

Schwab

Miriam & Henry Schwab
ACADEMY OF MUSIC

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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SCHWAB ACADEMY OF MUSIC RETURNS TO VC THIS JULY

- 3rd Annual Summer Academy begins July 3, 2023
- 13th Annual Violin & Viola Competition Finals July 22-23
- An Inclusive Opportunity for Student Musicians

VENTURA, CA... The Miriam and Henry Schwab Academy of Music returns to Ventura College for its third annual Summer season July 3-23, 2023. The Academy offers high-level music instruction and performance opportunities to student musicians in Ventura County and beyond. Designed with accessibility in mind and an eye toward the future, the Academy is well on its way to becoming one of the premiere music festivals on the West Coast.

About the Academy

An enduring gift from Miriam Schwab, The Miriam and Henry Schwab Academy of Music has three main components: an intensive three-week Summer Academy, the Henry Schwab Violin & Viola Competition, and an Extension Program during the Spring and Fall. The Summer Academy offers programs in Chamber Music and Symphony Orchestra. In this intensive three-week summer institute, all students receive classes each weekday from the Academy's nationally-recognized faculty and present public performances each weekend.

Faculty members rehearse and perform alongside the students. "Having students play alongside a professional at every rehearsal and performance is very special" says Festival Director Robert Lawson, "The students and faculty become a family, working together daily to develop their skills and to reach the highest standard of music making." Academy student Sophia Holdorf adds, "It's an opportunity to push yourself and learn in an open environment; we welcome each other's experience, cheer each other on, and we build connections we'd never have any other way."

(Continued) In the program, students learn performance practice including dynamics, articulation, rhythm, ornamentation, tuning and style and will also explore the works performed through a historical perspective. In addition, "Music education teaches more than just music," says Ashley Walters, music director and conductor. "It teaches students to develop a strong work ethic, how to work as a team player to meet goals, and provides students of all ages with an incredible community that can offer support and guidance as they discover and pursue their own dreams."

Students participating in un-conducted chamber ensembles will gain valuable experience in being accountable for their own part as a soloist while learning how they function as part of the ensemble as a whole. Students playing in the large orchestral ensembles learn to follow a conductor and have the opportunity to perform some of the most exciting orchestral repertoire. Courses are crafted to meet each student where they are and guide them to the next level. "You can build the program in a way that is right for you." says Walters, "Students can take chamber music, symphony orchestra - or both! Also, with two to three concerts per week, students are guaranteed lots of performance experience."

About the Competition

The 13th Annual Henry Schwab Violin & Viola Competition Finals will take place on Saturday, July 22 (7:30 PM) and Sunday, July 23 (2:30 PM) at the Ventura College Performing Arts Center. The Competition is split into two categories; finalists in Category B (1st prize, \$1000) will perform a movement from a concerto while Category A finalists (1st prize, \$2000) will perform a complete concerto. All performances in the final round will be accompanied by the Schwab Academy Orchestra.

An Inclusive Opportunity

Faculty member John Hester emphasizes, "The quality of instruction and performance opportunities in the Schwab Academy easily rivals any other music program, and yet this program is local, has opportunities for almost every age and ability level, and it is designed to be affordable." With enrollment fees of only \$66 per unit for California residents, The Schwab Academy has been designed as an inclusive program to support the Ventura community, as well as the broader music community. "Accessibility is something I have been thinking about a lot," says Walters. "Many music festivals are thousands of dollars, which means only select students can take advantage of the opportunity. Thanks to Miriam Schwab and Robert Lawson's efforts this festival is very affordable, and truly accessible to every student musician."

Miriam and Henry Schwab: A Lifelong Passion for Music

In addition to her career as a highly successful real estate agent, Miriam was passionate about music and a longtime member of the Ventura College Symphony. Henry was a professional concert violinist, and upon his death in 2006, Miriam worked with Robert Lawson (then Chair of Ventura College's Music Department) to honor his memory by creating a competition to promote promising string players. The inaugural Henry Schwab Violin and Viola Competition debuted in 2006.

In 2017, Miriam invited Lawson to her home to discuss expanding her legacy. Knowing she was ill, Miriam wanted to create an endowment to build an academy for instrumental music where talented students would have the opportunity to study and perform alongside an acclaimed faculty and guest artists.

Miriam died on December 24, 2017, leaving more than ten million dollars to the Ventura College Music Department. The Miriam and Henry Schwab Academy of Instrumental Music was inaugurated in the summer of 2019, integrated with the existing Henry Schwab Violin & Viola Competition, and supported by a new Extension Program taking place during Ventura College's Fall and Spring semesters. 2023 will mark the third annual Summer Academy and the 13th Violin & Viola Competition.

The Schwab Music Academy envisions a program where people of all ages, especially residents of Ventura and Santa Barbara Counties, have access to the unique social, emotional, and intellectual benefits of live music and its transformative power in the lives of youth, adults, and families in our community and beyond. Says Lawson, "Miriam was forward-thinking and passionate about music. Her legacy is a gift to our community. We are so grateful for her generosity and her vision."

Looking Ahead: A Bright Future

Lawson and Walters have big plans for the Academy's future. While initially geared towards students in Ventura and Santa Barbara Counties, Lawson sees the Schwab Academy expanding their footprint throughout the state and beyond, "This program is developing such momentum; We're in the process of developing local housing to support out-of-area students and I see this program becoming a magnet for students from around the country." Asked where she sees the festival going in the next few years, Walters responds, "Expanding! We're only in our third year on the ground, and many of our students are already being accepted into their top choice music schools. I see this festival becoming one of the top music festivals of the west coast."

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**For promotional images, please contact Brian Hotchkin
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CALENDAR EDITORS PLEASE NOTE

- The Schwab Summer Academy of Music runs from July 3-23, 2023
- Performances are at The Ventura College Performing Arts Center (4700 Loma Vista Rd.)
- Ticket Prices: \$15 General Admission, \$5 Student, Staff, Senior
- Online Orders: <https://ventura.vbotickets.com/events>
- Website: www.venturacollege.edu/schwab
- Questions and Information: vcschwab@vcccd.edu / 805.289.6106, ext. 6106

2023 Schedule of Performances

Saturday, 7/8: 7:30 PM (orchestra)

Sunday, 7/9: 7:30 PM (artist-in-residence)

Friday, 7/14: 7:30 PM (chamber music)

Saturday, 7/15: 7:30 PM (orchestra)

Friday, 7/21: 7:30 PM (chamber music)

Saturday, 7/22: 7:30 PM Henry Schwab Violin and Viola Competition (orchestra)

Sunday, 7/23: 2:30 PM Henry Schwab Violin and Viola Competition (orchestra)