

The Festival at 35

Of course, the story of the Colorado College Summer Music Festival is about music—what else could it be? Over 25 interviews with festival artists and fellows have confirmed this while uncovering a deeper truth. The most potent and vital theme that emerged from the interviews was actually this: community.

While Colorado Springs music fans eagerly wait for this summer's 24 festival artists and 54 festival fellows to assume their seats in the cause of great music, it is worth distinguishing why this annual music festival generates so much enthusiasm, loyalty, and support from its audiences and participants. This degree of passion is seldom, if ever, found in the classical-music business.

As is true of any successful organization, institution, or even sports team, the CC Summer Music Festival was not at its peak from day one. It's true that the festival artists have been top-notch from the very beginning, but something rare gradually began to emerge on the Colorado College campus when the musicians convened during the early years. A familial culture of cooperation took hold of the professionals, an attitude all too seldom found in the politically charged conservatories, universities, colleges, and teaching festivals in our country, and the CC Summer Music Festival ascended to an elevated status from which it has never fallen.

It all starts at the top, and there was no interview that did not call out festival Music Director Susan Grace as the primary reason for the festival's synergy. Festival artists noted her ability to build and maintain the right chemistry while empowering them to be stakeholders in the product. Those are the essential characteristics of a great leader.

As concertgoers prepare to celebrate the 35th season of CC's reliably top-notch music festival, they can anticipate sharing in the community that makes this festival exceptional as well as noting a new addition that will contribute to that sense of community. Here on this website, on social media, and in the hallway lobby of Packard Hall documentation related to the festival will be posted for all to see, read, and discuss. Keep checking back.

For now, happy birthday to everyone who has ever played a note for or sat in the audience of the renowned Colorado College Summer Music Festival.