mike Keddy): This group rehearses 3 or 4 pieces for concert band (winds, brass and percussion) and is open to all Intermediate to Advanced players.

Beginner/Intermediate Woodwind Ensemble (Julia Nolan) Would you like to try a different type of ensemble this year? Only woodwinds - flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon, and saxophone. No brass and no percussion. This new ensemble will explore repertoire at various levels, but specifically less challenging than wind ensemble. Curious? Show up and give it a try!

Instrumental Jazz (Mike Keddy): Welcome to Beginner Jazz Improvisation! If you've ever wondered how jazz musicians make up music on the spot—this is the place to find out! In this class, we'll break down the basics of jazz improvisation in a fun, friendly way. You don't need to be an expert—just bring your instrument, your curiosity, and a willingness to try new things. We'll start with simple patterns, learn to listen and respond, and explore how to create your own musical ideas over easy chord progressions. No pressure—just a chance to experiment, play together, and discover the joy of making music in the moment. No prior improvisation experience is required—just a willingness to take a chance and have fun with the process of making music spontaneously.

Big Band (Scott MacInnes): Scott is excited to bring his experience playing and leading a big band to WCAMS for another year. This year's ensemble will focus on tunes from the modern big band tunes, with the possibility of stretching to other styles and difficulty levels as is appropriate and/or desired by the members of the ensemble. Ideal instrumentation is: Saxes (Alto, Tenor and Baritone), Trumpets, Trombones, Guitar, Piano, Bass (Upright and/or Electric), Drums. Other instruments that could be accommodated with some effort would be: Clarinet, Violin, Auxiliary Percussion, French Horn and Tuba. No jazz or improvisational experience needed, but be prepared to clap on 2 and 4!

Instrumental 'Only' classes:

Violins Advanced (Nancy DiNovo): A mixture of technique, masterclass, and playing as a group. Also known as the "violin nerds" class. For this class, violinists should be comfortable playing a fast two-octave scale in any key.

Violins Intermediate (Jeanette Singh): This class works on the fundamentals of violin playing, including posture, intonation, sight reading, and sound production. Depending on the needs of the class we may include performance opportunities as well, in a masterclass setting. All levels of players are welcome here!

Violins Beginner/Intermediate Upper strings (Sarah Kwok): Sarah will be leading a new "Onlys" class for Beginner/Intermediate Upper Strings. This class is a technique/masterclass for violins and violas combined.

Violas (Tawnya Popoff): A mixture of various techniques (standard, advanced and extended!), masterclass and playing as a viola ensemble. In the masterclass portion we can work on individual solo repertoire, orchestral repertoire, ensemble parts and more. Feel free to bring pieces you know or "works in progress". Will include ensemble pieces that could be performed throughout the week.

Cellos Advanced (Marina Hasselberg): A mixture of technique, masterclass and playing as a group. For this class, cellists should be comfortable playing a three-octave scale in any key.

Cellos Beginner/Intermediate (Brian Mix): A mixture of technique, masterclass and playing as a group. All levels of players are welcome.

Double basses (Meaghan Williams): This class will review basic principles of technique and include a masterclass format as well as some ensemble playing. All levels are welcome!

Flutes (Arin Sarkissian): We will begin each group class with warm-ups, followed by technical building and short melodic pieces to hone breathing and expressive control.

Oboes (Heather Haydu): A daily masterclass setting, where everyone has an opportunity to play for a collaborative and supportive group of colleagues! Technique, reeds, breath control and posture are all topics that will be covered, and we will also play as a group.

Clarinets (AK Coope): Each class will cover a different aspect of clarinet playing with group participation for all in each session - appropriate for all levels. Masterclass option available for any who are interested in performing for the class.

Bassoons (Sophie Dansereau): Reed fixing, technique, interpretation, masterclass, orchestra repertoire sectionals, and group playing during the week. All levels welcome.

Recorders (Karen Epp): Technique (tonguing, breathing, intonation, etc.) will be explored in the context of bringing recorder consort music to life. Bring your assorted sizes ... a home will be found for all levels of player, low, intermediate to advanced.

Saxophone (Julia Nolan): Fun and function with fundamentals. We will go through aspects of fundamentals to help you improve intonation, technique, control, vibrato, etc. These ideas/exercises/concepts will help you find a good and enjoyable routine. We will address solo and ensemble playing. Suitable for all levels.

Trumpets (David Michaux): Trumpet morning sessions will be daily group warm-ups and technique practice, section playing and ensemble work. All trumpet, all the time.

Horns (Andrew Mee): A mixture of technique, orchestral repertoire and horn ensembles.

Lower brass (Scott MacInnes): The sessions will include a group warm-up, ensemble playing and discussions of lower brass (trombone, tuba, euphonium,...) playing. This class is suitable for players of all levels.

Percussion (Gregory Samek): This is a fundamentals and techniques class that will each day focus on different aspects of the huge variety of skills involved in playing percussion. We will cover timpani, snare drum, keyboard percussion and everything else we can get to, with particular focus on areas of need for the attending participants. Sometimes this time is used to do sectionals on big repertoire being performed at WCAMS that week or to give participants specific exercises to work on for the other 51 weeks of the year. It is fun, fast-paced and, mostly, hands-on.

Pianos (Kinza Tyrrell): We will focus on one or more of these items, depending on attendance and interest: playing posture, repertoire (bring 1 slow and 1 fast piece/excerpt), sight reading, collaboration skills (duetting and chamber music), finger voicing, breathing, counting/subdividing and conducting/leading from the keys. All skill levels welcome.

Mixed classes

Collaborative music (Kinza Tyrrell): A coached masterclass for pianists accompanying a singer or instrumentalist, designed to help both musicians take a piece of music from "just notes" to "a true collaborative musical experience".

Early Music (Karen Epp): Come one come all! This ensemble welcomes everyone no matter what their skill level or instrument/voice. We tend to focus on Renaissance and Baroque music, but may have some excursions into other periods. It is an opportunity for instrumentalists and vocalists to learn about working and making music together. Something for everyone!

Strumming and Singing (Marco del Rio): Come to Strumming and Singing for a fun, low pressure hour where we'll enjoy singing popular songs together while strumming simple accompaniment. This is "Ukuleles Only" expanded to include Guitar and any other chord-strumming instruments or singers that would like to join. We will also briefly explore strategies for making both your strumming and your singing easier and more enjoyable. Song requests are encouraged!

Other classes

Body awareness for musicians (Patricia Plumley): The more aware you become of the subtleties of your primary instrument – your body – the more joyful, integrated, eased and fulfilling your life as a musician can become. Hop into loose-fitting clothing and get ready to explore both movement and relaxation. Increase your awareness of the dramatic range of possibilities for motion through Alexander technique, yoga and Feldenkrais-inspired concepts that will help you listen and respond to the singular needs of your body!

Music lectures: Faculty give lectures on a wide variety of topics. The titles of this year's lectures can be found in the camp booklet.