

Barnaby Kerekes

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PROFILE

CEO and founder with 23 years of unbroken leadership in music education and the performing arts. Built the ABC Academy of Music from an \$8K first year to a ~\$250K-per-annum operation — 4 teachers to 20, under 50 students to 200, one address to 11 locations — profitable every year through the 2008 recession and the pandemic, with 70–80% annual retention and no debt carried. Sourced, negotiated and integrated an acquisition in 2019. Founder of a music-education software platform; board member of the Toronto Concert Band; orchestral musician and conductor trained at UBC and U of T. P&L ownership, acquisition and integration, curriculum and program development, government and institutional relations, and two decades of employing and keeping the trust of professional musicians.

SELECTED SKILLS & ACHIEVEMENTS

Strategic & Fiscal Leadership: 23 consecutive profitable years, through the 2008 recession and the pandemic, with no interrupted year and no debt carried; moved the business off credit to cash-positive operations with a corporate reserve.

Revenue Growth & Diversification: Grew top-line ~30x; acquired and integrated a complementary business (Maple Leaf Music Together, 2019); licensed and launched curricula that broadened market and margin.

People Development: Employer, mentor, speaker, and trainer to established and emerging musicians for two decades; codified operational and contractual standards that keep professional relationships clear.

Data-Informed & Digital Leadership: Founder of a software platform for music-education operations; marketing and retention decisions driven by measured outcomes.

Government & Institutional Relations: Held the working relationships that put programs inside publicly funded schools and care environments — public school boards, municipal and provincially regulated childcare operators, multi-location private day-cares, and law enforcement — negotiating access, agreements, and standards site by site across 11 locations.

CAREER HISTORY

2003–PRESENT

ABC Academy of Music • CEO

Built a private music school in central Toronto from an \$8K first year to near \$250K per annum, profitable in all 23 years of operation — including the 2008 recession and the pandemic — with no interruption and no debt carried:

- Growth from 4 teachers to 20, and from under 50 students to 200, from one location in Toronto to 11 in the region
- Customer retention of 70–80% in both general and pandemic conditions, with 4.9–5.0 online ratings across platforms
- Acquisition and integration of Maple Leaf Music Together business operations and locations in 2019
- Moved from credit-based operation to cash-on-hand operations with a corporate savings and investment reserve
- Acquired, developed, and marketed new curricula to diversify revenue, add margin, and broaden intake age-ranges
- Highly targeted marketing with measured outcomes across print, CPC, web, email, and phone; strong organic search performance
- A historic commitment to orchestral instruments including Oboe, Flute, Bassoon, Percussion, and Harp

2024–PRESENT

Hinna • Founder

Built and lead a software platform, now in beta, that runs the full operating cycle of a music school end to end — scheduling, enrolment, billing, and client communication. Specified and written against the operating requirements of the sector I have worked in for two decades, rather than adapted from generic business software.

2026–PRESENT

Toronto Concert Band • Board Member & Substitute Conductor

Serving on the board while performing in and conducting the ensemble, including half of the Fall 2026 concert at the Glenn Gould Studio, Toronto. Conducting workshop with Mark Shapiro, Hamilton, August 2026.

2004–2008

Long & McQuade Musical Instruments • Sales Consultant, then Assistant Manager, Band & Orchestral

Canada's largest musical-instrument retailer. Promoted after three years for innovations in events management, merchandising, and sales; top performer in total departmental sales; recruited internationally renowned artists for an in-house clinic series; mentored and onboarded new team members and co-op students.

2001–2004

Chan Centre for the Performing Arts (UBC) • Front of House Coordinator (interim); Usher Captain

Promoted from usher to run front of house at a unionized university concert hall on an interim contract — scheduling and training the staff who met every audience, and holding the venue's working relationship with the University, theatre management, and the RCMP.

BOARD & GOVERNANCE

Board Member, Toronto Concert Band (2026–present) • Creator of the Frank Harmantas Trombone Scholarship at the University of Toronto (2004)

EDUCATION

University of Toronto, Faculty of Music — Advanced Certificate in Performance (2004)

University of British Columbia — Bachelor of Music, Orchestral Instrument Performance (2001)

National Youth Orchestra of Canada — Bass Trombonist, student of Richard Erb (1999–2002)

SPECIALIZED SKILLS

Fluency in written English and French • Fluent in spoken Hungarian • Commissioned and premiered Concerto for Bass Trombone by Elizabeth Raum with the Brampton Symphony (2009)

ORCHESTRAL CURRICULUM VITAE — SELECTED

2026	Conducting half of Toronto Concert Band's Fall 2026 concert, Glenn Gould Studio, Toronto
2026	Conducting workshop with Mark Shapiro, Hamilton
2006–2012	Bass Trombonist with the Brampton Symphony; soloist in a commissioned concerto by Elizabeth Raum (2009)
2005	Invited to perform with the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra
2004–2007	Invited to perform and record with the Thunder Bay Symphony Orchestra; masterclass given at Queen's University
2001–2003	Assistant Conductor, Vancouver Philharmonic Orchestra (position won by audition)
2002	Conducted Franck Symphony in D minor in concert with the Vancouver Philharmonic; co-founder and conductor, Vancouver Orchestral Training Society
1999–2002	Member, National Youth Orchestra of Canada (position won by audition), student of Richard Erb
1997–2002	Member, Vancouver Philharmonic Orchestra; Vancouver Academy of Music Orchestra; West Coast Symphony
1998–2000	Conductor/Instructor, Royal Canadian Air Cadet 767th Squadron Band, Surrey, BC

Full orchestral CV and repertoire list available on request.