

2025-2026 HANDBOOK



ARTARIA CHAMBER
MUSIC SCHOOL



Since 2002 in-residence

Episcopal Church of St. John | 60 N Kent Street, Saint Paul, MN

Artaria String Quartet | Founders, Directors

Ray Shows, violin | Nancy Oliveros, violin | Annalee Wolf, viola | Rebecca Merblum, cello

Email: acms@artaria.us

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The 2025-2026 season is the 40th year since the founding of Artaria in Boston, MA.

Named after the Italian publishers of the first issues of Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven quartets, Artaria's refined and thoughtful playing has brought them critical acclaim in Europe and throughout the United States. The Boston Globe describes Artaria as "exquisitely balanced and sonorous" and the Saint Paul Pioneer Press says: "MINNESOTA'S FOREMOST performing and teaching string quartet, the Artaria String Quartet is likely to give eloquent voice to whatever work it tackles." Check the [ABOUT US](#) page to see who their chamber music mentors were, where they've taught and performed, and their group and individual bios.

As one of the nation's premiere chamber music coaching programs, the **Artaria Chamber Music School** provides exceptional musical training, communication skills, and ample performing opportunities for pre-college string players.

AUDITIONS

Audition Dates:

Rolling admission is from May 2025 – February 2026 at [Acceptd.com](#)

To Apply:

Prospective ACMS students must apply online and include a letter of recommendation from their private teacher. Complete all required application questions.

Notification Of Acceptance:

Students receive a response to their application in a timely fashion and are assigned to a group as quickly as a place is available. Playing in a chamber music group is a wonderful way to make and keep friends. Sibling requests for same group placement are honored if the playing levels can accommodate. Requests to play with friends are seriously considered by members of the Artaria String Quartet.

SCHEDULE | [PDF](#)

2025-26 Concert Dates | Fridays At 6:00pm.

- November 14th - February 20th - April 19th

2025-26 Labor Day Parent/Student Meeting

- Mon. Sep. 1st from 4:00-5:00pm at St. John's | Get informed on policies.

2025-26 Masterclass Dates | Note the times.

Sat. Nov. 1 (4 - 5:30p)

Thu. Feb. 5 (6 - 7:30p)

Fri. Apr. 17 (6 - 7:30p)

2025-26 Coaching/Rehearsal Dates | Saturdays - 2hrs (1:00-5:00pm)

Fall Trimester - (8 coachings)

- Sep. 6
- Sep. 13
- Sep. 20
- Oct. 4
- Oct. 11
- Oct. 18
- Oct. 25
- Nov. 8

Winter Trimester - (9 coachings)

- Nov. 22
- Dec. 6
- Dec. 13
- Dec. 20
- Jan. 10
- Jan. 17
- Jan. 24

- Jan. 31
- Feb. 14

Spring Trimester - (8 coachings)

- Feb. 21
- Feb. 28
- Mar. 7
- Mar. 14
- Mar. 21
- Mar. 28
- Apr. 4 – on 2nd floor
- Apr. 12 - Sunday

ATTENDANCE / ABSENCE POLICY | Plan Ahead

- Coachings with members of the Artaria String Quartet and student rehearsals take place in the Undercroft spaces at St. John's on Saturday afternoons between 1-5pm.

IN ORDER FOR A COACHING TO TAKE PLACE, ALL GROUP MEMBERS MUST BE PRESENT.

Artaria coaches will review the upcoming coaching, masterclass, and concert dates and times with group members prior to the start of each trimester. Each group may request one alternate coaching date per trimester.

- In case of illness, students must send a group text (that includes their coach) as early as possible, and before 12:00pm on the day of the coaching. Members of the Artaria String Quartet are not available to serve as substitute players, and the coaching will be cancelled. In case of Artaria illness, the coaching will be cancelled and made up, if a mutual time can be scheduled.
- Students taking the ACT/SAT exams and college visits must plan them around their ACMS coaching times.
- Out of respect for everyone involved, students who choose to participate in ACMS must agree to prioritize ACMS coaching sessions, masterclasses, and concerts over other extracurricular activities. **PLAN AHEAD AS PARTICIPATION IS MANDATORY.**

COMMUNICATIONS / WEATHER | Email

Email is the primary form of communication between ACMS and families. This includes upcoming event reminders and invitations, **and weather cancellations.** In most instances, if weather prohibits Saturday morning events: ex. MYS rehearsal, it will most likely but not always, impact ACMS coachings. **If ACMS cannot be held due to the weather, we will contact you by 10:00am Saturday. Artaria will make every effort to re-schedule the afternoon coachings.**

Artaria coaches and group members communicate by group texts, including reminders about repertoire, music printing, illness, and weather-related information. Artaria members will share phone numbers with groups they are coaching.

PERFORMANCES

Sound Checks

Individual group sound checks take place in St. John's Church with Artaria coaches at least once during each trimester. Final sound checks begin one-hour before the start of the Fall, Winter, and Spring concerts.

What To Wear | What to Bring

End-of-Trimester Concerts:

ACMS students are not required to, but may wear all-black, or other colors coordinated among group members. Concert wear can reflect the time period of each trimester and must cover the shoulders and knees. Students are expected to "Dress Up" as photos will be taken.

- Hair must be off-the-face.
- Cellists must bring a rock stop.
- Music must be in a black folder or on an iPad.
- Arrival time is 5:00pm for sound checks.

Masterclasses:

Casual, but no denim, is recommended.

- Hair must be off-the-face.
- Groups performing must bring the score with them.

Coachings:

Casual, comfortable, working attire is suitable for coachings.

- Students must have a pencil, metronome, tuner, rosin, cloth, and extra strings.
- Students must remember to bring their music parts and scores.

Student Intros

With guidance from Artaria members, each ACMS group creates a personalized introduction to the piece they will perform. These introductions include a brief overview of the composer, details about when and where the piece was written, its inspiration, and what makes it meaningful or relevant to both the performers and the audience. Students also practice public speaking skills such as standing confidently at a microphone, speaking clearly, and making eye contact with their audience.

Community Outreach

ACMS students are encouraged to participate in community outreach through chamber music performances. Chamber music fosters strong connections within our communities, creating an intimate setting where performers and audiences can form meaningful, personal bonds.

The ACMS Episcopal Homes Concert Series gives volunteer ACMS groups outreach performance in front of an enthusiastic audience. This popular series takes place on Thursday evenings, once per trimester, from 7-8pm in the lovely Coventry Chapel at Cornelia House, 1840 University Ave W, Saint Paul.

Tentative Episcopal Homes 2025-2026 Dates:

November 13th | February 19th | April 23rd

Music on Sunday mornings:

Students who demonstrate readiness are welcome to perform pre-service music at St. John's on one of several Sunday mornings throughout the year, from 9:45-10:00am. Students may perform chamber music or solo repertoire in which case an accompanist will be provided.

Competitions

ACMS groups interested in entering chamber music competitions are encouraged to do so, based on their readiness and a commitment to additional personal practice, group rehearsals, and coaching sessions. Artaria members will offer guidance in determining readiness. For details on recommended competitions, please visit the [Concert Dates +](#) page

Switcheroo

The annual chamber music party known as [Switcheroo](#) is a celebratory evening of sight reading for past, current, and future ACMS students and their string playing friends.

Switcheroo always takes place at St. John's on December 27th from 6:00-10:00pm.

Stringwood

[Stringwood Chamber Music Festival](#) specializes in nurturing and connecting young musicians each August through chamber music as an expressive art form. The intensity of the two weeks of music making is enhanced by the sensory rich environment of southeast Minnesota. The Artaria String Quartet, guest artist chamber musicians, and dedicated students gather at the Eagle Bluff Environmental Learning Center outside of Lanesboro, MN to rehearse and then perform in historical venues throughout the region including Spillville, IA, the summer home of Antonin Dvorak.

THE ARTARIA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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