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Fundația Regală Margareta a României



## Strengthening the Promotion of the Royal Margaret Foundation of Romania's Young Talents Program and its Members

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# Strengthening the Promotion of The Royal Margaret Foundation of Romania's Young Talents Program and its Members

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## Abstract

The Young Talents Program is part of a non-governmental organization located in Bucharest, Romania that offers scholarships to young artists from low-income homes. This project's goal was to assist the program in strengthening its promotion to reach young artists. The team conducted surveys and interviews remotely, researched social media, analyzed the program's online presence, and performed archival research of promotional strategies. Results indicated that artists prefer to promote their work on Instagram and Facebook and want to hear other artists' emotional stories. The Young Talents Program can enhance their promotion to attract a broader audience by posting a wide variety of art styles from alumni and current members and using promotional techniques such as social media takeovers.

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## Executive Summary

### Introduction and Background

Following a career in art allows one to live a life of creativity and inspiration and provides the opportunity to pursue one's passions.

Art culture in Romania began to flourish following the fall of Communism in 1989. When asked about the evolution of the contemporary art scene over the past 25 years, Romanian artist Daniel Perjovschi stated that "after the Revolution, Romania's uniform, totally controlled, and compact art scene morphed into a multi-layered, contradictory, and diverse environment" (My Art Guides, 2016). Subsequently, full-time artists have formed welcoming art communities, and large cities in Romania, like Bucharest, are boasting galleries showcasing their works (see Figure E-1) (Romania Tourism, n.d.). The willingness of these communities and galleries to work together has enabled both the art market and Romanian art scene to experience steady growth over the past few decades.



*E-1: Bucharest Art Gallery*  
(<https://theculturetrip.com/europe/romania/articles/arts-lover-guide-to-romania/>)

Romanian youth from low-income families often lack the monetary and educational opportunities to develop their

artistic skills. The young artists who are fortunate enough to develop their artistic skills struggle to gain recognition for their work in Romania (Grosu, 2012), and thus have begun to explore new avenues to promote themselves. Today, many young artists utilize social media as a means of self-promotion but continue to struggle with gaining an adequate audience to support a career. However, there are nongovernmental organizations in Romania that provide financial, educational, and professional support to young artists and work actively to promote young artists on social media.



*E-2: Young Talents' Artist at Work*  
([http://www.tinertalente.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/MG\\_8707.jpg](http://www.tinertalente.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/MG_8707.jpg))

The Royal Margaret Foundation of Romania (Fundatia Regală Margareta a României) provides support for young, low-income Romanian artists through their Young Talents (Tinere Talente) Program. Each year, the Foundation admits approximately 30 artists to the program, split between visual artists such as painters (see Figure E-2), illustrators, and sculptors and musicians including vocalists, instrumentalists (see Figure E-3), and composers. In order to qualify for the program, artists must speak Romanian and reside in Romania or the bordering nation of Moldova. The Young Talents Program

provides artists with mentorship sessions, opportunities to participate in artistic events, and up to a €2,000 (9,800 RON, \$2,400 USD) scholarship to help them pursue their passion in the arts through higher learning (FRMR, 2019).



*E-3: Young Talents' Musicians*  
(<http://www.tineretalente.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/DSC8795.jpg>)

The Young Talents Program has their own Facebook and Instagram pages to reach young artists on social media who are trying to gain recognition for their work. The program would like to reach a larger audience of young artists in Romania and Moldova on these social media platforms, to have the potential to help more young artists in need of support.

The goal of this project was to assist the Royal Margaret Foundation of Romania's Young Talents Program with strengthening their social media promotion to reach more young artistic talent. The team addressed this goal through three objectives:

- Investigate social media usage among young artists in Romania.
- Evaluate the social media presence of the Young Talents Program
- Explore creative techniques for the Royal Margaret Foundation and its Young Talents Program to attract a wider audience on social media.

For this project, the stakeholders included the current artists enrolled in the Young

Talents Program, the alumni of the Young Talents Program, young Romanian artists unaffiliated with the program, art enthusiasts, and the Royal Margaret Foundation.

## Methodology

To investigate social media usage among young artists in Romania, the team surveyed current members and alumni of the Young Talents Program as well as other artists in Romania unaffiliated with the program. Through the surveys, the team discovered the best ways that the Young Talents Program can reach young artists online, as well as what platforms these young artists utilize to promote themselves and their art.

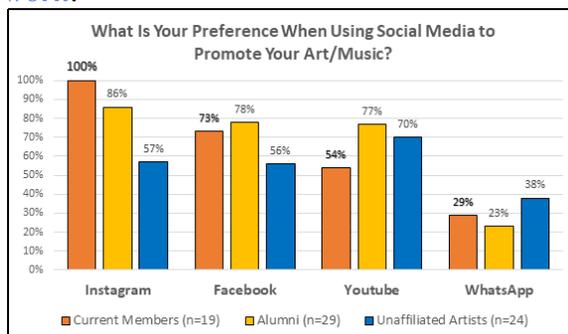
To evaluate the status of the Young Talents Program's social media presence, the team researched online articles and blogs of social media experts and marketers to learn what an artist or organization should be posting on their pages, as well as how frequently they should post to reach the largest audience. With this knowledge, the team then coded each post on the program's Facebook and Instagram by their content, and determined the frequency in which they post. The team analyzed the Young Talents Program's Facebook and Instagram pages to understand the programs' promotional stance and how they can improve upon what they already promote and share to their viewers.

To explore creative techniques the program can employ to attract a larger audience, the team extended their research to social media promotional techniques for specific platforms like Facebook and Instagram and conducted follow-up interviews with eight current members and seven alumni of the Young Talents Program. By interviewing current members and alumni of the program, the team wanted to

learn how these artists promote their work online and allow them to share their opinions of the Young Talents social media pages. By conducting research on different techniques of social media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram, the team wanted to explore creative ways the program can use these platforms and collaborate with their current members to reach more young artists in Romania.

## Results and Findings

*Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube are the most popular social media sites among young Romanian artists for sharing their work.*



E-4: Respondents preference when using social media for promotion

Current members and alumni generally preferred Instagram the most in regards to promoting their work online. As show in figure E-4, 100% of current members and 86% of alumni indicated they use Instagram for promotion. As one interviewee expressed, **“nowadays I feel like Instagram is really powerful and it's not only my opinion, but I also heard it from people in the business, managers... It's very important to put yourself out there and to present yourself and to show people what you're doing and how you are doing it”** (Young Talents alumni, age 21). Young Talents respondents also indicated high preference for Facebook, with 73% of current members and 78% of alumni

selecting the platform. Finally, alumni and unaffiliated artists enjoy promoting on YouTube, as 77% of alumni and 70% of unaffiliated artists prefer the platform. This suggests that Instagram, as well as Facebook and YouTube may be effective platforms for promoting art in Romania.

*Artists can gain professional opportunities from social media.* Two alumni explained that they received their current jobs through social media: one through YouTube and another through the audio-sharing site SoundCloud. **“It was a dream; I was searching for some auditions and I was in Stuttgart to make an audition and then someone found me on YouTube,”** stated one interviewee when explaining how she received her current position (Young Talents Alumnus, age 27). These statements indicate that professionals utilize social media to find new talent. Furthermore, these success stories have the potential to inspire Young Talents' current members who may not yet have as much experience with social media as the alumni.

*Those applying to the Young Talents Program would like to see more diverse work from past members on social media.* Current members expressed an interest in seeing the work of alumni on the Young Talents social media pages. **“I was curious about what kind of artwork or people from other years participated in this program, and I couldn't find it,”** explained a current member when describing her feelings during the application process (Young Talents Current Member, age 21). An alumnus expressed similar opinions about the diversity of the Young Talents social media, stating: **“if you want to promote visual art, then promote every visual artist that actually was in your program”** (Young Talents alumni, age 26). Alumni of the program expressed to the

team that they felt the program's social media does not represent certain types of art, and an analysis of the program's social media pages revealed that they feature a wide range of visual artists, but do not highlight as much work from musicians.

*Artists want to hear personal experiences and emotional stories from other artists.* As well as posting the art and music of current members and alumni, artists also expressed that they want to see personal testimonies as a companion to these posts. One interviewee said "... if [the Young Talents Program] wants to **grow outside of [the art community], they should have something [that] translates to any other group of people that may not be so interested in art ... something that will connect with more people, and stories always do that**" (Young Talents alumni, age 26).

*The Young Talents Facebook and Instagram pages have inconsistent posting schedules.*

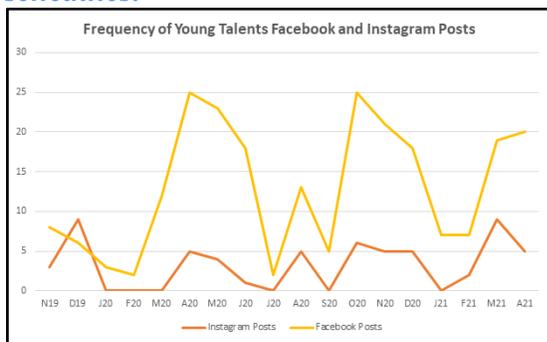


Figure E-5, Young Talents Facebook and Instagram Monthly Posting Frequencies

As shown in Figure E-5, the Young Talents Facebook (yellow) and Instagram (orange) go through periods of high and low posting frequency. The average number of posts-per-month for the Facebook page is 13, and for the Instagram page is three. Nonprofit organizations should post four times a week (16 to 20 times per month) on Instagram to maximize user engagement and audience recognition and five times a week (20 to 25

times per month) on Facebook (Feehan, 2021).

*Social media takeovers are a technique that organizations use to allow persons of interest to create content for their pages.* A social media takeover is a form of marketing where an organization grants posting privileges to a person of interest such as a celebrity, expert, or community member. Users have the opportunity to take advantage of social media takeovers on all platforms, however it is most popular to do so on Instagram or Facebook (Sehl, 2019). Takeovers allow social media administrators to delegate the time needed to create content to other stakeholders, and provide those stakeholders the opportunity to tell their stories firsthand. Through a takeover, Young Talents current members could learn how to create engaging content for social media, therefore strengthening their individual promotional skills, while helping to assist the program with content management.

## Conclusions and Recommendations

From these findings, the team determined that the Young Talents Program is utilizing the two platforms best suited for promoting to young Romanian artists (Facebook and Instagram) and their pages on these sites have a wide range of visual artists highlighted. However, an inconsistent posting frequency on both platforms and less focus on musicians on Instagram indicate that the program can make improvements to their social media strategy in order to reach a wider audience. The team developed five recommendations that they believe will strengthen the promotion of the Royal Margaret Foundation of Romania's Young Talents Program and assist the Foundation with improving the development of young artistic talent:

***Implement more effective use of Facebook and Instagram.*** The Young Talents Program should implement a posting schedule for their social media in order to maintain consistent and frequent updates.

***Post Work from Members and Alumni to Diversify Content.*** To address diversity issues, the team suggests that the Young Talents Program post work from all their current members to show potential applicants and sponsors of the program the diversity of artists the program accepts. The program's social media pages can feature a different artist's work every week, alternating between visual artists and musicians, and featuring artists' work that the pages have not traditionally shown. Particularly, the Young Talents pages should share more work from different types of musicians such as composers, conductors, and instrumentalists.

***Tell Stories from Current Members and Alumni about their Time in the Program.*** Stories have the potential to allow the Young Talents Program to connect with audience members and increase engagement with Young Talents posts. "Social media gives people a place to share these emotions and connect with others who feel similarly. If you can tie your marketing content to strong emotions, you can boost its social media shares" (Ballantine, 2018). Alumni were enthusiastic about sharing their experiences with mentorships, exhibitions, and concerts, and expressed the meaningful

relationships they formed with other members. The program can utilize these stories to appeal to potential applicants and donors emotionally. Additionally, donors and art enthusiasts may feel more inclined to support a program that fosters this kind of camaraderie between its members.

***Teach Current Members about Social Media Platforms Specific to Their Discipline.*** Through the surveys and interviews, the team learned about platforms that are specific to certain types of art, namely SoundCloud and YouTube for musicians and Behance for visual artists. The team recommends that the Young Talents Program inform their current members of these platforms in order to grow their individual promotion.

***Involve Current Members in the Program's Promotional Process.*** During a social media takeover, members would be able to share their work, share their personal testimonies about their experiences in the program, and advocate for the program's positive impacts. Given the more visual nature of Instagram and the fact that this is one of the most popular platforms in Romania, it may be best to make use of this promotional strategy on Instagram.

The team hopes that through increased promotional efforts, more young Romanian artists will learn of this program, and have the opportunity to further develop their talent and pursue their passions.

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## 1.0 – Introduction

Following a career in art allows one to live a life of creativity and inspiration and provides the opportunity to pursue one's passions. In Bucharest, young artists have emphasized “how much more impact they can have [on the local art scene] and how dynamic Bucharest is in some ways compared to Western Europe” (Cadwalladr, 2016). While art has always had a significant place in Romanian culture, the freedoms of expression gained after the fall of Ceausescu and the subsequent end of communism in Romania in 1989 allowed the art scene to have more individual expression and growth (Guta, 2014). However, a decline in living standards following the 1989 revolution and limited government support made it difficult for Romanian artists to find sources of funding to pursue an art career. Consequently, many artists turned to different fields of study due to the difficulty of transition following the revolution (Lathom, n.d.). Recently, conditions in Romania have improved and Bucharest now has a rich cultural life filled with festivals, museums, and theaters. Despite this growth in art culture, young Romanian artists are still facing financial difficulties in pursuit of their passion, as well as reaching a large audience with their work.

Romanian youth from low-income families often lack the monetary and educational opportunities to develop their artistic skills. While economically disadvantaged students with passions in the arts might have the desire to attend an arts high school to focus on their goals, interests, and talent, the cost of tuition for art school in Romania can be prohibitive. Young artists who are fortunate and able to develop artistic skills in school still struggle to gain recognition for their work in Romania (Grosu, 2012), and have to explore new avenues to promote themselves.

Today, many young artists utilize social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube as a means of self-promotion. The multimedia format of social media combined with the ability to engage with one's audience make these sites appealing to visual artists and musicians alike, but many creators continue to encounter difficulty with gaining an adequate audience to support a career. Artists often do not gain immediate returns from online promotion, and as a result may become discouraged from using social media for their work. However, there are nongovernmental organizations (NGO's) in Romania that support young artists financially, professionally, educationally, and actively work to promote these youths on social media.

The Royal Margaret Foundation of Romania provides support for young Romanian artists who come from low-income homes through their Young Talents (*Tinere Talente*) Program. Each year, the Foundation admits 30 artists to the program, split between visual artists (painters, illustrators, sculptors, designers, etc.) and musicians (including vocalists, instrumentalists, and composers). In order to qualify for the program, artists must speak Romanian and reside in Romania or the bordering nation of Moldova. The Young Talents Program provides artists with mentorship sessions, opportunities to participate in artistic events, and up to a €2,000 (9,800 RON, \$2,400 USD) scholarship to help them pursue their passion in the arts through higher learning (FRMR, 2019). Figure 1-1 showcases some of the Young Talents artists and their work.



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([https://youtube.com/channel/UC6GTgXKWDQ\\_2NqJ0A8kaQLg](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC6GTgXKWDQ_2NqJ0A8kaQLg))



Diana Lemnaru

([instagram.com/dia.lemnaru/](https://www.instagram.com/dia.lemnaru/))

Figure 1-1: Collage of Artists' and Musicians' Work from the Young Talents Program

Currently, The Royal Margaret Foundation promotes the Young Talents Program through the social media platforms Facebook and Instagram, as well as on their own website. They post and share information about the artists in the program, past and future events, and information

about the program for prospective students. Although they are somewhat active on social media, the Young Talents Program would like to expand their platform to reach more young people and increase audience engagement. The Foundation describes their program as “niche”, meaning that they may only be well known within the Bucharest art community.

The goal of this project is to assist the Royal Margaret Foundation of Romania’s Young Talents Program with strengthening their social media promotion to reach more young artistic talent.

The team addressed this goal through three objectives:

1. Investigate social media usage among young artists in Romania.
2. Evaluate the current social media presence of the Young Talents Program.
3. Explore creative techniques for the Royal Margaret Foundation and its Young Talents Program to attract a wider audience on social media.

To accomplish these three objectives, the team distributed surveys to current members, alumni, and unaffiliated artists; researched social media platforms; analyzed the Young Talents Program’s social media posts; conducted follow up interviews, and performed archival research to find new innovative ways for the program to promote themselves on social media.

From the results of these methods, the team created a set of five recommendations for the program. The team found that Facebook and Instagram are the most popular social media sites among young Romanian artists so they recommend that the program continue to use these sites but in more effective ways so that their content can reach more people. After hearing from alumni and current members about the content they would enjoy seeing on the program’s social media, the team also recommends that the program diversify their posts on their social media pages and tell more emotional stories from the current members and the alumni about their experiences in the program. Finally, due to the program’s limited promotional resources, the team recommends that the program employ the use of social media takeovers and allow the current members to make and post content on the program’s social media pages.

## 2.0 – Background

This chapter presents information regarding the cultural status of Romania, the importance of the arts, and the impact poverty has on the accessibility of higher arts education. Additionally, this chapter details the historical significance of the Royal Margaret Foundation of Romania and how its Young Talents Program works actively to help improve the development of young Romanian artists from low-income homes. Lastly, this chapter explains the benefits and difficulties social media promotion presents to artists and organizations as well as the relationship between Romanians and the Internet.

### 2.1 Romania: Art Culture, and the Impact of Art, Education and Poverty

This section explores the significance of the arts in Romanian culture and the importance and influence the arts have on the youth. Furthermore, this section describes the impact of poverty as well as the education system on young artists in Romania.

#### 2.1.1 The Importance of Art in Romania

Art culture began to flourish following the fall of communism in Romania in 1989. When asked about the evolution of the contemporary art scene in the past 25 years, Romanian artist Daniel Perjovschi stated that “after the Revolution, Romania’s uniform, totally controlled, and compact art scene morphed into a multi-layered, contradictory, and diverse environment” (My Art Guides, 2016).



Figure 2-1: George Enescu Philharmonic Orchestra  
(<http://romaniatourism.com/george-enescu-music-festival.html>)

Subsequently, full-time artists have formed welcoming art communities, and large cities in Romania, like Bucharest, are boasting galleries showcasing their works (Romania Tourism, n.d.). The willingness of these communities and galleries to work together has enabled both the art market and Romanian art scene to experience steady growth over the past few decades. The Romanian art market, valued at 9.65 million USD in 2010, was almost double the value in 2009 (Maneker, 2011). In 2016, this value rose to 14.6 million USD (Gheorghe, 2018).

Currently, there is clear public interest in the arts in Romania. According to a national survey, more than 30% of Romanians in Bucharest visit art exhibits or indulge in activities related to art every month, and over 90% of Romanians consider art being for everyone (Villarreal, 2019). As a result, many of Romania's major cities enthusiastically support art and arts entertainment.

Bucharest, the cultural capital of Romania, is home to over ninety theatres, the largest and most prestigious being The National Theatre. The city of Bucharest holds a theatre festival annually for the public's enjoyment. Music functions as a central part of the culture in Bucharest, as seen in places such as opera houses, where the George Enescu Philharmonic Orchestra (see

Figure 2-1), and the Romanian National Orchestra perform. Every two years, renowned international classical musicians come to the Enescu Festival, dedicated to the famous Romanian composer George Enescu (Weident, 2018). In addition, the city contains over 60 notable museums, which include the National Museum of Art of Romania, The National History Museum of Romania, and the



*Figure 2-2: Exhibition at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Bucharest (<https://theculturetrip.com/europe/romania/articles/bucharest-s-10-best-contemporary-art-galleries-art-in-romania/>)*

National Museum of Contemporary Art (see Figure 2-2), which host exhibitions from around the world (Britannica, n.d.).

Bucharest is not the only city contributing to the nation's arts culture, however. The city of Sibiu also has an annual theater festival, known as the Sibiu International Theater Festival. It

is one of the world's largest arts events, and its program includes many renowned international musicians, dancers and street artists (Weident, 2018).

### 2.1.2 Impact of Art on the General Public

Art appreciation benefits viewers of all ages, especially the youth. Creating, viewing or listening to art is beneficial to children as there exists “evidence that engagement with artistic activities can enhance one’s moods, emotions, and other psychological states” (Wright, John, Ellenbogen, Offord, Duku, & Rowe, 2006). Participation in artistic activities is particularly beneficial to youth from disadvantaged homes, as children experiencing residential instability demonstrate worse academic and social outcomes than their residentially-stable peers (Sandstrom, Huerta, 2013). Researchers have found evidence to suggest that structured arts programs can cause a “decrease in emotional problems” for youth from low-income communities (see Figure 2-3) (Wright, John, Ellenbogen, Offord, Duku, & Rowe, 2006), while creating art has “the ability to cater to the well-being of the whole inner-city child: socially, emotionally, behaviorally, and cognitively” (Thomas, 2017). These studies demonstrate the positive effects and impact artistic expression has on children, especially those who come from disadvantaged backgrounds.

In general, art consumption and appreciation have the ability to positively influence one’s health, happiness, and quality of life. Studies have shown that artistic expression can provide healing capabilities like improvement of



Figure 2-3: Art for Children in Romania (<https://earlyarts.co.uk/blog/arts-and-creativity-for-children-in-romania>)

memory and emergence of peaceful thoughts for people with anxiety, depression, dementia, and even cancer (Harvard Health, 2017). The practice of using art in mental healing is emerging

throughout the United States and worldwide (Nobel, Stucky, 2011). In a 2010 U.K. study of 1,500 people, cultural experiences such as theatre, concert and gallery/museum visits, were the second most important determinant of psychological well-being, second to incidence of disease (Paintings in Hospitals, n.d.). In Romania, the Bucharest University of Economic Studies conducted a study in 2019, surveying 120 young and middle-aged adults in Southern Romania to evaluate the correlation between art consumption and the level of life satisfaction. The results indicate that 89% of participants consider they have a fulfilled life, where the impact of art consumption positively influences the level of satisfaction (Coman & Mihaita, 2019).

These studies suggest that it would be beneficial for arts organizations in Romania to promote the importance of the arts for youth and the rest of the public, due to the positive impacts that the arts provide.

### **2.1.3 – Access to Arts Education in Romania**

Despite the arts contributing to the well-being of adolescents and encompassing a significant part of Romanian culture, the youth from disadvantaged families have scarce access to arts programs and education. After communist rule ended in 1989, Romanian higher education institutions introduced major reforms (Romanian Education, n.d.). These included removing socialist ideology courses and emptying the libraries of communist texts. With the advent of this new reform, student enrollment increased from 164,000 in 1989 to 256,000 in 1993 (Education, n.d.). The basic levels of the education system in Romania are pre-school education, compulsory education, upper secondary education, vocational education and tertiary education. Preschool education for children of ages 3-6 is optional. Compulsory education for children aged 7-15 years consists of four years primary and four years of middle/lower-secondary education. Unlike in the United States, where every high school student must gain a certain number of credits in each subject, eighth-grade students in Romania decide between multiple areas of study in high school. Students can choose to attend an arts or science high school, a military college, an economic college, or a professional school (Cassin, 2016). Students with passions in the arts can attend an arts high school to focus on their goals, interests, and talent. To advance to tertiary education (college or university), students must hold a high school diploma. Most of the institutions conduct an “admissions exam” in a high-school subject that corresponds to the course offered by the institution (Romanian Education, n.d.).

Significant differences exist per residential environment in terms of access to higher education in Romania. Millions of families are struggling through extreme disadvantages and financial hardship. Approximately five million Romanians, about 25% of the population, live below the poverty line, with children making up 1.5 million of that total (see Figure 2-4 of four children part of a family in poverty) (Habitat, 2020). Young people from rural and poorer

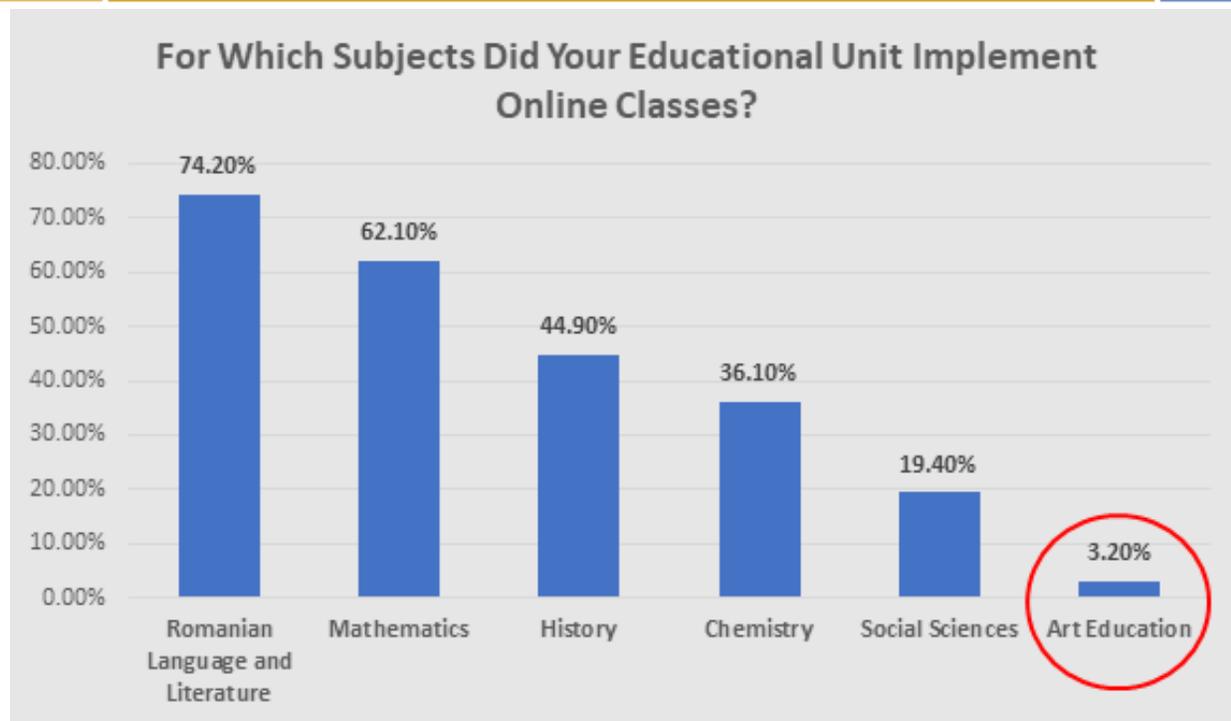


Figure 2-4: Impoverished family in Romania  
(<https://www.unicef.org/romania/what-we-do>)

regions, in particular, have fewer chances to graduate or go to university (Sandu, Stoica, Umbres, 2014). On average, the dropout rate in secondary school for those living in rural areas is approximately 50% greater than those living in urban areas (Ioana, et. al, 2015). This is due to the combined effects of Romanian children and young teens leaving

school to help provide for their families financially (Melenciuc, 2018) and lack of access to quality education (Cassin, 2016). The dropout rate and subsequent inheritance of poverty imply that Romanian children and young adults often go without the opportunity and financial support to pursue higher education, as one cannot pursue tertiary education in Romania without a secondary school diploma. The COVID-19 Pandemic has also put a strain on the quality of education for young students from rural areas, especially artists.

In Romania, many educational units across the country switched to online classes. However, the Romanian education system was unprepared for this online shift, as it only implemented online classes for 60% of students (Sava, 2021). There were limitations to online schooling in rural areas, as children often lack access to a computer or smartphone, as well as access to Internet connections (Sava, 2021). Schools only implemented 3.2% of art classes online, while they administered 74.1% of Romanian language and literature and 62.1% of



*Figure 2-5: For Which Subjects Did You Educational Unit Implement Online Classes*

*(<https://www.statista.com/statistics/1114149/romania-online-classes-by-type-of-subject-covid-19-romania/>)*

mathematics classes online (Sava, 2021) (see Figure 2-5). As mentioned previously, the arts have major benefits for youth from disadvantaged homes, yet thousands and even millions of children in poverty do not have proper access to higher arts education that could develop their skills and passions. The Bucharest National University of Arts, one of four art schools in Romania, costs between 14,000 RON – 32,000 RON (\$3,400 – \$7,700 USD) in yearly tuition (Statista, 2021). In contrast, the average annual household income in Romania is 64,000 RON (\$15,300 USD) (Statista, 2021), while the poorest 10% of the working class in Romania earn less than 4,700 RON (\$1,140 USD) each year (UNICEF, 2015). The fact that the cost of tuition for art school in Romania is at least triple the annual income of impoverished families in Romania demonstrates the difficulty that many households have in their ability to afford an education in the arts in Romania without outside financial support.

## 2.2 – Royal Margaret Foundation of Romania

The Royal Margaret Foundation of Romania is a charitable organization that aids struggling young artists through their Young Talents (*Tinere Talente*) Program. This section explains the history of the Foundation to provide context for their mission as well as describing its Young Talents Program.

### 2.2.1 – History

Her Majesty Margaret, Custodian of the Romanian Crown, and her father, King Mihai, founded The Royal Margaret Foundation of Romania (*Fundația Regală Margareta a României*) in 1990. Her Majesty was born in exile in Lausanne, Switzerland, on March 26, 1949, because the Communist Party forced her father to abdicate from the Romanian throne two years earlier in 1947. She spent her early childhood surrounded by her family in Britain and Switzerland, and only heard about life in Romania through old stories from her father and grandmother. After graduating from the University of Edinburgh, Scotland with a bachelor's degree in sociology, she worked for several United Nation Agencies and spent her time assisting in social projects in the field of public health. This was the start of Her Majesty Margaret's journey into the service of humanity (FRMR, 2019).

In 1990, Her Majesty Margaret arrived in Romania for the first time when she left behind her United Nations activities to devote herself to repairing Romania. After seeing the cruel reality of “orphanages and old people's homes, where children and the elderly lived in miserable conditions”, the Royal Margaret Foundation of Romania emerged later that same year (FRMR, 2019).

The Royal Margaret Foundation of Romania serves Romania as a charitable organization that works to build strong communities and inspires leaders to help in creating sustainable and autonomous communities. The leaders of the Foundation facilitate programs that span generations of Romanians, working with both the elderly, the youth, and even creating intergenerational programs between them. The Foundation envisions Romania reaching its true potential and for all its citizens to respect each other and themselves (FRMR, 2019).

## 2.2.2 – Young Talents Program

The Royal Margaret Foundation of Romania's Young Talents (*Tinere Talente*) Program “aims to create equal opportunities for talented young people from disadvantaged backgrounds, by supporting and promoting their talent” (FRMR, 2019). Specifically, they look to support “young people between [the ages of] 14 and 24, who study during the year at art and music



Figure 2-6: Young Talents' Artist at Work ([http://www.tineretalente.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/MG\\_8707.jpg](http://www.tineretalente.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/MG_8707.jpg))

schools and universities in the country” (FRMR, 2019). The program provides 30 year-long scholarship opportunities in the program every year to Romanian youths passionate in the fields of music and visual arts. Students may receive the scholarship up to three times, and then have the opportunity to return for a fourth year to act as a mentor for the younger members. Roughly half

of these positions go to musicians, and the other half to visual artists, (see Figure 2-6), but the exact distribution varies year-to-year. Individuals who currently hold a scholarship and have been in the program three times or less are ‘current members’, and those who are either in their fourth year with the program or who no longer hold the scholarship are ‘alumni’. Cornelius Zirbo, an alumnus of the program, describes competition for acceptance as “fierce”, in that he competed with over 60 other musicians for half the spots in the program (FRMR, 2019). The application process also requires proof of financials, where the student's parents must each make less than 1700 RON per month (approximately \$410 USD per month) in order to qualify for acceptance (FRMR, 2019). This is to ensure that all students come from low-income homes, the target group of the foundation. Acceptance into the program includes up to a €2,000 scholarship to help students cover the costs of any materials required for their studies and any participation fees in competitions and courses. In addition to the scholarship, the program offers unique mentorship opportunities that enable students to meet and to learn from established professionals in their fields of study. The program also provides a summer camp for their artists to gain more



*Figure 2-7: Young Talents' Musicians*

(<http://www.tineretalente.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/DSC8795.jpg>)

experience. However, due to the COVID-19 restrictions, the program did not run the camp in 2020 and will not be running it in 2021. The Royal Margaret Foundation of Romania partners with sponsors of the program to organize events to promote the work and talent of their students including but not limited to galleries,

exhibitions, and music galas (see

Figure 2-7). Participation in these activities allows the students to experience a professional environment (FRMR, 2019). While these events provide students with a chance to promote themselves and make connections in the art industry, many young artists continue to struggle with finding effective tools to promote their work without the aid of an organization such as the Royal Margaret Foundation.

### **2.3 – The Difficulties of Independent Promotion**

Artists and musicians often need to make connections with curators, record companies, or critics to get their work into museums or store shelves. This poses an entry barrier for artists who cannot afford to go to school, those who lack a professional network, or those whose work appeals to a more niche audience (Blume, 2017).

For example, musicians in particular often have a difficult time finding widespread support unless they sign to a record label. Even after labels recognize them, many musicians still have difficulty making any money from their work as the company distributes much of their profits from record sales unevenly. The labels often give the artists small percentage cuts in comparison to their managers (El Gamal, 2012).

Visual artists have difficulty getting their work into galleries as many of these organizations hold bias against young, inexperienced individuals. Romanian visual artist Angela

Szabo reflected upon her experience trying to start a new career, “The Romanian Fine Arts Union thought I was too young. There was no place in galleries. Only consecrated artists exhibited there.” (Grosu, 2012).

Furthermore, independent Romanian artists do not receive the same government support as artists affiliated with national organizations and nonprofits, which is especially damaging during the COVID-19 pandemic. As journalist Paula Erizanu explains, the Romanian government offers aid and consultations to artists with connections to arts organizations, but does not offer these benefits to independent creators. On March 26, 2021, Bucharest-based independent artists protested this inequality on the steps of the Ministry of Culture (Erizanu, 2021), showcasing the importance of support for these artists.

Overall, building a career from one’s art and developing an audience is a difficult challenge for young artists to overcome on their own, and in many cases the benefits of affiliating oneself with a recognized arts organization are necessary for finding support in creative fields. Alternatively, social media is a relatively new avenue artists and art-related organizations have seized to gain greater recognition through independently posting and promoting their own work.

## 2.4 – Social Media Platforms

Social media is a computer-based technology that facilitates the sharing of ideas, thoughts, and information through the building of virtual networks and communities. By design, social media is Internet-based and allows users to quickly create and distribute content with the public. Content includes personal information, documents, videos, and photos. Users engage with social media via a computer, tablet, or smartphone via Web-based software or applications.

This section explains the social media platforms Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, YouTube and TikTok, important features of each, and their usage in Romania.

### 2.4.1 – Facebook

Facebook is a widely used social media platform, with 2.8 billion users worldwide, and is the most popular social media platform in Romania with 12.8 million Romanian users (approximately 66% of the population) (Sava, 2021). Facebook is a social media platform which allows users, who sign-up for free profiles, to connect with friends, work colleagues and people they don't know online. It allows users to share pictures, music, videos, and articles, as well as their own thoughts and opinions with however many people they like (WebWise, 2014). Users can access Facebook on smartphones, and online on a device such as a computer or tablet.

On Facebook's mobile application, there are five "widgets" at the bottom which include "Home" where people can view posts of people they follow, as well as create their own posts, a tab for Facebook Marketplace, where people can buy or sell items, a profile tab where users can view their own profile, a notifications tab, and a menu tab that contains more widgets such as Friends, Memories, Groups, Events, and Settings (see Figure 2-8). In Facebook's browser site, there are widgets at the top of the screen, titled "Home", where users can see posts, "Watch", where a user can watch videos, Facebook "Marketplace", "Groups", and "Gaming". Users can view their profile, check settings, their notifications, and access Facebook Messenger, a built-in messaging platform, on the top right of the screen (see Figure 2-9).

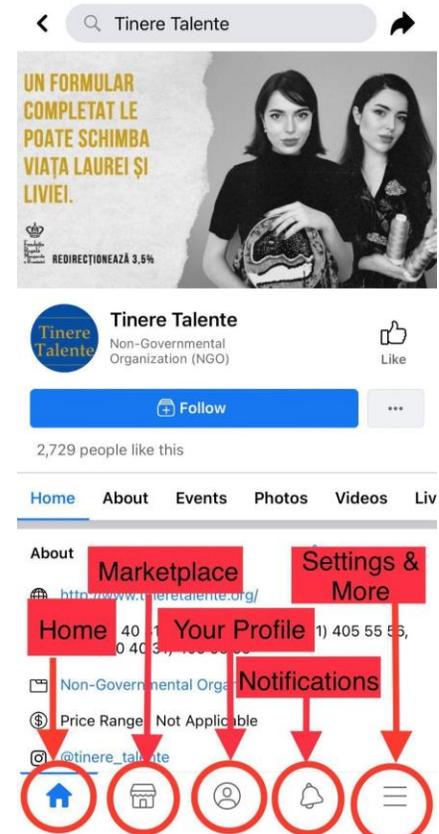


Figure 2-8 Facebook on a Mobile Device

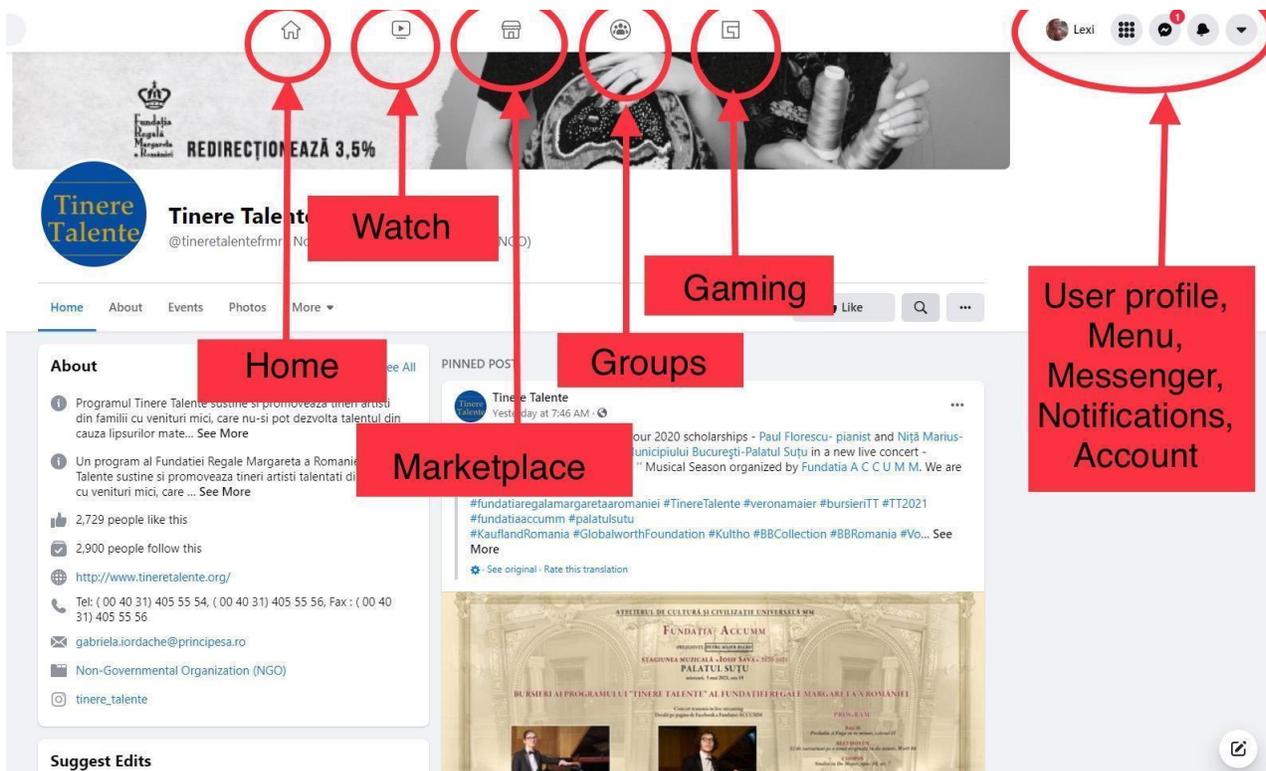


Figure 2-9: Facebook in a Browser

## 2.4.2 – Instagram

Instagram is popular with over one billion users worldwide, with five million users in Romania (approximately 26% of the population), making it the second most used platform in Romania after Facebook (Sava, 2021). Instagram is a free photo and video sharing app available on iPhone and Android smartphones. Users can upload photos or videos on Instagram and share them with their followers, or view, comment and like posts shared by other users on the platform. Anyone 13 and older can create an account by registering an email address and selecting a unique username.

Similar to Facebook, on the bottom of the app there are five widgets: Home, containing all the users' followers' posts, Discover Page with posts of the users interests and where a user can search another user or hashtag, "Reels" which is a spot to watch videos of a user's interest, a Shop widget, and the user's profile. When a user is on the Home page, they can click to create a post on the top right of the screen, as well as see their notifications, and access the direct messaging widget that is connected to Facebook Messenger. To make a post, a user can choose

up to ten photos or videos of up to a minute in length, along with a caption of any length to go with the post, as well as the option to tag other users that are in the post, and even add a geotag. In addition, a user can optionally create a story, which is a post the user's followers can only view for 24 hours, a story highlight, which is where users can attach their past stories to their profile, as well as a reel or IGTV Video, which is a video that can be longer than one minute (see Figure 2-10).

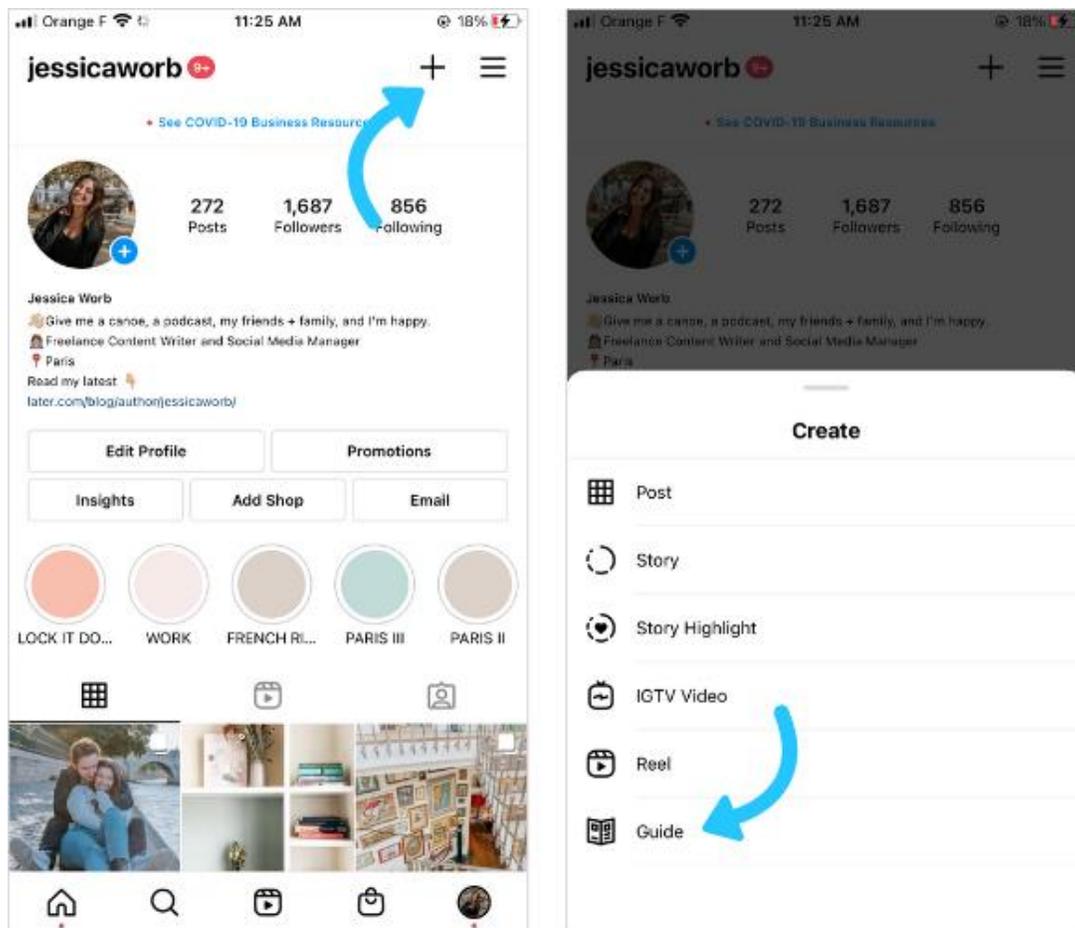


Figure 2-10: Instagram on a Mobile Device

### 2.4.3 - WhatsApp

Launched in 2009, WhatsApp is one of the most popular text and voice messaging apps in the world. It's free to use, and users can send messages, make voice calls, and host video chats on both desktop and mobile devices. More than two billion people in over 180 countries use WhatsApp to stay in touch with friends and family, anytime and anywhere (WhatsApp, n.d.). However, unlike Facebook and Instagram, users cannot make posts to publish to the public,

which makes the platform a less traditional social media platform. Romanians widely use Whatsapp, as the platform has over six million users (approximately 31% of the population), and is more popular than Facebook Messenger (Sava, 2021).

#### **2.4.4 - YouTube**

Founded in 2005, YouTube is an online video platform that Google owns. YouTube provides users several avenues for watching videos, such as on the website, on mobile apps, and allows other websites to embed them. Available content on YouTube includes music videos, video clips, short and documentary films, audio recordings, movie trailers, live streams, and video blogs. Individuals generate most of the content on the platform, but organizations, businesses and brands also publish videos. Besides watching and uploading, registered users can comment on videos, rate them, create playlists, and subscribe to other users. YouTube is highly popular among Romanians, however the current number of Romanian users is unavailable.

#### **2.4.5 - TikTok**

TikTok has over 690 million users worldwide, and there are 4.1 million active TikTok users in Romania (approximately 21% of the population), and 2.4 million of those are daily active users who spend 60 minutes on average per day on the platform (TUYA Digital, 2021). TikTok is a short-form, video-sharing app that allows users to create and share videos up to one minute long. The TikTok app offers users a wide selection of sounds and song snippets, along with the option to add special effects and filters. There is also an option to directly add videos that you create on your phone. On TikTok, there is a “For You Page” where the machine learning system selects content for users on this page that it believes they would enjoy based on their watch history. Since 2020, Tik-Tok has become an integral part of the music marketing landscape and is a platform with a history of taking unknown songs and turning them into global, chart-topping hits (Pastukhov, 2020).

### **2.5 - Social Media as a Promotional Tool**

This section details the difficulties that artists both worldwide and in Romania have faced regarding promotion, and considers new opportunities that social media presents for these artists

to reach a wider audience. Additionally, the section discusses tools and features that social media offers that are beneficial to nonprofit organizations seeking a larger audience.

### **2.5.1 – Social Media’s Impact on Artist Promotion**

Today, artists have a chance to reach an audience without the support of professionals and media empires, through Internet promotion. There are many different categories of promotion on the World Wide Web, including social media, search engine optimization, and banner ads. While search engine optimization and banner ads are better suited for businesses trying to sell a product, social media (including blogs, podcasts, Facebook / Twitter / YouTube, etc.) provides a more personal connection between a creator and their audience through a view into the artist’s life (Horowitz, 2011).

The multimedia, customizable structure of social media posts enables artists to create their own digital image and develop a following. This affords them the chance to avoid the connections and contracts required to get exposure in art communities. “As opportunities in galleries are rare for young artists in traditional galleries, the digital art world offers a promising space for them to display and market their work,” describes Romanian journalist Luciana Grosu in an interview with young Romanian visual artists (Grosu, 2012). Artists are not alone in promoting their work online, as many social media users dedicate themselves to spreading the work of new, independent creators. Platforms such as Facebook and Twitter have an “enormous network [that] also creates the opportunity to develop ‘buzz’ around a new artist or, even more effective, have a song or video spread virally” (El Gamal, 2012). One of the most popular sites for artists is Instagram due to its focus on image sharing (May, 2020). Figure 2-11 displays

Romanian artist and Young Talents' Alumni Sabina Dragomir's page as an example of an Instagram post.

Despite the potential avenue for success social media presents, artists continue to struggle financially and often cannot make a living through art alone. Oana Livia, a 26-year-old from Focșani, Romania explained in an interview that she is able to reach more potential supporters online, but she does not make sufficient money through her work to afford living expenses. As a result, she studies computer science to support herself. Angela Szabo, a Romanian painter, (see Figure 2-12 below), explains that while the digital age enables her to gain an overseas audience, she is only able to afford to be a full-time artist by living modestly in a rural area (Grosu, 2012). This demonstrates that while the Web contributes to the growth of an artist, independent Romanian artists continue to struggle with promoting themselves and many cannot make art a sustainable career.



Figure 2-11: Romanian Youth Talents' Artist Sabina Dragomir's Instagram



Figure 2-12: Mixed Media Romanian Artist at Work ([https://globalpressjournal.com/eastern\\_europe/romania/digital-art-expands-opportunities-for-young-artists-in-romania/](https://globalpressjournal.com/eastern_europe/romania/digital-art-expands-opportunities-for-young-artists-in-romania/))

## 2.5.2 – How Social Media Benefits Individuals and Organizations

As a recognized arts organization in Bucharest, the Royal Margaret Foundation of Romania aids struggling young artists through financial and promotional support. In order to reach more independent artists that may benefit from their program, the Foundation wishes to expand their online audience through the use of social media promotion.

Several online platforms offer benefits to user accounts that register as an organization or business. Facebook, for instance, provides a sponsorship feature for posts if an organization chooses to pay for such support. “The more budget an organization has for Facebook, the greater audiences the organization can reach with their messages,” which gives groups with higher promotional budgets an advantage in reaching an audience (Kim & Yang, 2017). For groups that do not wish to, or simply cannot, pay for promotion, there are many free features that organizations can utilize. Instagram allows any account to register as a business, which gives the

individual or organization access to analytics and trends about their followers and content (see Figure 2-13).



Figure 2-13: Instagram's Analytics Page showing an account's follower count change, age range, location, male to female ratio, and times when active.

(<https://buffer.com/resources/instagram-analytics/>)

A business account can see statistics about their posts, such as the number of users that followed the account after viewing a specific post, and data about the demographics of their followers, including age, gender, and the time of day they access the app most (Hart, 2019). These metrics help an organization develop strategies for posting, such as the best days and times to post and picking content their audience engages with most.

Another important aspect of social media promotion is the presence of machine learning and artificial intelligence on many modern sites. Social media platforms use these tools as a “way of sorting posts in a user’s feed based on relevancy instead of publish time,” and selects certain posts and accounts to promote to other users based on a number of factors such as the number of likes, shares, or comments that post has (Barnhart, 2021). Each platform prioritizes these forms of engagement differently, for example, Facebook roughly equates 1 share to 2 comments, and 1 comment to 7 likes. Thus, it is important that organizations utilize strategies that encourage users to comment or share posts such as including a call to action or a question

that generates high user replies (Kim & Yang, 2017). Organizations that learn the strategy a platform uses when prioritizing posts can cater their content to that site's AI, which will share their posts with new users.

Finally, organizations should consider a platform's target audience when creating content. According to Forbes, it is necessary to account for the frequency that users expect content from the organization and the demographics of the site's users when choosing a social media site for promotion purposes. For instance, Twitter users expect daily updates from the accounts that they follow, but the content is brief and takes little time to produce. In contrast, YouTube viewers are accustomed to less frequent content due to the greater time required for content creators to make a video. TikTok is popular with Generation Z while Instagram users are most likely to be Millennials (Tabas, 2021). Depending on an artist or organization's target audience, content and post frequency, certain platforms may prove more useful than others.

## **2.6 – Romanian Internet Infrastructure and Accessibility**

Despite the economic struggles mentioned in previous sections, the infrastructure Romania has built to provide Internet access throughout the country is well-developed. In 2015, Romania had 9 of the world's top 15 cities with the fastest broadband Internet speeds (Ookla, 2015). The presence and demand for high-speed Internet has been present since the late 1990's / early 2000's, and has persisted through characteristics unique to Romania.

One characteristic that has enabled the presence of high-speed Internet is Romania's geography. The latest data reports a population size of 19.1 million, living in a country the size of Oregon (Worldometers, 2021). Such a population density equates to needing less materials to connect more people, which enables the development of a highly connective infrastructure at a much lower cost compared to other countries.

When there was growing demand for widespread access to the Internet in Romania in the late 90's, no major Internet Service Providers (ISP) existed in the country to meet their needs. This motivated Romanians to develop their own local area networks (LANs), a technology which supported high-speed connections to those nearby. While this architecture meant that Romanians could only connect to local peers, they still used the method heavily to communicate, play games, exchange music, and more (Rogers, 2015). Once ISPs began offering their services in Romania, their only option to be competitive was to implement high-speed connectivity, given

that Romanians were already used to this luxury. Such infrastructure advantage remains, and today Romania ranks fourth in the world in broadband Internet speed (SpeedTest, 2021). Despite these high speeds, Internet penetration in Romania is low compared to other countries. Roughly 74.8% of Romanians use the Internet as of 2020, the second lowest penetration rate of all countries in the EU (Internet World Stats, 2020), which may be due to lower wages and the lack of rural penetration.

This presents itself as a digital divide between age groups and regions. According to a 2018 study by the Bucharest University of Economic Studies, the 16-34 age group had the highest percentage of Internet users with 95% reporting frequent Internet use, while only 55% of Romanians between the ages of 55 and 74 reported regular Internet usage (Fanea-Ivanovici, 2018). Seventy-five percent of households in the city of Bucharest use the Internet, a significantly higher statistic than the rest of the nation (which averages between 45%-58% depending on region), outlining the disproportion of Internet usage amongst regions in Romania (Ștefăniță, 2018).

## 2.7 – Project Stakeholders

Expanding the Royal Margaret Foundation's social media promotion of the Young Talents Program will affect multiple groups. For this project, the identified stakeholders include: the current artists enrolled in the Young Talents Program, the alumni of the Young Talents Program, art enthusiasts, young Romanian artists unaffiliated with the program, and the Royal Margaret Foundation itself. Current members in particular have the potential to gain greater recognition via the Young Talents Program's increased online presence. Since the Young Talents Program's social media often highlights work from their members, those who follow them on social media may become interested in these artists. Similarly, the Young Talents Program often shares their alumni's work on social media. This means that those who discover the program will also see the work the alumni have created. Next, young artists unaffiliated with the program may learn about its benefits for the first time through an increase in online promotion. Finally, the Royal Margaret Foundation stands to gain an increase in potential applicants to the Young Talents Program and potential donors or collaborators could have a greater chance of becoming aware of the program.

## 2.8 – Background Summary

Despite the importance of art in Romania's culture, the nation's high poverty rates and limited access to higher education in some regions prevent many young people from pursuing a career in the arts. The support of an organization such as the Royal Margaret Foundation benefits young artists through their scholarship and by providing them with the opportunities to engage in galleries and concerts. An examination of popular social media platforms, the current state of Romania's computer networking infrastructure, and the Web's impact on artist and organization promotion revealed that social media is a powerful tool that the Young Talents Program and its members can use to gain an audience.

### 3.0 – Methodology

The goal of this project was to assist the Royal Margaret Foundation of Romania's Young Talents Program with strengthening their social media promotion to reach more young artistic talent. The team planned to achieve this goal through three objectives:

1. Investigate social media usage among young artists in Romania.
2. Evaluate the current social media presence of the Young Talents Program.
3. Explore creative techniques for the Royal Margaret Foundation and its Young Talents Program to attract a wider audience on social media.

To accomplish these objectives, the team identified and executed a set of methods within a seven-week period from March 24, 2021 to May 13, 2021 while working remotely in Worcester, Massachusetts with the project collaborators in Bucharest, Romania. Figure 3-1 depicts the flow of this chapter and categorizes each method based on which objective it addresses.

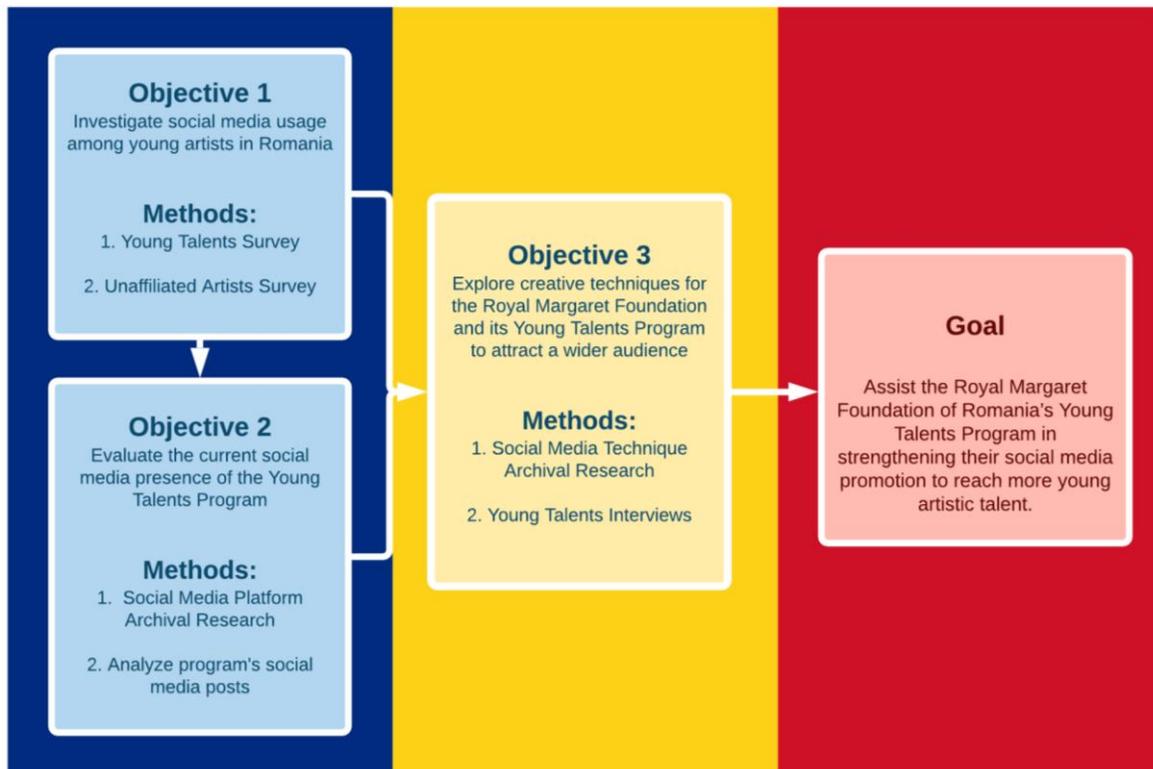


Figure 3-1: Flowchart of project objective and methods

This chapter includes a section on each objective, the methods the team implemented to achieve them, and the schedule the team followed over the course of the project term. Both surveys aimed to reveal the usage of social media usage among artists in Romania, while the social media research and analysis of the program's posts helped to evaluate their social media presence, and the research on promotional techniques and interviews helped to explore creative techniques the program can use to attract a wider audience.

### **3.1 - Investigate Social Media Usage among Young Artists in Romania**

The first objective was to investigate the various avenues that young artists in Romania utilize to interact with social media. To accomplish this task, the team distributed online surveys to two groups: members of the Young Talents Program (current and alumni) and artists not affiliated with the Young Talents Program.

#### **3.1.1 - Survey Procedure**

The team generated Qualtrics surveys for both target groups (shown in Appendix D: Young Talents Survey, and Appendix E: Unaffiliated Artists Survey). To ensure that the surveys were cohesive and coherent, the team sent the surveys to a test audience of WPI artists to complete before sending it out to the target groups. This test revealed that there was an error in the survey, specifically, a minor could bypass the question asking about the consent form. The team resolved this problem by making that question mandatory and removed the results of these test surveys prior to conducting the actual surveys.

The team provided an explanation of the research, the purpose of the surveys (to investigate social media preferences among artists in Romania), and ensured respondents that their responses are confidential and voluntary when distributing the surveys. Respondents received a consent form in English (Appendix A), and one in Romanian (Appendix B). The team used Google Translate to generate the Romanian text, and their collaborator proofread it to ensure that the translation was accurate. At the start of the survey, the team included the informed consent and confidentiality statement along with the statement that the team would publish only aggregate data from the surveys. It was necessary to include the consent form because this project targets young artists, which includes minors (people under 18). Romania's

consent laws for using data of a minor requires that anyone under the age of 18 providing their personal information must have the permission of their parent or guardian. On Qualtrics, both surveys first asked the respondent's age (see question A1), and if the respondent indicated they are below the age of 18, they could not continue the survey until they signed and uploaded the consent form (see question A2). None of the members who responded were under 18, so the team did not collect any minor's data.

### **3.1.2 – Young Talents Survey**

The team sent the first survey through email to current members and alumni of the Young Talents Program (see Appendix D: Young Talents Survey). The collaborator provided a contact list of 165 students enrolled in the program between 2015 and 2021. This list included the members' email addresses, the schools they attended, their artistic specialties, and if they enrolled in the program multiple times. The members and alumni received the survey via email on April 5th, 2021 (see Appendix C: Email to Young Talents Members for Survey). To increase the number of survey responses, the team sent follow-up emails on April 9, 2021 and April 21, 2021 to remind the target audience to participate in the survey. The team closed the survey on April 27, 2021 and in total received 48 completed responses.

The team surveyed these participants to gather data on their social media usage and preferences utilizing questions D6, D8, D10, and D12. Understanding their social media preferences and how they learned about the program is valuable information that the team used as the basis for later methods. Additionally, the survey asked the respondents to indicate if they were willing to participate in a follow-up interview about their experience in the program (see Question D16), along with their availability (see Question D17). The survey provided multiple options for possible dates and times of the interview to make sure each interviewee was able to attend. To accommodate the interviewees, the team considered the seven-hour time difference between Worcester, MA and Romania when providing times for interviews in the survey.

### **3.1.3 – Unaffiliated Artists Survey**

Additionally, the team sent a different Qualtrics survey to Romanian artists not affiliated with the Young Talents Program (see Appendix E: Unaffiliated Artists Survey). The team

wanted to learn about general social media usage among artists in Romania, their social media habits with respect to promotion of artwork and music online, and their familiarity with the Royal Margaret Foundation. Questions gauged the respondent's awareness of the Young Talents Program, if they felt they would benefit from it as an artist or musician, and one question regarding their monthly household income, to determine if they would financially qualify to apply for the program.

Reaching this target group required the team to research artist-run initiatives and youth organizations in Romania to find a wide range of organizations to contact. The next step was to compile their contact information into a spreadsheet (see Appendix H: Romanian Arts and Youth Organizations). The team identified and contacted 26 organizations through email, social media messaging, or their websites to ask if the organizations could distribute the survey to their members. The team chose this process to reach artists outside of the Foundation because they did not have access to the emails of individual artists themselves, and felt that the artists may be more likely to respond to a survey sent out by an organization the artists already trust. The team was unsuccessful in getting any organization to distribute the survey so they posted the survey on Reddit and Tumblr and reached out to groups of Romanian artists on Facebook and Instagram. This approach allowed the team to obtain 33 responses from artists aged 18-35+.

### **3.1.4 - Analyzing the Surveys**

The team began analyzing the surveys by examining all of the data and recognizing any trends in the surveyed population as a whole. Next, the team employed cross-tabulation to examine how social media usage differed according to age, artistic specialty, gender, and for the Young Talents Survey, whether the respondent was an alumni or a current member. To visually display the quantitative data, the team built their own charts and graphs based on key findings from the cross-tabulation.

There were two of the same questions in both surveys that yielded qualitative data. The first question was in response to asking respondents about their experience with promotion on social media (Appendix D11, E18). If the respondent answered "I had a social media page for my work in the past, but I no longer use it" the next survey question gave them an opportunity to tell the team why. The second question asked if the respondent had any further opinions about social media that they would like to share. The team categorized responses for each question

using deductive coding by creating three themes: positive opinions of social media, negative opinions of social media, and discussions about their own social media pages.

## **3.2 – Evaluate the Current Social Media Presence of the Young Talents Program**

The second objective was to evaluate the current social media presence of the Young Talents Program. The program utilizes Facebook and Instagram to promote their events, scholarships, and members, so for this objective the team researched those platforms and analyzed the platform's pages through coding.

### **3.2.1 – Social Media Platform Archival Research**

In order to understand how to evaluate the current social media presence of the Young Talents Program, the team conducted their first stage of research on social media platforms, with a focus on Facebook and Instagram. In this stage of researching, the team first desired to learn about the types of content individual artists and organizations should be posting on each of these platforms, as well as how consistently these users should post on each platform to best reach one's targeted audience. To uncover this information, the team utilized online articles, videos, and credible personal blogs from independent artists and social media marketers. Appendix N outlines the full list of resources that the team used. By discovering exactly how often and how consistent an organization should be posting on social media to optimize engagement, the team could better analyze the frequency of posting on the Young Talents social media pages to determine if this was online behavior that the organization needed to improve. By learning about the important types of content an artist or art non-profit organization should be posting, the team could evaluate the content of the Young Talents Program's Facebook and Instagram to decipher if there is different content they should be posting, or if there is a specific type of content they should be posting more.

### **3.2.2 – Analyze Young Talents Program's Social Media Posts**

After better understanding the type of content organizations should be posting on Instagram and Facebook through the social media platform research, the team used this

knowledge to inductively code the content of the Young Talents Program's Facebook and Instagram posts. The team evaluated all 58 Instagram posts of the Young Talents Program since the page's creation in November 2019, as well as the program's Facebook posts from the same time period. The team did not look at any older Facebook posts since they wanted to compare the Facebook and Instagram pages across the same timeframe.

The team recorded the number of posts per month from each social media page beginning in November 2019 and continuing through April 2021. They then cross-referenced this data with the social media archival research, which suggested that consistent posting frequency is important for online promotion.

Next, the team carefully examined the program's social media pages and developed a set of categories based on their posts' content. These categories included: events with Young Talents current members or alumni, general Romanian events or holidays, current member mentions, alumni mentions, current member work, alumni work, and updates on the scholarship process. The evaluation process continued as the team returned to the program's social media pages after the interviews to evaluate particular suggestions the interviewees gave for improving the pages' content. This included analyzing the Young Talents Instagram page for diversity: specifically, whether the program posts a wide range of different types of art and music and if there is any disparity between the number of posts highlighting current members and those showcasing alumni.

Finally, the team developed a set of criteria to evaluate the aesthetic appeal of the Young Talents Instagram page. The criteria include if the page contains: high-resolution images, a colorful and consistent palette, posts that fit an artistic/musical theme, and posts that are easy to understand from a distance. The team selected two portions of the Instagram feed with nine posts in each, the first from May 6, 2020 through August 29, 2020 and the second from March 22, 2020 through April 27, 2020, and determined if they fit the criteria.

### **3.3 – Explore Creative Techniques for the Royal Margaret Foundation and its Young Talents Program to Attract a Wider Audience on Social Media**

The third objective is to explore creative techniques for the Royal Margaret Foundation and its Young Talents Program to promote themselves and gain a larger following from a wider audience. For this objective, the team used the survey results to collect opinions on social media, and the analysis of the Young Talents social media pages to drive the process of identifying creative techniques the program could utilize to address the shortcomings of their current social media promotion presence. The research in this section includes consideration of the pros and cons regarding specific social media platforms for promotion and identifying creative social media promotional strategies that the program could benefit from utilizing. The team also conducted virtual interviews with current members and alumni of the Young Talents Program to better learn of their time in the program and experience with promoting their work, and attempted written interviews with social media directors of art organizations.

#### **3.3.1 – Social Media Technique Archival Research**

The team began to address this objective by drawing on the results from the previous two objectives. The information from objective one allowed the team to collect statements from respondents regarding their thoughts on social media and which platforms they preferred to use to promote their work. The results of the survey educated the team about the most preferred and used platforms by artists. Thus, the team continued the next stage of their research focusing on those platforms. Then, the analysis of the Young Talents social media pages performed in objective two informed the team about specific areas of the pages that need development. Furthermore, the prior analysis directed further research to discover techniques that may facilitate this improvement.

This stage of research included: techniques and promotional strategies young artists and organizations can use to expand their audience and increase user engagement, determining if some sites/platforms are better for certain types of art than others, the pros and cons of using each social media platform, and any costs associated with using the platform. The research process also included noting creative techniques that non-governmental organizations similar to

the Royal Margaret Foundation utilized to attract a larger audience. Like in the previous research, the team found Google Scholar, online articles, and personal blogs from social media experts and marketers useful for finding credible sources for this information. See Appendix O for the list of sources the team utilized.

### **3.3.2 – Interviews with Young Talents Program’s Alumni and Current Members**

The team conducted follow-up interviews with alumni and current members to acquire knowledge of unique experiences and stories from the alumni regarding their time in the Young Talents Program (see Questions G24-G31), to gather testimonies about the current members’ expectations and experiences so far (see Questions G18-G22), to collect more information beyond their survey responses about social media promotion (see Questions G2-G5), and to discover techniques the Young Talents Program could use to strengthen their social media presence (see Questions G9-G12). By conducting these interviews, the team believed they could gain insight on more creative techniques the program can utilize and interviewee’s thoughts on techniques the team discovered previously through their social media technique research. Through the interviews the team desired to learn about emotional experiences of members the program could potentially share on their social media, to aid with the execution of their third objective.

Gathering this data in a personal setting such as an interview was the most efficient and logical technique for the team, as such sentiments varied among each respondent. In addition, interviews can allow for follow-up questions when unexpected answers occur (McNamara, 1999). The team did not want to restrict the structure of the interview in case the interviewee presented unique answers.

The team created a guide for semi-structured interviews containing the complete list of interview questions, included in Appendix G: Young Talents Interview Questions. To ensure that the interviews were cohesive and coherent, the team conducted practice interviews with test groups of WPI artists before officially interviewing members of the Young Talents Program. The team used the semi-structured interview questions as a guide for each interview, but because of the large number of questions the team created, the team members who conducted each interview

only asked questions that they felt were most relevant to each individual interviewee based on their responses in the survey.

Before the team began conducting the interviews, they “starred” the questions that they felt were most important, and if time permitted, they asked a few of the other questions. From the survey responses, 21 artists provided their email address so the team could contact them for an interview: nine were current members and 12 were alumni. The team emailed all the interested respondents and asked them to participate in a brief 30–40-minute interview (see Appendix F: Email to Young Talents Members for Interview). The team interviewed 15 of the 21 survey respondents that indicated interest. The team tried to interview all 21 interested members, however, the six members that the team did not interview either did not respond to the team’s email about an interview, did not show up to the scheduled interview, or took the survey and indicated interest too late into the team’s project timeline. Table 3-1 and Table 3-2 contain the artistic specialty of the interviewees and the dates of the interviews.

Current Members		Alumni	
Tuesday, 4/13/21	Musician (Pianist, Conductor)	Monday, 4/12/21	Musician (Opera Singer)
Wednesday, 4/14/21	Musician (Organist)	Monday, 4/12/21	Musician (Clarinetist)
Thursday, 4/15/21	Visual Artist (Illustrator)	Monday, 4/12/21	Musician (Opera Singer)
Friday, 4/16/21	Visual Artist (Multimedia)	Monday, 4/12/21	Musician (Composer)
Monday, 4/19/21	Musician (Guitarist)	Tuesday, 4/13/21	Musician (Pianist)
Tuesday, 4/20/21	Visual Artist (Fashion Designer)	Friday, 4/16/21	Musician (Opera Singer)
Thursday, 4/22/21	Visual Artist (Painter, Fashion Designer)	Thursday, 4/22/21	Visual Artist (Fashion Designer)
Thursday, 4/22/21	Visual Artist (Multimedia)		

Table 3-1: Current Member Interviewees and Table 3-2: Alumni Interviewees

There was a 3:2 ratio of female interviewees to male, and all interviewees were between the ages of 18 and 27. The team did not interview anyone under the age of 18, as no members completed the consent form in either Appendix A (English Form) or B (Romanian Form) prior to the interview. Two members of the team conducted each interview, where one member led the interview by asking the questions, while the other observed, took notes, and produced follow-up questions. Prior to the start of the interview, the team member leading the interview read the complete informed consent statement included at the beginning of Appendix G, explained the purpose of the interview and the topics of discussion, then requested and received consent to record the session in order to transcribe each response for later analysis.

### 3.3.3 – Written Interviews with Directors of Art Organizations

To learn about how professionals utilize social media to promote artistic organizations and discover more techniques that the Young Talents Program can use, the team attempted to conduct written interviews with directors of art organizations. In order to distribute written interview questions, the team contacted 26 artist-run initiatives in Romania (see Appendix J: Email to Romanian Arts and Youth Organizations) and seven in Worcester, MA (see Appendix K: Email to Worcester Arts Organizations). However, none of these organizations completed the interview questions, so the team did not execute and complete this method.

### 3.3.4- Analyzing Interviews

The team analyzed both alumni and current member interviews by first transcribing the questions and responses from the recording of each interview (Appendix Q: Interview Transcripts). The team conducted 15 interviews, and each member of the team transcribed an equal number of interview recordings. Zoom provides an automatic transcription feature for recorded meetings, so the team used this as a base for their transcriptions and then corrected any mistakes by listening to the audio recording of the interview. Interviewers and interviewees spoke English exclusively for all but three of the interviews. For these interviews the team's collaborator Diana Costache served as a translator and the team took extensive notes on these interviews instead of transcribing them.

To analyze the qualitative data of the interviews, the team used inductive coding. The team began by identifying four themes based on the survey responses. In order to create a more comprehensive coding scheme, the team utilized inductive strategies after conducting the interviews because other themes emerged from the transcripts that did not fit into the themes the team already established. The team divided the interview transcripts evenly and coded them individually using the new set of categories, counting the frequencies of mentions of these themes and subthemes during interviews. The team split up frequencies of mentions between alumni and current members, as well as visual artists and musicians, to try to discover trends among the members' feelings and impactful experiences. Table 3-3 contains the team's themes, subthemes, and some key words and phrases the team used while coding each of the transcripts.

Themes	Subthemes	Key Words or Phrases
<i>Artists' Social Media Promotional Experience</i>	Promotional Success	Mentions of: "Im using..." · Instagram · Facebook · Youtube · Soundcloud · Behance
	Promotional Techniques	Mentions of: · Hashtags · Consistency · Images · Posting Frequency · Posting Artwork · Engagement with Audience
<i>Thoughts on the Young Talents' Promotion</i>	Positive Thoughts and Praise	Mentions of: · "I think that the Program is doing a good job..." · "I don't see any problems with..."
	Constructive Criticism and Suggestions	Mentions of: · "I wish they posted more of..." · "They need more..."
<i>Program's Impact on the Artists' Professional Life</i>	Scholarship aid	Mentions of: The scholarship... · "helped me buy materials" · "gave me opportunities to better my skills/talent"
	Personal Growth	Mentions of: · "I gained more confidence" · "I think I was kind of foolish to not see the good in my artwork" · "It was a good thing" · "half of my confidence comes from... it comes from Instagram or the Internet in general"
	Job Opportunities	Mentions of: · "Career opportunity"

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· “I was commissioned...”</li> </ul>
	Professional Connections	Mentions of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· “I met...”</li> <li>· “I was lucky to meet...”</li> <li>· “Princess Margareta”</li> <li>· “We covered for the Queen...”</li> <li>· “American Embassy...”</li> </ul>
<b><i>Key Events Members Experienced in the Program</i></b>	Competitions	Mentions of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· “I was competing...”</li> </ul>
	Concerts	Mentions of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· “We performed on...”</li> <li>· “My feelings on stage...”</li> <li>· “We performed virtually...”</li> <li>· “At the National Opera House in Bucharest...”</li> </ul>
	Galas	Mentions of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Romanian Athenaeum</li> <li>· Young Talents Orchestra</li> <li>· “Recitals”</li> </ul>
	Exhibits	Mentions of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· “we had an exhibition...”</li> <li>· “there would be pictures posted online...”</li> <li>· “I only took part in group exhibitions...”</li> <li>· “...in the gallery...”</li> </ul>
	Mentorship Classes	Mentions of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Mentors</li> <li>· Professional Musicians</li> <li>· Professional Artists</li> <li>· “We met virtually...”</li> <li>· “The zoom meetings that we had...”</li> <li>· “Musicians mentored us...”</li> <li>· “you can hear from people that succeeded and are famous...”</li> </ul>
	Fashion Shows	Mentions of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· “I got to show off my designs...”</li> </ul>

	Summer Camp	Mentions of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· “Music camp”</li> <li>· “At the summer camp I learned...”</li> </ul>
<i>Life of an Artist in Romania</i>	Education	Mentions of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· High school</li> <li>· University</li> <li>· Romania/Moldova Education system</li> </ul>
	Financial Struggles	Mentions of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· “I couldn’t afford...”</li> <li>· “I didn’t have enough money to...”</li> </ul>
	Lack of Support	Mentions of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· “...didn’t support me”</li> <li>· “they still think that we are doing this just for our pleasure... that It's a hobby”</li> <li>· Stigma around art career</li> </ul>
	Lack of Opportunities	Mentions of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· “there aren’t many opportunities...”</li> <li>· “you can never have a fair payment for what you do...”</li> <li>· In Romania, it's very hard to promote your music and it's very hard to reach the audience...”</li> </ul>
	Lack of Representation	Mentions of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Lack of Diversity</li> </ul>
	Leaving Romania	Mentions of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Other Country schooling opportunities</li> <li>· “I left Romania because...”</li> <li>· “In Romania, I left...”</li> <li>· “I left for a second Bachelor in Austria”</li> </ul>
	Religion	Mentions of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Tradition</li> <li>· Catholicism</li> </ul>

Table 3-3: Coding Themes and Sub-themes

In addition to coding, the team compiled personal testimonies and meaningful quotes from alumni about their experiences during the Young Talents Program through interviews that the Royal Foundation can share on their social media platforms and website (see Appendix P: Interviewee Quotes).

### **3.4 – Summary**

Upon addressing the three objectives through the completion of these methods, the team gathered information about social media promotion hoping to tackle the goal of assisting the Young Talents Program in strengthening their online presence and increasing their audience. The team investigated how the Romanian artists, including alumni and current members of the Young Talents Program utilize social media and analyzed the current state of the program's social media pages.

### **3.5 – Research Project Schedule**

To ensure completion of the project's methods, the team developed a schedule to execute their goal within a seven-week period from March 24, 2021 to May 13, 2021 remotely in Worcester, Massachusetts. (see Table 3-4). The team adapted this schedule from the initial proposal schedule with adjustments made to accommodate unforeseen obstacles. To make sure that they revised and tested the questions properly, the team began the surveys and interviews later in the term. Due to this, work on archival research started earlier than anticipated.

<b>PROJECT TITLE</b>	Strengthening the Promotion of The Royal Margaret Foundation of Romania's Young Talents Program and its Members							
<b>ADVISORS</b>	Professor Butler, Professor Kinicki							
<b>TEAM MEMBERS</b>	Lexi Ferrini, Chris Guerrette, Madeline Perry, Ryan Tougas							
Key:								
Draft Class Deadline	Final Class Deadline		Team Deadline		Current Work		Prep Work	
Date	WEEK 1	WEEK 2	WEEK 3	WEEK 4	WEEK 5	WEEK 6	WEEK 7	WEEK 8
Prep								
Talk to Sponsor- Obtain Email List of contact information								
<b>Objective 1 Methods:</b>	Investigate social media usage among young artists in Romania							
Distribute Young Talents Survey								
Contact Other Foundations								
Publish Unaffiliated Artists Survey on Social Media Platforms								
Reminder Email for Young Talents' Response								
Analyze Feedback of Both Surveys								
<b>Objective 2 Methods:</b>	Evaluate the social media presence of the Young Talents Program.							
Social Media Platform Research								
Analysis of Young Talents' Social Media								
<b>Objective 3 Methods:</b>	Explore creative techniques for the Royal Margaret Foundation and its Young Talents Program to attract a wider audience on social media.							
Social Media Technique Research								
Interviews of Current Members and Alumni of the Young Talents Program								
Analyze data obtained in interviews and social media research								
<b>IQP Report and Presentations</b>								
Introduction								
Background								
Methodology								
Findings								
Recommendations & Conclusions								
Final Paper								
Final Presentation								

Table 3-4: Schedule of Project Completion

## 4.0 – Findings

This chapter discusses the team’s primary findings and the data that support them. Section 4.1 details the social media sites that are popular among young Romanian artists and the ones they prefer to employ for promotion. Section 4.2 describes the team’s findings after analyzing the current state of the Young Talents social media pages. Finally, Section 4.3 explains findings regarding alumni and current member opinions on the Young Talents social media pages and how the program can improve them.

### 4.1 – Social Media Usage Among Young Romanian Artists

The team’s first objective was to investigate social media usage among young Romanian artists. To achieve this, the team surveyed and interviewed current members and alumni of the Young Talents Program, surveyed artists unaffiliated with the program, and conducted archival research on social media in Romania. This section explains the primary findings the team discovered from executing these methods.

Sixty-percent of the respondents of the Young Talents survey are alumni of the program and 40% are current members. The original contact list contained 139 alumni and twenty-six current members, meaning that a much higher percentage of the current member pool (73%) responded than of the alumni pool (21%). Additionally, the Young Talents survey respondents were 65% female, 33% male, with 2% choosing not to answer. In contrast, the unaffiliated artists survey respondents were 72% male, 21% female, and 7% nonbinary. The team hypothesized that the skew toward male respondents in the unaffiliated survey may be due to Reddit being the primary means of finding respondents. According to a 2017 survey, over two thirds of Reddit users identify as male (Sattelberg, 2021).

The Young Talents program accepts approximately fifteen visual artists and fifteen musicians each year, and in parallel, the team received almost an equal number of responses from each specialty, with 52% of Young Talents respondents identifying as visual artists and 48% as musicians. Similarly, 42% of the unaffiliated respondents are visual artists and 48% are musicians, with 10% falling into the ‘other’ category. The three respondents that identified as ‘other’ were two writers and a choreographer, which are disciplines that the Young Talents Program does not accept.

#### 4.1.1 - *WhatsApp, Facebook, YouTube, and Instagram are the most popular social media sites among young Romanian artists.*

The team received survey responses from 19 current members, 29 alumni, and 24 unaffiliated artists to gain insight into their social media usage. For all three groups, the most popular social media platforms were WhatsApp, Facebook, YouTube, and Instagram. Figure 4-1 shows the results from the question ‘What Social Media Sites/Platforms Do You Use?’. Respondents selected all that applied from a predetermined list of seven social media platforms and could provide a written answer for the ‘other’ category. Amongst respondents, the average number of selected social media sites is four, and the respondent that uses the largest number of social media platforms is an unaffiliated artist who chose eight. None of the respondents reported that they did not use social media.

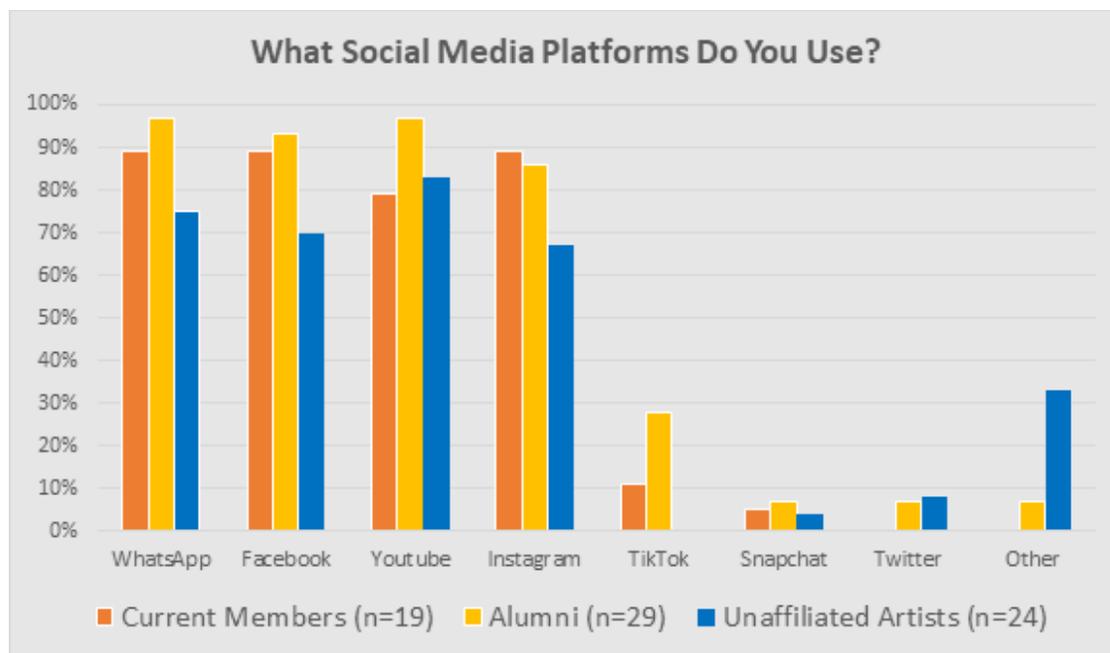


Figure 4-1: Respondents' use of social media platforms

In total, 88% of respondents use WhatsApp, 88% use YouTube, 85% use Facebook, and 81% use Instagram, which is consistent with a 2020 study on social media promotion in Romania that reported the top five social media sites as Facebook, YouTube, WhatsApp, Facebook Messenger, and Instagram (Statista, 2020). This suggests that social media usage among artists does not differ significantly from that of the general population. Hence, the team focused on these four

social media platforms for the remainder of the project. Alumni respondents selected TikTok more frequently than the other two populations, with 28% indicating use, compared to 11% from the current members and 0% from the unaffiliated artists. The unaffiliated artists reported a higher percentage of ‘other’ platforms with 32% providing alternate social media sites, the most prevalent (25% of respondents) being Reddit. Other platforms that respondents provided included: SoundCloud (an audio sharing site), Pinterest (an image sharing site), Behance (a site for professional artists to share their portfolios), and Discord (a messaging platform). However, none of these platforms have a prevalent Romanian user base, so the team chose not to focus on them.

#### 4.1.2 – *Current members and alumni of the Young Talents Program already have experience with promoting their work on social media.*

In addition to using social media in their daily lives, members of the Young Talents Program typically already have experience with promoting themselves and their work online. Figure 4-2 shows the breakdown of responses to the question: ‘what is your experience with posting your artwork/music on social media?’:

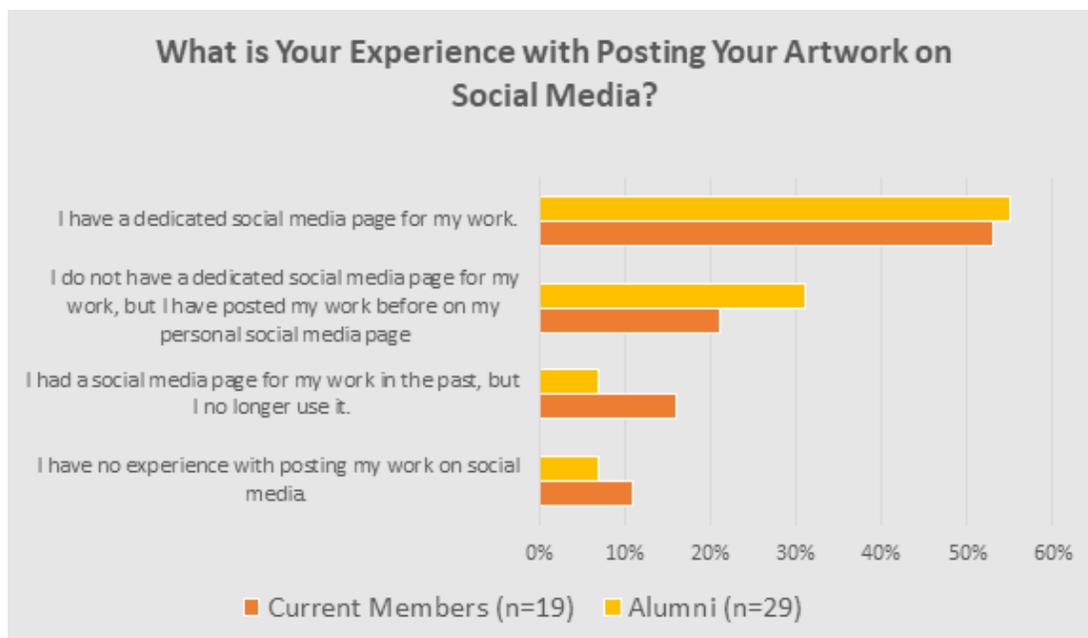


Figure 4-2: Respondents' experience with social media promotion

Eighty-nine percent of current members and 93% of alumni reported that they either have a dedicated social media page for their work, post their work on their personal social media page, or had a social media page for their work in the past. Respondents provided reasons why social media can be beneficial for artists who use it properly. As one musician explained, “I think posting on social media is a great way to promote artists and musicians, especially now that it’s bigger than ever and more and more people have access to the Internet” (Young Talents Alumnus, age 18-24). Another respondent echoed this sentiment by expressing how important online promotion is during the time of COVID-19: “I think we should focus much more than we do on social media, because it could be an intermediary between us and the public, especially in this time of the pandemic” (Young Talents Current Member, age 18-24).

At the same time, four respondents (8%) stated that they have no experience posting their work online. “Art is lived on the spot and not in a simulation,” explained one visual artist who chose not to post their work digitally (Young Talents Alumnus, age 25). Respondents that chose to stop using social media to promote their work indicated that they either lacked the time or skills to post on social media or that they didn’t find success when posting on it. This result prompted the team to look further into how artists struggle with online promotion. Some artists become discouraged when they do not see immediate returns from social media, however even building a small audience can be beneficial if that audience engages with the content (Reeves, n.d.).

#### ***4.1.3 – Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube are the most preferred sites among young Romanian artists for promotion.***

Some artists prefer certain social media over others for showcasing their work. Specifically in the case of WhatsApp, even though it was the most used platform by survey respondents, it was much less preferred for promotion compared to Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube. Figure 4-3 shows which social media platform respondents prefer for promoting their art:

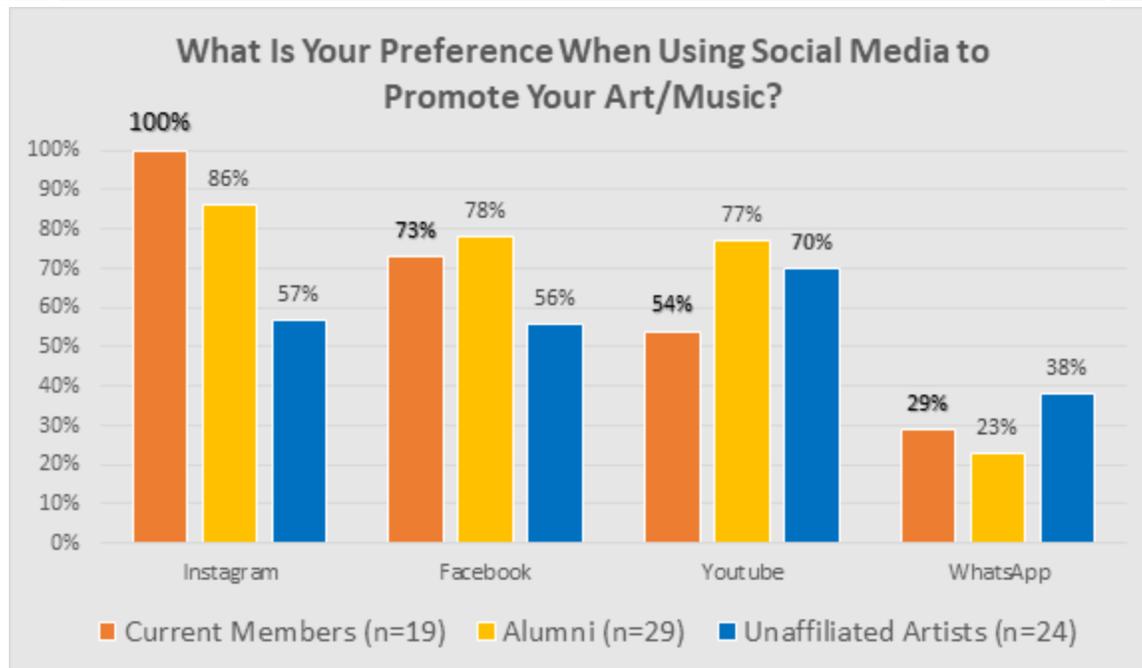


Figure 4-3: Respondents' preference when using social media for promotion

Current members and alumni generally preferred Instagram the most in regards to promoting their work online, as 100% of current members indicated they use this platform alongside 86% of alumni. With over one billion global users and five million Romanian users, (Sava, 2021) Instagram's popularity means that young artists have the potential to showcase their work to more than just a local audience. One alumni interviewee explained: "Nowadays I feel like Instagram is really powerful and it's not only my opinion but I also heard it from people in the business, managers... It's very important to put yourself out there and to present yourself and to show people what you're doing and how you are doing it" (Young Talents alumnus, age 21). Young Talents respondents also indicated high preference for Facebook, with 73% of current members and 78% of alumni selecting the platform. In an interview, one alumni described their use of Facebook in more detail. As the founder of a music festival in Moldova, they found great benefits to posting on Facebook as they could connect people they knew from other parts of their life with their music career (Young Talents alumni, age 27).

Surprisingly, the unaffiliated artists respondents preferred YouTube the most, at a 70% preference rating. Of the 16 respondents who indicated they preferred YouTube, nine were musicians while the other seven were visual artists, indicating no bias in preference based on artistic specialty.

#### **4.1.4 – *Artists can gain professional opportunities from social media.***

One of the most impactful results about individual social media usage was that three of the interviewees gained professional attention from their online promotion. One alumnus explained that they received a job opportunity through Instagram, but had to decline it due to time constraints. “For gallerists, Instagram is important because the entire art world—artists, collectors, and art critics—is using it to display or discover art,” explains painter Dina Brodsky, who runs multiple popular Instagram pages (Muzdakakis, 2021). Two alumni explained that they received their current jobs through social media: one through YouTube and another through the audio-sharing site SoundCloud. “It was a dream; I was searching for some auditions and I was in Stuttgart to make an audition and then someone found me on YouTube,” stated one interviewee when explaining how she received her current position (Young Talents Alumnus, age 27). These statements indicate that professionals utilize social media to find new talent. Furthermore, these success stories have the potential to inspire Young Talents’ current members who may not yet have as much experience with social media as the alumni.

Another musician described how their opinion on social media changed after receiving a request for a commission, stating that “because someone listened to my SoundCloud and they liked me, they proposed to me to write a piece for them. Now I'm thinking that it's helping me promote my music, but it's something that I recently discovered, and I wasn't so aware about this in the past” (Young Talents Alumnus, age 22). SoundCloud is a platform specifically beneficial for musicians, and this particular alumnus’ experience suggests that Young Talents current members should be aware of this platform. Similarly, one survey respondent indicated that they use a site called Behance: a platform where visual artists can share their portfolios and sell their work. This indicates that certain disciplines of art may benefit from specialized platforms that cater to their needs.

#### **4.1.5 – *Artists gain confidence and validation from social media engagement.***

Three of the current members expressed to the team that they are reluctant to post their work online. “I think that I have a lot to learn. And after that I want to share with the people,”

explained one current member when asked why they were waiting to create a social media page for their work (Young Talents Current Member, age 22). Artists around the world struggle with self-confidence and assessing the quality of their work. Forbes journalist Bryan Collins explains that this causes artists to hesitate to share their creations, as: “a work released out into the world no longer belongs to the artist. It belongs to his or her fans, and that could be difficult for the creator to accept.” (Collins, 2019). However, relinquishing control over one’s work and allowing an audience to embrace it allows an artist to build confidence and receive validation. As one visual artist explained: “I think I was foolish not to see the good in my artwork and to see the appreciation from the people I know, and don’t know” (Young Talents Current Member, age 21). When asked what made them decide to post online, they continued: “as a shy person I wasn't comfortable with putting my artwork out there, but when I applied to the program, I told myself that this is the moment to step up and to be more open and kind of seen” (Young Talents Current Member, age 21). Another interviewee corroborated this by saying: “Probably half of my confidence comes from Instagram or the Internet in general. Because even, let’s say I had an exhibition, there would be pictures posted online, and that offers me some sort of confidence too” (Young Talents Current Member, age 20). This suggests that current members may gain more than just professional connections through posting their work on social media, they may become more confident about their work and about their legitimacy as artists as well.

## **4.2 – Current State of the Young Talents Social Media Pages**

The team analyzed the Facebook and Instagram pages of the Young Talents Program to complete their second objective: evaluate the current social media presence of the Young Talents Program. Additionally, this section contains findings about social media pages that the team discovered during collaborator meetings.

According to the team’s collaborator, there is only one primary administrator of the Young Talents social media pages. This administrator handles many other aspects of the program not limited to social media, and therefore they have limited time and resources to dedicate to online promotion. Given this constraint, the team focused their efforts on discovering creative techniques to improve the program’s social media promotion that do not require significant time dedicated to them. Considering that many Young Talents members have experience using social media, the team identified ways that they could assist in the promotion efforts of the program.

#### 4.2.1 – *Artists primarily learn about the program through word of mouth.*

The team wanted to learn more about how Romanian artists discover the Young Talents Program and were especially interested in whether it was common to discover the program through social media. Between the 10% of unaffiliated respondents who had heard of the program and the Young Talents respondents, the most common way that artists indicated they heard about the Young Talents Program was by word-of-mouth as shown in Figure 4-4.

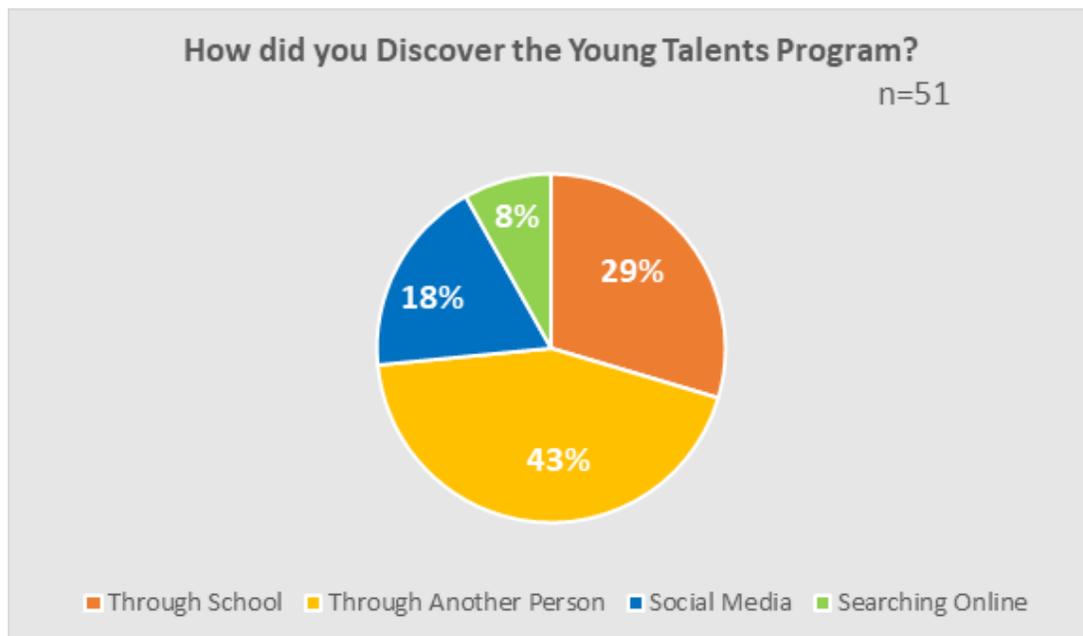


Figure 4-4: How respondents discovered the Young Talents Program

Forty-three percent of respondents to the two surveys learned about the program from another person. Furthermore, the 29% of respondents who discovered the program through school heard about it through a professor, teacher, or student: another variation of word of mouth. The fact that only 18% of respondents discovered the program through social media suggests that the Young Talents Program's social media pages may not currently be effective in reaching prospective members.

#### 4.2.1 – *The Young Talents Program's Facebook and Instagram have inconsistent posting schedules.*

The team analyzed the Facebook and Instagram pages of the Young Talents Program to gain a better understanding of how the program uses social media for promotion. Through the first stage of social media research, the team learned that nonprofit organizations should post four times a week (16 to 20 times per month) on Instagram to maximize user engagement and audience recognition and five times a week (20 to 25 times per month) on Facebook (Feehan, 2021). An analysis of the Young Talents Facebook and Instagram pages revealed that the program does not adhere to a regular posting routine and will sometimes go weeks or months without posting an update. Figure 4-5 displays the number of posts on each page by month starting in November 2019 until April 2021.

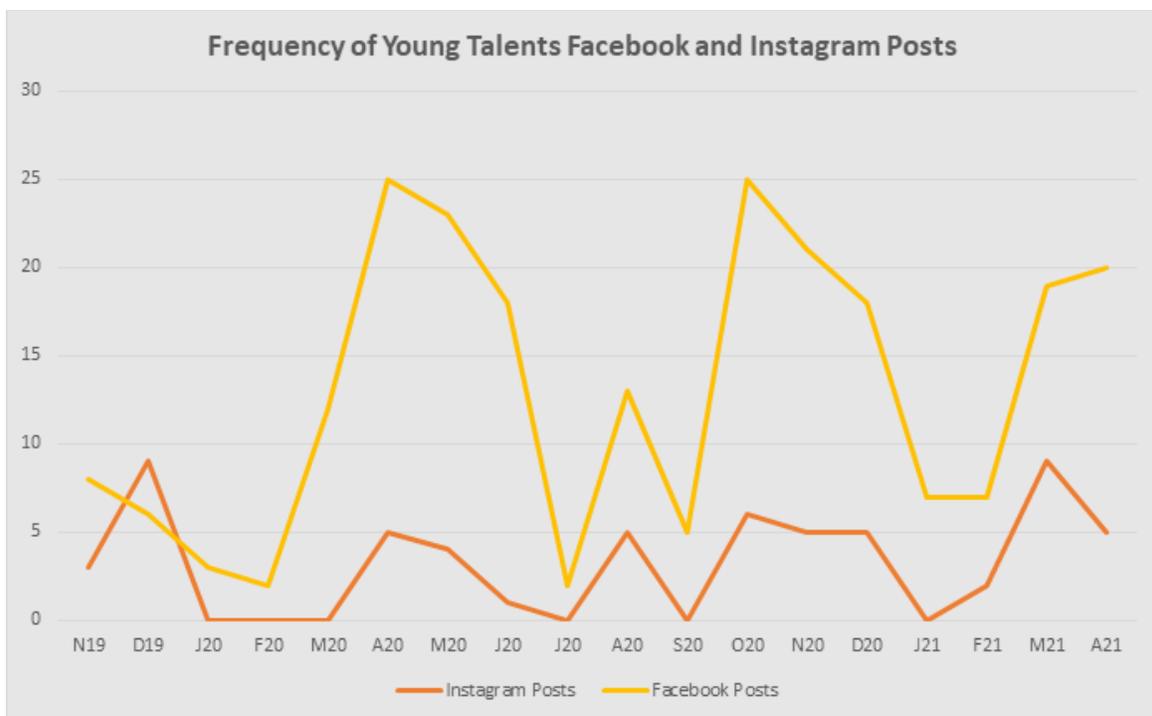


Figure 4-5, Young Talents Facebook and Instagram Monthly Posting Frequencies

The average number of posts-per-month for Facebook is 13 and for Instagram is three. However, the number of posts varies greatly month-to-month for both pages, as Facebook has a maximum post count of 25 (April 2020 and October 2020) and a minimum of two (February 2020) and Instagram has a maximum of nine (December 2019 and March 2021) and a minimum

of zero (January-March 2020, July 2020, September 2020, and January 2021). Months with low post rates are similar between the two pages, such as July and September 2020 which saw dips in the number of posts on both Facebook and Instagram. Months with high post rates seem to correlate with Young Talents events. For example, the program advertised the Identitati Exposition in March 2021 and posted about it seven times on Facebook and four times on Instagram that month. In both 2020 and 2021, the program's posting rate dipped in January and February, which is after the program advertises the scholarship but before they select their current members for the year. This suggests that the program does not have a set schedule for posting their content and instead their posting frequency is bursty, irregular and event-driven throughout the year.

#### **4.2.2 - *The Young Talents Program Instagram page does not have a consistent aesthetic.***

An aesthetic on social media is the cohesive type, mood, and general impression of a user's posts. A consistent aesthetic on each social media platform provides the program with a unique personality, which can make it easier for people to recognize the program and its visions. An Instagram aesthetic is essential, as it is a platform that is highly visual, so the imagery the program presents to its audience will shape the personality or "aesthetic" of the program (Donlon, 2021). Figure 4-6 displays the program's Instagram feed from May 6th, 2020 to August 29th, 2020 as an example of how the Young Talents Program builds a powerful, artistic aesthetic.

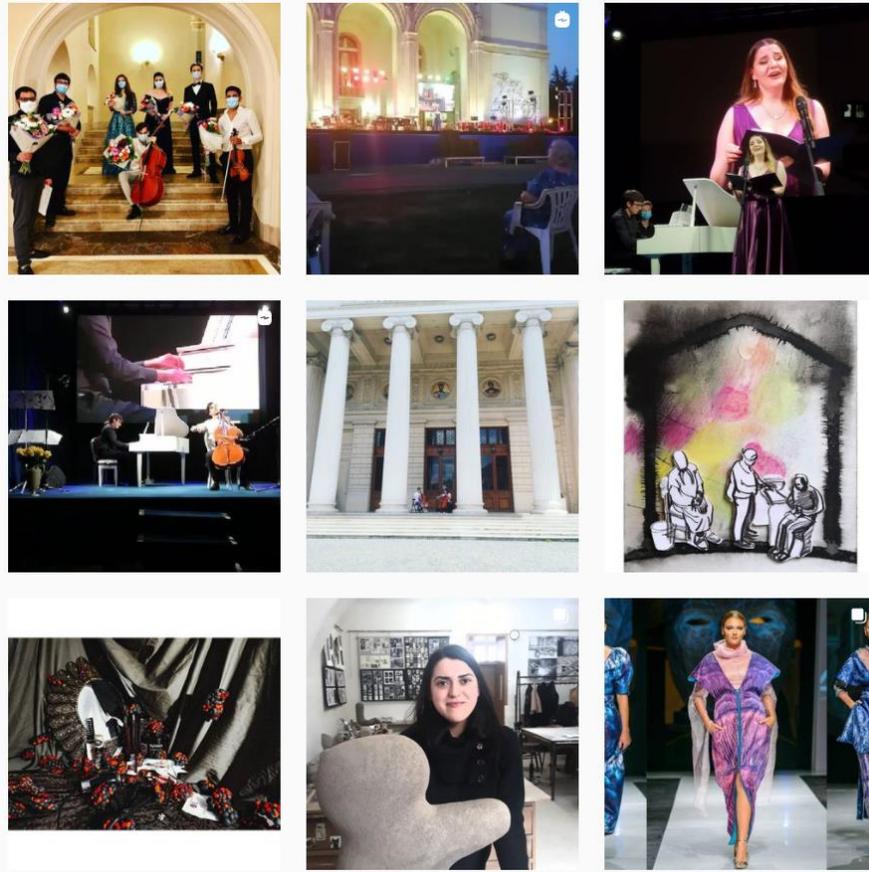


Figure 4-6, Young Talents Instagram Posts May 6th, 2020 - August 29th, 2020

Each of these posts contains a high-quality image of content relevant to the program (events, current member work) and builds a consistent theme of art and music. Table 4-1 evaluates these posts with criteria the team developed based on their archival research sources (see Appendix O).

High-resolution images	Colorful, consistent palette	Fits Artistic Theme	Easy to Understand from a Distance
Yes	Yes, strong use of purples/pinks against black and white	Yes, multiple images of artwork/music performance	Yes, thumbnails are eye-catching and readable

Table 4-1: Aesthetic Criteria Applied to Figure 4-6

While the Young Talents Instagram page features stunning images of their members and events, thumbnails full of text often break up this aesthetic. Figure 4-7 contains the page's feed from March 22, 2020 to April 27, 2020.

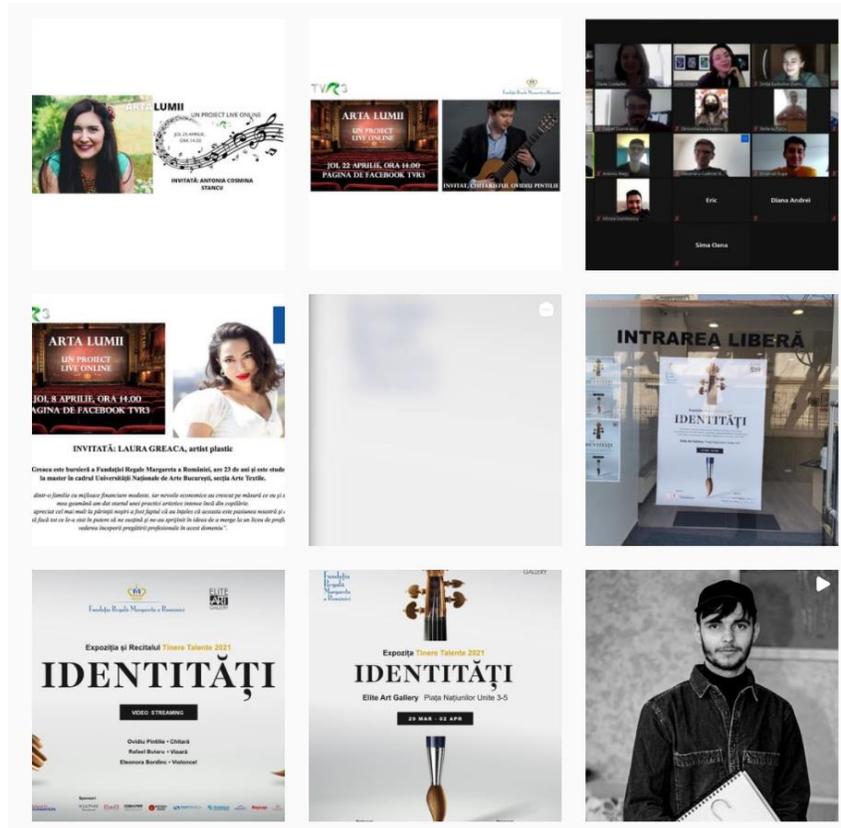


Figure 4-7, Young Talents Instagram posts March 22, 2021 - April 27, 2021

In contrast, this portion of the page contains a mix of photos of people, images with lots of text, and thumbnails that are difficult to read at this size. Table 4-2 evaluates these posts based on the team's aesthetic criteria.

High-resolution images	Colorful, consistent palette	Fits Artistic Theme	Easy to Understand from a Distance
Yes	No, mix of monochromatic and images with small splashes of color	No, there are no images of artwork or music performance	No, text cannot be read in the thumbnails

Table 4-2: Aesthetic Criteria Applied to Figure 4-7

### 4.2.3 – *The Young Talents Program Instagram and Facebook do not showcase work from alumni as frequently as work from current members.*

The team gathered responses from the alumni and current member interviewees on the social media presence of the Young Talents Program to help determine what content applicants to the program want to see on their social media pages. Six interviewees (40%) offered their views on how the Young Talents Program promoted themselves, five were current members and one was an alumni.

Each offered constructive criticism ranging from what to post, page organization, and comments about the importance of having a social media page. Regarding the current state of the social media pages of the Foundation, one current member told the team: “I was curious about what kind of artwork or people from other years participated in this program, and I couldn’t find it” (Young Talents Current Member, age 21). Another current member echoed the same statement, and said: “I think that their social media pages could be more organized or they could post more about our artworks...” (Young Talents Current Member, age 22).

The team examined the Young Talents Facebook and Instagram pages to see what kind of content they currently post and learned that events with Young Talents members and promotion/updates about the scholarship itself are the most frequent topics on both pages. As shown in Figure 4-8, the Facebook page only featured one current member’s work since the beginning of the year and none for the alumni, validating the previous interviewees’ statements.

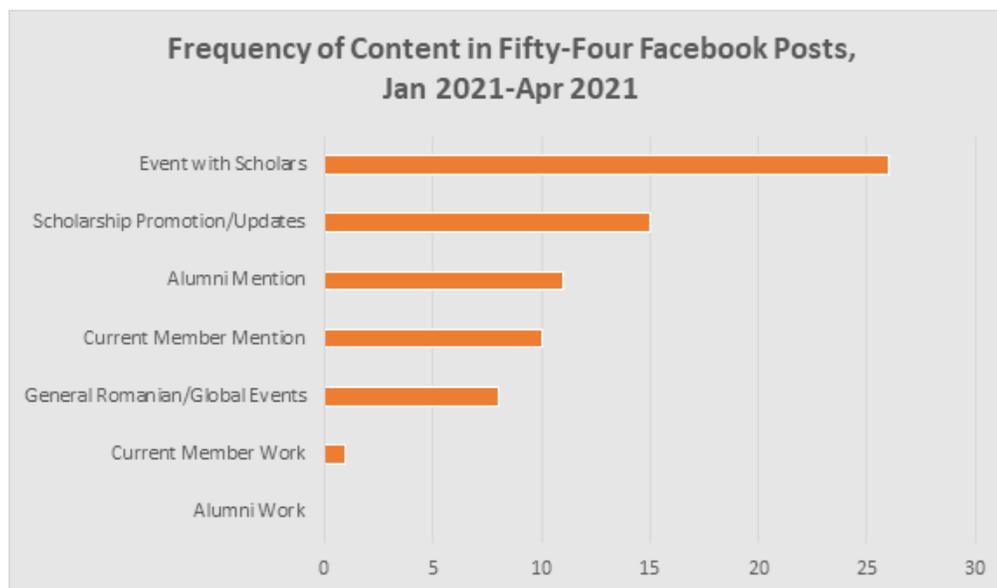


Figure 4-8: Frequency of Content in Young Talents Facebook Posts, Jan 2021 - Apr 2021

As shown in Figure 4-9, the Instagram page features much more work from current members than the Facebook page with 13 posts highlighting their scholarship holders. However, the page does not showcase any work that alumni completed after leaving the program.

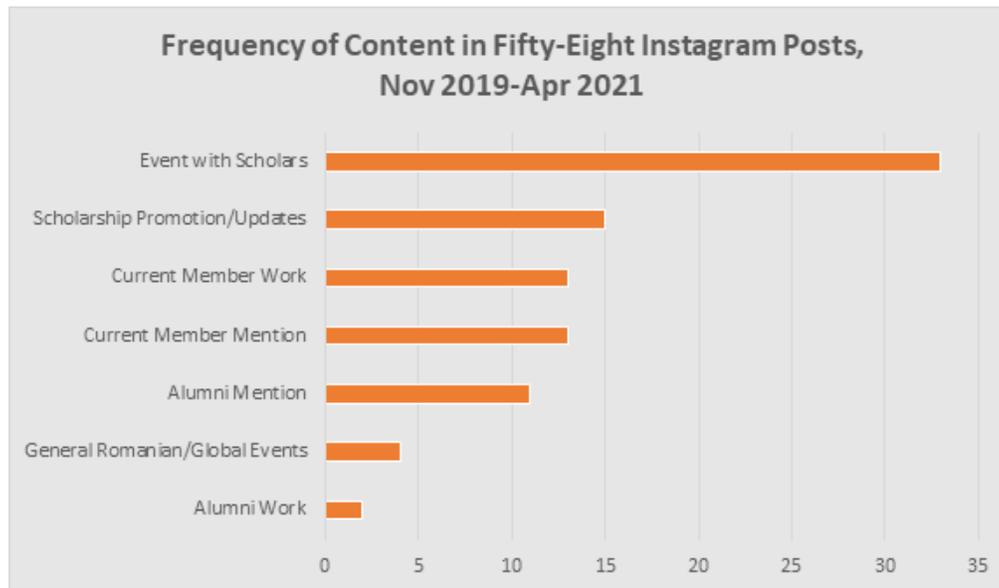


Figure 4-9: Frequency of Content in Young Talents Instagram Posts, Nov 2019- Apr 2021

### 4.3 – Improving the Young Talents Social Media

To achieve the third objective, exploring creative techniques that the Young Talents Program can use to attract a wider audience on social media, the team surveyed and interviewed current members and alumni of the Young Talents Program; surveyed artists unaffiliated with the Young Talents Program; conducted archival research on social media promotional techniques; and analyzed the Young Talents Program’s social media pages. This section explains the primary findings supported by analyzing results across all these methods.

#### 4.3.1 – *A diverse range of content has the potential to attract a broad audience.*

One alumni, a fashion designer, said that “... I’ve noticed with their social media, it’s not diverse enough ... because diversity will actually bring in people that might be interested in the

less traditional kinds of art” (Young Talents Alumni, age 26). This fact was a point of frustration for this alumnus, who felt that because her art was less-traditional than others, her work was not as well-represented as others. She said, “You never know who sees [a post], and if you want to promote visual art, then promote every visual artist that actually was in your program” (Young Talents alumni, age 26). A further look into the content of the Young Talents Instagram revealed that of the 13 posts about current member work, 11 (85%) were visual arts pieces. Posts containing visual arts pieces have a variety of disciplines highlighted, including but not limited to: textile art, painting, animation, and fashion design. The disparity between the Instagram content and the variety of musician types present in the program is much more prevalent than with the visual artists. Only two posts on the Young Talents Instagram feature music performance; both contain a pianist and one each contain a vocalist and a string instrumentalist. In comparison, the team received survey responses from nine different types of musicians: pianists, organists, wind instrumentalists, string instrumentalists, vocalists, classical musicians, musicologists, composers, and conductors. Considering this large difference in content between the two types of artists, audiences may be surprised to learn that the program accepts an equal number of musicians and visual artists each year. Additionally, the page may not appeal to music enthusiasts who would like to see more work from young musicians.

#### **4.3.2 – *Artists want to hear personal experiences and emotional stories from other artists.***

One member said to the team “... if [the Young Talents Program] wants to grow outside of [the art community], they should have something translate to any other group of people that may not be so interested in art ... something that will connect with more people, and stories always do that” (Young Talents Alumni, age 26).

Sharing stories via social media is also a form of ‘word of mouth marketing’ (Sumrak, 2021). Considering that word of mouth is the most popular method which current members and alumni have heard about the program, combining the effectiveness of word of mouth and social media is a potentially powerful method to draw in potential applicants. This is especially true during the COVID-19 pandemic, when talking in-person is not as commonplace as it once was.

In order to provide examples of stories the Young Talents Program can share on their social media, the team asked alumni interviewees to describe some of the most impactful experiences they had while in the program. From these responses, three distinct kinds of experiences emerged: mentors/masterclasses, concerts/exhibitions/galas, and building connections with other members. Seventy-five percent of alumni spoke positively of the mentorship and masterclasses they took, while 25% cited these as the most impactful experiences while a part of the program. These alumni all mentioned that they learned important professional skills through these mentors; experiences they were not expecting to have as a part of this program. One alumnus expressed:

“... I wasn't expecting such mentorship. I was expecting more of the artistic part, but they were about everything else, regarding that. How to make a great portfolio, how to apply for a job in creative art, or how to apply for an exhibition and things like this which I've never heard talked about before. Not in university, not in other situations. So that was the most surprising aspect because like I said that's where I feel like I learned the most” (Young Talents Alumni, age 26).

The team also asked alumni about their experiences performing and showcasing their art. Eighty-eight percent of alumni spoke highly of concerts, galas, and exhibitions that the Young Talents Program hosts throughout the year. In particular, 75% of respondents cited the annual concert at the Romanian Athenaeum in front of Princess Margaret herself as their favorite experience from the program. One alumnus described it as: “... a very important cultural institution in our country with great artists. I was 20 years old. And to be on that stage at 20 years old ... it was a key moment” (Young Talents Alumni, age 27). Another said that “[The concert] was something very special for me and it is just here in my heart” (Young Talents Alumni, age 27). Having the opportunity to meet Princess Margaret and perform for her in concert was an important moment for these members, which became obvious through the reverence that the respondents had when speaking of the experience.

Eighty-eight percent of alumni cited interacting with other scholarship recipients as important to their time during the Young Talents Program. “What I enjoyed the most was the community. ... I really felt that I was part of a group that actually was passionate about the same things that I was,” described one interviewee (Young Talents Alumni, age 26). Another

described the program as “like a family, with contact between the scholars, with holidays together, when we worked together for concerts, it was great” (Young Talents Alumni, age 27).

Current members also had testimonies about their experiences in the program so far. “They [the Young Talents Program] really makes you feel like an artist ... we feel that we are an artist for real when we are on the stage or when they are talking to us. They treat us like people,” expressed one interviewee when reflecting on what they would tell future applicants about the program (Young Talents Current Member, age 24).

#### **4.3.3 – *Social media takeovers are a technique that organizations use to allow persons of interest to create content for their pages.***

Through their research on creative social media promotional techniques, the team discovered social media takeovers as a potential strategy that best aligns with the characteristics and limitations of the Young Talents Program. A social media takeover is a form of marketing when an organization grants posting privileges to a person of interest such as a celebrity, expert, or community member. Users have the opportunity to take advantage of social media takeovers on all platforms, however it is most popular to do so on Instagram or Facebook (Sehl, 2019). Takeovers allow social media administrators to delegate the time needed to create content to other stakeholders, and provide those stakeholders the opportunity to tell their stories firsthand. According to Digital Ink, “They offer your followers a behind-the-scenes look into your business from a customer’s perspective, and they take some of the pressure off of you when it comes to creating unique and engaging content” (Lawlor, 2018). In the case of the Young Talents Program, currently a single administrator runs both pages and therefore followers may not hear the full perspective of current members. Through a takeover, Young Talents current members could learn how to create engaging content for social media, therefore strengthening their individual promotional skills, meanwhile the program would also benefit from an increase in content without a high time commitment.

## 4.4 – Summary

Through analyzing the survey data interview responses, the Young Talents social media pages, and the information gathered from archival research, the team determined five primary findings that they felt were key to strengthening the promotion of the Young Talents Program:

1. Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube are the most preferred social media sites among young Romanian artists for promotion.
2. Those applying to the Young Talents Program would like to see more work from past members on social media.
3. A diverse range of content has the potential to attract a broad audience.
4. Artists want to hear personal experiences and emotional stories from other artists.
5. Social media takeovers are a technique that organizations use to allow persons of interest to create content for their pages.

## 5.0 – Recommendations and Conclusion

This chapter provides the team’s final recommendations to the Young Talents Program, their conclusions to the project, and details opportunities for future work. The team developed five recommendations that they believe will strengthen the promotion of the Royal Margaret Foundation of Romania’s Young Talents Program and assist the Foundation with improving the development of young artistic talent.

### 5.1 – *Implement More Effective Use of Facebook and Instagram*

The Young Talents Program already uses Facebook and Instagram for promotion, but there are changes that they can implement to make more effective use of these platforms. These include:

1. *Have a consistent and frequent posting schedule.* If the organization posts regularly the program’s audience will expect and look forward to the program’s content (Donlon, 2021). A consistent posting schedule is crucial for an organization’s social media promotion strategy as it tells their followers how often to expect updates and builds reputation (Simpson, 2019). Additionally, if accounts post and publish content consistently, the social media platform’s AI machine learning will favor the user’s posts and more people will have the opportunity to see them (TechHopper, n.d.). Therefore, the team suggests that the Young Talents Program determine a weekly schedule for their posts in order to maintain consistency and frequency.
2. *Use a Consistent Aesthetic on Instagram.* Having a specific and consistent aesthetic has the potential to make the program and their posts more memorable to its audience. Being an arts program, the Young Talents Program has the potential to share visually appealing pictures, such as shots of artwork, galleries, and different musical events.

### 5.2 – *Post More Work from Current Members and Alumni to Diversify Content*

When the team analyzed the Program’s current social media pages, they noticed that the pages only highlight a small subset of current members and alumni in their own individual posts, and typically, the Program only posts student work that relates to one of their events. The results of the interviews indicated that Alumni and current members are interested in seeing a more

diverse catalogue of arts posted to the Young Talents social media pages. The team recommends that the program posts work from all of their current members throughout their time with the Young Talents Program. The program's social media pages can feature a different artist's work every week, alternating between visual artist and musicians, and featuring artists' work that the pages have not traditionally shown.

### **5.3 – *Tell Stories from Current Members and Alumni about their experiences with the Program***

Stories have the potential to allow the Young Talents Program to connect with audience members and increase engagement with Young Talents posts. According to Ballantine, “Social media gives people a place to share these emotions and connect with others who feel similarly. If you can tie your marketing content to strong emotions, you can boost its social media shares” (Ballantine, 2018). In interviews, alumni shared their experiences with mentors/masterclasses, concerts/exhibitions/galas, and building connections with other members. The program can use stories from alumni's experiences with these to appeal to potential applicants. Additionally, donors and art enthusiasts may feel more inclined to support a program that fosters this kind of camaraderie between its members. The team has extrapolated testimonies and meaningful quotes from interviewees that the Young Talents Program can use in the short term (see Appendix N: Interviewee Quotes). However, these are anonymous and in English so the program may want to contact current members and alumni to obtain additional statements.

### **5.4 – *Teach Current Members about Social Media Platforms Specific to their Discipline***

The team learned that alumni musicians found success on YouTube and SoundCloud, and alumni visual artists enjoy using the site Behance. SoundCloud and Behance both cater strongly to individual promotion of specific types of art, so the Young Talents Program can inform their current members of these platforms in order to strengthen members' individual promotion. Current members, particularly musicians, may benefit from learning how to use the platform YouTube as well for their own promotion and may gain wider professional attention.

## 5.5 – *Involve Current Members in the Program's Promotional Process*

Running multiple social media pages can be a demanding task, but the Young Talents Program has the opportunity to allow their current members to take control of their Instagram temporarily through a social media takeover. During a social media takeover, members would be able to share their work, share their personal testimonies about their experiences in the program, and advocate for the program's positive impacts. Given the more visual nature of Instagram and the fact that this is one of the most popular platforms in Romania, it may be best to make use of this promotional strategy on Instagram. Based on information from Hootsuite, the team recommends that the Young Talents Program consider these things to run a successful social media takeover (Sehl, 2019):

1. *Choosing a goal for the takeover.* In this case, it can be about giving a current member a chance to promote themselves and their own work and give a “behind the scenes” look of what it's like to be a part of the Young Talents Program. The program may want to highlight specific individuals who have unique artistic talents
2. *Choosing the right person for the takeover.* This should be someone whom administrators of the program believe can represent them and who has some past experience with promotion. This should also be someone who is best suited to achieve the outlined goal for the takeover.
3. *Setting takeover parameters.* It is important to discuss things such as: what platforms the takeover will be on, how long the takeover will be, the type of posts they should make, and how many posts the takeover will include. The team recommends the program to check and approve of the posts before the current member publishes any posts for the takeover.
4. *Promoting the takeover.* The Young Talents Program should let their audience know about the takeover ahead of time. This promotion can take place on other social media platforms as well as on the platform where the takeover is occurring, and should include the date and time for when people should check it out.
5. *Encouraging the individual doing the takeover to have fun.* This can help the individual to gain more confidence and encourage them to further develop their own promotional

skills. This can also lead to a positive response amongst the Young Talents Members, encouraging other members to want to participate in these takeovers as well.

## 5.6 – Conclusion

From their findings, the team determined that the Young Talents Program is utilizing the two platforms best suited for promoting to young Romanian artists (Facebook and Instagram) and their pages on these sites have a wide range of visual artists highlighted. However, an inconsistent posting frequency on both platforms and less focus on musicians on Instagram indicate that the program can make improvements to their social media strategy in order to reach a wider audience. The team hopes that through increased promotional efforts, more young Romanian artists will learn of this program, and have the opportunity to further develop their talent and pursue their passions.

## 5.7 – Future Work

During the development of the project, the team came across interesting nuances of social media promotion and the relationship artists have with Romanian culture. The team was unable to further investigate some of these aspects due to the limitation of the COVID-19 Pandemic, and another was not relevant to the scope of the project. Future work might include:

1. *Survey and interview members from low-income communities unaffiliated with the Young Talents Program.* One obstacle the team faced was that they were not able to reach low-income communities to distribute the survey. This population is of importance to the Young Talents Program, as these are the communities from where they recruit new members. Learning more about how well known the Young Talents Program is in these communities, and a more developed understanding of how young artists from low-income homes interact with social media will assist the Young Talents Program to help them learn how to better reach this group in the future.
2. *Address the underlying problems of why artists leave Romania.* An interesting finding that arose during the interviews with alumni of the Young Talents Program was that it is not uncommon for artists to leave Romania to pursue their career elsewhere in Europe.

Alumni cited inadequate pay, a lower appreciation for arts compared to other European countries, and greater opportunities abroad as reasons for leaving the country.

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## Appendix

### Appendix A: Informed Consent Agreement for Participation in a Research Study (English)

Investigators: Lexi Ferrini, Chris Guerrette, Madeline Perry, Ryan Tougas

Contact Information: gr-royalart-d21@wpi.edu

Title of Research Study: Strengthening the Promotion of The Royal Margaret Foundation of Romania's Young Talents Program (Aiding Young Romanian Artists)

Collaborator: The Royal Margaret Foundation of Romania (Fundatia Regală Margareta a României)

#### Introduction:

Your child is being asked to participate in a research study. Before they agree, however, they must be fully informed about the purpose of the study, the procedures to be followed, and any benefits, risks or discomfort that you may experience as a result of their participation. This form presents information about the study so that you may make a fully informed decision regarding their participation.

#### Purpose of the study:

The purpose of this survey is to explore social media usage among young artists in Romania and to help develop strategies for artists to promote themselves online. If interested in an interview following the survey, the purpose of the interview is to allow the research team to understand the expectations and experiences of artists affiliated with the Young Talents Program, along with experiences following an artistic career in Romania.

#### Procedures to be followed:

- 1) Your child will complete a 5 minute survey online that asks questions about your social media use and their perceptions of social media use in Romania. This survey is voluntary and no identifying information about their answers will be published.
- 2) If they also express taking part in an interview at the end of the survey, they will participate in a 30-40 minute virtual interview with the members of the research team on Zoom. The interview will be with only interviewee at a time (your child), with two members of the team, one leading the interview by questioning and the other will be listening. There will also be a Romanian translator present if needed. The team prepared a set of interview questions, as any calls with minors shall be well scripted, with respectful and polite language. Interview times and dates will

be of your convenience, within the time frame of March 31st - April 16th, 2021. A Zoom link will be sent by email once an interview is established. Questions about personal experiences and expectations of the Young Talents Program will be asked that are not covered in the survey. This interview is voluntary and they can choose not to answer any questions they do not wish to answer, and can end the interview at any time.

Risks to study participants: There are no foreseeable risks to study participants.

Benefits to research participants and others:

This survey and potential interview will be used to help recommend ways that the Royal Margaret Foundation of Romania can better promote itself and its artists. If the subject is a current scholarship member of the Young Talents program, they will be benefiting from how the foundation moves forward with their promotion practices.

Record keeping and confidentiality:

The results of this survey will be viewed by all investigators and will be published as aggregate data. You do not have to answer any questions that you are not comfortable answering. If conducted, the interviews' audio will be recorded. Records of your participation in this study will be held confidential so far as permitted by law. However, the study investigators, the sponsor or it's designee and, under certain circumstances, the Worcester Polytechnic Institute Institutional Review Board (WPI IRB) will be able to inspect and have access to confidential data that identify you by name. Any publication or presentation of the data will not identify you.

Compensation or treatment in the event of injury:

This study involves no more than minimal risk of injury or harm. You do not give up any of your legal rights by signing this statement.

For more information about this research or about the rights of research participants, or in case of research-related injury, contact:

Our team is using the email directly listed above ([gr-royalart-d21@wpi.edu](mailto:gr-royalart-d21@wpi.edu)). For more information, contact the IRB Manager (Ruth McKeogh, Tel. 508 831-6699, Email: [irb@wpi.edu](mailto:irb@wpi.edu)) and the Human Protection Administrator (Gabriel Johnson, Tel. 508-831-4989, Email: [gjohnson@wpi.edu](mailto:gjohnson@wpi.edu)).

Your participation in this research is voluntary.

Your refusal to participate will not

result in any penalty to you or any loss of benefits to which you may otherwise be entitled. You may decide to stop participating in the research at any time without penalty or loss of other benefits. The project investigators retain the right to cancel or postpone the experimental procedures at any time they see fit.

**Withdrawal:**

Should a participant wish to withdraw from the study after it has begun, send an email to gr-royalart-d21@wpi.edu to let us know of your decision.

There are no consequences for early withdrawal for the subject.

By signing below, you acknowledge that you have been informed about and consent to be a participant in the study described above. Make sure that your questions are answered to your satisfaction before signing. You are entitled to retain a copy of this consent agreement.

\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Name (Please print)

\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Study Participant Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Study Participant Name (Please print)

\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Person who explained this study

## Appendix B: Informed Consent Agreement for Participation in a Research Study (Romanian)

Acord de Consimțământ Informat Pentru Participarea la un Studiu de Cercetare

Anchetatorii: Lexi Ferrini, Chris Guerrette, Madeline Perry, Ryan Tougas

Informatii de contact: gr-royalart-d21@wpi.edu

Titlul studiului de cercetare: Consolidarea Promovării Fundația Regală Margareta a României Programul Tinere Talente (Sprijinirea Tinerilor Artiști Români)

Colaborator: Fundația Regală Margareta a României

### Introducere:

Copilului dumneavoastră i se cere să participe la un studiu de cercetare. Înainte de a fi de acord, însă trebuie să fie pe deplin informat cu privire la scopul studiului, procedurile care trebuie urmate și orice beneficii, riscuri sau disconfort pe care le puteți experimenta ca urmare a participării lor. Acest formular prezintă informații despre studiu, astfel încât să vă puteți informa complet decizie privind participarea lor.

### Scopul studiului:

Scopul acestui sondaj este de a explora utilizarea social media a artiștilor din România și de a înțelege acoperirea Fundației Regale Margaret din România.

### Procedura care trebuie urmată:

Copilul dvs. va completa un sondaj online de 5 minute care vă pune întrebări despre utilizarea rețelelor dvs. sociale și percepțiile lor despre utilizarea rețelelor sociale în România. Acest sondaj este voluntar și nu vor fi publicate informații de identificare despre răspunsurile acestora.

Riscuri pentru participanții la studiu: Nu există riscuri previzibile pentru participanții la studiu.

### Beneficii pentru participanții la cercetare și pentru alții:

Acest sondaj va fi folosit pentru a recomanda modalități prin care Fundația Royal Margaret din România se poate promova mai bine pe sine și pe artiștii săi.

### Păstrarea înregistrărilor și confidențialitatea:

Rezultatele acestui sondaj vor fi vizualizate de toți anchetatorii și vor fi publicate ca date agregate. Nu trebuie să răspundeți la nicio întrebare la care nu vă simțiți confortabil.

Înregistrările participării dumneavoastră la acest studiu vor fi păstrate confidențiale, în măsura în

care acest lucru este permis de lege. Cu toate acestea, anchetatorii studiului, sponsorul sau persoana desemnată și, în anumite circumstanțe, Comitetul de revizuire instituțională al Institutului Politehnic Worcester (WPI IRB) vor putea inspecta și avea acces la date confidențiale care vă identifică pe nume. Orice publicare sau prezentare a datelor nu vă va identifica.

Compensație sau tratament în caz de vătămare:

Acest studiu nu implică decât un risc minim de rănire sau vătămare. Nu renunțați la niciunul dintre drepturile dvs. legale prin semnarea acestei declarații.

Pentru mai multe informații despre această cercetare sau despre drepturile de cercetare participanților sau în caz de accidentare legată de cercetare, contactați:

Echipa noastră folosește adresa de e-mail direct enumerată mai sus (gr-royalart-d21@wpi.edu). Pentru mai multe informații, contactați managerul IRB (Ruth McKeogh, Tel. 508 831-6699, Email: irb@wpi.edu) și administratorul protecției umane (Gabriel Johnson, Tel. 508-831-4989, Email: gjohnson@wpi.edu).

Participarea dvs. la această cercetare este voluntară. Refuzul dvs. de a participa nu va fi duce la orice penalizare pentru dvs. sau orice pierdere de beneficii la care ați putea fi altfel intitulat. Puteți decide să nu mai participați la cercetare în orice moment, fără penalizare sau pierderea altor beneficii. Anchetatorii proiectului își păstrează dreptul de a anula sau amâna procedurile experimentale în orice moment pe care le consideră adecvate.

Retractare:

Dacă un participant dorește să se retragă din studiu după ce a început, trimiteți un e-mail la gr-royalart-d21@wpi.edu să ne anunțați decizia dvs.

Nu există consecințe pentru retragerea timpurie pentru subiect.

Semnând mai jos, recunoașteți că ați fost informat și consimțiți participa la studiul descris mai sus. Asigurați-vă că întrebările dvs. sunt a răspuns la satisfacția dumneavoastră înainte de a semna. Aveți dreptul să păstrați o copie a acestui document acord de consimțământ.

\_\_\_\_\_ Dată: \_\_\_\_\_

Semnătură Părintelui / Tutorelui

\_\_\_\_\_ Numele părintelui / tutorelui (nume în clar)

\_\_\_\_\_ Dată: \_\_\_\_\_

Semnătura participantului la studiu

\_\_\_\_\_  
Numele participantului la studiu (nume în clar)

\_\_\_\_\_ Dată: \_\_\_\_\_

Semnătura persoanei care a explicat acest studiu

## Appendix C: Email to Young Talents Members for Survey

Hello!

Our names are Lexi Ferrini, Chris Guerrette, Madeline Perry, and Ryan Tougas. We are a part of a research project team from Worcester Polytechnic Institute in Massachusetts, USA in collaboration with the Royal Margaret Foundation of Romania's Young Talents Program. We have prepared a survey as part of our research to explore social media usage among young artists in Romania and to help develop strategies for artists to promote themselves online. Since you are connected with the Young Talents program, we felt that you would be a great resource. The objectives of this survey are to explore new techniques for the Royal Margaret Foundation of Romania to attract a younger audience, to explore innovative online mechanisms for promoting young artists, and to provide the Young Talents' students with more resources for professional development.

The link to the survey can be found [here](#). By default, it is in English, but you can also choose to take it in Romanian as well.

If you are under the age of 18, you and your parent/guardian will need to sign and then upload a minor consent form during the survey. The consent form has been attached along with this email.

Directions for uploading a minor consent form:

Question 1 in the survey will ask for your age, and if you are under 18 you will be asked to provide a signed minor consent form. The form is provided along with this email, and will also be linked in the survey as well.

Please print out the consent form, read the form with a parent or guardian carefully and both you and your parent/guardian must sign and date the document.

Then, scan the signed consent form and upload it to your computer and submit this file for question 2 to continue taking the survey.

Participation in this survey is voluntary. If you have any questions about this process, please email [gr-royalart-d21@wpi.edu](mailto:gr-royalart-d21@wpi.edu). We appreciate your responses!

Thank you for your time,

Lexi Ferrini

Christopher Guerrette

Madeline Perry

Ryan Tougas

## Appendix D: Young Talents Survey



English ▾

Thank you for your interest in this short survey. The purpose of this survey is to explore social media usage among young artists in Romania and to help develop strategies for artists to promote themselves online. This is part of a research project from Worcester Polytechnic Institute in Massachusetts, USA in collaboration with the Royal Margaret Foundation of Romania's Young Talents Program. Our names are Lexi Ferrini, Chris Guerrette, Madeline Perry, and Ryan Tougas. The objectives of this survey are to explore new techniques for the Royal Margaret Foundation of Romania to attract a younger audience, to explore innovative online mechanisms for promoting young artists, and to provide the Young Talents' students with more resources for professional development.

Your responses are valuable to our research; however, your participation is completely voluntary and you may decline to answer any questions you are not comfortable answering. We will not be collecting personal or identifying information such as name, location, etc. unless you choose to provide it. Individual data from your response will not be made public, however we will be publishing aggregate data from this survey in a final report.

If you have any questions or concerns about this survey, please contact the research team at [gr-royalart-d21@wpi.edu](mailto:gr-royalart-d21@wpi.edu). For ethical concerns about the content of this survey, please contact Worcester Polytechnic Institute's International Review Board at [irb@wpi.edu](mailto:irb@wpi.edu).





English ▾

English ▾

Q1. How old are you?

Under 18

18 - 24

25 - 30

31+

Q2.

Romanian law states that children under the age of 18 must have their parent or guardian's permission to give their data to a study. Please upload the signed consent form to continue with this survey. You can download it from here if you do not have it already:

[English](#), [Romanian](#)

Drop files or click here to upload



Q3. What is your gender?

- Male
- Female
- Non-binary / third gender
- Other / Prefer not to say

Q4. What is your relationship with the Young Talents program?

- Current Member
- Alumni

Q7. What social media sites/platforms do you use? Select all that apply.

- Facebook
- Instagram
- Twitter
- Tik-Tok
- Snapchat
- WhatsApp
- YouTube
- Other (Please specify)
- None

Q5. Which would you describe yourself as? (select all that apply)

- Visual Artist (Specify type)
- Muscian (Specify type)
- Other (Please specify)

Q6. How did you discover the Young Talents program?

- Through my school
- Through another person
- Searching online
- On social media (Specify what social media)

Q8. What is the reason you do not use social media? Select all that apply.

- I don't have access to social media
- I don't know how to use social media
- I don't understand the purpose of social media
- I don't want to share personal information
- I don't have time
- Other (Please specify)

Q9. Rank these social media sites based on their popularity in Romania.

Facebook
Instagram
Twitter
TikTok
Snapchat
WhatsApp
YouTube
Other (Please specify) <input type="text"/>

Q10. Rank these devices based on the frequency you use them to access social media.

Cell Phone
Personal Computer
Public Computer
Tablet
Other (Please specify) <input type="text"/>

Q11. What best describes your experience with posting your artwork/music to social media?

I have a dedicated social media page for my work

I do not have a dedicated social media page for my work, but I have posted my work online before on a personal page

I had a social media page for my work in the past, but I no longer use it

I have no experience posting my work to social media

Q12. Why do you no longer use a social media page for your work?

Q13. What is your preference when using social media to promote your art/music?

Facebook ^

No Experience

Not Preferred

Preferred

---

Instagram v

---

Twitter v

---

TikTok v

---

Snapchat v

---

YouTube v

---

WhatsApp v

---

v

Q14. If you'd like, please share your art/music pages with us! (Instagram, Facebook, YouTube...)

Q15. Do you have any further thoughts about social media?

Q16. Our team is also looking for volunteers to participate in an interview to learn more about the Young Talents Program's impact on young artists. We appreciate any and all participation. If you are interested in being contacted for more information about this interview, please provide your contact information below:

Name

Email

Q17. Please indicate what possible days and times (Romanian time) that work best to set up an interview with you

Mondays



3 P.M.

4 P.M.

5 P.M.

6 P.M.

7 P.M.

8 P.M.

9 P.M.

Tuesdays



Wednesdays



Thursdays



Fridays



## Appendix E: Unaffiliated Artists Survey



English ▾

Q1.

Thank you for your interest in this short survey. The purpose of this survey is to explore social media usage among young artists in Romania and to help develop strategies for artists to promote themselves online. This is part of a research project from Worcester Polytechnic Institute in Massachusetts, USA in collaboration with the Royal Margaret Foundation of Romania's Young Talents Program. Our names are Lexi Ferrini, Chris Guerrette, Madeline Perry, and Ryan Tougas. The objectives of this survey are to explore new techniques for the Royal Margaret Foundation of Romania to attract a younger audience, to explore innovative online mechanisms for promoting young artists, and to provide the Young Talents' students with more resources for professional development.

Your responses are valuable to our research; however, your participation is completely voluntary and you may decline to answer any questions you are not comfortable answering. We will not be collecting personal or identifying information such as name, location, etc. unless you choose to provide it. Individual data from your response will not be made public, however we will be publishing aggregate data from this survey in a final report. If you have any questions or concerns about this survey, please contact the research team at [gr-royalart-d21@wpi.edu](mailto:gr-royalart-d21@wpi.edu). For ethical concerns about the content of this survey, please contact Worcester Polytechnic Institute's International Review Board at [irb@wpi.edu](mailto:irb@wpi.edu).



English ▾

Q2. How old are you?

- Under 18
- 18 - 24
- 25 - 34
- 35 - 44
- 45 - 54
- 55 - 64
- 65 - 74
- 75 - 84
- 85 or older

English ▾

Q4. What is your gender?

- Male
- Female
- Non-binary / third gender
- Other / Prefer not to say

Q5. Which would you describe yourself as? (select all that apply)

- Visual Artist (Specify type)
- 
- Musician (Specify type)
- 
- Other (Please specify)
- 

Q6. Are you aware of the Royal Margaret Foundation of Romania and their Young Talents program?: [Webpage](#)

- Yes
- No

English ▾

Q8. What is the average monthly income of you or your parent/guardian?

1700 RON or less

More than 1700 RON

Prefer not to say

Q9. The Royal Margaret Foundation's Young Talents Program Young Talents program supports and promotes talented young artists from low-income families who cannot develop their talent due to material and financial shortcomings. Young artists who are part of the target group can apply for a scholarship in December of each year. The program provides up to a 2000 EURO scholarship, mentorship sessions with professional artists and musicians, and experiences in exhibits and music galas. Is this a program you believe you could/could have benefit(ted) from financially?

Yes

No

English ▾

Q12. Rank these social media sites based on their popularity in Romania.

Facebook
Instagram
Twitter
TikTok
Snapchat
WhatsApp
YouTube
Other (Please specify) <input type="text"/>

English ▾

Q10. What social media sites/platforms do you use? Select all that apply.

Facebook

Instagram

Twitter

Tik-Tok

Snapchat

WhatsApp

YouTube

Other (Please specify)

None

Q13. Rank these devices based on the frequency you use them to access social media.

Cell Phone
Personal Computer
Public Computer
Tablet
Other (Please specify) <input type="text"/>

Q14. When choosing to follow an art-or-music-related social media page, what content do you like to see? Select all that apply.

- Images of Artwork
- Photos of Events/Concerts
- Photos of the Artist
- Videos of the Artist Working
- Videos of Music/Performance
- Audio of Music/Performance
- Daily Life Updates from the Artist
- I don't follow art-or-music-related social media pages.

Q17. How do you typically find new accounts to follow? Select all that apply.

- Hashtags
- I look at what my friends follow
- I look at what the social media site recommends to me
- I find them through content that they are tagged in
- Other

Q18. What best describes your experience with posting your artwork/music to social media?

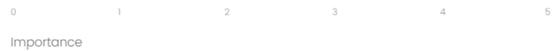
- I have a dedicated social media page for my work
- I do not have a dedicated social media page for my work, but I have posted my work online before on a personal page
- I had a social media page for my work in the past, but I no longer use it
- I have no experience posting my work to social media

Q19. Why do you no longer use a social media page for your work?

Q15. How frequently do you like to see a social media page post new content? (# of posts per week)



Q16. How important to you is post frequency for social media pages you follow?  
(1 - Not Important at all, 2 - Somewhat unimportant, 3 - Neutral, 4 - Important, 5 - Very Important)



Q20. What is your preference when using social media to promote your art/music?

	No Experience	Not Preferred	Preferred
Facebook	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Instagram	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Twitter	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
TikTok	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Snapchat	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
YouTube	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
WhatsApp	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q21. If you'd like, please share your art/music pages with us! (Instagram, Facebook, YouTube...)

Q22. Do you have any further thoughts about social media?

## Appendix F: Email to Young Talents Members for Interview

Subject: Royal Margaret Foundation of Romania's Young Talents Program Interview

Good [their time of day] [person's name],

Thank you so much for expressing interest in interviewing with us. This interview is for a research project in collaboration with the Royal Foundation to understand the expectations and experiences of members of the Young Talents program. This interview will also discuss pursuing an art career in Romania. Participation will take approximately 30-40 minutes. The interview will be conducted in English and over Zoom by two of our team members. Please let us know if you would prefer to have it in Romanian. If that is the case, we will coordinate with the Royal Margaret Foundation to have a translator present at the interview.

Based on your indicated times, we would like to schedule the interview for [day of week] April [day of month] at [Romanian time], [EST]. Please let us know if this no longer works for you and we will select a different day.

We will send out an email with the Zoom link once the time and date have been confirmed.

We really appreciate you taking the time to speak with us, and are looking forward to meeting you!

Please email us at [gr-royalart-d21@wpi.edu](mailto:gr-royalart-d21@wpi.edu) if you have any questions or concerns. Thank you again and take care,

Lexi Ferrini

Christopher Guerrette

Madeline Perry

Ryan Tougas

## Appendix G: Young Talents Interview Questions

Our names are Lexi Ferrini, Chris Guerrette, Madeline Perry, and Ryan Tougas. We are undergraduate students at WPI which is located in Worcester, Massachusetts in the United States. This interview is for a research project in collaboration with the Royal Foundation to understand the expectations and experiences of members of the Young Talents program. This interview will also discuss pursuing an art career in Romania. Participation will take approximately 30-40 minutes. Please understand that your participation in this interview is voluntary and that you may freely refuse to participate, without penalty. This interview is confidential, however there are questions that may reveal parts of your identity, and some of your specific responses may be used in our research. Yet, in the report your name will be kept confidential. Do you consent in allowing the recording of audio and voice and give permission for this interview to be recorded?

You have the right to review and/or delete any responses later by emailing the research team at [gr-royalart-d21@wpi.edu](mailto:gr-royalart-d21@wpi.edu). If this is requested, the interviewer is required to remove from notes anything wished to be removed.

“Do you have any questions about this research? Do you agree to participate in this interview?  
[GET CONSENT]

*Questions for interviewees. As these interviews were semi-structured, the team did not ask every question to each interviewee.*

### Demographic Questions

- I.1.a. Where are you from?
- I.1.b. At what age were you accepted into the Young Talents Program?
- I.1.c. What grade were you in when you were accepted to this program?
- I.1.d. In the survey you said that you were a [type of artist/musician]. (If they were not specific) Can you specify what you play/make?
- I.1.e. How long have you been doing [type of art/music]?

### Survey Response-based Promotional Questions

I2. Can you expand on your experience with promoting your artwork on (*social media platform(s) they referred to using in the survey*)?

I3. Are there any techniques you used or others use to gain followers on (*social media platform(s) they referred to using in the survey*)? Explain some to us that were and were not successful.

I4. Have any of your posts gone viral? If so, did it lead to some level of success?

I5. If not, could you explain to us what having a post going viral could mean for an artist?

I6. You stated how you discovered the Young Talents Program in the survey. Could you explain this discovery more thoroughly?

I7. Explain how well known you feel the program is in Romania.

I8. Do you think it is possible for the foundation to reach a larger audience? If so, what would you suggest in the foundation reaching a larger audience?

#### **Questions about the Young Talents Program's Promotion**

I9. When you applied to the Young Talents Program, did you look into their social media pages? If so, which ones?

I10. What do you currently enjoy about the program's social media pages?

I11. What improvements do you think the program could make to their social media pages?

I12. What kind of content would you like to see on the program's social media pages?

#### **Questions about the Royal Margaret Foundation of Romania**

I13. Why were you interested in being a part of this program?

I14. What were your feelings when applying?

I15. Please explain the process of applying, and any auditions you may have gone through.

I16. How selective did you feel that the program was?

I17. How did being accepted into the program make you feel?

#### **Questions for Current Members**

I18. What were your expectations prior to joining the program? This would be based on information provided in the application and what you learned through the website and social media of the Foundation.

I19. We were informed that the program started in March of 2021. Since this was a month ago, have you participated in any exhibits or experiences yet that you would like to share?

I20. What other experiences do you expect to participate in for the remainder of the program?

I21. What are your goals you want to accomplish, and skills you want to obtain?

I22. What are you most interested in accomplishing or participating in?

I23. Would you be interested in learning more professional skills to aid your future art career during the program?

### **Questions for Alumni**

I24. Tell me some of your experiences during the program.

I25. What are some skills you acquired?

I26. What was your favorite thing you participated in during the program?

I27. What was the most valuable thing you learned during the program?

I28. Were there any experiences you enjoyed in the program that you did not expect to be a part of, such as things that aren't mentioned in the Foundations website or social media? If so, explain.

I29. Did you learn any professional skills to help aid your future career?

I30. Were there professional skills you wish you had learned during the program? If so, what were they?

I31. Did you make professional connections in the program?

I32. Would you suggest this program to fellow artists? If so, what would you tell them?

I33. You shared your social media page about your art/music in the survey. Have you ever shared that you were a part of the Young Talents Program on your social media page? Explain.

### **Questions about following an art or music career**

I34. Have you faced barriers or obstacles in pursuing a career in the arts/music? Tell me about this experience. What were some of these barriers and how did you try to overcome them?

I35. Are you aware of other artists or musicians who experienced this same dilemma? If so, was this common amongst artists in Romania?

I36. Did you go to art/music school in Romania, and if so what school did you attend?

I37. In what ways did the Young Talents Program scholarship support you?

I38. Discuss your experiences once you left the program.

I39. To what extent did you continue engaging in art/music, professionally?

I40. To what extent did you continue engaging in art/music in your personal life?

I41. What kinds of things did you learn as a result of the program that were helpful to you in your professional life?

I42. In what ways did the program prepare you for your future in the arts?

I43. Are you attending or interested in attending art/music school in Romania? If you do, what one do you attend?

I44. If you are currently studying at a secondary arts school, are you interested in pursuing a university?

I45. Could you tell me about the financial feasibility of art/music higher education in Romania?

I46. How common would you say it is for people interested in art/music to attend art/music higher education in Romania?

I47. Was the scholarship a helpful aid in attending art/music school? What did receiving the scholarship mean for you?

## Appendix H: Romanian Arts and Youth Organizations

Organization Name	Description	Contact Method
AIESEC Romania	Romanian youth organization that promotes leadership and international opportunities	Contact Form on Website
Art Encounters Foundation	Romanian arts and culture organization	Email
Asociația Contur	Nonprofit that promotes young Romanian talent	Instagram Direct Message
Biennial Foundation	Promotes leadership in the international arts community	Email
Casa de Cultura	Rural art retreat in Romania	Instagram Direct Message
ETAJ	Artist-run space in Bucharest	Email
Firm Foundations Romania	Romanian nonprofit that works with low-income youth	Contact Form on Website
Forum Arte	Foundation for culture and heritage	Email
Fundatia ConstantART	Nonprofit that promotes Romanian artists	Facebook Direct Message
Fundatia Inocenti	Romanian children's relief nonprofit and charity	Email
George Enescu National College of Music	Romanian music school	Email
Gheorge Dima National University of Arts	Romanian music university	Email
MARe	Modern art museum in Bucharest	Email
META Cultural Foundation	Romanian visual arts organization	Email
MISC Art Center	Independent cultural center in Timisoara, Romania	Instagram Direct Message
MISZSZ	Hungarian organization that works with youths in Hungary and Romania	Email

National University of Music Bucharest	Romanian music university	Email
Nevazutii	Social media page that promotes unseen Romanian artists	Instagram Direct Message
Open Society Foundations	International charitable group with a chapter in Romania	Contact Form on Website
Romania YMCA	Youth organization in Baia Mare, Romania	Email
Romanian Art and Artists	Social media page that promotes Romanian artists	Instagram Direct Message
Romanian Art Market	Social media page that promotes art and culture events in Romania	Instagram Direct Message
Romanian Foundation for Excellence in Music	Platform that promotes young Romanian musicians	Email
Romanian Music	Social media page that promotes Romanian musicians	Instagram Direct Message
Romanian Music Export	Social media page that promotes Romanian musicians	Instagram Direct Message
Romanian Society of Botanical Art	Coordinates events for botanical illustrators	Instagram Direct Message
The Borgen Project	Nonprofit that works with low-income communities in Romania	Email

## Appendix I: Worcester Arts Organizations

Organization Name	Description
Apple Tree Arts	Youth music and theater education center
Creative Hub Worcester	Nonprofit community art space
Crocodile River Music	African music and dance group
Main IDEA	Youth arts education organization
Salisbury Singers	Volunteer community chorus
The WorcShop	Industrial makerspace and forge
Worcester Art Museum	Art Museum located in Worcester, MA

## Appendix J: Email to Romanian Arts and Youth Organizations

Subject: Research Project on Social Media Usage Amongst Artists In Romania: Survey Inquiry

Hello <name>,

My name is <sender>, and I am part of a research team gathering information about social media usage among artists in Romania. This is part of a research project from Worcester Polytechnic Institute in Massachusetts, USA in collaboration with the Royal Margaret Foundation of Romania's Young Talents Program.

We are looking for organizations that have contact with artists to distribute a survey about social media preferences and usage. Since your organization works with young people, we were curious if any of your members identify as artists or musicians.

If you are interested in distributing this survey to your members, we will be sending a link later in the week. All survey responses are voluntary and confidential.

Additionally, we are interested in conducting written interviews with social media administrators. If you or any member of your organization is available to answer some questions about how you use social media as a means of promotion, please let us know! Also, if there are other organizations in Romania that you would suggest we reach out to, please let us know.

If you have any questions / concerns, we are more than willing to answer them.

Thank you for your time!

<sender>

## Appendix K: Email to Worcester Arts Organizations

Subject: WPI Students Inquiring about Written Interview for Research

Good Morning!

My name is <sender> and I am part of a research team from Worcester Polytechnic Institute working with professors Melissa Butler and Robert Kinicki and the Royal Margaret Foundation of Romania. We are studying social media promotion amongst artists and arts-related organizations in order to help the Foundation strengthen their online presence and grow their audience.

We are reaching out to inquire if you or a member of your organization would be interested in participating in a written interview over email about how you promote your group through social media. The interview is estimated to take about ~20 minutes and quotes or statistics gathered from your answers may be used in our research.

If you have any questions/concerns, or would like to know more about our research, please let us know!

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Lexi Ferrini

Chris Guerrette

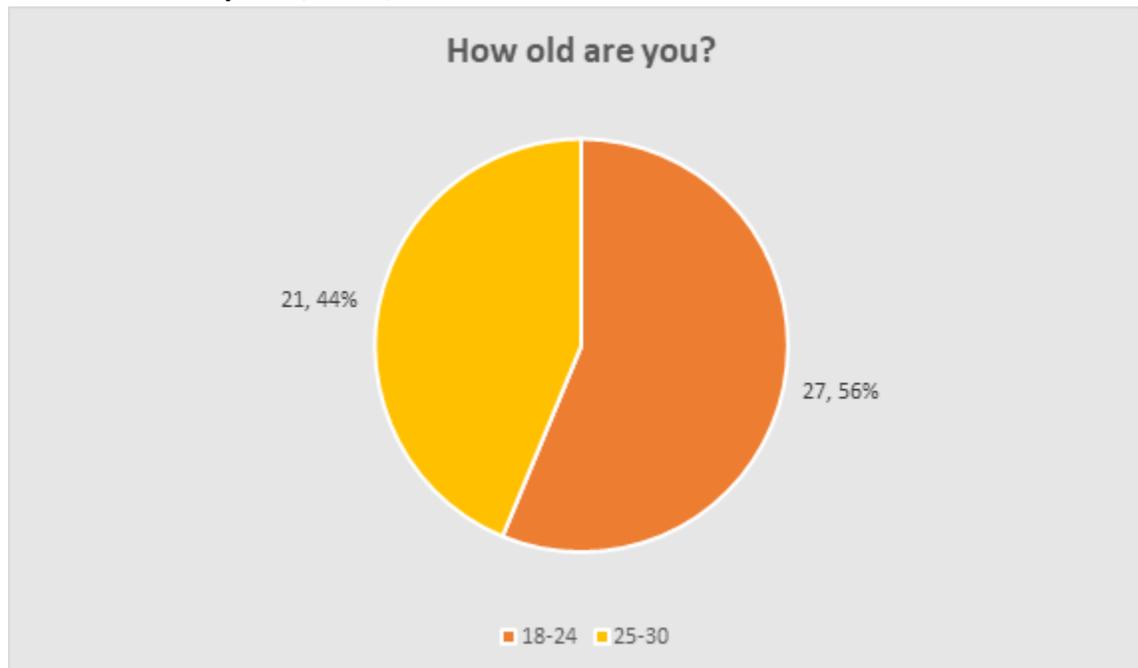
Madeline Perry

Ryan Tougas

## Appendix L: Young Talents Survey Additional Data

48 respondents completed the Young Talents Survey. The Qualtrics reports of each question are displayed below.

L1. How old are you? (n = 48)



L2. Specified artist types:

- "Fashion design"
- "textile artist"
- "Painter" (Translated from Romanian)
- "Painter"
- "Painting, graphics, education" (Translated from Romanian)
- "Fashion Designer" (Translated from Romanian)
- "Graphics" (Translated from Romanian)
- "Energetic nature. Positive. Collector." (Translated from Romanian)
- "Fashion designer"
- "Cultural manager"
- "Graphic designer"
- "A person curious to know as much as possible, communicative and perseverance." (Translated from Romanian)
- "Painting, sculpting, drawing, and multimedia"
- "Fashion designer"
- "Soprano"

- “Flautist”
- “Guitar Player”
- “Musicologist”
- “Pianist”
- “pianist”
- “Classical”
- “Bassoon” (Translated from Romanian)
- “Composer”
- “Clarinetist”
- “Canto”
- “I study piano and conducting art.” (Translated from Romanian)
- “Organist”

L3. Specified social media:

- “Through the Facebook platform” (Translated from Romanian)
- “From a friend”
- “Facebook”
- “facebook”

L4. What social media sites/platforms do you use? Select all that apply. Values for ‘Other’:

- “Behance, Pinterest”
- “Reddit”

L5. Rank these social media sites based on their popularity in Romania.

Mean:

1. Instagram (2.34)
2. Facebook (2.36)
3. YouTube (3.30)
4. WhatsApp (3.53)
5. TikTok (4.15)
6. Snapchat (5.87)
7. Twitter (6.47)

L6. Rank these devices based on the frequency you use them to access social media.

Mean:

1. Cell Phone (1.05)
2. Personal Computer (2.22)
3. Public Computer (3.39)
4. Tablet (3.63)
5. Other (4.71)

## L7. Values for 'Other':

- "Tableta"
- "Tabletă"
- "I pad"

## L8. Responses to "Why do you no longer use a social media page for your work?"

- "I think I need to evolve more to post something valuable" (Translated from Romanian)
- "Because more people see it on my personal account." (Translated from Romanian)
- "It had no success"
- "Because I don't have time for that." (Translated from Romanian)

## L9. What is your preference when using social media to promote your artwork/music? (n = 42)

Platform	# No Experience	# Preferred	# Not Preferred
Facebook	5	30	7
Instagram	5	35	2
Twitter	32	1	5
TikTok	27	5	7
Snapchat	30	0	8
YouTube	13	24	2
WhatsApp	11	10	18

## L10. Do you have any further thoughts about social media?

- "I think social media is a very easy way to promote yourself, but it can also be a resource that occupies too much of your time."
- "The algorithms are a big issue for gaining a big audience, and for me it's still a problem."
- "In my opinion, a big issue with posting art on social media in Romania is that the audience is composed of artists, young artists, or professionals in this field mostly. People with other occupations are not so interested in the art field. So we, the artists, exhibit artworks for other artists. I'm wondering which type of strategies are needed to enlarge the target group and to increase curiosity and interest in people with no preparation and expertise in this domain."
- "I think we should focus much more than we do on social media, because it could be an intermediary between us and the public, especially in this time of the pandemic. It is

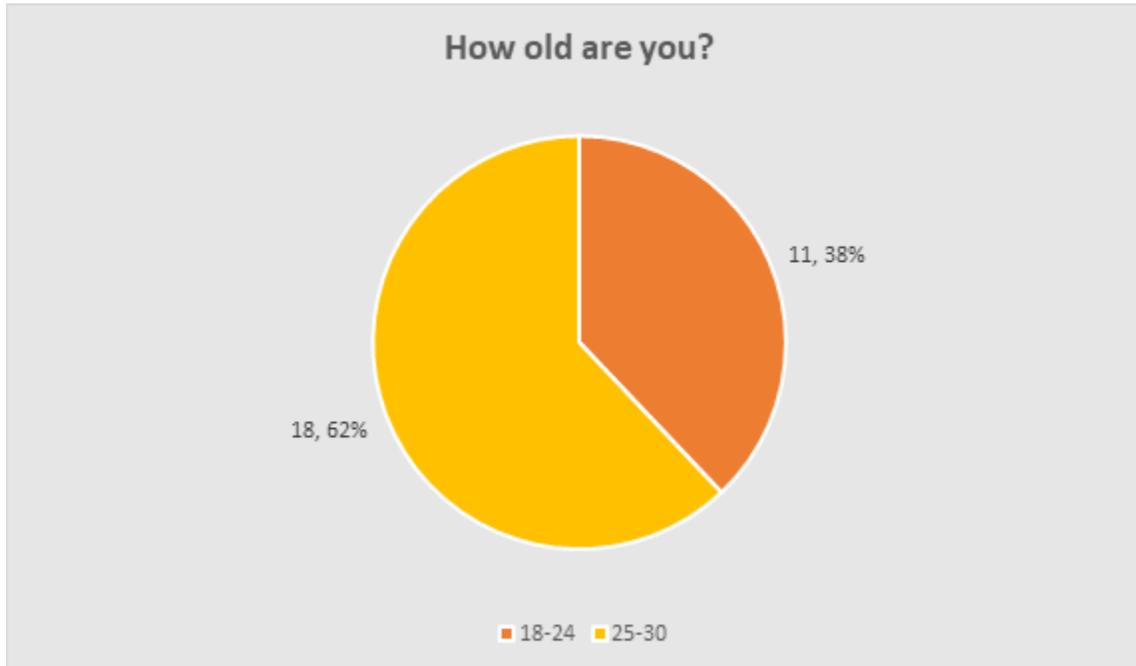
difficult for us to show what we are doing in the privacy of the workshop from the perspective of possible opinions, but we must overcome this obstacle.” (Translated from Romanian)

- “Yes. There is a growing need for art .... I think it's good that art is lived on the spot, not in a simulation.” (Translated from Romanian)
- “I don’t know if this is a good way of promoting art”
- “No” (Translated from Romanian)
- “It’s helpful”
- “No” (Translated from Romanian)
- “I think social media platforms are a great way to gain visibility.” (Translated from Romanian)
- “I think social media is a tool, and as any tool it can be useful or harmful. Have you seen the leeks with about 500 mln mail/passwords/etc? Also it can be harmful for teenagers who cant understand that what they see on their favourite people instagram is not the real life, and that applies also to me. Its hard to understand that that ”perfect lifes” have also problems and troubles. And that is a huge damage to our minds. I would be glad to know the results of this test :)”
- “I will create my own youtube channel about fashion, visual art and its connections with science. But I will also have one dedicated to my creative process, editorials, behind the scene type of content from my collection presentations, etc, And I will continue to post on my other social media accounts all the works that I make.”
- “There are platforms that, if used properly, should help promote artists” (Translated from Romanian)
- “it can benefit us if we use it wisely(as artists), because of the fact that information is spreading efficiently”
- “I think posting on social media is a great way to promote artists and musicians, especially now that it’s bigger than ever and more and more people have access to the internet.”
- “I know I don't post enough of my music online, the problem is I am very hard with me, being very hard to feel alright about my interpretation. I think this is a very useful survey because that reminds us that this is a real concern in 2021.”
- “\_”
- “Great way to promote yourself as an artist”

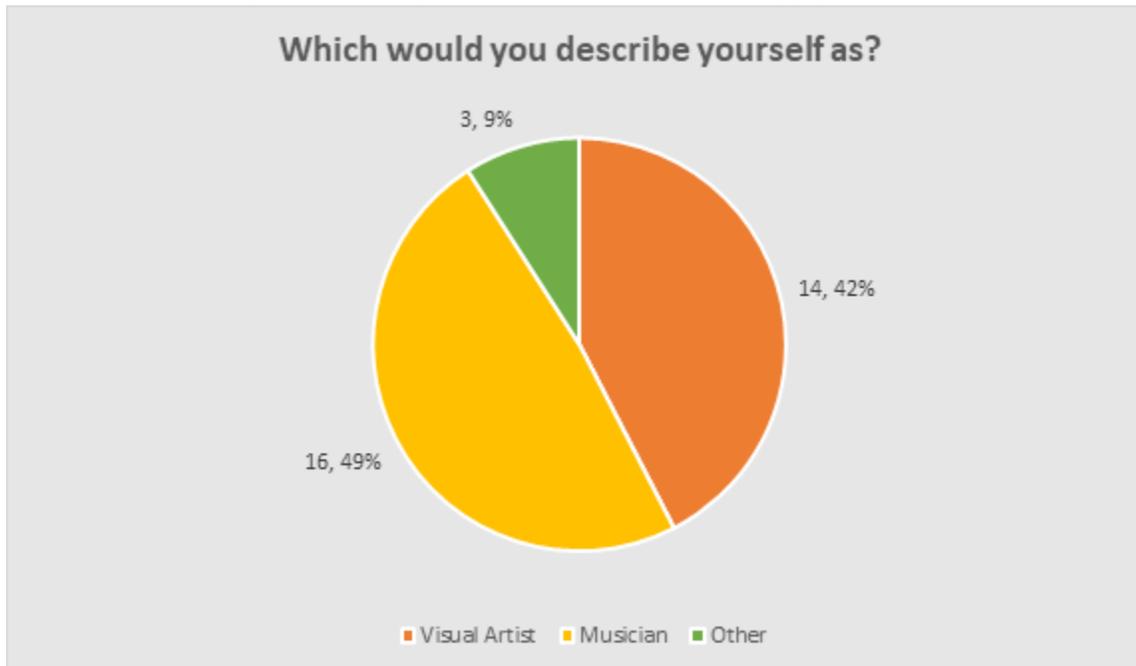
## Appendix M: Unaffiliated Artists Survey Additional Data

33 respondents completed the Unaffiliated Artists Survey, but only 29 were within the same age range of the Young Talents respondents. Not all respondents answered each question. The Qualtrics reports of each question for respondents aged 18-34 are displayed below.

M1: How old are you? (n = 29)



M2: Which would you describe yourself as? Select all that apply. (n = 33)



M3: Responses for 'Specify Type':

- “Writer”
- “Writer”
- “Choreographer” (Translated from Romanian)
- “Hobby painter”
- “Digital painter”
- “Painter”
- “Digital art”
- “Vocalist”
- “Producer, 3D artist, graphic designer”
- “photographer”
- “Bassist, designer”
- “Guitarist and Bassist”
- “Guitarist, songwriter, interior designer”
- “Drawing/sketching as a hobby”
- “beatmaker”
- “guitarist”
- “Guitarist”
- “Experimental electronic artist”
- “Rock vocalist”
- “Guitar player”
- “Electronic, graphic designer”
- “I identify as an electronic music producer”
- “Rapper”
- “Piano, guitar”
- “Illustrator”
- “Digital and traditional artist”
- “Photographer”
- “Guitarist”

M4: What social media platforms do you use? Responses for 'Other':

- "Reddit"
- "Reddit"
- "Reddit and SoundCloud"
- "Reddit, tumblr, and discord"
- "Discord"
- "Reddit"
- "Reddit, Facebook Messenger (but not Facebook)"
- "Reddit"
- "Vimeo"

M5: Rank these social media sites based on their popularity in Romania:

Mean:

1. Facebook (1.70)
2. YouTube (3.00)
3. Instagram (3.09)
4. WhatsApp (3.22)
5. TikTok (4.61)
6. Snapchat (6.00)
7. Twitter (6.70)

M6: Rank these devices based on the frequency you use them to access social media:

Mean:

1. Cell Phone (1.14)
2. Personal Computer (2.05)
3. Tablet (3.24)
4. Public Computer (3.71)
5. Other (4.86)

M7: Responses for 'Other':

- "smart tv"

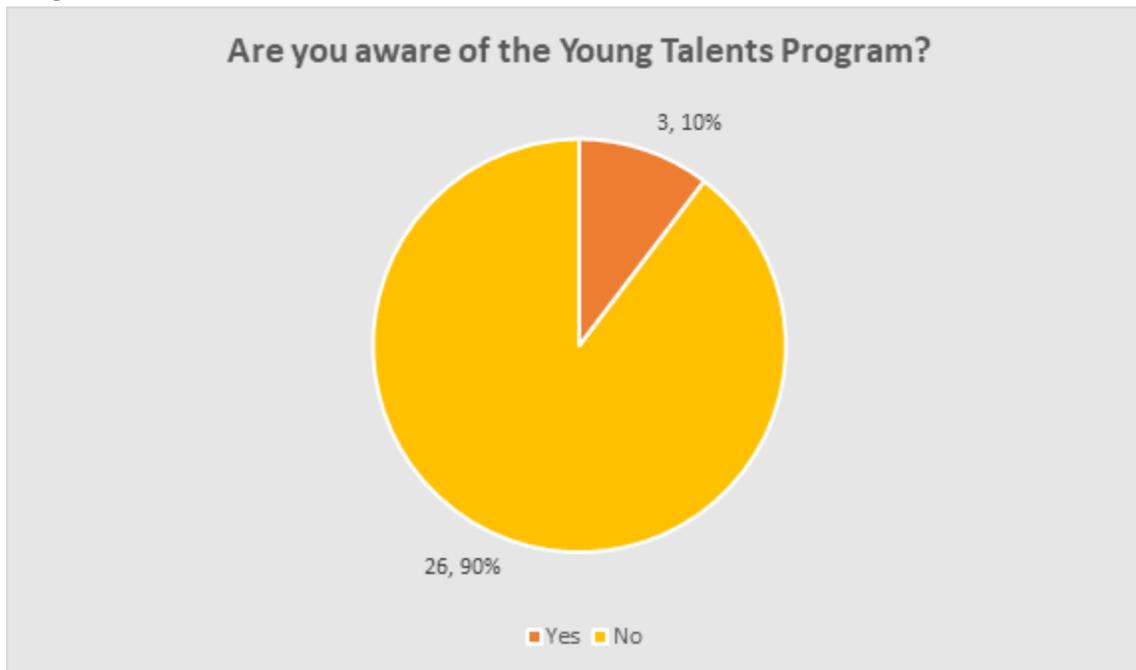
M8. What is your preference when using social media to promote your artwork/music?

Platform	# No Experience	# Preferred	# Not Preferred
Facebook	3	5	4
Instagram	5	5	2
Twitter	7	1	4
TikTok	9	1	2
Snapchat	8	9	3
YouTube	1	4	2
WhatsApp	5	5	2

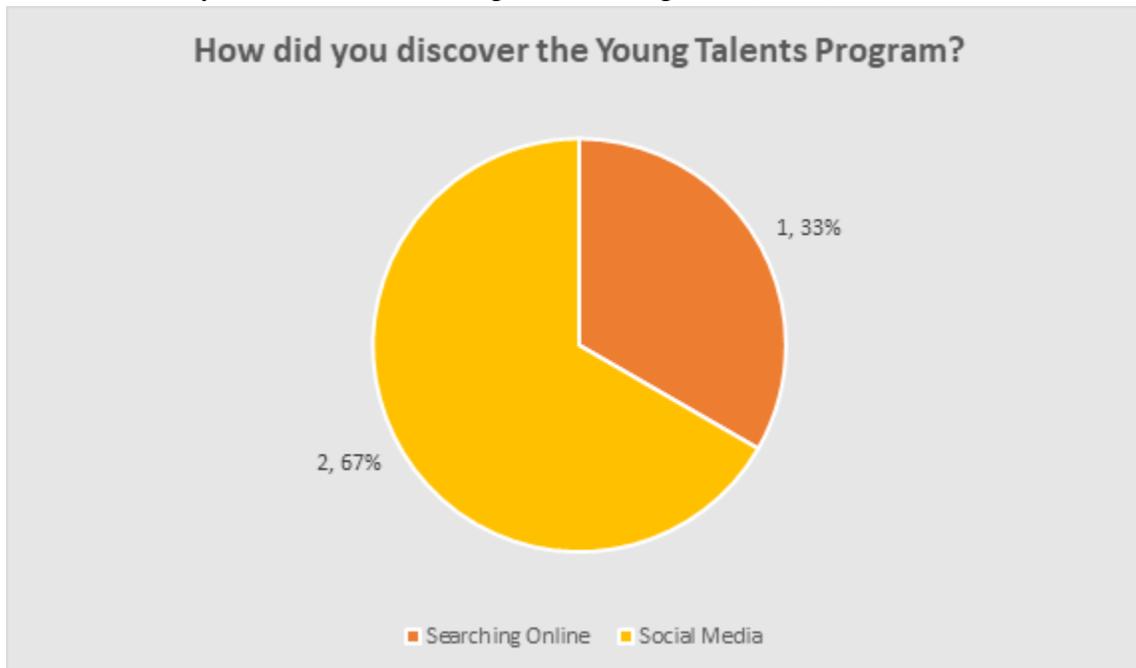
M9. Do you have any further thoughts about social media?

- “Moderators and admins should not be allowed to close entire groups just because they don't like the content (as long as that content isn't illegal). I'm saying this because several groups I was in were closed for no apparent reason or were shadowbanned.”
- “I have a generally bad opinion of social media. Facebook, for instance, is often used for driving political agendas and for misinforming the general public and I've come to realise that social media has a profound impact on the mental health of younger people, particularly on the way they view themselves in relation to the seemingly perfect lives portrayed by the others (friends, family members, celebrities etc.)”
- “Helped me find out about some great artists”
- “No”
- “No”

M10: Are you aware of the Royal Margaret Foundation of Romania and their Young Talents Program? (n = 29)



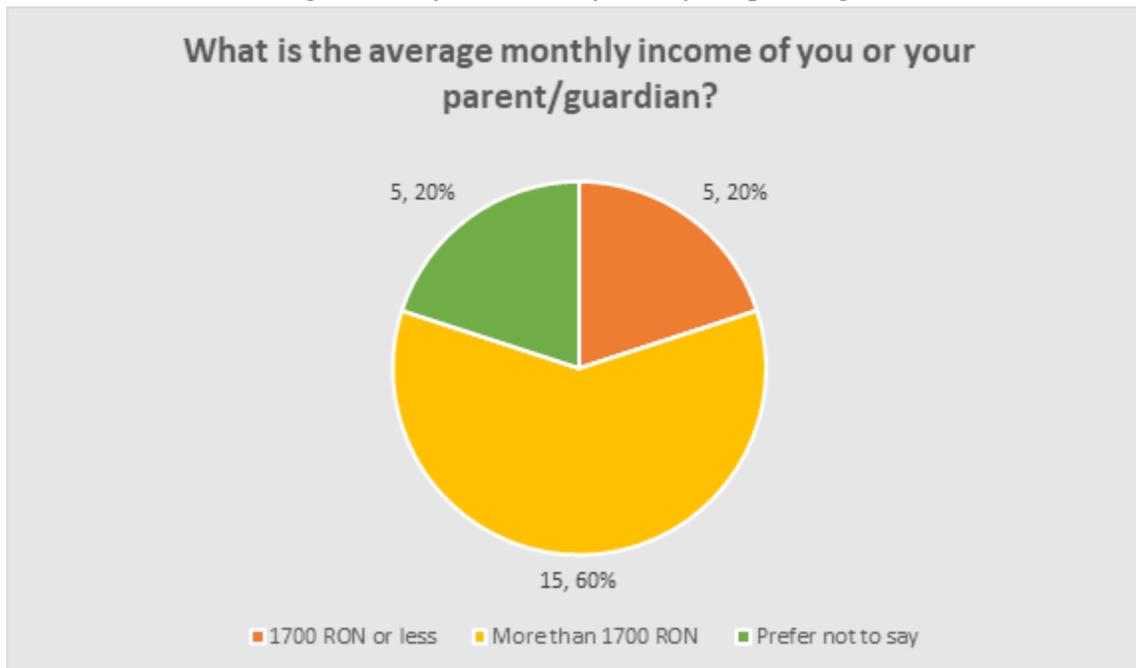
M11. How did you discover the Young Talents Program? (n = 3)



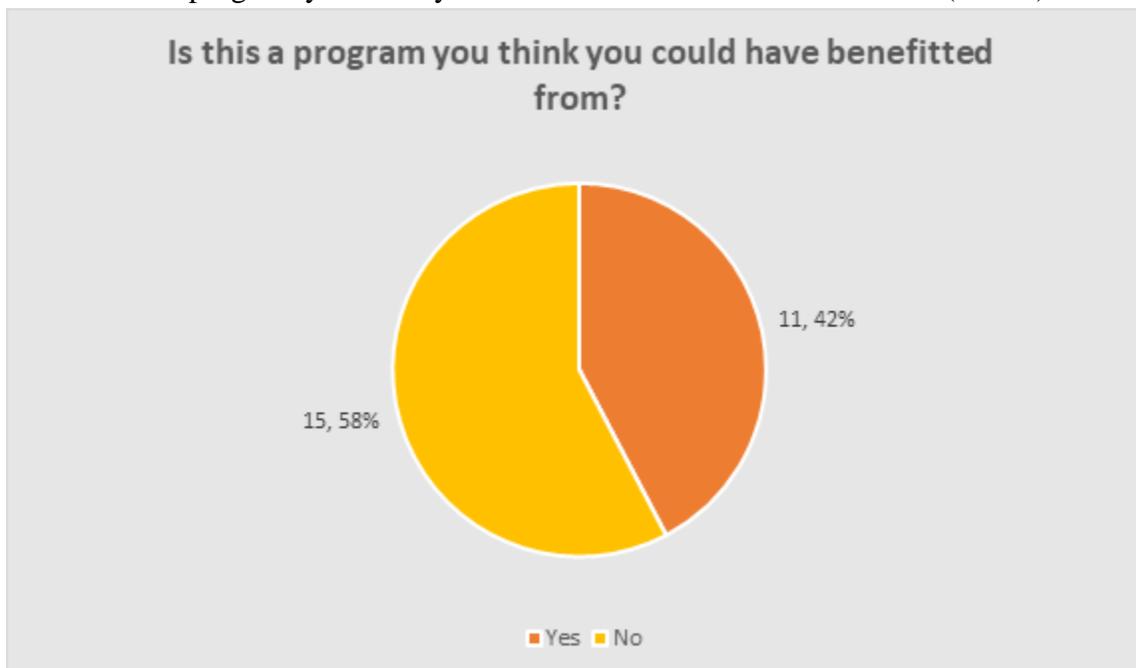
M12. Responses for 'Specify what social media':

- "Facebook"
- "instagram"

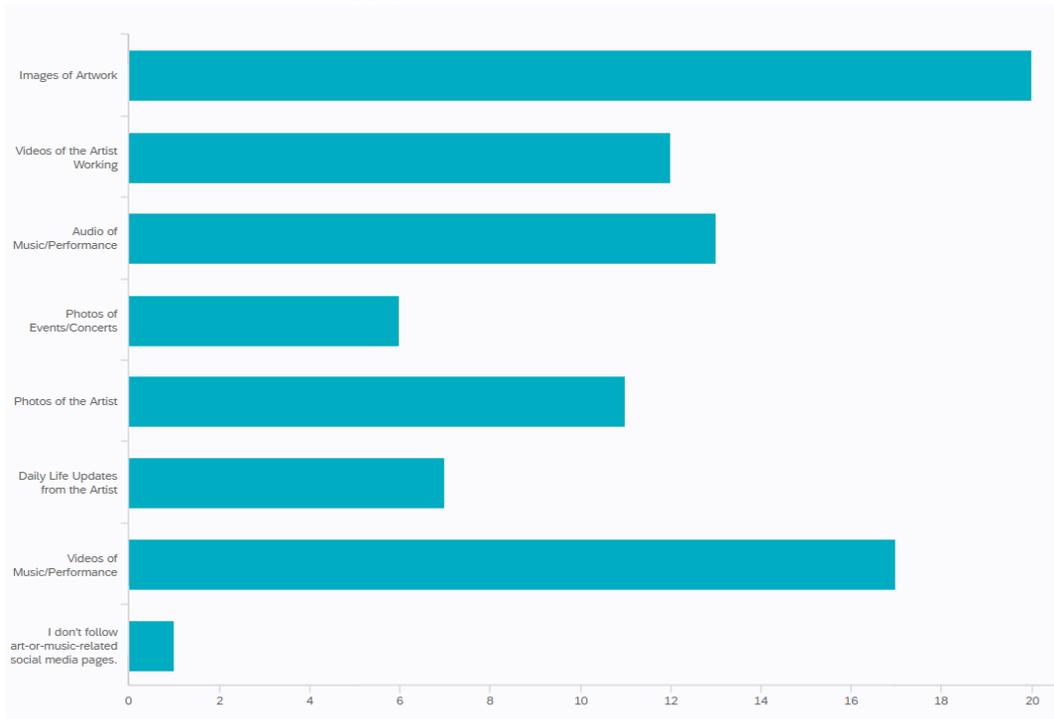
M13. What is the average monthly income of you or your parent/guardian? (n = 25)



M14. Is this a program you think you would/could have benefitted from? (n = 25)



M15. When choosing to follow an art-or-music-related social media page, what content do you like to see? Select all that apply. (n = 23)



M16. How frequently do you like to see a social media page post new content? (# of posts per week) (n = 23)

Minimum: 1.00

Maximum: 10.00

Mean: 3.96

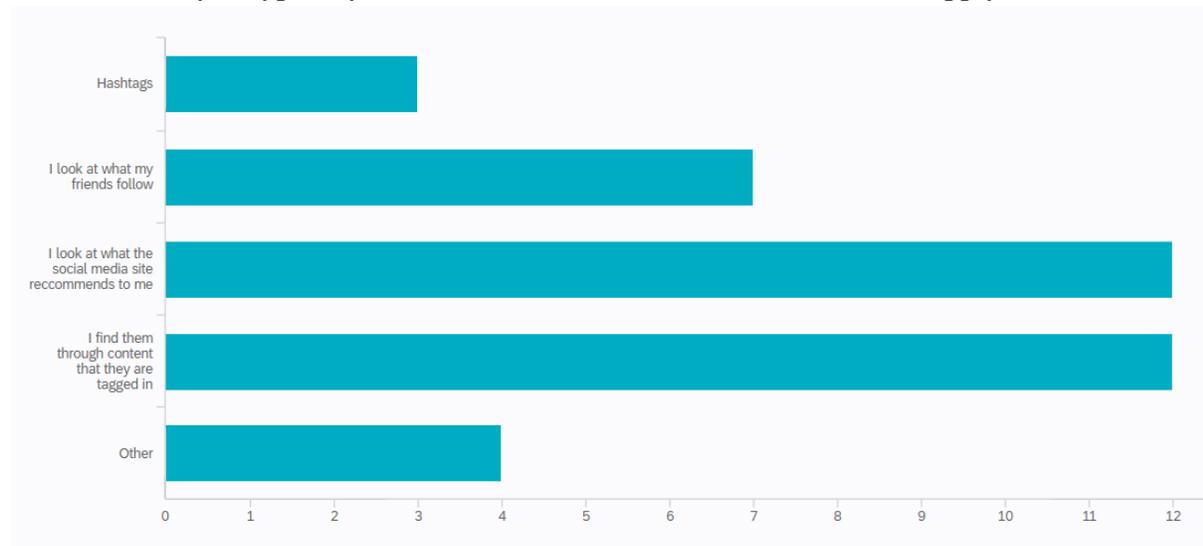
M17. How important to you is post frequency for social media pages you follow?(1 - Not Important at all, 2 - Somewhat unimportant, 3 - Neutral, 4 - Important, 5 - Very Important) (n = 23)

Minimum: 0.00

Maximum: 5.00

Mean: 2.35

M18. How do you typically find new accounts to follow? Select all that apply. (n = 23)



M19. Responses for 'Other':

- "by searching for e.g a lesson on a topic and filtering between all the artists"
- "Mentions of other artists by accounts I already follow"
- "Randomly"

M20. Responses for 'Why do you no longer use a social media page for your work?':

- "Started to post my work on relevant groups."
- "Not much time to play guitar and to keep up with job and studies"

## Appendix N: Social Media Platform Archival Research Sources

### Webpages:

Title	Reference
About Whatsapp	About Whatsapp. (n.d.). WhatsApp.com. Retrieved May 6, 2021, from <a href="https://www.whatsapp.com/about/#:~:text=Our%20App,phones%20all%20over%20the%20world.&amp;text=And%20yes%2C%20the%20name%20WhatsApp,on%20the%20phrase%20What's%20Up.">https://www.whatsapp.com/about/#:~:text=Our%20App,phones%20all%20over%20the%20world.&amp;text=And%20yes%2C%20the%20name%20WhatsApp,on%20the%20phrase%20What's%20Up.</a>
How Often Should My Business Post On Facebook?	How Often Should My Business Post On Facebook? (n.d.). Metric Marketing. Retrieved April 1, 2021, from <a href="https://www.metricmarketing.com/faqs/often-post-social-media/">https://www.metricmarketing.com/faqs/often-post-social-media/</a>

### Videos:

Title	Reference
Build Strong Posting Habits	Build Strong Posting Habits. (n.d.). Facebook for Business. Retrieved March 21, 2021, from <a href="https://www.facebook.com/business/learn/lessons/post-on-facebook-page-regularly">https://www.facebook.com/business/learn/lessons/post-on-facebook-page-regularly</a>

### Journals:

Title	Reference
Like, Comment, and Share on Facebook: How Each Behavior Differs From the Other	Yang, S., & Kim, C. (2017). Like, Comment, and Share on Facebook: How Each Behavior Differs From the Other. <i>Public Relations Review</i> , 43(2), 441–449. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2017.02.006">https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2017.02.006</a>

## Articles:

Title	Reference
20 Instagram Post Ideas For Artists to Try Next	Gomez, S. (2019, March 7). 20 Instagram Post Ideas for Artists to Try Next. <a href="https://www.theartistnextlevel.com/%e2%80%8b20-instagram-post-ideas-for-artists-to-try-next/">https://www.theartistnextlevel.com/%e2%80%8b20-instagram-post-ideas-for-artists-to-try-next/</a>
Best Frequency Strategies: How Often To Post On Social Media	Lee, K. (2014, April 7). Best Frequency Strategies: How Often To Post On Social Media Buffer Library. <a href="https://buffer.com/library/social-media-frequency-guide/">https://buffer.com/library/social-media-frequency-guide/</a>
Social Media in Romania	Digital, T. (2021, February 11). Social Media in Romania. TUYA Digital. Retrieved April 28, 2021, from <a href="https://tuyadigital.com/social-media-romania/">https://tuyadigital.com/social-media-romania/</a>
The Art of Creating Winning Video Content for Social Media	Social Media Marketing. (2021, March 31). The Art of Creating Winning Video Content for Social Media. Digital Agency Network. <a href="https://digitalagencynetwork.com/the-art-of-creating-winning-video-content-for-social-media/">https://digitalagencynetwork.com/the-art-of-creating-winning-video-content-for-social-media/</a>
The Importance of Consistency in Social Media Marketing	Payne, L. (2017, June 23). The Importance of Consistency in Social Media Marketing. Auburn Advertising Blog - A Service of Inner Spark Creative. <a href="https://www.auburnadvertising.com/articles/86-the-importance-of-consistency-in-social-media-marketing">https://www.auburnadvertising.com/articles/86-the-importance-of-consistency-in-social-media-marketing</a>

## Blogs:

Title	Reference
8 Top Social Media Platforms for Artists and Designers	May, T. (2020, May 26). 8 Top Social Media Platforms for Artists and Designers. Creative Bloq. Retrieved April 4, 2021 from, <a href="https://www.creativebloq.com/features/social-media-for-artists">https://www.creativebloq.com/features/social-media-for-artists</a>
How Often Should Your Nonprofit Post on Social Media?	Stelter, N. (2019). How Often Should Your Nonprofit Post on Social Media? <a href="https://blog.stelter.com/2019/05/08/how-often-should-your-nonprofit-post-on-social-media/">https://blog.stelter.com/2019/05/08/how-often-should-your-nonprofit-post-on-social-media/</a>
How Often to Post on Social Media	Feehan, B. (2021, February 24). How often to post on social media. Rival IQ. <a href="https://www.rivaliq.com/blog/how-often-to-post-social-media/">https://www.rivaliq.com/blog/how-often-to-post-social-media/</a>
How Often to Post on Social Media	How Often to Post on Social Media—Agency list. (n.d.). Retrieved May 11, 2021, from <a href="https://agencylist.org/blog/how-often-to-post-on-social-media#:~:text=Good%20news%20is%2C%20Instagram%20is,post%20as%20appealing%20as%20possible">https://agencylist.org/blog/how-often-to-post-on-social-media#:~:text=Good%20news%20is%2C%20Instagram%20is,post%20as%20appealing%20as%20possible</a>
How Often to Post on Social Media: 2021 Success Guide.	Myers, L. (2021, May 7). How Often to Post on Social Media: 2021 Success Guide. Louise Myers Visual Social Media. <a href="https://louisem.com/144557/often-post-social-media">https://louisem.com/144557/often-post-social-media</a>
How to Create A Unique Instagram Aesthetic that Fits Your Brand	Fontein, D. (2019, July 18). How to Create A Unique Instagram Aesthetic that Fits Your Brand. Social Media Marketing & Management Dashboard. <a href="https://blog.hootsuite.com/instagram-aesthetic/">https://blog.hootsuite.com/instagram-aesthetic/</a>
How to Curate the Perfect Instagram Art Account	Henderson, V. (2018, December 23). How to Curate the Perfect Instagram Art Account. Upleap. <a href="https://upleap.com/blog/instagram-art/">https://upleap.com/blog/instagram-art/</a>

How to Promote Your Instagram: 13 Ways That Actually Work	Barnhart, B. (2020). How to Promote Your Instagram: 13 Ways That Actually Work. Sprout Social. <a href="https://sproutsocial.com/insights/promote-your-instagram/">https://sproutsocial.com/insights/promote-your-instagram/</a>
The Importance of Instagram Aesthetics	Kinzinger, J. (n.d.). The Importance of Instagram Aesthetics. Retrieved April 2, 2021, from <a href="https://www.candoideas.com/blog/the-importance-of-instagram-aesthetics">https://www.candoideas.com/blog/the-importance-of-instagram-aesthetics</a>
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What to Post on Instagram: 15 Creative and Engaging Ideas	Tran, T. (2019, August 27). What to Post on Instagram: 15 Creative and Engaging Ideas. Social Media Marketing & Management Dashboard. <a href="https://blog.hootsuite.com/instagram-post-ideas/">https://blog.hootsuite.com/instagram-post-ideas/</a>
Why Consistency is Key For Social Media	Donlon, J. (2021, February 18). Why Consistency is Key For Social Media. <a href="https://www.dma-solutions.com/theblog/why-consistency-is-key-for-social-media">https://www.dma-solutions.com/theblog/why-consistency-is-key-for-social-media</a>

## Appendix O: Social Media Technique Archival Research Sources

### Articles:

Title	Reference
3 Amazing Insights on the Psychology of Social Media Sharing	3 Amazing Insights on the Psychology of Social Media Sharing. (2018, August 22). Ballantine. Retrieved May 7, 2021, from <a href="https://www.ballantine.com/psychology-sharing-social-media/">https://www.ballantine.com/psychology-sharing-social-media/</a>
4 Artists Share Their Social Media Strategies	Hill, E. (2019, April 10). 4 Artists Share Their Social Media Strategies. Artsy. Retrieved April 28, 2021, from <a href="https://www.artsy.net/article/artsy-editorial-4-artists-share-tips-instagram-grow-art-practice">https://www.artsy.net/article/artsy-editorial-4-artists-share-tips-instagram-grow-art-practice</a>
6 Tips for Artists to Engage Their Social Media Audience	McVicker, D. (2020, June 16). 6 Tips for Artists to Engage Their Social Media Audience. Art Business News. Retrieved May 1, 2021 <a href="https://artbusinessnews.com/2020/06/6-tips-for-artists-to-engage-their-social-media-audience/">https://artbusinessnews.com/2020/06/6-tips-for-artists-to-engage-their-social-media-audience/</a>
10 Pros And Cons Of Social Media Marketing In Mobile App Development	Oza, H. (2019). 10 Pros And Cons Of Social Media Marketing In Mobile App Development. Customer Think. Retrieved April 12, 2021, from <a href="https://customerthink.com/10-pros-and-cons-of-social-media-marketing-in-mobile-app-development/">https://customerthink.com/10-pros-and-cons-of-social-media-marketing-in-mobile-app-development/</a>
A Practical Guide to Instagram Analytics for Business Accounts	Hart, K. (2019, December 16). A Practical Guide to Instagram Analytics for Business Accounts. Jumper Media. Retrieved April 30, 2021 from, <a href="https://jumpermedia.co/instagram-analytics-for-business/">https://jumpermedia.co/instagram-analytics-for-business/</a>
How Much Does Social Media Advertising Cost in 2021?	How Much Does Social Media Advertising Cost in 2021?   webfx. (2021). Retrieved April 21, 2021, from <a href="https://www.webfx.com/how-much-does-social-media-advertising-cost.html">https://www.webfx.com/how-much-does-social-media-advertising-cost.html</a>
How NonProfits Can Use Social Media to Increase Donations and Boost Visibility	Tabas, J. (2021, March 6). How NonProfits Can Use Social Media to Increase Donations and Boost Visibility. Forbes. Retrieved April 6, 2021 from

	<a href="https://www.forbes.com/sites/allbusiness/2021/03/06/how-nonprofits-can-use-social-media-to-increase-donations-and-boost-visibility/?sh=6f027a0a2bb7">https://www.forbes.com/sites/allbusiness/2021/03/06/how-nonprofits-can-use-social-media-to-increase-donations-and-boost-visibility/?sh=6f027a0a2bb7</a>
How These Artists Used Social Media to Gain a Following	Douglas, M. (2017, June 14). How These Artists Used Social Media to Gain a Following. Better. Retrieved April 12, 2021, from <a href="https://better.net/life/artists-you-should-know-used-social-media-gain-following-2/">https://better.net/life/artists-you-should-know-used-social-media-gain-following-2/</a>
How to Get Your First 1000 Art Instagram Followers	How to Get Your First 1000 Art Instagram Followers. (n.d.). Artwork Archive. Retrieved May 1, 2021, from <a href="https://www.artworkarchive.com/blog/how-to-get-your-first-1000-art-instagram-followers">https://www.artworkarchive.com/blog/how-to-get-your-first-1000-art-instagram-followers</a>
How to Rise Above Social Media Algorithms	Barnhart, B. (2021, March 26) How to Rise Above Social Media Algorithms. Sprout Social. Retrieved April 25, 2021, from <a href="https://sproutsocial.com/insights/social-media-algorithms/">https://sproutsocial.com/insights/social-media-algorithms/</a>
How to Run a Social Media Takeover From Start to Finish	Chen, J. (2018, April 25). How to Run a Social Media Takeover From Start to Finish. Retrieved May 3, 2021 from <a href="https://sproutsocial.com/insights/social-media-takeovers/">https://sproutsocial.com/insights/social-media-takeovers/</a>
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Facebook Advertising - Advantages and Disadvantages	S-Lawler, K. (2020, May 12). Facebook Advertising - Advantages and Disadvantages. Hallam. Retrieved April 28, 2021, from <a href="https://www.hallaminternet.com/facebook-advertising-advantages-disadvantages/">https://www.hallaminternet.com/facebook-advertising-advantages-disadvantages/</a>
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	<a href="#">insights-for-artists/</a>
TikTok Revenue and Usage Statistics	Iqbal, M. (2021, April 22). TikTok Revenue and Usage Statistics. Business of Apps. Retrieved April 27, 2021 from <a href="https://www.businessofapps.com/data/tik-tok-statistics/">https://www.businessofapps.com/data/tik-tok-statistics/</a>
The Pros and Cons of Using Facebook to Market Your Business	Mullen, A. (2019). The Pros and Cons of Using Facebook to Market Your Business   Matson & Isom Technology Consulting. <a href="https://www.mitcs.com/field-notes/pros-cons-of-using-facebook-to-market-your-business">https://www.mitcs.com/field-notes/pros-cons-of-using-facebook-to-market-your-business</a>
What Do Social Media Algorithms Mean for You?	Agrawal, A. J. (n.d.). What Do Social Media Algorithms Mean for You? Forbes. Retrieved April 2, 2021, from <a href="https://www.forbes.com/sites/ajagrawal/2016/04/20/what-do-social-media-algorithms-mean-for-you/">https://www.forbes.com/sites/ajagrawal/2016/04/20/what-do-social-media-algorithms-mean-for-you/</a>
Why (and How) You Should Host a Social Media Takeover	Lawlor, J. (2018, February 26). Why (And how) you should host a social media takeover. Digital Ink. <a href="https://www.dgtlnk.com/blog/social-media-takeover/">https://www.dgtlnk.com/blog/social-media-takeover/</a>

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Social Media Takeover Guidelines	Social Media Takeover Guidelines. (n.d.). Retrieved May 1, 2021, from <a href="https://www.ucdenver.edu/offices/ucomm/social-policies-guidelines/social-media-takeover-guidelines">https://www.ucdenver.edu/offices/ucomm/social-policies-guidelines/social-media-takeover-guidelines</a>

## Scholarly Journals/Articles:

Title	Reference
Constructing the Platform-Specific Self Brand: The Labor of Social Media Promotion	Scolere, L., Pruchniewska, U., & Duffy, B. E. (2018). Constructing the Platform-Specific Self Brand: The Labor of Social Media Promotion. <i>Social Media + Society</i> , 4(3), 205630511878476. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1177/2056305118784768">https://doi.org/10.1177/2056305118784768</a>
Marketing Strategies Development within Romanian Companies in the Context of the Global Economic Crisis. Case Study: the Automobile Market	Pinzaru, Florina & Zbucnea, Alexandra & Galalae, Cristina. (2010). Marketing Strategies Development within Romanian Companies in the Context of the Global Economic Crisis. Case Study: the Automobile Market.
Social Media Promotion for Classical Music Events Held in Malta	Grima, G. (2018). Social Media Promotion for Classical Music Events Held in Malta. Retrieved April 12, 2021, from <a href="https://www.um.edu.mt/library/oar/handle/123456789/41711">https://www.um.edu.mt/library/oar/handle/123456789/41711</a>
The Effectiveness of Social Media as Media Promotion of Village Tourism	Oktaviani, W. F. (2018). The Effectiveness of Social Media as Media Promotion of Village Tourism. <i>Studi Pustaka</i> , 0(0). <a href="http://kpm.ipb.ac.id/karyailmiah/index.php/studi_pustaka/article/view/5481">http://kpm.ipb.ac.id/karyailmiah/index.php/studi_pustaka/article/view/5481</a>

## Blogs:

Title	Reference
6 Ways Artists Can Use Instagram to Build a Following	6 Ways Artists Can Use Instagram to Build a Following. (2018, November 20). Art Business News. Retrieved April 29, 2021, from <a href="https://artbusinessnews.com/2018/11/6-ways-artists-can-use-instagram-to-build-a-following/">https://artbusinessnews.com/2018/11/6-ways-artists-can-use-instagram-to-build-a-following/</a>
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How to Run a Smart Social Media Takeover in 5 Steps	Sehl, K. (2019, September 10). How to Run a Smart Social Media Takeover in 5 Steps. Social Media Marketing & Management Dashboard. Retrieved May 4, 2021, from <a href="https://blog.hootsuite.com/social-media-takeovers/">https://blog.hootsuite.com/social-media-takeovers/</a>
Market Intelligence for the Music Industry	Pastukhov, D. (2020). Market Intelligence for the Music Industry. Sound Charts. Retrieved May 1, 2021 from <a href="https://soundcharts.com/blog/tiktok-guide-for-artists-and-music-professionals">https://soundcharts.com/blog/tiktok-guide-for-artists-and-music-professionals</a>
The 5 Types of Social Media and Pros & Cons of Each	Bump, P. (n.d.). The 5 Types of Social Media and Pros & Cons of Each. Retrieved April 1, 2021, from <a href="https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/which-social-networks-should-you-focus-on">https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/which-social-networks-should-you-focus-on</a>

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## Appendix P: Interviewee Quotes

**Female Fashion Designer, Alumni:** “What I enjoyed the most was the community. ... I really felt that I was part of a group that actually was passionate about the same things that I was”

**Male Pianist, Alumni:** “Yeah, that's also a really really nice concert [what concert]and a really nice thing they do. They also collect money and yeah, that was the concert I also met uh Her Majesty. Yeah Margaret, so yeah, that was also a really nice thing”

**Male Guitar Player, Current Member:** “They really make you feel like an artist... we feel that we are for real an artist when we are on the stage or when they are talking to us. They treat us like people.”

**Male Opera Singer, Alumni:** “If everyone is at the start of their career, without, without this without the support, like this program. Yeah, they have to work, maybe three, three times more than, then, then, a member of the than me. But I was lucky. I wasn't at the start with the others, I was three steps in front, four because of this program.”

**Male Clarinetist, Alumni:** “I think it's a fantastic program because it has helped me, especially last year... we were still able to have online through zoom sessions with big names in the music industry. So that helped me a lot.”

**Female Illustrator, Current Member:** “I'm really pleased because I already had an exposition in Bucharest at a Gallery, and I think two weeks from now we will have another one and I saw that other people have already concerts and, uh, I'm really glad because in school or University in two years I haven't had that chance to expose [my art] somewhere.”

**Female Opera Singer, Alumni:** “So, that [the scholarship] was absolutely great for me because I had the opportunities to attend master classes and go to competitions abroad, that otherwise without the help I wouldn't have been able and my parents, my mom wouldn't have been able to pay for.”

**Female Opera Singer, Alumni:** “Our, uh, great concert on the new Romanian national stage. It's a very important, uh institution, cultural institution in our country with great artists. And a great conductor. We were so young, I don't know I was, uh, 20 years old. And to be on that stage at 20 years old. It's something, wow. Amazing. Yeah it was a key moment.”

## Appendix Q: Interview Transcripts

Interview 1

Interviewers: Ryan (Conductor), Madeline (Notetaker)

Interviewee: Anonymous Alumni

R: So, this recording is just going to be used, it's not gonna be published or anything, just to transcribe all the responses. Make sure we have a complete record of everything. You have the right to review and or delete any responses later by emailing the research team through the correspondence we've already had with you. If this is requested, we will remove all the information and anything you wish to be removed. Do you have any questions about this research that we're doing?

A: No, no, but uh, it's a big pleasure to speak about this foundation.

R: Awesome.

A: I can say that yeah, yeah, so for me every time when I have to speak about it, it's a... It's a dream, yeah? Yeah.

R: Awesome and then the last question before we can start getting into things. Do you agree to participate in this interview?

A: Yes, yes of course.

R: Excellent, alright so. With all that out of the way. So, First off, you know, tell us a little bit about your background, like so where you're from, you know, in Romania and some of that stuff.

A: Yeah I want to say that in the last two years I spoke so much German here in Austria where I work. Yeah, so I didn't. I didn't use so much English in the last few years, but I think it's OK. I hope yeah. I hope to be. Yeah, so I am an opera singer, a young opera singer. I am 27 years old. Uh, I'm born in Romania, Bucharest. Yeah, so uh, what can I say are so many things? Uh, during my preparation years I. I received so many scholarships. Uh, for years, uh, I was the scholarship of Princess Margareta Foundation Princess Margareta Foundation, yeah. That was a great honor. Uh. Big opportunity to participate in several competitions. Yeah, and had extraordinary support. Because we have to pay so many fees in competitions, contest fees, uh? For example, tickets for the airplane, piano lessons. Yeah, oh, I don't know. For example, I bought a camera, a laptop, a piano and they are very very important for the young singers. These things, all these things. And, uh, for example, the fee for a master class is also very expensive. They gave us this opportunity to participate in so many things. Umm yeah, I had the privilege of meeting so many great artists. Uh, soloists?

Uh conductors, actors in many mentoring mentoring. Yeah, mentoring and masterclasses? Uh, yeah they gave us this opportunity. Umm, what other things? Oh yeah, and all these four years I participated. Uh, I participated in so many competitions. And I received many prizes, for example in Como, Italy in Paris, France, in Budapest, Hungary, Bucharest, Romania and so on.

R: Now these were all through The young talents program?

A: Sorry, could you repeat?

R: So all those competitions were through the young Talents program?

A: Uh, yeah, somehow, but uh, we can find these competitions. Yeah they are not included, In the foundation. Yeah. They help you to participate in all these competitions and masterclasses.

R: I see so they sort of... so it gave you the resources to find all these competitions?

A: Uh, you can find them.

R: I see, so it's more of an individual thing?

A: Yeah. Yeah, somehow they uh, they give us, uh, some tips. But you have to decide what you would like to participate in.

R: I see OK.

A: Yeah.

R: Awesome. So the question I have for you is in this survey you indicated that you found out about the program through social media, so could you explain a little more of like how you found it, what platform you found it through, that kind of thing.

A: A platform.

R: Yeah, like if it was through Facebook or Instagram.

A: Yeah. If I if I do it?

R: Uh, if you how you initially learned or discovered the Royal Margaret Foundation?

A: Ah,I heard about it from my colleagues, I think. Yeah, but uh in on. Facebook also.

R: Right, So you said you were with the program for four years.

A: Yeah. It's fantastic, so you know what made you decide to sort of reapply every year. You know where there are still things you want to get out of your time in the organization, or was it you know, sort of? Just You were just enjoying all the sort of, Programs and opportunities they were providing. Yeah, I had so many opportunities because we had many concerts in front of important people and in such great institutions in my country, in front of Princess Margareta. So it was a great honor, yeah? And then we had the privilege to exercise on the stage, to sing in front of people. And I was very young then I don't know the first year uh, of a scholarship was when I was 17 years old. Uh, so yeah, it was a great start. On great stages in my country, yeah. It was like a family, I don't know, with contact between the scholarships. With Holidays together, when we worked together for some concerts. Yeah it was great and I was, uh. It was, uh, I think the... the luckiest, uh, young artists. Because it's very difficult to obtain this scholarship for so many years.

R: Now, um... you know you mentioned you guys were like a family, which is, which is so wonderful to hear. Have you kept in contact with a lot of these people, you know? Have you sort of built a network from it?

A: Yeah, yeah, of course with the people who work, uh, in, uh, in this foundation and with my colleagues, Yeah.

R: That's great to hear. In a bit of an unrelated question. So we will shift a little bit here, so a question I have is sort of relating to, you know how you promote your own work. So we saw you included your YouTube channel. We watched a couple of videos and I must say we're very impressed. They're really incredible, yes. It's so, so wonderful to see. So can you talk about your experience with you know, promoting yourself, promoting you know you know your music through, you know, all these different social media platforms like Facebook and Instagram and YouTube? And and a little bit about how your experience has been with that so far.

A: I think it's very important to promote ourselves. Yeah, well, for example, for artists we have to have an agency because otherwise its very difficult in this, uh, in this time, for example, Now I am seeing, but I'm in the symbol of the Grand Opera House. Its the 2nd year. It's a great privilege, and it was also very difficult because I didn't have an agent. But when I had the audition, I [unintelligible] so many people. I dont have one. But yes you have to have an agency, yeah? And at the same time you have to promote yourself, uh, through uh, YouTube, Instagram, Facebook. Yeah, it's very important. With, uh, I don't know, Videos. With the posters with your concerts. Yeah, the people have to see what you do. Yeah.

R: For sure, it's interesting that you mentioned having an agency, so I guess you know. Uh, are you familiar with any of the differences between like how like a a musician versus like a visual artist would either promote themselves or try to, you know, make their way through the art world?

A: Uh, the both of them have to promote, uh? Themselves. Am I right, yeah. But especially for musicians, they have to have an agency. Maybe yeah, it's from the beginning. Yeah, I don't have one now, I'm searching for an agency. I was very lucky to find something very important in such a great Opera House without agency, but I have to do it because, It's very difficult, uh, among so many people, so many people with an agent. Yeah.

R: Interesting now is this, uh, because you said you're in Austria, correct?

A: Yeah yeah, Austria grad.

R: And is this, is that sort of sentiment how you sort of need an agent? Is that true in Romania and sort of across Europe?

A: I think in Romania it is the same thing, but, Umm you can do it without an agency, yeah? I had also so many uh concepts and, uh, important, uh, contracts in Romania. Even when I was a student when I was in college, yeah, so it's possible. In Romania. But it's also important to have someone to speak about you. yeah, uh, growth is much more difficult. Yeah.

R: You know, what are some of the criteria to get accepted as into some of these agencies like do they consider if you have like a popular like YouTube channel or some sort of social media account like Facebook or Instagram that kind of thing.

A: Uh. If I could, uh, find an agency?

R: Uhm, yeah, so I I guess I'm just interested in, you know. Some of their criteria, and I I guess I don't know if that's something that you might know, but like I guess, do they consider like? So let me let me rephrase it. Ah, I think I think I just lost my train of thought here. Like, do you feel that having a social media page might help some people find an agent? Or do agencies not usually look at that stuff?

A: When I came in Gratz for the audition, someone found me on YouTube. Yeah, so it's a great thing. It was a dream I I was searching for some auditions and I was in, uh, Stuttgart to make an audition and then someone found me on YouTube And I came here. Well, it was fantastic. So

social media is very important and. Yeah, the agencies? Uh can't find you. Yeah. And promote you and, uh. Consider that you can be part of their agency. But I think it's important to someone to speak about you. And or an agency. Yeah.

R: So do the agency's posts like, UM, about the artist they have. Uhm, I guess. First off, do these agencies have social media platforms of their own? And do they sort of post like about the artists they have or you know, I guess, what are some of the you know some of the content they post?

A: Uh, yeah they can post about you. Uh, they can speak about, you know, for some great opera houses, and it's much more difficult to do it, but by yourself. Without an agency is much more difficult. Yeah, I. I felt the same, yeah. But at the same time, it's not impossible. Yeah. my case is, uh, one example I don't know.

R: Yes, for sure. It's super interesting to me to hear. Let's see. OK so I have a couple questions about you know specifically, you know your time with the Royal Margaret Foundation. So can you talk about any particular important experiences that you had during the program that you thought were either you know, super helpful for you, maybe thought, hey, these weren't helpful to me at all, or any such similar kind of things you experienced.

A: Important experience?.

R: Yeah, or maybe is there like you know, maybe one key moment that you can remember of your time that you thought that was, you know, was Super important to you.

A: Our, uh, great concert on the new Romanian national stage. It's a very important, uh institution, cultural institution in our country with great artists. And a great conductor. We were so young. I don't know. I was, uh, 20 years old. And to be on that stage at 20 years old. It's something, wow. Amazing. Yeah it was a key moment. And at the same time in that concert where we saved money for the next scholarships. For the next year. So it was a great moment to. Uh, to uh to? The people were there to give money for the next. Of the year for the foundation. Yeah, so it was a charitable concert. I don't know. Yeah, something like that. And we sang in that concert, yeah?

R: That's so great to hear. Now what would you say this in most valuable thing that you learned? While part of the program.

A: Uhm, the most important thing?

R: Yeah.

A: All the experience in competitions on the stage because without this money, uh. I wouldn't have been able to to have. Then because I didn't come from a, I don't know, family with many possibilities. And when you are an artist we have to... to buy so many things. To invest much money as a singer, as a musician and as a visual artist. Also, yeah. It's not like much or something like that, I don't know. Yeah, so I think all this, uh competitions or this concepts, everything was so important.

R: Now, were there any sort of experiences that you didn't expect would be offered to you? Like maybe things not even related to art like? Something like that.

A: Umm? In my country or. Just in general. About the art.

M: Yeah, like there were there ways that the foundation helped you that you weren't expecting going into the program. Like, do you feel that it helped you in ways other than with your music?

A: If I had, if I have other expectations or something like that.

R: Yeah, like UM, going into the program, Um, did you feel that you expected certain things?

A: Mm-hmm Yeah. I don't know, Um.

R: Yeah, no worries. If nothing is coming to mind. Yeah, sort of a similar question you know, did you learn any like professional skills while in the program? When we're talking with some of the collaborators at the Royal Margaret Foundation, they were talking about how... you know they were sort of one of the things they really wanted to begin really sort of helping with in the future with things like, you know, writing professional business emails, how to help you know the students of the program, sort of market themselves better. Did you learn these similar kinds of skills? Or were these things you had to learn on your own?

A: Yeah, I think I Learned some new skills. For example we had to be in contact with so many people for some concerts we made it together. So many concerts with the young people so. I don't know i, The communication maybe with the other people. True, this masterclass with great artists I I learned so many things. Yeah, how to? Work with our emotions on the stage and in our lives. Yeah.

R: Awesome, yeah, that's it. Yeah, that's exactly what we're looking for.

A: How to use our? our money. Yeah it was, yeah. It was difficult to make, to plan everything. Yeah, you cannot use them how you want. So you have to invest in, uh, your work, not for other things. Yeah, so it was a great thing. To Be responsible. For these concerts.

R: So yeah, that's that's great to hear. That's wonderful. Right, so we have a couple sort of more general questions about the general process of following a career in music or and and the arts in general. So could you talk about some of the barriers or obstacles you've faced in pursuing a career in music?

A: Yeah. So many, so many things I can say, oh it was difficult but at the same time, uh, I was lucky because I was engaged in Bucharest and in other places in other towns in Romania. During my preparation years, during my college yeah. And I have many opportunities to sing, to think uh roars, and the symphonic vocal works. In great institutions in my country, but at the same time people with someone who helped them. Yeah. Uh, where in how to say, uh? Were promoted more. Sometimes it was much more difficult for me without anyone to help me. But it was... it was not impossible. Also in my country I had so many contracts even when I was very young. For example at National Opera Bucharest. Uh opera, for child, opera yeah for child. A National Opera for child. Or something like that, yeah? That's in another theater near Leona Theater for opera and operetta. at the new yeah Romanian Athenaeum already. I had these opportunities, but I can say that it's even much more difficult without someone. In our country. Yeah, and to have a, uh. An important contract for many years is very difficult. Because all people are there and have, uh, this. This contracts for the, for the. Paradise, so for the younger singers... It's very difficult to obtain such a great contract. You can be invited, or you can have a contract for one year or something like that. Some years ago was not so difficult I think.

R: Interesting, actually. I think that's something I we haven't really talked about too much. Is that how you know? Covid sort of complicated things over these past years or over the past year I should say.

A: Uh, covid?

R: Yeah, coronavirus, COVID-19.

A: Yeah, well, what can I say about these two years?

R: Yeah, so how has, you know, how has that impacted you?

A: Yeah, yeah, having a contract in this ensemble at this great Opera House, I didn't feel it because we had so many online. Online streaming, yeah with our premiers. We made some CDs, DVDs for... a new Opera House. Oh, and also performances until December. So I didn't feel... But I have time for me or something like that. No, it was the most intense two years in my life and I don't know so I didn't feel that because I was in the ensemble. But when you have when, you are a Freelancer it is very difficult. Because so many artists have canceled contracts,

cancelled premieres, cancelled concerts. So even the great artists, I don't know, 40 years old or something like that maybe now are staying home and don't have contracts. And it's very... difficult, yeah, but I was lucky because I have a contract I didn't feel. Yeah. Yeah I didn't have... I don't know problems, yeah, but I don't know for the future. I want to participate in a stand new audition and it's very difficult to travel. Very difficult and especially because I have a contract and I work almost everyday so I can have... I cannot have time to travel. But it's, uh, it's very difficult to travel because you have to be, I don't know for three days in a city, and you have to stay in quarantine there. I don't know 10 days or five days or two weeks, and then when you come back in our country too. So it's very difficult for an artist to make a defunct. To to have a concert. Yeah, you have to think about all these problems. And so many auditions for young singers for new roles for a contract for one year., Two years is very difficult to travel or are cancelled. Yeah. So for me it was not a problem, but. Could be in. The future or for others. I know it's very big. It's a very big problem.

R: Sure, yeah, that's that's super insightful now. Would you say over the past year or I guess, let me rephrase it. We're sort of digital concerts or streaming concerts. Was that something that you guys did before covid, or has it sort of? Increase in frequency since then.

A: These concerts were not before. Online.

R: So you didn't know online concerts beforehand.

A: Ah, before covid?

R: Yeah.

A: No, we we made them with the. Public, with public. Yeah, and even now we we had the. Performances until December or with public and then was a lockdown, but we we made this, uh, online streaming and CD DVD. Yeah, but we are waiting for uh, for good days. Maybe in May. To be able to have the public.

R: Now, so if the... if the contents are being streamed right then I assume there's... no one is in the audience. So how does performing like online versus in person? You know? How do you, you know? Maybe prepare mentally? How do you prepare differently? You know, how do you prepare for these two different kinds of things?

A: Well, you have emotions, you have... you are, uh, nervous. But, Umm, it's very important to have the public. Yeah for us. It's not the same thing, I think. Yeah. You have to feel the emotions of the public, the response with the clapping with yeah. You can feel their energy. Yeah, it's very difficult to describe the feeling.

R: Yeah, that's that's super interesting.

M: Yeah, I guess it's a little similar for us 'cause a lot of our classes have moved online so it's hard to get really like the energy of being in the classroom through remote learning. It's difficult.

A: And especially in art, I don't know it's... its difficult to learn how to sing, an instrument or vocal singing.

M: Yeah, yeah, especially where that's such an emotional connection that you get to like live performances like. I know the few times that I've been to a concert like you really connect with the people on stage and you can't really do that online.

A: Yeah, I think it's a big difference. That's why I'm waiting so much. Good performances with the public yeah.

M: Absolutely.

R: What do you think the long lasting impact of Covid will be on performances, you know? What do you think that the future holds for for this kind of thing? So do you think you may still continue streaming concerts in the future, even when everyone can be in person and there can be sort of this totally packed, you know, concert Hall or... nothing of the sorts.

A: I think it's much better in a person. Much more better, but uh, it was... was a good thing in that, because, uh, how the people all over the world can come. Somehow? See our performance. Uhm, I don't know from Vienna Staats opera or Metropolitan Opera House. It's a good thing to be able to see such a great performance. But somehow it's very difficult, yeah.

R: Yeah, absolutely. Let me take a quick look through all the prepared questions we have. I guess another question related to social media a little bit is, you know. You know, of course, you know we're American, right? So we're so familiar with you, know the American social media landscape which you know through a lot of the research and surveys. Yeah, we've conducted right. It's pretty different, so can you talk about how you know American social media or American media has sort of impacted some of the work you do or influenced it in any way?

A: Are you asking me, uh, about the social media in America or something like that?

R: Yeah, and other media from America in general, if it has any impact.

A: I don't know what to say.

R: So I guess one thing I have in mind is like the the social media platforms that are commonly used in in America. You know, like here you know Snapchat TikTok. Those are platforms that are really popular. Here, but through sort of our research and all these surveys indicate they don't get used a ton In Romania you know, does the popularity of these certain American platforms have any influence in? You know, in Romania and in Europe in general, could you speak to that at all?

A: Umm, I think so Many people around the world use these platforms. Snapchat or Instagram? I don't have them. I had so many so I don't. I don't want to use them now, but I don't know in the future. But I think they are very used. For me, we're not necessary, but., yeah.

R: For sure. Madeline, did I miss anything?

M: I think we covered most of what we came in prepared to ask.

R: Awesome awesome. Let's see, are there any, you know, sort of comments you'd like to make or anything you'd like to sort of? Tell us that we didn't cover either about any specific experiences or things we'd like to just talk about in general.

A: About the foundation?

R: Yeah, Yep, or just anything in general. You think we should know about either the work you do or. Anything related to that.

A: Let's see, I don't know. Maybe I forgot something I wanted to say and I wrote it down on a paper but I didn't. I didn't use them, oh. Let's see, maybe something, UM.

R: Hey, no problem, it's totally fine.

M: Yeah, no problem, yeah.

R: So I guess one one final question I have is, uh so earlier you mentioned, you know someone sent you a message through YouTube, right? So seeing your work and that led to you know a fantastic opportunity for you. So I guess my my question is, you know if. Uhm? trying to get a good way to to phrase this. So, uhm. I guess it just comes down to, you know, it seems like such a good opportunity for you. You know, are there other sort of platforms that you've considered? But haven't used it for one reason or another because it seems like you know. You know, through YouTube you're able to, you know, sort of get this recognition. You know? Why not try like other platforms or increase your visibility through social media?

A: Uhm, I also use Facebook and Instagram. Yeah, and through YouTube someone from America, uh, saw me and also wrote me to sync up their works. She was a composer, so through YouTube and this time. Yeah, so are very important. It's very important that I promote myself. Yeah, because I don't have an agency, but they... they saw my work.

R: Yeah, have you found that you've gotten people to reach out to you through Facebook or Instagram? Or is it usually just YouTube?

A: Oh, You Tube. Is very important for us singers for musicians. But when you have a page on Facebook is also very good. Or Facebook or Instagram? Yeah. I think all are important, yeah?

M: Alright great, I think uh Ryan, did you have anything else that you wanted to ask today?

R: No, I think we've hit all the points. Yeah, so thank you so much for your time. You know we're so incredibly grateful.

M: Yeah, that was great. Yeah, we really appreciate you taking the time today to talk to us.

A: Thank you very much. It was great. The questions were really. Beautiful.

R: Hey, do you have any final questions for us either about. You know these questions or any other research in general. If not, that's totally fine. If not, you can always email us with any questions you have after the fact. But you can reach out through there and again remember, right? You know the right to review and delete any responses later by emailing us and we remove any questions or responses at your request, right? So if you have any questions or hesitations after the fact, please reach out to us. We're happy to know, assist you and help you out, right? Right, yeah, again, thank you so much for taking the time to talk with us.

A: Thank you so much, cool.

R: have a great rest of your day.

## Interview 2

Interviewers: Chris (Conductor), Lexi (Notetaker)

Interviewee: Anonymous Alumni

C: So one last thing before we start, so you have the right to review and or delete any responses from this interview or from your survey by emailing our research team. our email, I think we send it to you and also you would like I can share with you later. If you request that, and then any notes you specify we will remove that we won't use them so you're free to do that as well. Okay, so before, of course, yeah. Before we begin, I'd like to know just so how would you like us to pronounce your name I don't actually really want to get our problem.

A: Okay, so my name is pronounced [REDACTED]. But you can pronounce it however it comes naturally to you. That's not something that bothers me at all.

C: Okay I think I can do that. [REDACTED]. I'll try my best but I appreciate the understanding. Of course. Okay, so I will now start with our questions so the first one we have is where are you from

A: I am from Ploiesti, Romania, it's a relatively big city close to the capital. So that would be Bucharest. And so yeah I'm from here. I was born here and well I came back here When I was like, 11 years old because I moved to Spain for a little bit.

C: Oh nice, any reason you moved to Spain?

A: Well, yeah, my parents got divorced, and my mom took me with her to Spain, with her to like work, and I grew up there, like when I was two years old. We went there and I got here, I got back here. When I was 11 so nine years nine ish.

C: Okay. And so, in our survey you said that you were a musician as a clarinetist, is that correct. Perfect. Actually we just watched one of your YouTube videos, you're very talented. much better than I was as a clarinetist

L: we actually did both play clarinet. Growing up, I got a clarinet I think in fifth grade. So I was like, 10. I was awful at it so I quit pretty early.

A: yes thank you thank you, that's so cool that you guys play the clarinet too.

C: How long have you been playing the clarinet?

A: I've been playing the clarinet since I was like, eight years old, I started in Spain, but I wasn't taking it seriously because I wanted to play the piano as my main instrument. But when I got back here in Romania, and I started to be a student at the Carmen Silva School of Arts here embraced my teacher actually got me to love the clarinet, and the when somebody asked me, How long have I been truly playing the clarinet I say since I was like, 11 because that's when I came here and that's when I really got into it, but I learned some stuff in those three years that I played in Spain.

L: Nice, that's really cool, awesome that you had a good teacher to get you more interested in, in the art of them playing the clarinet. That's awesome.

A: Yeah, that's, that was like the main thing that has helped me because if it hadn't been for my teacher, I would probably be either playing the piano right now, or not be at this level of playing the clarinet.

C: That's very nice. Yes, I mean you're very talented so it makes sense even playing for a while. Yes. Okay, so now for this next portion of the interview will discuss some of your responses that you gave on that survey, and this is specifically about the way that you promote your art on YouTube playing the clarinet, and also how you discovered the young talents program originally. So we'll start so you indicated that you, in terms of your social media usage, that you like to use Facebook and Instagram and YouTube and your YouTube channel, Obviously, and so can you expand more on your experience of promoting the art that you do on social media and how, like that's done and how it's affected you?

A: Sure, well my main thing is this. Facebook I don't really use it that much, but when I have like some big things in my art career. Music career like residence concerts or some music projects, everything related to my professional life, I post there. That's why I said I promote my art on Facebook, too, because that's the truth, but I don't really use it to, like, like on a regular basis, it's just to put my projects there. But the one social media platform that I use the most is actually Instagram. And there I also post my art. For example, on the Instagram stories, or I recently posted a recording on like a regular post on Instagram. But it was my first. I believe Yeah, my first recording of me playing the clarinet, that I posted there. It usually happens more on Facebook, but like I told you, Instagram is like my day to day, checking, social media life.

C: Do you see a lot of other artists promoting their work on Instagram in your day to day usage?

A: Yeah, that's actually why I use it, that a lot, because, first of all, it's more fun than Facebook, and second of all, I found really great pages with musicians that are like so good at promoting their stuff and their art, so it really inspires me.

C: Are there any techniques that you've used or you've seen successful while promoting your work on social media?

A: Yeah, so I've seen that if you make a post, and then put it on your story, people will you basically have, you'll reach more people, because not everybody sees your posts,

L: especially with how Instagram posts out on their feed you know.

A: Yeah. You know, you have a bigger reach with the stories I also saw musicians on Instagram that have posted fleets are flitter this new thing on Instagram that are like kind of a post. But there's a whole separate section for it. And I, and they're like, shorter certain videos. And so I've seen a lot of those. Also IGTV is great for bigger videos for example the video that I posted was like, I think, 10 minutes long or eight minutes long and I was able to post that because on a regular post you can only do one minute per video and you can cut it like a longer video to post or, more, more parts of that of that recording in one boss. Right. It's, it's better to just have the whole video in one piece, you know. Yeah. Yeah. And also it is on another separate section if somebody, for example, posts on IGTV just recordings, like whole pieces that then in fleets posts, shorter videos like educational videos or something like that, you can easily access because it's everything it's well organized.

L: Yes. Another question to add on to that. Are there any other reasons why you or other artists would post their artwork to not only promote themselves to like make their self esteem better or something like that make them feel better about their art is that something that you do to like make your confidence feel better knowing that your other people can see your artwork online.

A: Um, for me, I don't think I have experienced that, really, I maybe a little bit on Facebook, because, you know, that's where I posted most of my professional related artworks and music videos, but I don't have that much experience, with it to like say that it has boosted my confidence level. I don't know if it happens for other musicians, but I think it's really important to put your stuff out there, not only to promote yourself but to inspire other musicians, young musicians and even the older well established musicians. Like, if for example, I have. I'm not feeling really motivated, or inspired per se, I can go on Instagram and see other people working hard and not only that but I can see other people. I don't want to say ladies but struggle, almost, so it makes you relate, because, yeah, the friction is, you can't relate to perfection. So, when you see other people have their journey, there's this hashtag, 100 days of practice. And so you can see their evolution. And it's really inspiring because no one's perfect, so when you see people at the first stages of the practice. This practice challenge, I suppose it's, yeah, it can make you feel better about yourself in that sense.

C: Really interesting I wasn't aware of that trend, like trying to not like definitely get away

Yeah, because it like humanizes people and show us, everyone has, has the same experience they work really hard to get to where they are in the. come overnight so it's really interesting.

A: Of course, and the, there's this other challenge that it's basically the same but it's with 1000 days. And there is one music page I think it's just, musician, a cellist that posts, and I think he finished the challenge by now. I can't remember what his name is but his work is so beautiful on his page and it's really inspiring because his videos are very nice quality. He's an incredible cellist, of course, and yeah, it really inspires you because you can see other people working hard and getting fire in this industry, and like it. You can see it pay off on there. So you're inspired.

C: That's really cool. That's awesome.

L: And so, oh sorry, Chris, did you want to go more into detail how he discovered the program.

C: Yes, actually my next question. So on our survey you indicated that you found out about the program through the other person. Can you elaborate more on what that experience was and like, like from who you heard about them from.

A: Yeah, so I actually, I think, I don't really remember from who it was by, but I have an idea because a friend of mine that was like, not a classmate he was older than me, but we were at the same Professor, climate teacher, and he got on the program the young talents, I think it's translated in English. So, I saw that he got on there, and that's why I said I heard it from another person, because I think in my, in our class where my teacher was talking with this friend of mine, about the program, I heard from, I heard about this. So, yeah, I then tried to get on three times. And the third time, it was like the third time's a charm.

L: So, yeah, we were actually, I'm going to ask how selective. The program is so we're going to get more into that later into the interview because we're going to ask them questions. More based through that program but yeah that's definitely what we're interested in learning.

C: Another question. How well do you feel that the foundation so the Royal Margaret foundation and also the young talents program. How well do you feel that they're known about in Romania and like in the art scene?

A: Well, I think they are really well known, especially because like, when I first heard of it, I was, I think I was in eighth grade, so I was really that I think I was like 14 years old. And so I think musicians know about these like young musicians from a relatively young age, like 14-15, they start hearing about this program because it's really, it has helped a lot of young artists and not only musicians because, as you know, this program is also for visual artists, yes.

So I think it is really well known amongst young musicians. But also, of course, the teachers, I think everyone knows about this program because it's the Royal foundation.

C: Okay so, so now moving to question some more about your experiences while you're a part of the foundation and like your feelings during that time. So you mentioned that you heard about the foundation and the program when you were in eighth grade and, like how old were you when you're finally accepted into it?

A: Well, I was accepted into it last year, so I was 16 turning 17. And, yeah, I think it's a fantastic program because it has helped me, especially last year, although we couldn't really do everything that they wished, and we wished we could do. Because I know they also have a music camp, but we weren't able to do that, unfortunately. But we were still able to have online through zoom sessions with big names in the music industry. So that helped me a lot. Also, the financial aid. It was really helpful. And also, we actually had some concerts and recitals. Despite the pandemic. we could have, like, online live recitals and stuff.

C: That's really, it's really cool. What was the format was this over like a, like a platform like we're using now.

A: Yeah, so I had two concerts. One, it was at the National Opera House in Bucharest. So that was very big for me because it's hard. It's really hard to get on there, it's the National Opera House. And so, that one was when things kind of calmed down a little bit. That one was in person attending the concert. But, but the other one was at [?] Palace and it was too. Live casting via YouTube broadcasting, I think.

C: Yeah, the live stream yeah same, same idea. Okay, that's really cool. Nice.

C: And so you mentioned before that. It took you three tries to be selected in the program. How selective would you say that they are on when they choose scholarships.

A: So I think there, they are pretty selective Of course, because every year, there are a lot of young artists who apply, and so they don't have unlimited spots. And so they are pretty selective, and I think one really really nice thing that they do, is that apart from the like contest, because you have, obviously, you have to play for them. But apart from the playing part, they also have this interview part where they asked. They asked you about what, what are your future plans. What are your hobbies and stuff like that. I think that's really important because a well established musician isn't just a musician. A person that loves music, and also art in itself. So, reading is really important for a musician, hobbies like reading or having a really strong view about how you feel about music and about art. It's really important for a musician, for a good

musician. So they have this interview part and yeah I think this one is very very good for for that human part of it, not just the you know the clarinet player

C: right to make sure you're like a well rounded person overall. oh yeah, of course, that makes sense I understand why. Yes.

L: So just to learn exactly how the application process goes, so you perform for whoever's deciding, and then you interview?

A: Yeah, so things go like this, you play for them, like when I got on it was still there was no pandemic because the, the contest was in January 2020. And we obviously played in person, and then after our playing session, they just started asking me questions. So after that part the contest entered the interview. They decide who like basically who goes on to the next part. Yeah, so that next part is actually some person that represents them comes to your house to have a little talk, and that's just to see if you live..., okay, so how do I say this, this program is for people with fewer financial resources. And so, if you play really well and the interview goes well but then they come to your house and you're living in a really nice home and there they see that you don't really need this financial aid. then, I think they don't, they can decide not to choose you because this one that financial aid is dedicated to people who need it, and also deserve it. So, not just for

L: Yeah, yeah, yeah because we know that the Royal Foundation, one of their biggest goals is trying to aid in the lower income communities in Romania, so that's awesome that they do that, I didn't know that.

C: Yeah. Yeah. It's really interesting. Yes, on the application process, did you have to indicate any of your current financial standing?

A: So when you apply you have to fill in an application form, or send an email, and they ask you basically your average per person earnings in your family of the last three months. Okay. So, yeah, and if you fall below. I think it's like 1700 Romanian RON, which about. Let's say \$400, per person, then you are eligible.

C: In terms of your overall experience with the program, what would you say was the most valuable thing you learned and maybe like the favorite thing you got to do at your time.

A: So, my favorite part of my experience with the program. Of course my experience was a little limited because of the pandemic, But my favorite part was actually the zoom meetings that we had, because I think I learned a lot from the, The musicians that basically mentored us. So we would have these, It was like at least 40 minutes. Some days, they would take up to, like, two hours. And we, we learned a lot. For example, we had a really well known. Director here on

zoom. And he did a musical analysis of a piece with us. So it was also like this kind of stuff, not just talking. So, we also learned things that are like on paper.

C: Of course, yeah, that seems like a very good skill to have. So that's awesome. And so now that you've got you've gone to the program here, you're an alumni of the program. What are some of your future plans for continuing to pursue a career in the arts and music?

A: Well I am in my senior year. Yeah, I think the senior year of high school is the last one, right, senior. Yes. Yeah. Okay, so I mean my senior year of high school, and I have to apply for university. And I am really looking forward to that. I want to go back to Spain, for my university studies, I think it would be a really, Really nice full circle moment. Yeah, and, like, I think. Yeah, I'm very excited to go to Spain for college. I really am.

L: Are you going to be studying music or something else?

A: Yeah, no, I'm going to study clarinet. And I think my master's degree may be in some kind of other music related discipline, because I don't really want to put myself in a box, you know, just a clarinetist or just really I really want to expand my knowledge. Like, I'm really interested in music theory and composition. And, Yeah, I really am looking forward to that.

C: That's great. Yeah, of the few things I know about music theory. I think the way that it's, it's, it seems very well like it seems very complex and I don't know something that I never really fully understand, but just the way that music makes people feel and how there's a lot going into it and the people who study in performing they're just it's incredible. It is such an honor, for sure.

A: Yeah, it's so cool. And I don't know, it's something that it's very appealing to me. So, yeah, I really want to pursue that part of music, also in my education Later on

C: Yeah, of course, right, so that's really cool. Do you have other aspirations and goals for once you're beyond college and university and what you'd like to do?

A: Um, I think I want to, like, to be a part of an orchestra. And because I really love playing in an orchestra, but also, I would really like to get more and more into composing. So that's something that I could do at the same time be in an orchestra and compose. In my free time I guess so, I think that's my dream, let's say, at least for now.

L: Now, Chris, did you want to go into the art career itself? So we just had some questions on like some like obstacles you faced or like people face in Romania, when going into art school.

C: So obviously you're, you're finishing up high school and I mean were there any like large obstacles that you have to face or that you're aware of the other people pursuing, you know, higher education in the arts that they have to overcome?

A: Um, I don't really know if I experienced any obstacles. I think every musician has periods of un-motivation and, like, lack of motivation and inspiration. But here in Romania. The thing that I would say needs improvement and not only in the music industry is an actually good education plan, because I think our education system is really flawed. But, like, it could be worse. Of course. And, yeah, I don't think there's something about, like, I don't think our government, let's say, puts enough attention, gives enough attention to the music schools, because I don't know, it's, it's like, maybe that's why. Maybe if that aspect of it was treated a little better, there would be more aspiring musicians, you know, more. Yeah.

L: That, that's what I wanted to say so, by obstacles. I was just thinking like in the US, that if you like go. If you want to pursue an art career or Music career there's this this stigma, where it's really hard to succeed in that field or to make a lot of money in that field so a lot of people are like, put off on the idea of going into that field so we weren't sure, like, if it's the same way in Romania, if more people are opening or like supportive of people going into that field or if people are like less supportive based off of the financial and success of people in that field.

A: Well, I don't, I don't think it's really that bad in that aspect. But I was just thinking like on a higher level, an educational level, I think the system, it's a little bit flawed for everyone, not only musicians, but I think from what I saw online and. and. And from what I heard. In Spain, actually, music is treated worse than here. And, I mean, yeah, I mean, like, if we compare like a normal job in Spain, with a musician, it's like there. But in other countries like, I know that in the Netherlands, or Germany or Austria musicians are paid a lot, you know, because it really is something that requires years and thousands of hours of work. And so, from what I understand in Spain. The musicians aren't seen that well. But here in Romania, compared to Spain, it's not that bad. Because we have, we have opportunities, and people like music, and not to say that in Spain there aren't opportunities, and people don't like music because there are a lot more than here, but I just say, I just think that. Generally speaking, the population in Spain doesn't give that much attention to musicians, whereas here in Romania, I think we are seeing, maybe a little bit better just by comparison with Spain, there are a lot more opportunities, because of course it's a richer country.

L: Yeah, that makes sense. Um, so a lot of our research on this project was looking into the art, culture in Romania. So would you say that art and music is a big part of the culture in Romania.

A: Yeah, I think so. I think so because we also have our traditional music, which isn't seen like classical music here, but I think people like regular people that aren't into classical music, also,

like music because it's something deep rooted in our culture. So, and at the University of Music, here I'm correct. There's also a major I think a major for traditional music like with the voice.

C: Okay, That makes sense. Interesting.

L: Right. And you mentioned earlier that you are in art school right now for high school correct. Yeah. And what is that called again?

A: my high school is called the Carmen Sylva High School of Arts, when it was formerly High School of Arts now I think it's called like a college but I know in English college means University. So right yeah, it's not translated, like that. But, yeah, High School.

C: I was just going to ask is it common to go to specialized high schools like this one specific focus on music for students in Romania?

A: Yeah, I think. I, not every city has a music High School, but I think all the big cities have one. The university education though, I don't think that that might be that many conservatories. So Music Music universities. I know probably like five. Yeah, and, and, for example somewhere like Spain a lot I've, I've recently found a map. Looking for universities in Spain, I found a map with a lot of with every university in Spain, and it's like everywhere. There are universities and music schools. But here in Romania, there aren't that much, but it's pretty common If someone wants to go to music University and pursue this career. They will go they would go to, they would normally go to music High School. So it's, it's not rare,

L: just jumping back to about the Royal foundation. Was there any experiences that you enjoyed in the programs that you weren't expecting to be a part of based off of what you've learned in the application and, like the promotion of the program.

A: Yeah, actually, I think I wasn't really expecting to have concerts, because from what I understood, there was like this part with financial aid. when someone applies for this program, I think they're very focused on the financial aid, you know, because it's like 2000 euros. So like, probably \$2200. It's a lot of money Here in Romania so you can really, and also music and arts takes a lot of money to do. So it's really helpful and everyone, it's, it's focused just on that aspect of it, but I also had the pleasure of having concerts, and of course these meetings that I was telling you about and also if there wasn't a pandemic, We were going to have a camp, a music camp, and like some kind of master class or something. That's what I'm referring to when I say camp, and also at the, at the end of the year, I, I know we didn't have it but I know this happened, they would have, I don't know how it's called in English but it's basically an event where everyone meets and has like a big concert and art exposition with everyone involved and and the.... I don't know how Her Majesty is called, in, in, in the English but. The princess, I don't

know, it's not princesses. I'm not sure. I think it sounds like a gala. I said, like, Yeah, okay. Yeah. And so she would participate. Yeah, it's really cool but we unfortunately we couldn't have that, because it's, it was like, every year. In November, and here in Romania in November, there were a lot of restrictions are. fizzled out a bit in September, but then came back in November, or October or something like that.

C: Yeah, similar situation here the summer, it was a little better and as you got into the winter, more restrictive and stuff.

L: Yeah, right. So our interviews are coming to an end. One last thing I wanted to add. Um, so would you suggest, like your friends or to other musicians that are younger than you to join this program, like would you would you think that it would be helpful for them?

A: Yeah of course I think like every musician. Every artist in need of money needs to apply to this project because it's really so helpful. Like, not only financially. It helps you become a better musician. You learn a lot. Not just about music but also about how to manage your time and yourself. And, like, it's really some great experience that I think helps everyone who gets into this project so I actually recommended this to my friends, and one of them is a member this year. Also they have this just to mention this, they have this thing where if you participate, three is the maximum amount of years you can participate is three. They really like you and you have been really helpful and responding to everything they've asked that to do for example, if you're always at the meetings on time if you, if someone needs like the transcription and you offered to do it or something like that. And you're really helpful for them, they may ask you, they may ask you to come back and give you the full project experience. I mean the financial aid, the master class, everything. And you basically are now called alumni. I don't know how to translate this but it's basically, you are a little more special because you help them, and the new generations so you kind of become part of the program for at least that year that you come back.

C: Right.

L: That's awesome. Would you be looking, looking into joining the program again?

A: Yeah, I actually got applied for this year also. But the thing is, I don't know what happened, but my email was never received, I think, yeah, I don't know, it's a. It was a problem because, like I didn't receive a confirmation email and it was my fault that I didn't call them or something. But I thought I just didn't get it. Again.

L: Yeah, it stinks that technology can screw you over like that you know

A: yeah so when I told them that I called for another problem. And then they asked me, Why didn't, why didn't you apply this year, we were really looking forward to have you back. And when I told them, but I applied. And they told me, oh my god we're so sorry. We didn't receive your email, because I think there was a really big. Like many people were emailing them for this particular project. And so, I think mine got lost or was never received by them so yeah that was pretty sad, but it's okay, someone else, maybe who needed it more, Has it now. Yeah, I'm really happy that I got to be a part of this for the year 2020.

L: Yeah. Maybe you could apply again next year and maybe covid restrictions will be a little bit lifted, you could experience the camps and maybe some other things that you wouldn't be able to experience last year.

A: Yeah, the thing is that if I go to Spain this year, I wouldn't be able to participate. Yeah, because you need to be a student in Romania, for us to apply.

C: Okay. Yeah, that makes sense. I'm sorry to hear that. But yeah, I mean now you got a connection so you just hit him up.

A: yeah yeah I mean I'm really grateful for. For that I was a part of this for a year.

L: Thank you for meeting with us! We really appreciate all the things that we learned.

## Interview 3

Interviewers: Madeline (Conductor), Chris (Notetaker)

Interviewee: Anonymous Alumni

M: Alright, so First off, we just want to get to know a little bit about you. So like, where are you from? What kind of music do you do and how long have you been working with music?

A: And so, uh, I come from Romania, I was born in Bucharest Uh, currently I'm studying in Austria. Uh, in the other, constantly versitec Kratz. I'm studying composition. I work with contemporary music, a little bit experimental. I'm going in that direction of Avant garde music. I started studying music when I was six. I also have a Bachelor in violin and the first time when I received the scholarship from a principessa Margareta, I was actually studying violin. So my first scholarship from them was for violin and after I got two more for composition.

M: Awesome. Very exciting and how old were you when you got those scholarships?

A: The first one I can't remember exactly. I was in high school. I think that 15 or 16 or something like that.

M: Oh wow, yeah.

A: And uh, after the last ones were when I was 23 and 24.

M: OK, so there's like a little bit of a gap there, yeah?

A: Yeah, because I changed. Like I I didn't. I started to be more interested in contemporary music so it was a gap in which I was feeling like. Yes, I was feeling the information that I needed to be good in composition as well as in Violin.

M: Yeah, so I took a chance a little earlier to listen to some of your SoundCloud music and it was really cool. You mentioned that you did a lot of like experimental kind of Avant garde stuff. Is there anything in particular that's really inspired you to seek that type of music?

A: Yeah. Well, uh. I think that something, something that... inspired me, it was like my best friend is an actress and like we know each other from when we were five. We were doing ballet together and she continued with the acting. I continued with music and when she got in the University I was... going to her classes. And I saw that they were more open than we were in... In music. They were willing to experiment. They were willing to know about new stuff and to understand how they can break structures, how they can evade from structures, and this is something that we didn't have in music, and I think that that inspired me and made me wonder why the classical music is all the time like music from 300 hundred years ago and we never experiment and we never try to to go with the sound even further that than it was before and after I started composition in Romania, it is a very... uhm, let's say conservative environment. They don't like this kind of stuff and I was very lucky. Uh, it was a workshop in Romania.

Uh, a teacher from Jerusalem Academy of Music game. And he saw that I was kind of in another direction, and he said. Uh, no. I spoke with the teachers I want for you to study with me in Jerusalem, and that was actually the point when I got very opened because he explained to me I was doing everything intuitively. But he explained to me how to actually work with this kind of sound.

M: Oh that's great, yeah? Yeah, that's an awesome opportunity, but kind of going off of that. Have you found that posting your music online has that brought you any attention as well?

A: Well, recently now I say yes. And then if you would've asked me I don't know. One month ago I would say maybe no. But uh recently it was a surprise for me. I actually got commissioned a piece from a really important ensemble in Austria. Because, uh, someone listened to my SoundCloud and they liked me and they proposed to me to write a piece for them. So yes, I think that it helped me. Now I'm thinking that it's helping me promote my music, but it's something that I recently discovered and I wasn't so aware about this in the past.

M: Yeah, so are you going to continue to try and push with like the online promotion? A little bit? Or are you gonna, yeah?

A: I think now because I I I was very surprised I didn't. I didn't expect actually for someone to be interested in contemporary music and to search on Internet and randomly to listen something and to say all this girl is good. I I want to give her money to write. I was thinking that contemporary music is something like a niche is something. That is not for everyone, maybe or not everyone can understand it or not, if everyone is open for it, so I wasn't thinking about this. But now for sure I need to have a plan to promote myself also online to understand a little bit about what are the opportunities for a contemporary composer?

M: this is like a really great opportunity that you were commissioned. I can imagine that was a great feeling. Yeah, it's so exciting. Uh, so kind of going back to the Royal Margaret Foundation. What were some of your experiences during the program that stand out to you?

A: I think that I met, uh, two of my best friends. I met them in the program, and, uh. It it was very nice because it was like they have this camp, summer camp with all the the people that won the scholarship. And uh they come from different environments. They they practice different art forms and it opened me a lot. Because it made me understand also a little bit how visual arts are working or also about other players. How a flute is working, I wasn't, so it was very good from that point of view.

M: And as a composer, do you feel like, uhm, like most of the people that we've talked with so far, have played instruments or done visual art like you're one of the only composers that we saw in the list? So do you feel like you have different expenses with the money than some of the other artists might have?

A: Yes, that's for sure. For example, for my work, I can also generate sounds on the computer, so I needed a computer. Yes, and with composers. Yeah, I think that they had... I was the 2nd composer that won, no the third composer that won that scholarship from when the program

started up. And maybe because of this, they are very, very uh... maybe uncomfortable with what a composer does. Also, usually it's a gala at the end and you can present your work to the audience. But for a composer you are dependent on instrumentalists like players that can play your music.

M: Ao now that you've left the program and you're kind of starting your career and everything. Have you faced any like obstacles or barriers? Pursuing a career in music?

A: In Romania?

M: Like what's been your experience? Uh yeah, like in Romania outside of Romania. Like what are you doing right now?

A: Well, now I'm like I'm continuing my starting studies in composition. In most University grads and like in Romania. (SIGH) In Romania, I left and it's really sad to see if it is because I don't think that... uhm, you can never have a fair payment for what you do, and I think that it's very hard to promote your music and it's very hard to reach the audience because it's no interest for culture in general and I see that everyone who is good is living in the end and very few are remaining that are really good. And because of this the level is dropping and dropping and dropping and even for the University like I started, Uh, PhD in Romania and I left it for a second Bachelor in Austria. It was that kind of no way. So I think that is very hard... in Austria I feel that I have way more opportunities. Everything is different. Here in Romania you know we have a lot of corruption and this corruption you can feel it. Uh, they, uh, I saw that you had there people that were also living abroad and maybe they told you the same thing that you have many other opportunities are very few. And it's a lot of corruption and it's very hard, yes.

M: Yeah, we did notice that a lot of people who took our survey were also in Austria. Um, and like that makes sense, 'cause like Austria has such a rich history with music and so it's interesting to see that like people are going to other places to continue their studies. Yeah, ah, let me find another. Yeah, and kind of going off of like the cultural things. Do you find that stuff been more difficult in this past year with the pandemic and having to move things online or as a composer, do you feel differently about that?

A: I think that I was personally very lucky because I had like I had a project in the Shakespeare House grads that is the 2nd theater in Austria, like I think partners and I had a project with them I like I I worked this all. I had also a project to in an independent project in in Romania. Now I have this Commission. I like I was active and for me beside the fact that everything was online wasn't that much change, but uh, like I was lucky enough to don't have projects cancelled, but for all the others like for my friends I know that this is very very difficult. Sorry, it was my cat that was.

M: Ah, so cute.

C: What's your cat's name?

A: Uh, Era. Yes, so for me it wasn't wasn't that much of a change. But I know a lot of people that even had to interrupt their studies here and go back to their countries because of the pandemic situation.

M: Definitely, yeah it took a lot of things off track. Right? For a lot of people. So it looks like we are almost at 40 minutes, but if you have anything else that you want to share with us, we can stick around. Or Chris, if you had any other questions you wanted to address.

C: Uhm, I think I I had one other question. Let me look at my reference here. So I think OK, so on this survey I believe you indicated that you found out about the young Talents Program through your school. So if you want to explain a little bit more about that and like how you heard about them in the 1st place?

A: But first time I heard about them, it was it was at the beginning. The program was still at the beginning and I told you that it was like it was huge and I think that there were posters in in my high school with with this program and the teachers actually were pushing us to participate because it was something.... Something that the school was proud of. It was the Queen's scholarship. But in time this because many people got access after it wasn't so private. It wasn't something that just few people could have achieved during hear it like I think that everyone knows Now about the program, because a lot of People already got in.

C: And so you said that there are posters on your school that made people know more about it. Did you go to like a specialized like music Like high school or or, it was just... it's like more of a general thing?

A: Oh in Romania is this system... uh, we have like you have a normal state high school. You can have also high schools that are actually you can enter them from when you are 6. And you can finish when you are 18. For art or for music, or for dance and, uh, you do all the normal subjects. But on your diploma on your high school diploma at the end is written also a second specialization that is a vocational one. It's these kind of schools is are called for vocational schools and they are for free. Everyone can get in just they are more selective in a way that they say OK. Uh, to have a school for music, for example, is way more expensive than to have a normal school that the state, the government is, uh, like sustaining. Because you need private like we had one to one lessons with uh teachers for instruments and we had therapy classes with smaller groups and also history of music and so on. So where a lot of things that were in plus. You had like you, you have an exam when you are 6 and you can enter in the school, usually for violin and for piano you can't come later because you can't keep yes and you have at the end of every semester you have an exam and you need to pass that exam for the instrument that for you that you are, and also for all the musical subjects, you need to pass the exams. Otherwise you are moved to a normal school where you you learn just the normal stuff. It's like this and it's like this also for visual arts. I told you and basically for all the like for all the arts you can have. Also for architecture you have a a special school like this. And that's cool, I think. I think that this is cool that we have in Romania, because, uh, even if you don't have so much money, you can keep still be performative in something and you can have... you can learn instruments and so on.

C: Yeah, definitely it's an interesting I. I mean I. I think it's cool too. It's definitely different than what they have in the US where it's much more traditional like in a school setting. And then you can do like extra.... Like you can go to a normal high school and then you know after school you can. You can be a part of band play an instrument and saying stuff like that. That's awesome. But you know, I would say you don't really get into like it's rare to find like very like aren't driven like high schools or something at the University where that happens in the USA it's I think it's a cool part of this because nothing offer the opportunities you guys did and stuff like this. It sounds pretty difficult. In terms of like all the exams and making sure that you're passing them to stay in the program and stuff so.

A: Yes, it is hard.

M: In American high schools like usually the arts and music are so like they don't put any money into that and it's really sad. I wish that like our high schools did have more specialized art and music programs like that. The high schools here love to focus on like sports and stuff and not so much like music and culture and art. And I think that's something that we're really lacking in America. So I think it would be cool to kind of take some of those ideas like from Romania and other countries that do try to have schools where anybody can go get an education in art or music.

A: Here like here is a different system from how it's in US, because in US you are like you are paying for everything you pay for your education, like for your University. In Europe also in Austria, where I am and also in Romania, the University also is for free, so the school everything is for free under state is true that you might pay more taxes to the government, but in the end everything also the health system is for free for everyone you don't have like it's not this problem. That is in US with your insurance that may not cover something. In Europe everything is covered, doesn't matter what.

C: Yeah, it's a very different system. It's a. It's a very hot topic for modern politics in the US, you know. They just need to live through this at least, but. Anyways, uh Madeline any other questions?

M: I think I asked everything that I had on my list. But if you had anything else that you wanted to share with us, Go right ahead.

A: I don't know.

M: Thank you for your perspective. That was very insightful for us and we really appreciate you taking the time to talk with us today.

A: Yeah, well if you have, like if I can help you with anything else you can let me know.

C: Yes, and if you think of anything else after the interview, feel free to send us an email.

A: Awesome, thank you. I'm very appreciative of it so. Yeah, so thanks a lot guys.

M: Yeah, that was really good, thank you.

C: Yeah, great rest of your day then.

A: Thank you, yes you too take care.

Interview 4

Interviewers: Lexi (Conductor), Ryan (Notetaker)

Interviewee: Anonymous Alumni

L: If you feel uncomfortable with anything that you stated, you can email our research team, I think we've also provided that email. And just to start Do you have any questions before we start?

A: no.

L: Okay, cool. So first To start, we just want to learn a little bit about you so where are you from in Romania.

A: I was born in [unintelligible], and I lived there until 18 years old and then I moved to Bucharest where I made the university, and then I was part of the foundation.

L: Cool. Okay so and the interview, or in the survey you stated that you were a musician. Could you specify what instrument you play or type of music that you make?

A: I am an opera singer.

L: Awesome. And how long have you been singing

A: opera? since high school, but I've kind of sang all my, my entire life, but opera like classical singing I started once with the high school, so when I was I think 16. 15 or 16.

L: Yeah, I've heard some opera singers. I've watched like America's Got Talent and there's always a few opera singers on there, that if you can sing opera like that's a huge talent, because that not everyone can do that for sure that so that's awesome.

A: It's the same with almost like yeah it's the same with all the arts and all the instruments.

L: Definitely.

A: Yeah. Each one is special, is always.

L: Yeah. Awesome. So, I'm just to go into the next portion of the interview. We wanted to discuss the responses you gave on promoting your artwork on social media. So, we saw that you prefer to use Instagram, and I think it was Facebook or YouTube. Could you like explain a little bit about your experiences of promoting your artwork online on social media?

A: Yeah, I, to be honest I was never thinking about promoting necessarily what I'm doing it's just like showing what I'm doing and sharing it, not necessarily promoting it. Nowadays I feel like Instagram is really powerful and it's not only my opinion but I also heard it from people in the business, managers, It's very important to put yourself out there and yeah to present yourself and to show people what you're doing and how you are doing it. So, I'm posting when I have gigs into my stories and then doing the post with the role that I am them actually performing if its a debut or something like that. So Instagram is the social media where I'm like putting more, and Facebook. Yeah, I started having an artist page. Um, yeah, since I was I think part of like scholar in the foundation. Instagram was not that famous. I don't know, like, five years ago, at least not in my world around me, and I was posting, just the shows shows that I had. YouTube, still like, I believe, and it is true that when you're, when you upload a video or something of you, needs to be, We cannot be perfect but very close to it and that's very hard to achieve. So, on YouTube, I am posting videos that are mostly unlisted, you know, you can send the link, for example I'm using that for auditions or competitions where I don't let it public yet because I am a perfectionist and I want to be perfect. And there's still a long way to go. So, I am not very open to post myself on YouTube, and it's also very hard because as a singer, you cannot just post things by yourself, you need the pianist, you need, let's say you are recording yourself but the sound has to be very good and so on so it's quite a lot, invest a lot and you don't have maybe people to help you with that and so on. It's harder, and so far the moment let's say that the Instagram is where I am, promoting myself.

L: Gotcha. And, would there be other reasons to post your art online, whether it be just to kind of validate your feelings about yourself or just to like kind of get validation from other people, I guess?

A: No, not necessarily. I know very well my problems, and like the good points and bad points and I know what I have to work on. And I don't need that kind of the appreciation or you use the right word word that I'm looking for.

L: Yeah, I got it yeah I totally agree that's awesome that you don't need that because a lot of people here, They just want to post things just to like, kind of give validation that they actually are good and feel good about themselves, because a lot of artists are like unsure if they're good enough, you know, but that's awesome. So, I know you haven't really posted that much about your singing videos, so I was going to ask us any of your posts have gone viral or if you had known anyone where their posts and gone viral. Or if not, could you maybe explain to us like what having a post going viral could mean for an artist.

A: Yeah, now we are referring, we're speaking about a post with you doing your job becoming viral not something that you do parallel with TikTok and then becomes viral and something funny and it.

L: I just, by viral I mean like you post something, and a lot of people see it and like went viral to the point where it passed your platform.

A: But it's my point is it's something that you are actually doing it's not something that it's separate from your art.

L: Yeah, yeah.

A: okay. To be honest, I don't know. Like I don't have friends or, you know, even colleagues that I sang with that have a video that went viral with opera, to be honest, not that common. But, um, it depends. I think it can be great. Um, yeah, I don't know, I'm not. I never thought about it because it's not a domain where things are getting viral.

L: The reason we ask because we've been doing some, some research on like how social media affects promoting and how someone can grow a larger audience on social media. So if you see like, I'm big on TikTok so we've seen a post goes viral that you can gain a lot of followers through that. That's the only reason I'd be asking. So also, to jump into like more of the, the young talent program, so you stated, you discovered the youth talent program I think through someone else. Could you just elaborate a little bit more on that, please.

A: yes, I found out about the foundation exactly when I moved to Bucharest and I was in first year of university. And I found out from a colleague and friend Now, that was part of the foundation already. And yeah I prepared myself. And I sang the audition. That was the first year and I wasn't accepted. And then I tried the next year, and then I was accepted.

L: Good for you. Okay, to go a little bit more now into your experiences with the young talent program. So, why were you interested in being a part of this program

A: for me it was important because I don't know I think maybe you guys know that they offered the scholarships for students that come not from very rich families, it's actually more of a social help. So, that was absolutely great for me because I had the opportunities to attend master classes and go to competitions abroad, that otherwise without the help I wouldn't have been able and my parents, my mom wouldn't have been able to pay for. So for me it was important because first there was a high level and the nice status where it's just like an honor to be part of the foundation. And second of all, because I had some opportunities that otherwise I wouldn't have been able to have.

L: Sounds awesome, and What year were you accepted into the program?

A: 2014.

L: Awesome. A while back so you luckily got to experience things before COVID kinda messed up a little bit because we talked to someone earlier who participated in the program last year, and so a lot of things are a bit different, just because of the COVID restrictions. And so could you explain to us a little bit about the process of applying to this and like any additions that you went through before you got accepted.

A: Yeah, I remember we need to have documents that show our financial situation. That's part of the, like, yeah, It's, you need to, to be into a category I don't remember then each years, somehow this this some changes like when I was in I needed to, my family needed to make together under... I don't even remember so that was first the documentation of my parents being divorced me being being raised by my mom and having only her as a parent that it's actually. So growing and helping me. Otherwise, I don't remember other documents. So I sent this. And then there were. Yeah, one audition. That was somewhere in university, being held. And I sang two songs, and that was it.

L: Um, would you have said that the program was like really selective or if there was a lot of people applying at the time?

A: Yeah, there were always a lot of people but what does a lot of people mean nowadays that I'm sending stuff to competition [unintelligible] 200 people for, like competition. Before we were like, I don't know maybe let's say twenty singers. But there were all the time, very good singers, so the competition was quite high. And, yeah, I was, I was much younger so I thought it was hard. now? Yeah. Yeah.

L: So, the program accepts a certain amount of different types of artists. There's like a certain amount of singers that they accept? Yes, because I know that they want they accept musicians, as well as visual artists, so I wasn't sure if there was like a, an equal level of like groups of different artists

A: that was depending on on the year, because for example maybe you have a generation that where do you have four singers and all four are so good and you're like, and you have ideas with them and you're like we take all four. And then another generation when only these two are good so I remember when I auditioned First time I think there were only two singers. then three, and then when I enter we were four. And I was there for I think three years actually our maximum. You couldn't have applied more than three times. Yeah, and we were four then we were six I

think then we were three so it depends on the year and what do they project like what are we doing this year. Do we need for singers or we should really choose only two.

L: Okay. Okay, cool. Um, Next. And so what would you say the favorite thing is that you participated in during the program of like any year that you were part of it. Do you think

A: what I liked as a program... Um, I think one of the best parts were like the mentors that were coming. Yes, that's a very special thing especially for someone just at university has 20 years old, and you can hear from people that succeeded and are famous. And, yeah, they just shared their experiences and their examples for us. That was one of the best part and then there's this summer camp with all of us. And that's also super nice, because the musicians have more opportunity to communicate with, with artists like plastic artists, painters and so on. And it's super nice. That's also super nice so the summer camp.

L: Yeah, that's awesome. We didn't really get to hear much about that at my last interview because the man was a part of it last, last year and because of the COVID restrictions they no longer did the camp so its cool to hear about that.

A: That's sad, the camp is really nice.

L: Um, and, did you make professional connections in the program that like help aid you for your future career?

A: Um, Not necessarily connections that helped me directly. Just be where I am now we're just like directly but the fact that this conductor inviting me to sing this content when I was just only 21 years old, but yeah, radio Hall and so on. These things are very important. On a CV and then as my personal experience on stage. So, even if it's not directly connected, it is something very very big and valuable.

R: Quick question I have is I was talking with another singer this morning was talking about agencies, and the importance of you know sort of having an agent to, you know, promote themselves. You know what have been your experiences with sort of interacting with agencies and, you know, how they're needed to sort of traverse through the music program.

A: During the program?

R: and beyond, as well

A: Because in the program that was not this possibility, actually. And this is very hard stuff it's one of the hardest I must say. The competition is very high. And it is very hard to get an agent,

and it's not only about getting an agent but getting a good agent an agent that has connections and agent that can get you gigs and shows with the roles that are actually performing an agent that cares about you, because they also get money on you so they should be careful with what they are giving to you and so on. I am still looking for an agent, I never had agent and it's very shocking for people because somehow I got my way and I, I, I did things and I received contracts, went to auditions and so on. But still I'm struggling with the agent stuff which nowadays became even harder, because everything now it's like on standby, people are not searching as much. The competition is huge. Now there are like two or three generations coming together to one competition or to one audition, because we didn't have the time to do it or the ones that are just like graduating and so on, and accommodating now with us there just staying on standby. And another very very nasty thing about this business is that once as a female, wants to have 30 year old. And they you are not, you're not interesting anymore, you need to be young and deemed to be perfect [unintelligible] but age says says has a very big word to say. so... The agency story is very frustrating and hard. I don't know what my colleague said but it's not easy.

L: Yeah. it's really impressive that you've gone gotten so far on your own, without an agent.

A: Yeah, it's it's great, but I'm living in Germany for almost three years now and I was part of the part of the theater in Mannheim here and I did the opera studio which is like one of the best thing you can do after you finished university. And, yeah, I come finishing opera studio and then what am I doing, I can be unemployed for one year. But and still I'm lucky because I'm in Europe, like in America it's really really hard. Yeah, I don't know how, how the people and artists, there are doing it, it's just a very different system. But, yeah, It's just, it's crazy, and I need to do something you know I'm just looking for competitions which are actually a good place where agents could see you, and then offer you something.

L: I hope you the best of luck with that.

A: Thank you.

L: You're welcome. Okay, um, were there any experiences you enjoyed in the program that you weren't expecting to participate in like it wasn't, maybe mentioned to you prior to joining the program or any anywhere on the websites or anything like that?

A: if something was not like I was not agreeing with or

L: to say like, there was some unique event that you participated in that was like a surprise that you didn't really know you were going to participate in.

A: Yeah, but it was positive one because there was a private dining with the princess and I don't I think five or six ambassadors. Yeah, yeah. And this is the Italy embassy. And I had to sing like a small recital for them, and then I was invited with them at the table and I was speaking with the ambassador of United States. So that was really cool yeah that was one of the things that I didn't expect and actually happened.

L: I think it'd be better to not expect it because I think I'd have too much nerves.

A: And I think I was more nervous about eating with them at the same table.

L: Yeah, That sounds awesome. Um, would you suggest this program to fellow artists in the area or anyone.

A: Totally. Yeah.

L: Awesome. So and so you, you mentioned that you have a social media, like you said, for your music, or you you share your music on there. Have you ever shared that you were a part of the young talents program on social media?

A: Yes, I think so. On Facebook mostly for sure. It's even written that I was a scholar on Instagram, I don't know because when I started having the page it was just like for me. I made it for promoting and now I am. Yeah, I have like I changed the name. And the way that from my name first name and last name I put my first name and my voice type, which is usually common. And, yeah, I just deleted pictures that I posted in the beginning with cats and stuff.

L: Gotcha.

A: Yeah, but I am... I don't remember I don't know if I have a post that specifies that or.

L: Yeah, we were just wondering just in case, like, um, we're just seeing if other people have shared about the young talents program versus just the foundation itself so more people can learn about it so that was what we were wondering about so just to go more into like following a art or music career in Romania. Have you ever. I think we went into this a little bit but could you tell us a bit more about barriers or obstacles you faced in pursuing the career in opera singing, maybe even like when you were a bit younger and less experienced.

A: Yeah, this is so stiff point, I am very disappointed with the Romanian educational system. I am very disappointed with the level, teachers, found themselves, and also then singers that think they are the, especially in an opera singer somehow there's this ego that it's bigger than anything and people think they are doing the most divine thing but they just don't know what they're doing

on the stage and then don't understand what music is and how to conduct a musical phrase from beginning to end with with the brakes as well with the pauses. So it's very frustrating for me that's why I decided to go out of Romania so my first frustration is the teachers that we have that are just students that have diplomas and are teaching, they have no stage experience. They are not able to teach you what this business, and work. Is actually about. And the sufficiency that the people have, you know, "I'm a teacher I'm staying here, and I'm the best." Second of all, um, it's interesting that in Europe. We are known as good voices and people that are like workers like we work a lot for this is maybe a thing that it's good for us because we know that we really have to work a lot in order to achieve something and to be... to receive a job, it's not only because I am Italian or I am French or I am German. We each have the luck of singing from time to time it's not always in their own language, which is actually extraordinary. It's something that a lot of us, we don't have that luxury, and it's even more work of learning the language. And then of course translating and stuff but just to feel the taste of the language and so on. So as a nation we want to work, we want to thrive, and so on. The other things... I think people just have too big egos, and they put this in the work, and they put their preferences before the art. I can be a... it goes for both, you can either be an amazing person in real life, but not be great artist, and having a lot of technical issues and so on. And, or being an absolutely bad person in real life, but be an amazing artist on the stage for example, and people mix this things and I think this is not very well.

L: Yeah, so a big thing that we were looking into for social media promotion is the fact that art in uh the work that you create is not the only thing that can make you successful but like the person that you are and who you are, maybe even online if you, if you try to engage with like your followers and just to be like more personable and just like nice in general I guess it's just helpful in gaining and gaining respect from, from people trying to admire your, your work, I guess. So it's not only the talent, it's, it's who you are, that can make you successful.

A: Yeah, yeah, that's that's for sure and in mine what I'm what I'm doing the most amazing thing is that you get to transform on the stage but you put things that are from inside of you. So you use everything, and it's just you can feel, You can feel the artist.

L: Yeah, that's awesome. Yeah. Art is all about feeling, feeling what someone's giving.

R: On that note, could you talk about the differences you've noticed between performing, you know like before, covid and everything. And now, during it, and how that's impacted. You know the in person performances right because those at pride, for the most part gone away maybe switch to like streaming the shows or whatnot.

A: Yes, of course. It's, it's hard to. It's hard not to realize like it's so easy to just feel how you are on stage with the public, watching you, and the emotions that you feel and the way that you are

able to sing and act with your colleagues and just not being afraid of dying by catching a virus that comes from a spit that is because we are singing and it's happening sometimes. So, yeah. Now I had a lot of zoom auditions. And, Of course, I don't like auditions anyways.

L: It's Definitely stressful.

A: Yeah, and it's it's a fake environment. It's the same with recordings. That's why it's I hate recordings, because when you are performing in a show, you have the story. You have the environment, the energy, the colleagues are there when you're singing an aria, and you're singing it for your lover or something you're just watching him you have a human being there there's, it's acting, it's normal. When you are auditioning or you're recording something. Oh, and you have the public that gives you energy and takes energy from you, it's an energy transfer, when you are recording or auditioning you you don't have that. And before you even had the pianist. Now you don't have even the pianist, you just have like a piano recorded on your phone, that you have to adapt. First of all, technically, musically speaking, and then you have not, not even this exchange of energy. And it's dry, it's, it's like, yeah, it's, it's not as beautiful It's not natural. So, it's not very fun. and performing streaming, we did coordinate something in my theater. We recorded a show, and it's like a recording the hallway was empty, with cameras so it's it's not the same you don't feel that that energy from the public.

L: Yeah. Because you're making a huge impact on on them. That's the goal. It's just like, then what you want them to feel your. Feel your music and as well.

A: They Give and they take. Yeah. And we get and we take it's the same thing is just this transfer it's very special and unfortunately we're not being in being able to feel it anymore.

L: How are the covid restrictions in Germany? Is it lifting at all? In the US it's not that great but I'm not sure how it is in Germany.

A: It's crazy in Germany because we have so many restrictions, and we are in lockdown, For how many months now? November, December. So, it's crazy yeah shops are closed. Of course, theaters museums, museums, everything is closed. They even did something that I didn't understand. In November, I think, yes. In November, they closed the theaters and everything, but they left the shops opened, and in the theater the whole season we created this way of performinA: we were performing with six meters distance between us when we were singing face to face and three meters. lateral I don't know how, in foot how many that is, sorry. And the public in a 1000 room capacity We, we got only 200 people that were staying with three meters. So, front, back and lateral and with the mask they were doing that. And people were coming. we had, I don't know how many shows and all the shows were sold out. So there were all the time these 200 people that are accepted to come there with a mask and stay there for one and a half

hours because the shows went smaller because we had no brakes and so on. And then you close that but you let the shops opened, where people are entering touching stuff, all the stuff and yeah. And people are like this and they're Sorry Sorry, and I found it very, very, you know, weird and not logical like

L: Yeah, it definitely doesn't sound organized.

A: Yeah, theatre were actually safe place, museums as well, like, people were not getting ill from the theaters actually. Yeah. Yeah, it's somehow there's this thing know that art it's not something that we, we cannot survive without. And I think people are really getting into this thing because, of course, we sing opera we want to do our job and they're opera people but just imagine not being able to watch your VMAs with your pop stars there are people that watch opera as we and young generation are walking, watching the MTVs, or the Grammy Awards, yeah what's different. But yeah, I don't know, it's just, unfortunately, is this idea of art not being essential

L: a big, a big thing we've been researching is like how big artists in Romania and like the culture of art I guess and just like the importance of art in general, globally, and how it like helps people psychologically like mentally. And like help like have healing abilities so a big reason why we, we want to promote the Royal foundation is so that more people are interested in art because it has like all these great qualities that you can take from it just by just by appreciating art, going to museums, things like that. So we've also been looking into online galleries and seeing if there's like any online platforms that hold galleries for museums or anything like that since there aren't that many performances or exhibits or anything.

A: Yeah, I think it's great that we were able to do this and there were opera broadcasting and trimmings and so on. But still it's not it's not the same as going there and receiving all the energy or the life vibrations which, which in classical music it's amazing you receive so many vibration from a whole orchestra, and people singing it's very nice feeling that you cannot. You just cannot feel from just hearing it through a speaker.

L: Ryan Did you have any other questions you want to ask.

R: Yeah, I have a question related to what we've been talking about. And you know, what do you think about, you know, once it's done, you know that's a bit of a lofty phrase. But what do you see the future of, you know, you know like the theater and music and that kind of stuff what you do. After it, you know, do you think you know streaming might still be very prevalent, and you might be getting more frequently miss out on you know having that sort of audience interaction or, what do you think?

A: To be honest, I don't know, because it is more comfortable to stay at home if you want to but the thing is in the opera world. People are also enjoying going to the opera because some of them are like, like to dress more extravagant and the opera world and going to do opera going have the champagne and the break, and just gossiping a bit and so on it's, it's more than just the stage people. It's like a ritual itself. So, from my point of view. I think people can't wait to come again and leave all this stuff it's like going to the normal concerts and just in general it's something that the online cannot give to you and I think we had enough of it. This year, so I think people will want to go back.

L: Especially waiting, and knowing that you can't do it right now. It's like the anticipation of when you're finally able to go and it'll be that much better. And that much better experience.

R: Sure.

L: Did you have before we end this interview is there anything else you wanted to tell us about the young talent program before we end any more comments about that.

A: No, I think it's an amazing program, um, I think they actually have, like, you know, teenagers coming to them. It's great that they're doing that but I don't think they are lacking talent. I think there are always young people, as you know, and in Romania. You don't have a lot of possibilities of being helped. Especially when you are in the art domain. So, this is definitely the most famous foundation and [unintelligible]. And, yeah, no, I think I think it's, it's great what they're doing and even when I was there. We needed to bring the... once again, the proof of the money was spent which I think is warranted because you keep track of people really investing the money in what they should invest which is the career. Yeah. Um, yeah, the mentors, people coming speaking with us just amazing. And the summer camp as well so it was pretty awesome.

L: I'm glad you got to experience that three years even That's awesome.

A: Me too. Me too.

L: All right, we appreciate meeting you. We'd love to hear your singing if you ever wanted to send us a clip, I'd love to hear it. I know that you, you don't want to send it until it's perfect so I completely understand that but in the future if you ever have a video,

A: too, but it's actually not posted by me so you can still find things

L: okay well that's good. So thank you, it was great to meet you I hope you feel better. I hope this passes soon, and have a great rest of your night.

A: Yeah, thank you. It was, it was great speaking with you guys and have a nice day.

Interview 5:

Interviewers: Chris (Conductor), Lexi (Notetaker)

Interviewee: Anonymous Current Member

C: Okay, fantastic. So just to learn a little bit about you, some demographic questions, um, where are you from?

A: I'm from Romania from Ploiesti but I live now in the capital of Romania, Bucharest, where I study music.

C: And so, obviously you're a current member of the young talents program. Is this your first time being a scholar and receiving this scholarship?

A: Yes, it's the first time, is the first time.

C: Okay, and what year are you in your studies and how old are you?

A: I'm in the first year of college, and I'm 19 years old right now.

C: Seems like you're about the same, I think. Lexi and I are like 21-22 so a very similar age range. And in our survey, you... I believe you specified that you're, you play the piano and your conductor, which is very cool I- before this I watched some of your videos on the piano and you're very talented. So I congratulate you. Very good job.

A: Thank you. Thank you. Yes, I studied piano and conducting it.

C: Nice. And how long have you been doing this type of music?

A: I studied classical music, like piano, from the age of six from six years old, and I didn't have any pause. In this time and conducting... actually conducting? This is my first year, like the first six months. This is the first six months.

C: Okay. Okay, so for this next portion of the interview will discuss some of your responses that you gave on the survey surrounding your social media usage and the way you promote your music on social media. So I know that you said that you like to use Facebook and Instagram and YouTube to show off, you know, your piano and the work that you do. How long have you been promoting yourself online?

A: I don't know if I ever started doing this, actually. I am very afraid of showing my videos online, because I think that it's an artistic mindset that you are very critical with ourselves. And

that's why, but I completed... Yes, your summary. I think last week, and I had the opportunity to make a video for, I don't know for this instance, and I promoted it online like Facebook, Instagram and YouTube because I think about this for while. Like, I have to promote myself more because we are in the area in the 2020-2021 in the, our lives are on social media. And we have to put it, because we are, we want to be known, like musicians.

C: Very true. And what kind of response Have you seen from people interacting with your videos on your pages?

A: Like, I received very good feedback. And it's very overwhelming, but I am very happy because musicians. The Act is good. Like, of course that's normal people's responses are very important but musicians' responses are very very important more important.

L: Understandable, I agree.

C: Do you feel more encouraged by the positive response you've gotten from people to put more of yourself online with your work?

A: Yes, yes. But I think that I have to do it in the same way like I have to study very good before doing this, not just putting anything.

C: Right. Of course, it makes sense. Great. So now we'll shift to questions related around the foundation and the program itself. So in your survey, you indicated that you heard about the young talents program through another person. Can you go into more detail about what that was and how you heard about it?

A: Yes, I have a, I have a friend who studies clarinet, and he's one year younger than me. And he participated in the program last year, and we met this summer and spoke about it, and spoke... he told me the benefits about this program and I think "why not?"

C: That makes a lot of sense.

L: we actually talked to someone yesterday that played the clarinet, and was in the program last year, is your friend's name, [REDACTED]?

A: Emanuel Rupa, yes.

L: We interviewed him yesterday, that's awesome!

C: Man, small world, crazy. That's really cool though! Yeah, he's very nice, very talented.

A: Yes, very talented.

C: Fantastic. Okay. So you heard about it from him. What was the process that you had to go through when applying for the, for the program?

A: I had to record one video, like 10 minutes of playing. And that was the toughest part, let's say, and that's, that these, there were some interviews about what we want to do in our next five years and things like this with our career, and that's all.

C: Did you feel that the program was very selective in who they were choosing? Like, did you feel like it was a lot of competition for your application?

A: Yes, yes.

C: From some other people who we've talked to, they've also said similar things that the program gets a lot of applicants and a lot of very talented people. And there's a lot of steps in the application process.

L: Was this your first year trying to apply?

A: Uh, no this is my second trying, I tried once before when I was 15.

C: Were you also studying and doing piano and when you applied originally the first time?

A: Can you repeat that question?

C: Were you also playing piano and studying, that type of music The first time you applied?

A: Yes, yes I studied this type of, this type of music from when I was six years old.

C: And so, um, before you came into the program what were some of your expectations from what you've heard about it or from some things that you knew that you'd be doing with the program.

A: First thing is that I, I knew that the program helped younger students financially, like music is very expensive, and they help us pay for some master classes or some competitions abroad. And this is the first thing But the second thing I think it's more important that we can afford. In Bucharest a lot in some cultural things like the Philharmonic at the theater, the opera. It's very important for us as we are a young.

C: Of course, and it helps you guys to gain exposure and to gain those like, professional experiences of being a part of those groups.

A: Yeah, yes.

C: So we were, we were informed that the program started very recently so like I believe it was March when you guys found out that You got the scholarship. I know this was very recent, about a month ago. Have you had any experiences, so far that you'd like to share with us from being in the program?

A: Yes. I had, will have an. We will have an. I'm sorry, I forgot one word, like when you have a concert, how do you say we have a concert. I think that in. In May, I will send you a link if you want.

C: Sure.

L: Yeah.

A: Fast. Fast things, we had last week one master class with very good teacher from Bucharest, and we spoke about how this pandemic situation affected us, the musicians. And we really had a debate about a lot of music things. And she had us see that it's not so bad, as it, as it may seem, because people might want to listen to us more after this pandemic. I think that people are saturated with pajamas, and screens.

C: Yeah. Yeah. People will be more likely to go out and, you know, see a performance. It's a very good point, I hadn't really considered that. then is there anything upcoming that besides your, the concert in may, like how often do you guys meet and have these master class sessions?

A: I think that's about once, or it's a bit that... Wait, wait I have to formulate in my head. We don't have, like, a program. It just happens. It may be like once in a week, once or twice in a month it is not a program.

C: Okay. Prior to being a part of the program, Did you have any goals for what you'd hope to get out of it, and by the end something you'd hope to accomplish?

A: Yes, I really want to participate at [unintelligible] this year in July. With usually first time and have a concert there. And I want to participate also in a contest in Holland. You know musical classical music contest for pianists. things that are very, very good for us, because this is, this is how we get exposure.

C: Right, which of course makes sense. That sounds very good I wish you the best of luck on that. That's really cool.

A: Thank you.

C: So I know you haven't done a whole lot with the program yet but do you have plans to apply next year for the same scholarship? If you could again.

A: I want, that the first four years of my college to be with a lot of experiences abroad. Like, I have all the best information in my current country at the college, but it's very important for me to, to be connected with the whole Europe or world in a classical music way. And that's what I want from this program to help me financially, get there.

C: Understandable. That's good. So, so before you mentioned that you're in your first year in college and you want to have a good variety of experiences, which I think is a great goal to have and that's really important, especially for an artist like yourself, but could you talk more about maybe for people studying art, some of the financial obstacles they may face in trying to pursue a career?

A: The first is that travelling is expensive, master classes with a lot of teachers are expensive and this is normal, it's going to be expensive because these masters, get a lot of work and studied a lot to get there. But for our financial situation in Romania, It's very hard. And this is the reason why a lot of students... make better decisions like quitting because it's impossible. And that's sad.

L: By quitting, You mean like artists don't pursue their dreams because of the financial situation that Romania, Romania in terms of getting a career?

A: Yes.

L: Yeah, yeah, we were trying to look into that. It's really sad. It's pretty common here as well for artists not to pursue the career just because of like, the stigma around being an artist, and it's sad, because art is just very important to me, and to Chris.

A: Yes, of course. And there are parents with... I don't know how to say closed mind. I don't know if that?

L: I agree

A: And say to their children, you know, maybe you, you should be a lawyer and you should be a doctor, You can have a good salary and you will be okay for the rest of your life. Don't be an artist.

C: do you feel that young artists may not be like as respected from more traditionalists because of their field of study?

A: Yes. Yes, of course. We should get more more respect on our name. We should respect all the masteries and all the, all the things.

C: Cultures are a very important part of, of a society. It's sad to see the the ways that art is pushed aside in a way, not just in the US here in Romania, but just globally.

A: I think that there's. Yes, it's a big program because education and the culture is, I think that these two aspects are the most important thing in a country. You can destroy a nation just because it's uneducated, or anything. This happens in Romania, in the US, or worldwide.

C: Yeah, it's a hard issue to solve and people need to understand the importance that art has on a culture and as a whole, you know.

L: Yeah, because using your art, like when you're performing, or if the visual artists, put their own exhibit that the public gets to see them and get to experience that. And we've researched that art has a lot of healing properties and like helps people psychologically especially young people who are from like, lower income communities. It helps them with like, their psychological issues and things like that.

A: Yes.

C: And so. Would you be able to, like, study music at your college without the help of the Foundation and like the money that they're giving you to like further your studies?

A: Yes, I mean, I, I would be able to do my studies at the college but just that. it is not enough for an artistic career.

C: Very true.

L: Yeah, because this program is giving you the all these opportunities, correct? to travel to have these opportunities abroad, which is very impactful, I assume, in an artist's like career.

A: Yes, and meeting people that might help us.

C: Yeah, and making those connections. Lexi, Were there other topics you wanted to..?

L: Hold on, let's see.

C: Okay. I think we're just about gone through all of the main things that we wanted to ask you about.

L: We've talked about the education system in Romania with a couple other people. What's kind of your, your view on the education system in Romania?

A: Yes. Very sorry now that I don't have all the vocabulary to say what I think. there are good things that happen, and they're very bad things. Like I said, not pointing to culture and the education, we just go at school, and get the notes, and that's all. Without taking information in our head for the whole life, let's say, it's just the thing for the, for the grades. Having a 10, and having a deeper mind, that's all and after that you see that so that society doesn't work because all the people in all the important functions are just people with diplomas, but with not no information, you know. And if you want to make things very good you have to pay because teachers are not paid well in our country, and they make lessons particularly. But this is for a cost. And it's hard, it's a little bit hard. But, if we had some people up there in the government who would make some better decisions about our education. It'd be better. But our, our luck is that... my luck is that I had very good teachers that would share information for free. And this is what this was my luck.

C: That's true. Yeah, I would say that that's a very similar issue especially in the US with the way that the education system is treated and, like, and teachers' pay and stuff like that so it's really important when you get a teacher who cares that much to be able to share with you, everything that they can and to really put in that extra effort to make it valuable for the students.

A: Of course.

C: Did you go to a music, high school or was it more of like a general one?

A: Yes, like I said, I studied music from six years old and I studied in a, in a music school like from the first grade.

C: Okay, wow. Yeah, something we've learned from talking with other people from the program is that they all attended like schools for like specific studies which is a little different from how it is in the US, where it's much more common to have like your younger schooling to be generalized, then you don't actually focus in on your studies until you go to university so, yeah.

L: I like that idea.

A: Yes, it's better because you can do, like, what you want from from when when you are a kid, from a young age. and it will because it's not just music like we are not, you have said math and other things. You just study and produce in class music.

C: Of course. One of our goals, overall for this project is to help the foundation reach more young artists in in need of financial help. What are ways that you think the foundation can do a better job of reaching these people?

A: I think that, honestly, the foundation, make a really good job. The foundation, that's the only job here, of course. I don't know if that... of course there are things to improve, but what you say like making more people to know about the foundation in its benefits, i don't know it can maybe more promoting on social media but he's promoting on social media to maybe a little bit more.

L: Right. Okay, yeah, that's our plan. Um, would you say that the program is really well known in Romania, or at least in the Bucharest art community, or even art community in Romania?

A: Classical music is not well known in Romania. So the program is not well known in Romania, but in classical music circles. And in our world, let's say, it is very known.

C: One of the things that some of the program leaders were telling us, we were talking with them is that they are very well known in these specific communities, and they're trying to expand their reach to find people who just, just to broaden their net and get more applicants and try to reach the people who haven't yet heard about them. So, yes. Is there anything else you'd like to share with us that we haven't asked you, so far that you think would be beneficial to know?

A: Um, what, what do you think about social media and in the relation with, with artists like the thing that we should post ourselves a little bit more or or not, or what, what is your opinion about that?

L: So our project is just basically looking into how artists can gain a larger audience through social media, whether it be just sharing their posts, sharing their music and gaining followers and getting people interested in their music or with artists who like are selling paintings or drawings or whatever they do to gain or gain more followers through social media, so we just kind of been looking at how social media to help artists. So I guess we're. We think it does but like we're, we're trying to be neutral and seeing what people's opinions in Romania are in regards to social media. And then we artists use it and see if Social media is as beneficial as it is to people in the US, and kind of just compare that I guess, and see if it just as beneficial in Romania. And our

ultimate like deliverable and like what we want to get out of this project is to figure out a plan for the young talents program and royal foundation to promote themselves and ultimately gain a larger audience so we've just been gaining data on those topics and figuring things out.

A: I see. So, my, my last question is if I can help you in any other way.

C: I think this interview as a whole was very helpful and...

L: I maybe have one more question. Let's see. Have you seen artists like on social media or other platforms on social media, gain success through those like start at some point and then gain larger success by promoting themselves on social media.

A: This is an interesting point of discussion. I have a friend, his name is [unintelligible], in his 30s that he's a jazz musician. And in this whole pandemic period He posted a lot, a lot of his music he's very good, very, very good. But at one point, and he had a lot of likes, shares, everything, everything. But, at one point, he stopped. because yes for his ego and for his mind is this was very good, but it didn't help him financially, of course that we we do our art for for the soul and for things more deep than the money, but we also have to eat.

L: Yeah.

A: That was his point.

C: Understandable. It's definitely hard to...

L: Yeah, I feel like it's definitely harder for musicians, rather than visual artists to gain a larger following on social media just because, or at least gain financial help through social media just because visual artists can post stuff and like people can buy their stuff but I'm, I'm assuming with with musicians, they post their work and maybe they want to get noticed to like be put in some sort of performance, or concert so that's, to me in my, in my thoughts that would be more difficult.

A: Yes.

L: Have you ever gotten some sort of gig or anything, through posting your work?

A: Actually, yes. I had a little time in the high school when I played jazz. And it's more easy way to, to have gigs like posting on social media. But if we speak about Classical music, if, let's say you posted a video on Facebook. Now, the Carnegie Hall or the Liverpool orchestra will not call you oh I liked your facebook can you play for us. This will not happen.

C: That's true. Likewise, there's definitely a difference between these like higher institutions and the way that they find artists and.

A: Yes, yes.

C: Lexi, Was there anything else you want to add? as a very good questions at the end.

L: I think I don't think I have any more questions, did you have anything else to add [REDACTED].

A: No, no, I really enjoyed interviewing.

L: Yeah, we're, we were very interested in hearing what you had to say. And we were also very grateful we got to see some of your work. You're very talented, and we wish you the best of luck for your future career and university endeavors.

A: Thank you a lot.

L: Yeah, and also enjoy the rest of the program. And I hope that you gain a lot of experience through that.

A: Yes, thank you.

C: Take care, [REDACTED]. Thank you so much for meeting with us.

Interview 6:

Interviewers: Ryan (Conductor), Madeline (Notetaker)

Interviewee: Anonymous Alumni

R: Begin the recording. You'll probably see it like at the top left or something.

A: Yeah.

R: You have the right to review and or delete any responses later by emailing us, the research team, through the initial email where we send you the correspondence. If this is requesting, we'll remove from the notes anything you wish to be removed. Do you have any questions about this research?

A: Yeah, I'm just curious what's gonna be the result of their research and if they're going to be some useful information for me, I would like to see it and to use it and to. Yeah, I don't know just to see what you find out.

R: Of course yeah, yeah, Yep. And then and then one final question and we can begin. Do you agree to participate in this interview?

A: Yes.

R: Alright, delightful. Yep, so now we can initially begin.

M: Yeah, and we can explain a little bit too about what the outcomes of this project are going to be before we begin. What we're looking to do is basically compile a promotional plan for the Royal Foundation by speaking with past students and looking into different like techniques for social media promotion, but we also are finding things that will probably be useful for individual artists as well.

A: OK.

M: So our research will be published online at the end of this study. So if you'd like, we can send you our finished like project when we're done.

A: Yeah, yeah, sure it would be great. Yeah yeah yeah Great.

R: Awesome Yep yeah then that can absolutely be done. Yeah, I think Madeline summed it up pretty well. OK, so First off can you tell us just a little bit about your background like where you're from, how you heard about, you know the Royal Margaret Foundation, that kind of stuff.

A: Yeah, so I was born in the Republic of Moldova. It's just the country just near Romania, in Kischner, in the capital and. I studied piano there since 7 but in the beginning it was just a hobby. I graduated from high school in Moldova, then went to Romania to study first in Cluj Napoca. It's the second, I think, biggest city after Bucharest. Yeah, and uh and so on. And finally I ended [up] doing my master's in Bucharest, where yeah, where one of my friends, also from fMoldova, a cellist. [Friends name] Constantine borodin. Yeah, I also remember he was, I think even twice or three times, uh, he received this scholarship. And yeah, he told me about the scholarship and the opportunities and so on. And I said, yeah, and I think that was my last year when I could apply because I was already, I think 25 or 24. I don't remember now. Yeah anyways the last one. Yeah, and yeah, I was curious. I applied and played at the audition and they took me and so. Yeah, that how [the] thing started. Yeah.

R: Awesome awesome. Let's see so. Can you explain a little bit more of you know your thoughts about the program. Like even a little more how you discovered it, how you know how much you feel the program is well known in Romania. More about that.

A: Yeah, I don't know if the program is well known in Romania, actually also because it was basically maybe it's not like that. Actually, it might be actually, but I think the idea of the project and of the foundation is to focus just on a specific, uh people to say so yeah, so it's basically as I know this the scholarship I got was just for artists. Yeah, for musicians, painters and composers and so on. So, but I think even not every artist from Romania and Moldova knows about that. So I, uh, I think there is a bit more to work about because I also told some of my friends about the foundation and they didn't know before that. So yeah, and in this direction I think there's a bit more to work.

R: Interesting, OK. So you said you were accepted when you were 24 right as sort of, you know, towards the end you know how would you feel about the whole application process like? How are you feeling throughout It.

A: I think it was quite fine. Uh, the application is quite easy and you have basically to play. There is a jury who's listening and you must just be prepared to play. I mean to the practice of course, and, uh. Yeah, and the jury as I remember were quite good musicians, so people who you can trust you know that's important. And they're meaning. And the yeah, it is I think yeah, it's also a bit. I was of course a bit nervous because yeah, I wanted to get in and so on. But yeah, in the end it was. It was quite normal. I mean not nothing out of the ordinary. For musicians, it's quite an ok thing to do.

R: Sure, sure, yeah. Yeah, so then, when you're in the program, you know what were some of your experiences that you found, either to be, you know that you rather enjoyed you, thought

weren't helpful. Anything of the sorts.

A: Yeah, so basically. Yeah, of course I. I just used the money they gave to me. That's the first useful thing I still have look even here that I don't know. You can if you can see it. Yeah scores. Uh, a lot of scores from that come from the money that foundation gave me. And, uh, yeah, that that's one thing. And also a really good nice thing was the summer school. I think they call it we had in a really nice place in Romanian in the mountains. Actually in the mountains. Yeah we were, uh yeah, relaxing, chilling. The weather was really nice as I remember the place was really nice and also communicating with people. There were like some people came to talk with us also from a woman I still we still are in touch from but in no. Cars management, some PR uh management from Renault came also to talk with us, so that was quite useful also. Also we had the concerts, they were organizing the concerts. But yeah, at this point I think there were also maybe a bit more to work because the ladies we were working with like who are managing the project were not musicians and for them it was quite hard to put us together. You know it was like, uh like, come on guys your musicians come and just somehow stick together and and play something we have to make a concert and it was quite hard. I don't know if you are musicians. Do you play an instrument or? No, OK anyway. Yeah, so the idea was like they were really different instruments and to put them together was quite hard because it's really hard to find pieces written for a piano and cello xylophone and this clarinet. I don't think they even exist. Such things, you know and we were. Yeah. We were dealing with this and the yeah on in this way. It was quite, yeah maybe complicated, But anyway we managed to do it. Yeah. And also the concerts they were organizing. Every year, and I think it's the birth of King Michael. They do it in autumn if I'm not. If I'm not mistaken. Yeah, that that's also a really really nice concert and a really nice thing they do. They also collect money and yeah, that was the concert I also met uh Her Majesty. Yeah Margaret, so yeah, that was also a really nice thing. From that I remember so far.

R: Awesome, so when you're talking about sort of the difficulty of putting the people together, you know, musically that's specifically the people from the Royal Margaret Foundation, right?

A: Yeah.

R: Ok. Yeah, it's it's.

A: Just because just you know just because there are first of all, there are different instruments. Yeah, so they don't choose like normally when you would go to some master class or you would choose like OK we need like 2 violins, 1 Viola and one cello. So we need to pick these four instruments but they don't. They don't go don't they don't go this way and also the thing that there's really a huge difference. Between ages you know, so I was me and my friend, the cellist, the guy we were I think almost the oldest from the program. And there are also kids. I mean yeah

teenagers, so it was quite complicated to play with them because we are yeah, still different levels you know? And uh, yeah, that you know to put different instruments different levels together it might be complicated sometimes.

R: Of course, yeah. Yeah, that makes total sense. So you know were there any experiences you know that you enjoyed in the program that you didn't expect or you didn't anticipate what's going to be sort of what you signed up for per se. That either wasn't mentioned initially or promoted through their social media at all.

A: Umm? No, I don't think so. They explained to me just from the beginning and also my friend told me that described for this foundation from this yeah, and you must go to several. You must participate in several concerts and master classes. You have to go there, so that's just that's just the only thing they ask too. So I was just in. So I understood that I had to do that so nothing also to complain about.

R: And in your time there, did you learn any like professional skills you know, like email writing, drafting a resume and that sort of stuff?

A: All these kinds of things. Yeah yeah, but the one quite useful was this. The woman I told you who came from I don't know from the management, she was talking to us. The idea is I've already met the founder of a classical music festival in my home, you know, and I already got in touch with these things, but I remember when this lady came to that camp summer school and she started to talk, "look like you have to understand that music is still a product, so you have to sell it somehow". And I knew it and I totally agree with that. But they were like kids or not, even kids teenagers like I don't know, 14/15 years old that were like "hey we're not the product. Yeah, no way. What do you mean? The music is not product. We do this from soul" and I was like hey guys yeah just chilling. It's about bringing people to the concerts you know "no no way no way" you know yeah so in this direction I was uh I was just confirming the things I knew. And uh, yeah. Yeah. Other professional skills. Yeah, I don't remember any other professional skills. No no. But that just that that meeting was really nice. And also you had the professional music skills, but now nothing about social media as I remember nothing about. Yeah, making a CD or building some sort of page and so on.

R: Uh-huh. And so by the end of the program you know, did you make any sort of professional connections like I know like did you meet anyone through the program that you know beyond it? You sort of, you know, used you know made new connections through.

A: Yeah yeah, sure, sure I. I got yeah we I am still in touch with some of the people from there. Also a teacher, a violinist. We became friends and then I even started, I even tried to there was in that year was the girl was a graphic designer and we tried to make a I mean to collaborate so she

can so she would make a poster for one of our concerts. Yeah. And, uh, yeah we tried. We tried this. The styles were a bit different yeah and then But anyway. Uh, so that's one and also a singer from the project. We are still in touch and are still friends and I and I also follow some of our sculptors from the project that were really really nice and amazing and really talented. Yeah yeah not kids. I call them kids, teenagers and I just followed them and then yeah just looking forward to make something together.

R: Yeah, that's really nice. Yep. Other people who have talked to you know said it's sort of like a family so it's nice to hear people share a lot of the same sentence.

A: Exactly, yeah.

R: Uhm, OK, so have you ever shared like publicly or through social media that you were a part of this program we're trying to-

A: Yes. Just when I got in I wrote it that I posted on Facebook and just posted the logo and said like now I became [part of the program] and I got a huge feedback. I'm quite active actually on social media on Facebook and when I posted that I received a lot of comments and reactions to the post so.

R: Awesome, have you posted anything about it since then or was it just kind of that first time and that was it?

A: I posted that and also. Posted yeah, a few photos from that, again, summer school because it was so nice. Yeah we went on mountains and took some pictures. Also wrote about that like with the cello cellist friend. So we are by the we are at the and the summer school so. Yeah. Basically, that's I think that's all.

R: Awesome awesome. All right, uhm? So now we're going to kind of shift away from your specifically the time in the program. Where is there any like general comments or maybe questions I sort of didn't ask you about the program that you wanted to, you know? Talk about, maybe get out of your system, any gripes, or you know anything of the sorts.

A: Like you, you mean like to say something more about the program, what you didn't ask, or.

R: Just if you have any general comments or anything you think we should know about it.

A: OK. Yeah, I don't know maybe. Maybe it would be great. What I tried to do when I was there as I told you I am, I am the I founded this festival, in Moldova and by the way, the cellist who has who I was with in the project, is also a part of the festival I founded. And then we tried to

make them to make the foundation or to ask them for help, or at least some sort of support. You know, just you know just the thing that they like morally or I don't know. Support us. That still means a lot when you go to search for a sponsor and you say like look, the foundation is supporting us like morally and we will have their logo on our like. Yeah, what they call it. Yeah yeah like on Facebook and so on and the promotional things that helps a lot and I tried to do this kind of partnerships but I didn't manage. They said like "look we have our own things to do so we don't really do that, you know". And, uh, yeah, but. Yeah, I think it would be great. They follow up the artists they supported so they know what level are they. You know because maybe yeah, maybe some of them continue in a good way. Maybe some of them continue like in a brilliant way. And and some or some of them need a bit even more support maybe. Yeah, yeah, yeah yeah, because yeah, you go out and for example, now I'm in Austria doing another master and then yeah maybe they would be like it'll be like great like to to have this relationship building on like "hey, Where are you now? What are you doing? Do you need any sort of help? Maybe or like support again?" And it's not all the time, just financial, you know. Also, with some connections you know helping with some connections would be also great.

R: Yeah, sure yeah, that makes total sense. Is there any reason you know you're no longer in Romania doing, you know? In terms of like art.

A: Yeah I graduated the Masters then I went home to understand what's going on with my life and I was thinking either I go back to Bucharest and try to do things in Bucharest because I already had some connections and there's some people there. And either I tried this Uh, to apply for these Masters here in Austria, that was at the beginning of the last year. And yeah, then the Corona came and I was home that whole year and in Moldova and I made the admissions exams online at this University and I got in. So yeah, I basically started from the summer semester like from the beginning of March I'm here so yeah, that's that I don't know if that's a reason why I'm not. But Yeah look yeah Bucharest is I mean is maybe not just the best city I would like to to live in. Yeah maybe maybe because of that I'm not there.

R: Sure, sure. Anyway, can you elaborate more on that? Whether it be sort of in terms of connections or art or any other reasons?

A: Sorry?

R: Could you elaborate more on maybe why you wouldn't wait? Pick? You know, maybe somewhere else over Bucharest.

A: Why I picked this place instead of Bucharest or what do you mean?

R: Yeah, yeah, just talking about any reasons why you know you've sort of left the Bucharest

area.

A: Oh OK, yeah. Yeah, I mean it's more I think of the personal reason. It's not like because of the musicians or stuff, just because it's a quite crowded city and loud one and, uh, messy and yeah. I tend to like now more like peaceful and chill places and The Yeah, but yeah, you can find that things also in Bucharest. It was on my optional list, but yeah. Yeah, that's just it. It just happened so yeah, but maybe in the future one day I would move there back. I don't know yeah But anyway that like the music I had a lot of a lot of good friends musicians. We had so like nice group. And we were, yeah, hanging out, helping each other and they were quite nice. There were also places where you could play because that's one of the reasons, for example why I left Cluj, the other city where I was studying because there were not, and it's simply not enough places or holes with the piano where you can play, you know, and then Bucharest. There are a few. There are many more than. So you can find a place there. Yeah, so basically that's it.

R: Awesome, thank you. Yeah so tell us more about the festival in Moldova you help organize.

A: Oh yeah, it's yeah. It's a project called festival. It was founded like five or six years ago I think. Yeah, I think they were now six years ago. It's called Moldo crescendo [Not sure if that is right]. Uh, and uh, yeah, it was an idea. We were few friends who graduated the same high school in [some place] and then we all left to study abroad. And then during the summer Holidays when we came home, I said like, OK, let's play because yeah, we are musicians and we like music and let's play home for our people and and it started like a kind of a joke or just an experiment like let's say how is it going and it was going really well. Like the feedback was really great. People were like really happy. We're doing this and we are coming with high standards in music. You know we tried to bring the best from the school we're learning because and most of them were really and still are really really good musicians and we were proud to do that. So yeah, and we had like so far, we had five additions of the festiva. The six was supposed to be in the last year, but yeah. We had different ideas so every time the idea of the festival is a bit different. So once we play in the city for that idea then the second time there's another festival we could go in the villages and then once we were also playing in Romania. Then in the biggest cities of Romania and Moldova. So yeah. And yeah, that's I was even. Yeah, I was trying to. I was thinking about organizing a concert where we could invite Her Majesty Margaret to come to Moldova. Because yeah, that's you know. Basically, that's the idea that the Big Romania, the place, the Kingdom of Romania to call. So it has also Moldova. Part of it, you know. So we still have people who like the monarchy and who think yeah that so. I don't know where was the last time when she was in Moldova, I think that was a lot of years ago. I'm not even sure she was in Moldova. Right, but I might be mistaken, yeah? So that's that's the idea and we just try to play classical music and to bring it closer to the people. So people understand it's nice music and you can like it and listen to it if you understand it.

R: Yeah for sure. Yeah, it's super interesting. We're looking at the page so it's nice to learn a little bit about it as well through that.

A: Oh really? Are you on Facebook?

R: Yeah, Yep.

A: Oh yeah, yeah you can see that there's a last project we did last year just at the end of day with better than like they're free videos we did. It's a project and there are also subtitles in English, so you can like see what I'm talking about and that also it was like that last year was a better year and this is how we parted that we make there with I mean yeah.

R: Yeah, awesome. So could you talk a little bit about, you know how you sort of use social media to promote this festival?

A: Yeah, I just post things on Facebook. I was quite active since a while, even before starting the festival. And you know I write my opinions, you know, even if you go on my personal page the Last Post I wrote like 2 days ago I think was just about Moldova. It's a post where guide and economist talks about our country, and I know some of my opinions. So it has almost nothing to do with music, but it's about education and the thing that Moldova doesn't really invest that much in education and culture. And Yep, and people gather, you know, because I think one of the problems of the musicians. That maybe their social media life is just about the thing they do. You know they post just about music and just about concerts. Even if they post because there are a lot of people that don't do that. They simply don't like it or they don't know how to do it. And you know, the only thing they can post. It's like look, I'm practicing or look ahead at concert. Sometimes it's useful, but sometimes what I understood is that I have to bring more people to. There is a guy who I was like if you'd see that [unsure]. One guy commented like yeah, yeah, you're right, you're right A:ia one day I would come to your concert to support the thing you do. So yeah, that wasn't the goal of that post. But as you can see, people who know you and then they're like OK, look, this is the guy who I also like. I'm a part of an organization from Moldova who plants trees, you know, and I'm managing, and we're doing this social thing for them. Planting trees, events and people know me also from there. So when there is a concert, they're like, oh look, this guy who's planting trees like who's this guy who's not? You know who cares about the life in Moldova, it's playing a concert. Let's just go listen to him already. Yeah, so that helps in a way. Yeah, but yeah, I'm not that active or I'm maybe I'm not that good on Instagram. And I tried to see what's going on TikTok because everybody's talking about that yeah what I saw so far was like I don't know I'm just for me it's Yeah it was like yeah, you know. As I saw some kids you know like on TikTok and they were super mega antisocial like Hey what's up then leave us alone we're in TikTok you know. And uh I tried to see if I, like a musician, can go there and if there is a necessity and there is some people who watch something longer than six

seconds, or I don't know how that works in TikTok. But what I know is they're really short data. And Yeah, I'm just I would be curious if my because I searched for some musicians or at least by search for the hashtag classical music and I didn't find anything related to what I do. Yeah, so. I would be curious what other platforms maybe? Are good.

R: Yeah, yeah for sure. So, are you familiar with any of the differences in how like you know, people who know who are more visual artists promote themselves versus how a musician has to try to promote themselves?

A: I didn't hear the beginning of the question.

R: Oh yeah, no problem, just can you speak about the differences between how yourself as a musician versus like a visual artist would have to go about promoting themselves.

A: I'm not, uh, I'm not the good guy to talk about that. I'm not the specialist in this field. Yeah, what I like about Instagram that's the thing that visual artists can promote themselves really good on Instagram and also on social media. All kinds of social media because yeah, being an artist you can sell your paintings from being in Moldova and selling worldwide and me as a musician Yeah, I can post things on Instagram. People from US from Australia from Japan can hear them on Instagram. But I yeah I don't know when I will go with concerts to US or to Australia so. People say Oh yeah, and I saw this guy on Instagram and now he goes to his concert. So basically musicians, as for me, I mean I'm not an International musician yet. So yeah, I'm doing this more of the local promotion of so. Even that's why yeah, all my posts are in Romanian. I write in Romanian. And yeah, I'm not really going like posting in English so everybody understands because yeah, mostly there are people just from Romania and Moldova following me, yeah, but yeah as a non visual artist I think that they should use more the Instagram.

R: That's super interesting. Thank you for your input. So can you talk about you know your experiences with like having to do with like possibly hiring agents or having to interact with agents in the music business?

A: You know, I, I'm thinking about that. Uh, one of my friends is now part of an, uh, management like artist management agency or something like that. Uh, in [some place] there are a lot of musicians, a lot of very good musicians, so it's quite hard to get in and that's one of the problems and one of the things I'm thinking about now. Uh, yeah. Once I was 12, uh, another master class in here in Austria and a guy from such an agency came to talk to us and he told us look, look that you know, nowadays there are a lot of musicians, really good musicians and that there and some agencies, and they usually these agencies, pick just the best and the highest with like the highest ranked musicians. So if you want to come in such an agency, you should be first, really, really good, and the second you already must have like a your followers like basically

your followers. You know, like when you come first to an agency and you are like 20 or 25. Like 25 might be too late and they like are checking also where did you play before? What's your audience? Who's following you on Instagram? How many followers do you have? And yeah, here in Vienna like people are posting him like hey why do you post so much on Instagram? Yeah you, you must have followers because the [fill harmony?] wants to invite you to concerts. They also look at that you know, how many followers you have. So yeah, I find that a bit. It's quite impossible if you're not the Prodigy. It's quite impossible to get in these agencies, at least big ones you know, because yeah, the small ones where you just pay them so they kind of in so they can be in touch with other philharmonics. I don't know how would that work. But. Yeah, I guess. Maybe I should give them a try.

R: Yeah, would you say that having an agency is, you know necessary for any level of success? Or you know, I mean, I guess any level of success is kind of big, but. You know, do you find that you know people who do have agencies? Do they have better connections with all these philharmonics and are able to get in more or. Right? You know any thoughts about that kind of thing?

A: I think it should be like that. That's the reason why somebody would go in an agency. But I don't know how it really works. And then yeah I don't know because there are also this I think this private management?. Yeah I mean. People who manage yeah hold it, hold it yeah, so you don't necessarily have to go in an agency there. Theres also private people who do that. Uh. But yeah, basically I think it's there days that you don't really have time, you know, yeah. This is like what I can do and for example some other friends can't like do the music thing and do the organizing thing in the same time. Because and this is also not good for me because when I'm doing the organizing thing then I'm not playing piano so good. And when I focused totally on the piano then the organizing thing and the social media and everything goes down now and. Yeah, but yeah, one should definitely do things in this direction. If he or she can't do that, maybe then they must like, hire somebody and this is what I told some of my friends who are like "Yeah I don't like to post on Facebook again". Just if you don't like people, just hire somebody so they do that for you because you need that social interaction with people. Trust him. Yeah. Yeah. I don't know if that answers your question.

R: Yeah, absolutely yeah. That's exactly what I was looking for. So could you talk about how like, in the past year or so, COVID-19 has sort of impacted either you know how you post on social media or how you sort of, you know, the events you've tried to host. You know any struggles. You sort of faced along the way.

A: Yeah, basically I didn't have what to post. There were not so many concerts, even though in Moldova the restrictions were quite mild for a while. So we could do some events. But yeah, basically regarding the music thing. I didn't post that much. I tried to do some live videos, some

live things on Facebook. At the beginning it was quite interesting, but then everybody was doing this so there were like hundreds of musicians, hundreds of live videos on Facebook and Instagram. So you know the views went really down because yeah everybody just chose and it was so hard to keep somebody watching your video and not other. you know? And then yeah it was and it still is quite complicated and the only thing we do just to wait when this ends.

R: Do you think any of these sort of practices like you know, like streaming, will you know, persist? After all these restrictions and Covid has sort of gone away?

A: Yeah, that's a good question. Uh, I don't know it will come 100% sure that a lot of musicians this year understood Uh, the necessity of having like good quality. How would you say like good quality videos and content? Yeah, that's the word. Good quality content on YouTube or on Internet because like if you search before where 99% of the videos on YouTube made by people from schools or University were just filming the phone. You know, just in a standing position from you know, just one angle and no microphone and just posted that. You know basic really really raw things on YouTube and gathering like 105 views you know. And then this year they was like. OK maybe we should like make our content also more interesting. So this is how, for example, that videos on my page appeared. There were like a really professional video team working on that and sound. And yeah, so for sure, people will still do that. But I think, or at least I hope that when this will end when the pandemic will end, people would like to go to concerts and not to still stay home. And yeah and listen again and again online things, because then that's not music. What music is about?

R: For sure, yeah, that's I think that's very well said. Let's see a question I have. It's actually about a response you put in this survey.

A: OK.

R: You know our question was do you have any further thoughts, thoughts about social media you know and you said you know social media you think social media is a tool and it can be useful or harmful. Can you talk about some of the potentially harmful effects it may have?

A: Yeah, I think I also said after that that the harmful things is like this kind of depression that a lot of teenagers and not just teenagers have when going on Instagram and you see like I don't know who like Kim Kardashian. Having 2,000,000 followers, you know? And you are an artist who paints or who plays or who sings and then you are. You have just 100 or 2000 you know followers as I do. And if you're not really strong, I think you might get really depressed. You know, because yeah, you know. There is somebody doing almost nothing and showing parts of their bodies and receiving such a huge feedback and somebody working and So that's that, I think that's quite harmful. That's quite. Yeah, not really good for somebody who is, you know,

evolving and who's growing and who must understand? OK, what should I do? Should I invest in the thing I like to do? And should they pay interesting or should I just take some, you know. Pictures and without clothes on me, and that will have more effect than working, huh? And that, that's what a lot of musicians do. You know, it's way much harder to play a veteran Sonata, or Mozart or any other composer. You know you have to practice a lot. And it's much, much easier than just to pick despacito and to play it on the piano. And everybody is like oh oh despacito, that's so nice. Let's share this now and you receive hundreds of these. Yeah, so yeah, that's why I'm thinking also the thing that we spend I spent at least way too much time on this, and, uh, that's also harmful, at least for me, but. You sometimes you can't really stop doing that, you know. It's also really necessary. You're used to check all these things. Things, and you're also these debates. You know what I'm seeing now, and even this year where, like Skyrocketing debates about covid and vaccines and everything you know and you spend hours reading or writing it, that's also harmful, I think. Yeah so.

R: Yeah awesome, yeah. I think those are some really great points.

M: Yeah, I absolutely agree. Social media is tough.

A: Yeah.

M: 'Cause it's like. You almost need to be on there to be like successful or to get like any connections, but at the same time when you spend so much time on there, it like just starts to eat away at you.

A: Exactly, yes. And I think they're just few artists left. Who You know, build their career before social media came, so they're kind of, you know. For example, there is a huge pianist like one of the biggest pianist Live, Now Grigory Sokolov. He's a Russian, Russian guy. He's 65 I think, or 70 even now. He's not giving any interviews. He's not recording concerts, he. Yeah he doesn't have any social media, but everybody knows him because he's the best. But that was before social media, but now. You know, you know all this. You know influencers on Instagram because they have a lot of followers. But there are so many great and true you know artists that nobody knows because they are simply not on social media.

R: Alright, awesome, I think we've hit all the questions we wanted to ask Madeline, did I miss anything?

A: Great.

M: Yeah, I think I was everything that I was looking to ask. But did you have anything else that you wanted to share with us that we might not have covered earlier?

A: I think I really talked about everything so yeah, I hope the answers are useful and yeah I still hope I can also learn something from you.

M: Yeah, absolutely. Yeah, it was really insightful to hear from you where you have had experience like promoting your festival online. Like a lot of people that we talked to have tried to promote just themselves, but promotion of like a big like organization or group like that. It's like a little bit different so it's good to get that information as well and see that perspective.

A: Yeah great yeah.

M: So thank you so much for your time.

A: Welcome welcome I do that all I do that for my friends and you know younger musicians. I tried to just explain. Some of them don't really want to understand or to take this information but yeah I hope Somebody will take it.

R: Yeah again, thank you so much.

A: Thank you.

R: We are very grateful for your time.

A: Thank you, thank you, thank you.

R: Yep, so I think that's it then. So one final thing I just want to reiterate with you, let me officially pull up everything here, right? So remember, you know you have the right to review. And or delete any responses later by emailing us. So if there's anything in retrospect, maybe you wish you hadn't said or would like to resend anything you said right? Please reach out to us with any questions or comments or hesitation. You know? If you feel you have anything else to add that you maybe forget to mention, you can actually reach out to us and feel free to submit more information as well, right?

A: OK OK great great good thank you thanks.

R: Yep again, thank you so much for your time and enjoy the rest of your night at. At this point.

A: This point yeah and also you too take care, OK? Good thank you.

R: Thank you.

A: Bye have a nice day bye.

## Interview 7:

Interviewers: Madeline (Conductor), Chris (Notetaker)

Interviewee: Anonymous Current Member

Translator: Diana Costache

Where are you from? Tell us more about your music.

Started in the 9th grade, until then he had no involvement with music. During this time, he went to a religious high school. As a catholic he became interested in playing the Organ. He began to study by himself, and by the end of high school he needed to decide what to do with his life. He continued to influence by music and he wanted to become a priest. That is why he decided to go to the religious faculty to become a priest. After one year, he was not happy so he did not become a priest. He then studied with his professors with the Faculty of music at the University of Bucharest. He entered the Faculty of music this year at University.

Age? 22

What was your application experience?

He found out about the foundation from his teacher. He has some financial issues and this opportunity helped him a lot. This scholarship helped him a lot because he is not in Bucharest right now due to COVID-19. He studies by himself at home and he can go to the church in his town to play there. With the help of the Foundation, he can plan an instrument at home. Because he did not have the chance to participate in concerts, this foundation helps him prepare for that.

Posting on Social media experience?

Posts a lot of music on there. He mainly uses YouTube for his own compositions. He shares on Facebook what he posts on YouTube.

What kind of response about this?

At the beginning, it was very hard. It has been getting better and better. Even without a lot of followers, he is glad people can hear his music.

How long have you been using Social Media to promote?

He started using social media in 2020.

Why did you begin promoting yourself?

It was because he wanted to become well known.

Has the pandemic changed the way you interact with your music?

In a way, it helped him. From the beginning, his Family was having financial trouble, and he could not afford to come to Bucharest. During the pandemic, because he stayed at home, he went to his church and he studied a lot.

Experience finding out about the foundation?

When he found out about the program from his professor, he went online to find out about it but felt that the competition was fierce and that we would not make it in.

How did you feel getting the scholarship?

He does not have words to describe how he felt, he immediately shared the news with his teacher and his mother. His father is not that happy that he left the Religious faculty to study music, but now everything is going well. His father accepted this.

Experiences since being in the program?

No participation in events right now, but he did participate in a concert with his University in the winter. The foundation helped him to buy his piano prepare with and another [contest?]

Contact with other artists in the foundation?

He started to make friends with a girl in music, she lives in Moldova, and another girl. So far friends with girls but he is excited to meet everyone.

What do you want to accomplish?

He wants to be well known in Romania, and share his music compositions. Most of the YouTube videos are his own improvisations [compositions?] Feels that he can make everything feel real with his music.

What kinds of resources do you have to teach yourself?

YouTube videos of famous organists. He is the only organist at his village and in his church.

Does your Church inspire your music?

Unfortunately not, the music is very simple and he wants to bring a breath of fresh air to Church organ music but the church does not really want this. People are glad when they hear him playing, because they know it is someone who can really play the organ.

Anything else to share?

He is excited to take part in an Organ Festival in May. He is at the beginning of his artistic Journey. He has a secret. He wants to take part in Romania's Got Talent! He wants to surprise everyone by playing with his hands and feet. Flight of the Bumble Bee.

How well is the foundation known?

He thinks it is a famous program, since after he joined he found out about famous people who were in the foundation at one point.

Is the Organ a popular instrument in Romania?

The Organ is not that popular in Romania, he had the opportunity to go abroad and studying the Organ but he decided to remain in Romania and make the Organ in Romania.

## Interview 8

Interviewers: Ryan (Conductor), Madeline (Notetaker)

Interviewee: Anonymous Current Member

R: Sure thing and then one final question is, do you agree to participate in this interview?

A: Yes.

R: All right, delightful. Alright, so now it can begin. So First off, if you could start by sharing a little bit about your background. We'd like to hear that.

A: OK, so I'm 21 years old. I am in my second year of University and I study graphics. It's a mix of traditional and digital arts, and uh it is the first time that I am at the Young Talents Program. It is the first year. I studied in high school as well. Art and uh... Professionally, that's kind of it.

R: Awesome, so could you tell us a little bit about where you're from?

A: Oh yes, I am from Ploiesti. It's only like 60 kilometers away from Bucharest, where my universities and where I go when the school is open. Because of Covid, it's a hybrid right now. I say it's a quite well updated area. It's not a rural zone.

R: OK, awesome and then how long have you been doing graphics?

A: Uh, well. Officially, I might say, when I started the University because in high school I did ceramics. And it was kind of a change of mind going into graphics.

R: Sure, alright, awesome, thank you. So can you tell us a little bit about the application process to get into the young Talents program? Talk about some of the things that are involved.

A: Uh, yes, uh. The first thing that we had to do was a portfolio where we put our works, our artworks and they were Uh, accompanied by some documents that make clear our situation. Like a social situation or in my case my mother died one year ago and by that my income, it's a bit low. It's just me and my father right now. After that I think it was an interview with the teachers there and the counselors. And after that was all done. Another social assistant was the Royal Institute. Yeah, uhm, checked the papers, the legal papers and afterwards we had our answers. I hope it's clear.

R: Yeah, yeah, absolutely Yep, you're doing well. How selective did you think the program wants to do? You know, think is going to be tough or..?.

A: Uh, I think it was very tough. I heard that there were about 130 participants, all in Romania, not just in Bucharest, not just... I don't know where I was left on, but I think it was pretty rough, not rough. Oh, it was a big selection because there were 130 participants and, uh, just 30 are the winners of the scholarship and the 15 just in the arts Department. You know the other 15 in the music.

R: OK, awesome so... you know, what are some of your experiences in the program? You know what have been Some of the things you've done so far?

A: Oh, I actually, I'm really pleased because I already had an exposition in Bucharest at a Gallery, and I think two weeks from now we will have another one and I saw that other people have already concerts and, uh, I'm really glad because in school or University in two years I haven't had that chance to expose somewhere. But with this program It's quite a big thing for me.

R: Yeah, for sure that's fantastic to hear, so you know through these experiences what have been some of the skills that you've acquired since then?

A: Uh. Communication, I believe was the most important one, uh. Then, to be a teammate, so to say. Because the exposition was made, though with our help with the alumni, I think it's called in English as well by colleagues. And yeah, communication, I think it was the necessary one. For the next exposition, we have to make some certain artworks. For the last one, we had an explicit exposition, called it identities. And we had called artworks that kind of define us?

R: Awesome, awesome, so have there been any experiences you've enjoyed so far that you know you didn't expect to be a part of or things that aren't mentioned you know on their website or you weren't aware of when you first applied?

A: Oh no, I think it was pretty accurate what happened and what I expected?

R: So could you talk about, you know the how the expositions, or how things have been different? You know during COVID-19.

A: Uh yes uhm. In Romania we have a team called vernissage like it's the first day of the exposition we have a so to say party where the artist talks about the art and to it's quite a gathering of people. Well, we haven't thatIt was just allowed to have people in the Gallery to see the artwork. It was not an event, just an exposition, so to say.

R: Gotcha and then how do you think that impacts you? Know, like the feeling of the exposition or the understanding of the work that's being presented.

A: Uhm? It's a good and a bad thing I believe, because uh, at this gathering you could see the inside of the artist to weigh what he told what to do. What was his general idea about his artwork here is just what you think about it. Well, what's your perception? It's quite sad because I was at certain openings and it was really nice. It was a good atmosphere and I could find new information or insights. And I missed it.

R: Now, you said it was good and bad so we can talk about maybe some of the good things that come from this different format.

A: Yes, it's a kind of subjective thing. I think art is not made to express just the artist, more to find that not everyone should find something in the order that they are seeing. And I think without any thoughts or discussion from the artist. So its your experience and just that.

R: Yeah. That's a super interesting insight.  
I don't know if I ever thought about it like that.  
That's different.

A: It is the same thing like when you go to an Art Museum and you see an old painting like I don't know. Oh [unintelligible]. You can wonder what was going through his head, but he wanted you. And its just as beautiful.

R: Yeah, that's an excellent point. OK uhm so have you ever shared like via social media that you were a part of the young Talents program?

A: Yes, I do more on Instagram because it is the platform that I mostly post my artwork and where I'm the most active where my friends are in everyone actually. on Facebook are kind of. The official stuff or I don't know for the family to see.  
Old friends. I don't post that much there.

R: Yeah, so uh, can you talk about your experience with promoting yourself through social media in general?

A: Yes, I started to post artworks in 2020 being kind of emotional. I don't know how to say to a shy person I wasn't comfortable with putting my artwork out there, but so when I applied to the program, I told myself that this is the moment to step up and to be more open and kind of seen. Uhm, I don't have a... no, my personal end artwork. Instagram is the same. I post to drawings and the personal bottle. In the last month I only posted the drawings and what I am working on.

Yeah, I don't know if I'm not really into that to follow for follow I don't know to attract people. Very much. I'm just still there. If someone wants to follow me and find me through what I do, that's fine.

R: Would you say that since actually before I ask that question, did you start posting your artwork? Or, let me rephrase it again. When did you start posting artwork like for covid related purposes or was it just you felt it was just sort of time to begin posting your own work?

A: Can you repeat the bit for what?

R: Yeah, uhm, did you begin posting it because of COVID-19? Was it like around the same time or was it more just a coincidence that you chose?

A: No, I think it was a coincidence.

R: Alright, and then since you started posting, do you feel like you've sort of gained more confidence in your work?

A: For sure, I think I was kind of foolish to not see the good in my artwork and to see the appreciation from the people I know. And I don't know. It was a good thing. I gained a bit of confidence. Just by doing this interview, I think it's a big step forward.

R: Awesome, yeah, that's that's wonderful to hear. Let's see. So you mentioned right, you do. You don't really try to sort of. Uhm? You know? Lost my train of thought here. Attract followers.

Hold on yeah yeah so you know have you still found that you've begun getting more followers from people you don't know regardless?

A: Yes, uhm my friends kind of post me on their story, from there other people came or. So when I use hashtags but I use hashtag to tell what type of materials I'm using and other kinds of things. People come from there as well and yeah. I have other friends that have pages for their Instagram accounts that too know the hours when to post or. I don't know... to leave comments or that kind of thing, but I didn't really look well into that, I might.

R: Gotcha so. Have any of your posts gone viral at all, or has it led to some level of success?

A: Oh, it was one work that kind of got a lot more likes than I expected, but nothing crazy.

R: And you know, in your opinion, what could be effective, Having a post go viral? What could that mean for an artist?

A: Maybe have a broader audience like not just from a specific group of people. Not just the people that follow the artist. OK, you understand.

R: And let's say a post of yours went viral, you know, would you sort of feel the same way as the response you just gave. Or would you feel any differently?

A: I think the same, maybe now, uh, some business opportunities might come and that's a thing that I didn't think about. Yeah, that might come as well.

R: OK, so in the survey you submitted you had, I think, a couple let me just check it really quickly. Where was it? I think you included a. No, never mind. I'm sorry about that. Do you promote yourself through any other platforms other than Instagram or do or if not promote, do at least post your work on other platforms?

A: But no, I had a Behance or portfolio but it's not updated and I don't know if I'll post there. I think Instagram is just the one platform that I'm going for. Or yeah, I don't know. I'm for now, I'm just there.

R: Sure, in so in this survey you also mentioned you use like Facebook and TikTok, Are there any reasons you choose not to promote yourself on those platforms?

A: Ah yes, on Facebook, I saw that the flow is not that big. Like just my friends will see what I'm posting and I don't really see the point? I have my friends as well on Instagram, so I just share from there and, uh, TikTok, I just watch it. I don't post anything.

R: Gotcha, OK? And then you know what about YouTube is that? Uhm? Do you post on there at all?

A: Uh no.

R: OK, uhm, so sort of unrelated, but could you explain how you discovered or learned about the young Talents program?

A: Oh yes, my ex boyfriend was a part of this program. And though this year my University professor... uh, told us again about the program and. That's when I choose to be a part of it or to apply to it.

M: Sorry I have a quick follow up question to that.

R: Yeah, go for it.

M: Uhm, so when you first heard about the program and you decided that you wanted to apply, did you look for it online at all?

A: Yes, this year I got to see the site, the site, the platform, their platform, their accounts on social media and I was really excited.

M: OK, great. Thank you.

R: Awesome, so can you talk about how well you think that program is known throughout Romania?

A: Uhm? I don't think it's that known because, uh, I saw that people in high school can apply or 14 above can apply to it. And I didn't know about it until I got to University. Where I think also the most appliance happens. I mean that's the average age: 20 something.

R: Had you known about it, say when you were 14, would you have applied then?

A: Oh yes I would, yeah.

R: Interesting, OK? Let's see so. Uhm, in terms of how well you think the program is known, is it known like Do all artists know about it? Is it still not a lot of artists who know about it either?

A: Umm, I don't think all the artists known or uh, communities know.

R: Gotcha, and your professor who told you about the program. Was it just like he told you specifically, or did he sort of tell it to all of his students.

A: I think she told me because she knew my background like what happened with my mom and though also she told other students that are kind of in a similar social situation. It was not like a big announcement, but she wasn't like telling just some of the people.

R: Gotcha, uhm? Alright, and then, uh, so do you think it's possible for the foundation to reach a larger audience? And if So what would you suggest that they should do?

A: Uh, from what I know, I think posting a bit more with the. Be or not appreciate, but will have an outcome. I was curious about what kind of artworks or people from other years did in this program, and I couldn't find it. Maybe it was my fault. Maybe I didn't look that much into that,

but that's the thing I wanted to see what they were making or yeah. I don't know anything else, that,so just posting maybe or. Yeah, yeah.

R: Sure, awesome, and then you know. I guess along similar lines is when you were sort of. Actually hold on. It's a similar kind of question already so. What would be some of the kind of posts so I know you mentioned you'd want to see some of the past... uhm, artwork of the alumni. Are there any other kind of posts you'd want to see that would sort of further grab your attention?

A: Their artwork. I appreciate that on this site they have a section about them. Like who they were? And now I'm there as well, like if you want to get to know someone. Oh, there is information, but it's not the actual work they're making.

R: Yeah, of course. Let's see now. Let's take a quick look. I think have we gone through everything.

M: I feel like that was everything that we had planned to ask, yeah? Uhm, I can't think of anything else that was all really good information. Thank you.

R: Yeah, absolutely.

A: Thank you, I hope I did well.

M: Yeah, yeah, absolutely.

R: Yeah, for sure, you did great.

M: It was great to hear from you.

R: Yeah yeah, and your English is great. We could understand you perfectly.

M: Well, yeah, everything sounded perfect to me.

A: Thank you, thank you so much. It's kind of a big insecurity. Like when I'm posting as well on Instagram. I try to post in English because I'm thinking like maybe someone that is not from Romania, will see it, and, uh, I try to go on Google Translate and to make sure that everything is fine and I'm grammatically correct. But yeah, thank you. It's reassuring.

R: Yeah, absolutely. Are there any other comments or general things you want to sort of tell us or any anything of the sorts that we haven't asked about?

A: Oh no, maybe? Uh, that the program is kind of entering the TV area bit. I saw like in some television show, uh, it's a smaller part where one of us will speak about their artwork. Like, uh, last week it was a girl. That's the third time I think, uh, for this program. So I think, uh, through that they can reach you. Like our parents or grandparents. I personally don't have a TV in my room so I don't watch it, but other people might.

R: Very interesting we haven't heard about that yet. But that might be something to look into.

A: Yeah, oh, it's on DVD I think and it's also on the Facebook page.

R: Yeah, that's that's super interesting. I don't think we've heard anyone else talk about that before. Let's see, yeah, I'm just giving my questions one file check over and make sure we touched on everything we wanted to. Yep, so I think that covers everything we want to. So again, thank you so much for your time. We appreciate you taking the time to talk with us again. Just a reminder, right? You have the right to review and or delete any responses later by emailing us. You can just say you know if there's anything you want to be stricken from the record or make sure we don't include, you know that will absolutely be done at your request. Additionally, if you have any questions or concerns or anything you forgot to bring up, you know.

Now during this interview today, please don't hesitate to reach out to us and we're happy to hear what you have to say and work with you more.

R: Yes, thank you and good luck.

A: Good luck guys on your research.

R: Thank you.

M: Yeah, good luck in the program.

R: Yep, again, thank you and enjoy the rest of your your night at this point.

Interview 9:

Interviewers: Madeline (Conductor), Ryan (Notetaker)

Interviewee: Anonymous Current Member

M: Alright, so you have the right to review and or delete any responses later by emailing the research team. If this is requested the interviewer is required to remove from notes anything wished to be removed. Do you have any questions about this research?

A: Um, no, no.

M: All right, and do you agree to participate in this interview?

A: Yes.

M: All right. Awesome. So just to get started we just want to learn a little bit about who you are, and your relationship with the program. So, where are you from, and can you explain a little bit about your artwork?

A: Um, I don't know what you already know about me from the program, but, my name is Diana. And I am from Romania, and I live near [reverse], but in a rural area. And my artwork is... I know it's my life journey... it's my way of understanding my surroundings. So, yeah this is the best I can define it.

M: Great, and how long have you been doing artwork?

A: Um, well I've been drawing since I was a kid, but everybody does that. So, I studied at a arts high school. And then, the university, I must do them.

M: Great. And so right now you're a student, correct?

A: Yes.

M: All right. And so you're a current member of the Young Talents program. So, what age - is this your first year -

A: Yes

M: In the program? Okay. And how old are you?

A: I'm 20.

M: Nice, nice. All right, and where do you go to school?

A: Um, right now?

M: Yeah

A: In, at the National University of Art in Bucharest.

M: Awesome. Great. All right. So, in your survey you said that you discovered the young talents program through another person. Could you explain a little bit more about how that happened?

A: Well my ... with my friend from high school we get in touch, and she messaged me showing the screenshot with this, she found it, you know. I don't know, maybe a random ad, I don't know, she just send me this and I was surprised at first I didn't really want to do that it sounded too good to be true. So, but then I talked with my family and with her, and decided to apply.

M: Awesome, yeah. And so through the application process like what were some of your feelings that you were having during that?

A: Um, well I was a bit nervous, because I don't really like competition. And I knew that a lot of people apply for this, at least in my university I knew people that were actively applying for it and I don't know, I have colleagues, like from class, that life. And they didn't get in. But yeah, I was a bit skeptical because this kind of good and serious doesn't really happen here. And it's quite rare that it is.

M: That makes sense. So yeah, would you, how would you describe like, would you say that the application process was difficult? Was there a lot of competition?

A: Not really. I mean I just thought it was competition but I didn't know how many people were applying. I had the experience of applying for the university, I had a similar interview there. So I kind of knew what was going on but I didn't know the people that were interviewing me. I mean, I didn't know their names or how many were there. But yeah, It was fast, it was quick, easy.

M: Okay, great. And now that you're in the program have you had - like I know it's only been like a short amount of time so far, but have you had any experiences so far in the program that you want to talk about?

A: Well yes, we have a few meetings, we know each other, we chat sometimes. And we had already an exhibition and we are in the process of another one right now. So, yeah, it happened a lot and this interview too.

M: Awesome. and what was that exhibition like, that was earlier?

A: Um, it was nice. It was only us with only us in the center of Bucharest, but again there, because there is the pandemic going on, not many people want to see but we had a lot of online viewers. And that's what we've been told.

M: So it was kind of like a mix between...

A: It was a success, It was a success despite the conditions that we are right now

M: Okay. Yeah. All right. And do you have any expectations going forward about what you want to learn, as part of the program?

A: Oh, yeah I mean i'm just [inaudible] over and over again. So I'm kind of, I'm kind of afraid of making more expectations because it's already, really good. So, I feel like I expect to be just the way it is now maybe we'll meet in the summer, maybe we'll go into camp I don't know. Depends. Quite uncertain right now, or immediately.

M: Yeah, it can be hard to tell, sometimes especially with everything that's going on right now, but kind of moving on from that so when you first heard about the program, did you look up anything online about it, like did you interact with their social media pages at all?

A: Um, I will enter the website, and I was more looking at other participants in from previous years, to see what, what they were doing, how... where they were kind of like that. But, I discovered that most of them were from my university and that made it more easy for me to want to apply.

M: Was there any information that you tried to look for but weren't able to find on their website?

A: Um, no, I... it was pretty clear.

M: Okay, great. Awesome. So to kind of move on from the program. So you gave us a link to your Instagram page, and we got to take a look at it. So do you want to just explain a little bit about how you use social media as an artist?

A: Um, well, it's my both my personal and my artwork page, because that's pretty much what's about me. That's just the way you get to know me that's the only thing I do. And that's what people know me for so, my friends, everybody. And I tried to post I don't know... pictures that my friends or people that follow me already like. I try to post my works that represent me the most, the way people see me.

M: Yeah, just make sense. Um, so in using social media to you mostly just interact with your friends and people you know in real life, or do you have people who follow you that you don't know who just look at your artwork?

A: Oh, well, both. Yeah.

M: Cool. And is there any like strategies that you've tried to use to reach more people or do you just like post and see where it goes?

A: I post, I share other artworks. Sometimes I just, I don't really like to make my own kind of promotions. If people... if people share my stuff then it's great I didn't ask for that, and it's nice from them, and that's what I appreciate. If they offered to give a share, without me asking them for that.

M: Do you have any opinions on like social media as a means of promotion, maybe not specifically for yourself, but for others?

A: Um, well it's a very easy way to promote anything it's very efficient, and many people use it and watch it. I mean I don't judge that they just don't really, I'm kind of shy, I don't really like to. I'm not... I don't know. I don't have the courage to be like that.

M: Yeah, I understand. Great. Let me see what else is on my question list.

R: So, a quick question I have is would you say that since you've begun posting your work. Have you sort of built up more confidence from that? So, you know, through people liking and commenting and whatnot?

A: Oh yes, oh yes, probably half of my confidence comes from... it comes from Instagram or the Internet in general. Because even, let's say I had an exhibition, there would be picture for pictures posted online, and that offers me some sort of confidence too, from both ends.

M: Great. Yeah, and have there been any particular like social media posts that have affected you in some ways?

A: No. Way back. I've been great. As expected, as expected, I don't know.

M: Yeah. Would you say that any of your posts have had any, like, gone viral at all by any means?

A: Not really. I mean I have posts that a lot of people liked and shared but not not not more than that.

M: Okay. And kind of going back to the foundation, a little bit, so the program has both a Facebook page and an Instagram page and kind of what our project is looking to do is to increase their audience on social media. So, as somebody who uses social media would you have any suggestions for how they might be able to use their Instagram platform a little better?

A: Um... I don't know. Recently I saw that there had been a lot of post on stories and most people watch the stories. Um, I noticed, I noticed that but, I mean, already we are sharing their... the, the post that they are posting because we, we are in them. And we tell our friends about that. And I feel like people are finding out about them quite easy I mean my, my friend that told me about this, and she doesn't study at a art university. I mean she she could she can not benefit from that. But she, she saw it.

M: It's great to hear, actually, because we do want to reach more people even outside of the arts just get that buzz around the program to start going around. Alright, let's see what else we've got. So, so far in the program have there been any like professional skills that you've learned yet, like through your exhibitions and stuff like that?

A: Well, it's not necessarily skills in the artwork itself, but I've earned some kind of independence from school because I only took part in group exhibitions, and I've had that same success in school with teachers and colleagues and other stuff like that but I've never been on my own, and having... I don't know being in a group of people that weren't, or that offer me some, some feeling of being more independent that that's possible.

M: That makes sense, yeah. And do you have any like personal goals for professional skills that you want to start learning soon that you feel like you want to learn?

A: Yes, well, I've tried everything. I am, I paint, sculpt, I draw, I do prints, but I haven't had the opportunity to dig in more into photography and video editing and stuff. I did a short movie for school but it was really really difficult for my computer to be used on Adobe Premiere and I shoot it with a really cheap camera. And yeah, maybe through this program I can actually learn this because the only stuff that I haven't tried. So yeah.

M: Great. Yeah. So, you do like all kinds of stuff with your different mediums, like is there one that you would say is your favorite?

A: Um, well, natively. I feel like I'm... more my talent is more towards sculpting, because that talent has been in my family. But I've been doing painting for what six years maybe now. So that's the technique that I know the most, but I like to combine those because I like everything.

M: Great. Yeah. Okay. Ryan was there anything that you have that we haven't asked yet that you wanted to bring up?

R: Uh, yeah. so could you talk about how COVID-19 over the past year has sort of... has impacted your experiences, either through the program or in university?

A: Um... I actually... besides the stress and the lockdown and being alone, I didn't really have a bad time, because I did University online, I did school online. And right now this year I'm, we have a hybrid system where we can, we can, we can come to the practice classes like for example I'm in the painting department and we can go to the painting class work to work on that but the, the lectures are online. So I'm coming to school, once a week, and I work from home. And, again, besides your loneliness, I, it's, it's been alright for me. I didn't have any bad experiences necessarily, just some scares, but nothing more than that.

R: And could you talk about how, um, it impacted the recent exhibition?

A: Um, I don't know, I just was just really proud that I participated in that. I don't know how many people have noticed it, because maybe because one of my works were they, it was, it was too heavy to be hanging up I suppose, and they put it on the window, perhaps many people had saw it from the street but maybe from the inside it wasn't that visible. Um, I don't know, I haven't... besides people that already knew about the fact that I took part in the exhibition I didn't have another feedback from outside people that didn't know about that. At least I don't know, maybe I gained some followers on Instagram or Facebook but nothing more than that. I don't know for sure.

M: And would you say that the pandemic, like how is that affecting, excuse me, the art and music scene in Bucharest right now?

A: Um, well I've seen recently that there are a lot of tiny galleries starting up for young artists, a lot of online groups online online pages for promoting and supporting young artists in Bucharest. I mean, they are probably run by people that I probably know from school, maybe had seen them once or twice, and they gained quite a lot of following, and they help a lot of young kids that

need to be seen. It's more online, definitely, but I've seen, I've seen exhibitions had been held here.

M: And as a visual artist would you say that there any difference between seeing your artwork online versus seeing it in a gallery or an exhibition?

A: Well it's definitely a difference. Well in a gallery it's more of a classy thing I feel like it's more fancy, but the benefit is that you can see it in 3d, and I like to work with, textiles and textures and during the art and definitely it's more, it's, it's more there, it's more visible it's more. It's beautiful, it's more beautiful than a 2d picture. But online, a lot of people can see it more, a lot more than in the gallery. So, there is a benefit from this side.

M: That makes sense. Absolutely. And so to kind of bounce off about that. Have you been in contact with any of the musicians that are part of the program. Like do you know if they feel similarly about online formats?

A: I don't know, I don't know that I haven't talked to any of them. But I guess, to some extent it's similar maybe it's, I feel like it could be worse because classes are more different online than, in real life, at least when you're trying to learn a instrument, I'm sure of that.

M: Yeah, thank you. Um, I think we've gone through a lot of the questions that I had written down, um, Ryan am I missing anything? Probably skipped over a section, let me read through that again.

R: Yeah. So a question I have is um, have there been any sort of barriers, or obstacles that you faced when trying to um, you know, pursue a career in the arts?

A: Um, well, in... To begin with, in Romania to be an artist, it's hard. It's, it's an obstacle on itself, because it's a very conservative society, it's a quite poor society and art is not really necessary. And it's not really... the system is not fair, the government is not fair, the, the government of the schools, like the education part of the system it's not right, it's still very old, very old fashioned and a lot of bureaucracy. And it's basically, pretty much, really hard or impossible to gain success as an artist in Romania. I feel like it's easier outside of the country. It's not the culture I don't know my university does not provide me with anything. I have to buy everything, I have to work on myself. I have to go to school and pay money just to go to school. I have to pay my university fee, and recently they, the government, the other day just took a decision that the university will own our works. As long as we studied there. they are owning our works, and if they want to sell it, they will give us about 30% of the work and it's totally unfair I don't know where this where this come from. This is insane, insane. So I don't know. It's not

really here, it's pretty much impossible and most art students actually become something else, they just drop out or after they finish they just do a regular job, pretty much impossible.

R: So, what do you think the future holds for you? I know a lot of the alumni we've talked to are no longer in Romania. I'm sure for many of the same reasons you've cited. So, do you see yourself going out of Romania to pursue art, you know, what are your thoughts on that?

A: Well, yeah, if I have the chance i would i would at least for my master's. I wanted to go somewhere else but for the, the wages in Romania really small, we don't really have that much money. So let's say if a regular students like me, very average wants to go outside or have to probably work and save up a year or two before starting in university somewhere else, because there's, there is money to survive with a university fees. So for my master's, I will probably go on another city big city in Romania, Kluj, if you've heard about that. And then, maybe I will go somewhere else right No, but I, my goal is not to stay only in one place, but to move, and meet new people and new scenes and see what's going on more.

M: Yeah, absolutely. Makes sense. And to kind of go off of that which you say, like with your university fees and paying for like art materials and stuff, like, would you have been able to do that without the foundation or would you say that the scholarship is important to you in that way?

A: Well, I would have been able to do that without a scholarship, because I've already done that since high school; it's the same for the high schools. Um, but it's... if you want to buy more expensive stuff is pretty much impossible, like tiny stuff like colors and canvases. One by one, you can buy, it's, it's doable but buying something expensive like a camera. You have to save up like on our list a year for that. So it's definitely does it does help a lot.

M: Yeah, that makes sense. And so would you say that, like with the difficulties in building a career in art. Would you say it's common for people in Romania to want to pursue a career in art? Or is there a little bit more hesitation with that?

A: Definitely a hesitation. I mean, I, I just know a lot of people that are in the art scene, but normal people they don't know, no. I mean, my parents and my friends parents have told them not to go to a arts high school or university because they will die of hunger, that's a kind of Romanian proverb. Die of hunger because you wouldn't have anything to eat, you want to have money towards you, you, you just starve to death if you pursue art in Romania. That's what people are thinking.

M: Yeah. Um, and like with culture and everything like I know art is really important to a lot of people. So how would you say like art has affected you and your life so far. Like do you feel that it benefits you outside of just your work? Or...

A: Yes, I am. I'm a consumer of any kind. I listen to music. Every day I all the time I I'm watching movies, I am seeing other artists everywhere online. And I read about art, I, I, I, everything is... I express myself through it. I tried to understand myself and well it's really, it brings you to a very meditative state. And that's kind of therapeutic.

M: So, yeah, absolutely. Yeah, so I'm kind of like where do you see art in Romanian culture, like, besides yourself would you say that other people also have that kind of a close connection with artwork?

A: Yeah, sure, sure, in Romania, um, I don't know. There are a lot of people that do it I, there are people there is a lot of people that are very talented here very very talented and very passionate about it. But again, by time, they are fading away. That's what I'm seeing. So, yeah, I mean if you don't, if you are over 20 and you want to support yourself, then you see that art is not helping you you will have to do something and eventually you won't have time and you will stop.

M: All right, um...

R: I have another question. What do you think will be the long lasting impact of COVID on either, you know, your career specifically, or maybe the general art seen in, in Bucharest?

A: Um, well I feel like the pandemic is making people more philosophical because we have to be more by ourselves and alone and without socializing and we start thinking more I feel like that's a bit undeniable. Because once you are insulated, you will not have nothing to do but you know think or read, or do something like that. So, I feel like that affects the art in a good way in a bad way maybe some people are affected negatively but they would make good art out of that. Or they would find... I don't know, like, a balance in their lives, and they will be good being alone, I don't know. I mean, it can affect and we can benefit artists as well I mean it benefited me. And I feel like even though some people had bad times maybe they it was a good time to discipline yourself themselves. So, yeah, now it's getting a bit annoying. Already it's already been more than a year. And we need people.

M: Yes, absolutely. We're starting to feel...

A: It wasn't necessarily all bad.

M: Yeah, like, you've got your benefits but there's also like a lot that's really difficult about it. So yeah like I know here, we're really excited to have stuff like museums, galleries concerts open back up. And I know that like a lot of people do turn to art during times of struggle to, like, connect with other people. So I think absolutely right now, the pandemic is something that's really important in the art scene. So like we were doing a lot of research also into, like, online platforms that have started to develop, because of the pandemic. So have you done anything differently on your Instagram platform since this began?

A: Um, I spend more time on Instagram than usual. On, and I, I just took my, my profile more seriously. And I started out some, some words that I had there. But other than that, I've just used media, in general more visual social media and in general media.

M: That makes sense. Great. So I think that's all the questions that I had. But is there anything that you'd like us to know that we haven't covered yet about your work or your time with the program so far?

A: No, not really, no.

M: Awesome.

R: And then one final thing is you mentioned that there were some, like, online groups, run by young artists that you said were kind of springing up in the past year. Is there any way you can share some of these groups with us? We would be interested to learn more about the kind of work they do.

A: Yes, yes. But right now, right now, I don't know.

R: No it doesn't have to be right now.

M: Oh yeah, no worries.

A: I can send you some links, maybe, I don't know, through email.

R: Yeah, you can send them through the same email, for sure.

M: Yeah, it would be really helpful.

A: Yes, Sure.

M: Awesome. Thank you.

R: Yeah, thank you.

A: You're welcome, thank you.

R: Yeah, it looks like we hit, everything...

M: That was, yeah, that was awesome. So yeah, thank you so much for your time. We really enjoyed talking to you today, and we appreciate you taking the time to sit down with us. And again, you do have the right to review or remove any answers. So if you'd like any more information about us, that just reach out to us through email. And other than that I think that's everything. So again, thank you so much.

A: Thank you.

Interview 10:

Interviewers: Lexi (Conductor), Chris (Notetaker)

Interviewee: Anonymous Alumni

L: And first To start off, do you allow the recording of audio and voice, so we can, we are able to transcribe this interview, we won't delete it right afterwards we just need to make sure we can get a transcription.

A: Okay, cool.

L: And one last thing.

A: Sorry.

A: Tell me. tell me.

A: You can speak a bit, a bit slower, not that. Yeah, not, not, not very very fast like this sounds good, I need to talk to the sound

L: All right, and so you have the right, you or delete any responses leaders by emailing, our research team, at that email that we emailed you previously. And if this is requested, we will remove any of those responses

A: So you will send me a transcription of the interview.

L: Yeah, we can do that if you'd like to read it after.

A: Yes

L: Yeah, of course. And before we start, do you have any questions, and do you agree to participate.

A: I totally agree, no questions

L: Alright so to start off this interview we wanted to ask you about yourself, and some demographic questions so we were wondering, where are you from, Romania or a specific city.

A: Hello. So, let's start. My name is [REDACTED]. I'm from Romania, but not from Bucharest, I stopped in Bucharest, I'm coming from the countryside of Bucharest is somewhere in (Dover

Audra) is a small village, and I graduate from the High School of Arts. And then I moved to Bucharest, to do my, my concept art there.

L: Awesome. And at what age were you accepted into the young talents program?

A: In 2013.

L: 2013?

A: Yeah, and I've been down for three years. So, since 2013 to 2015.

L: Awesome. How old were you when you were accepted into the program?

A: 19

L: Awesome very young.

A: Yeah, I was in the last in the last year of my High School of Arts.

L: Awesome. So, in the survey that can help with that previously, you said that you were a musician. I think we all looked in some of your accounts that you provided for us so you're an opera singer?

A: Yeah, I'm an opera singer

L: Awesome. How long have you been doing opera singing?

G I started in 2009 with my with my canto classes in (Galat). And since that moment, I've practiced this

L: Yeah I watched some of your YouTube videos, I was shocked when I heard your voice.

A: Thank you very much.

L: You're welcome. So, to go more into the social media and survey response based questions, could you expand a little bit on your experiences of promoting your work on social media like YouTube or Instagram.

A: Yeah. I'm using now, much more Instagram, because I saw is very important for us as artists to promote ourselves, because if you practice in your room. If you're, I know at your home is not

the same, because, yeah, we need to show to the, to the audience to the people, especially in this time we are in.

L: Yeah

A: It's, it's very difficult for us, because yeah we are in a very good way, we need the relationship with the audience. Yeah, it's a big support for us but now, yeah, we are doing much more to the social media stuff.

L: Awesome

A: I'm not agree with that. I'm not totally agree with that. Because yeah, we need that connection that that changing of emotions with the audience, but for social media, yeah. As a young artist as a young singer, I need to show to the people, my activity my, what I'm doing, actually.

L: Yeah. You're very talented, I'm sure, tons of people would love to hear your, your music. Are there any techniques that you use on these social media platforms and attempt to gain a broader audience or more people interested in your music?

A: I am using YouTube. So, about, about two years [ago] I started to have a YouTube account, and because to that moment, everyone was posting on YouTube, things about me, and then I said, Okay, those those videos has to be mine. If someone is posting that has to ask me first, because not everything is that good to be posted. I mean, I'm very picky with that.

L: Yeah, we we've talked to some other musicians in the program recently, and a common answer from that perspective is what that they want to put on their on their YouTube account, they want to make sure it's perfect, how they want to sound.

A: Yeah. And because now I am living in Munich, [inaudible] with the Bavaria state orchestra, it's also a young talent program but it's a another level, is just for singers, and I'm, I'm here with the contract as a soloist in this program. And, Yeah, we started, especially from last year when the economy starts, we started to do videos to have much more, much more interaction with the social media platform. I think it's very important, I agree.

L: So I, I'm not sure if any of you have gone viral or that has led to some success. Could you maybe explain to us what going viral could mean for an artist or musician?

A: I don't know there are, there are some things that you should know, to go viral on social media. Yeah, with in specially with Oprah more classic music. You cannot do this too much, I guess because yeah it's it's a special audience for that. So, I don't think common persons or

people understand that. And, Yeah, this is my perception about about that. But if you have, uh, so from from this level, if you start to have a natural to have a, yeah, and manager for this, you can have, you can have a very good promotion, with that because, for example I have online saved almost 2000 songs. But, yeah, not all of them are interested about about about an agency. Yeah, I'm trying now to, to find a way to have just just musician just Opera fans or something like this.

L: Yeah, we got a similar response from another interviewee where they said it to promote yourself on Instagram or other social media, because the only people that are really into [opera] are other musicians and other artists. So, a part of our project is trying to find ways where you can reach broader audience and like people that aren't usually interested in trying to like find ways where we can reach them and gain their attention, sort of

A: Yeah, so if you if you have an agent or you to sign a contract with, let's say, a big producer house for classic music, then you can you can become a very famous, because they are doing this, this stuff, and they know how to do.

L: Yeah. Also, we had some discussions specifically about having an agent, and being in in touch with an agency. Is that something that you're involved with or had been involved with, and how that may have had some experience or jobs or anything like that.

A: Yeah, we actually say if you want a specific level to go in this world of... It's a business. If you want to have to reach a high level, let's say, yeah, you need a good agent for that, you need to be in contact with this world, inside of this world. So, because yeah, and we are doing auditions and, not, not all the time you are... they take you all the time. And that's why, maybe you need this connection with, with an agent.

L: So yeah, to keep going...

A: Oh sorry,

L: No no, keep going...

A: I hope, I hope so. I hope for me to, to have much more help from an agent to promote myself. But yeah, who knows, let's let's let's...

L: See what the future holds.

A: Exactly.

L: I'm gonna go more into questions about the foundation. You stated, you discovered the young talent program in your survey initially. Could you explain a little bit more about this discovery?

A: How I discovered?

L: Yeah, yeah how you like initially learned about the program.

G So I in 2013, I remember I was using much more Facebook, then now. And everything was posted there, and a colleague of mine, who applied, one year before me, just posted that she won the scholarship and yeah. I was so impressed about that. In the same time, I was afraid to apply, because I didn't know how is, how is working, actually. Yeah, because it was my was my first time when I applied online for something. Yeah, especially for this scholarship for me was the biggest step in my career at the beginning of career. And, yeah, everything was very new, I learned step by step, what is happening there.

L: Awesome. I'm glad it was such a great opportunity for you to start your

A: Yeah it was a big opportunity. The young talents program is the biggest one in Romania, and they are helping young artists, so so much. And at that moment I didn't know that.

A: I, I go, I go for that, like, with no knowledge about that. I just applied like I knew, yeah, it's about the royal family it's about something about Foundation, about, I didn't know, really, what about. And I had to I mean, I remember, I sent to them all of my [songs] (diploms?), which is not good I sent a lot of files. Because I didn't know how exactly works that.

L: Yeah. Makes sense.

A: Yeah.

L: And, online application can be useful

A: Yeah, I did was my first time when I did that. And there's a specific letter you have to know how to do it. There are a lot of papers, documents that you have to do it, it wasn't my first time. And then I was invited to Bucharest, to do an audition for the jury. And they, they took me.

L: Awesome! So you got accepted your first try?

A: Yeah

L: That's impressive!

A: Yeah. And then my new world. Start. Because because every month we had a meeting with a member of the foundation with Gabriella [courage]. You know Gabriella [courage]? She's the director of the program.

L: No, we haven't. The only talked to people that are involved with the program, we talked to Diana.

A: Ah yes she's the assistant?

L: Yes, she's the assistant. She's the woman we've been most working with.

A: Yeah yeah yeah, and then every month we had a meeting. And in those meetings, we had the opportunity to, to, to have interaction with many many huge artists from Romania, actors, conductors musicians Sopranos, tenors, that was amazing. Also, my, my favorite bar from from this program was the moment when I had the opportunity to work [acide modolvair], which is one of the greatest tenor in the world. He was soloist at the Metropolitan Opera in New York, and yeah for us as young singers was amazing to work with such a great man.

L: Wow, awesome.

A: Also, the day invited us to sing to in the Royal concert. They are doing every year, a royal concert for to support this young, Young talents program. And for me was the first time when I signed with with professional orchestra at the Romanian Philharmonic grouping in athenaeum.

L: Yeah, we've done some research on that, that's awesome. Last week we were doing, cultural, feeding on like different architecture in Romania. And so we had to choose one specific building. To learn more about and discussing our building was the Romanian athenaeum. So that's pretty cool.

A: Was something very special for me and it is just here in my heart.

L: That's awesome. I'm glad you got to do that. So going more into the process of applying, so you stated you were pretty scared when applying?

A: Yeah, I was scared

L: Were you scared you wouldn't be accepted or was there other reasons you were scared?

A: Not about accepting or not, because I did before that I did many competitions, was the same, the same feeling.

L: Yeah, of like nervousness

A: So, I wasn't scared about competition. I was scared about the process of applying at that moment. Now, I think it's much more easy with, with the technology. Also, they are not asking, so much so many papers for the application. Now, it's very easy. The process for today.

L: Okay cool, so they definitely fixed that. That's interesting to know you haven't talked to many people from the program that was in as early as 2013. So that's really cool to hear the differences that made.

A: No, actually I was so close. After I finished this program, I was so close to them. And I observed how they developed the program, and they did a great job. I have to say was better and better with. But I was scared because I didn't know how, how to do it. Actually I was asking my teacher from the high school and my, my, my voice teacher from that moment. She helped me a lot with with this process.

L: That's awesome, yeah.

A: Yeah.

L: Applying for things and anything online also stresses me out, like I hate applying for like my taxes or applying for financial aid, it's just always stressful for me so I get that feeling.

A: For example about taxes here I just did it, and I was, I felt the same as the moment when I applied for the foundation

L: Right, I know

A: So crazy to apply for taxes here is, I paid someone to do it for me.

L: Nice! Good choice. So, going into, how selective do you think the program was? So I know you got chosen for your first time applying but do you think there was like a lot of people that were trying to get to the program or...

A: Oh yeah. Yeah, I know, every year are kind of hundred, hundred 50 candidates. And just for 15 places.

L: Yeah. So 150 musicians?

A: Yeah 150 musicians.

L: Oh wow, that's a lot.

A: My year was like this, but not not [inaudible]... Sorry, my English, sometimes it's...

L: No worries.

A: So, not less than 100. I heard.

L: Yeah, wow, that's very selective, congrats on being chosen as one of the 15, I'm not surprised  
Your voice is incredible.

TIME CHECK: 21:23

A: Yeah my voice now is much, much better because I grow up and the voice change. At that moment I was just a young, young really young musician. And for me it was a great opportunity to to apply.

L: Yeah. Chris joined a few minutes ago, but I'm just going to let him know, he joined in 2013 and it was 19 when he was accepted so he was really young.

C: Cool.

L: Chris, I just want to fill him in on some... he's my other groupmate he's taking notes on on the interview and also coming up with questions that I might miss.

C: Sorry I joined a few minutes late I was I was taking my girlfriend to get the vaccine. I just got back so nice to meet you George.

A: Nice to meet you too. I love hearing about your stories and thanks so much for being here and talking to us about it.

A: Welcome.

L: Yeah, we're also curious to hear about some of the experiences that you had during the program, if you want to explain some of those to us

A: Sorry, some like other experiences from the program?

L: Yeah

A: So, this masterclass and [strong]. And what else he had this, they tried to promote us. As a young singers young musicians, they tried to organize every month, concerts in different places

L: Like different parts of Europe? Or in Romania

A: In Romania

L: Okay

A: Which was amazing, like a tour of concerts or something like this. Yeah. And for sponsors because this program has many, many sponsors, and we were singing for them. And for us was a great opportunity I have to say, because, yeah, this audience is very special is just like, like, a very intimate atmosphere like like a [restaurant]

L: Oh, definitely. Yeah. Um, so you're saying that, having an audience is a great, a great feeling when you're performing. So how has COVID affected that?

A: Oh my god I really miss the audience. I have here I have some productions in a State Opera. Without audience. Just, just online streaming. Yeah, and to feel at the end of the opera, to feel to go to the, to the applause, but not loud, and I almost started to cry every time because is very very weird to hear nothing at the end, just, yeah.

L: I totally understand it. Um, so we, in our online classes and college. A lot of our classes are online like this. And so most classes they don't require you to turn on your camera or sound. And so a lot of teachers they have to do to have like no faces. No voices. I'm sure they feel the same way, just like that. When you're used to an audience and not having done it must be strange.

A: It's hard though because you don't know how much emotion is in in the whole when the audience is there. When we do this is there is something really special is like a temple of emotion when, when the audience is inside, and everyone from this program. Maybe, yeah, because it's very interesting to see I graduate from this young artist program in Bucharest. Also, in the same time, I graduated from the conservatory of art. This is another story. But, and then I applied for here also was the same process but for this process to apply here in Munich for another Opera studio we call this, and was kind of the same as I did an audition for this and I applied like online with videos, this time with videos.

L: Okay

A: I made some, some opera arias, and I sent it to them, and they invite me here in Munich, to do an audition. And, yeah, every, every everyone from this program has the same feeling about the audience, we miss very much this.

L: Yeah I'm sure you guys can't wait it into some of these restrictions are lifted so you can be performing.

A: Is worse, the situation is worse here in Germany now And we are waiting for some, some less was the restrictions. From June, I think we will be able to perform, again, with the audience.

L: Let's hope for that

A: Let's hope that we have production. We are working at the, we have a contemporary opera made for us, the composer, just finished to compose that for us. And it's very very difficult, and we have seven weeks of rehearsals. And then, we hope on fifth of June to perform that in front of the audience.

L: I bet you guys are excited for that sounds exciting.

A: Thank you, yeah, it is. it is.

L: So to go more into the experiences of the program were there anything that you participated in that you weren't expecting to participate in based off what you had learned about the program prior to joining.

A: Um, You know this meetings that we have for the program, workshop... were called workshop. The workshop with different people, not, and not just musicians, or actors or. We had a meeting about how to promote yourself with the CEO, or if I'm wrong. I don't know, but was the one of the directors of [thaccia] and [reno'] the car manufacturer. Do you know this? It's a brand. Thaccia

C: I don't know

A: Or Reno'? It's a French brand

C: Maybe I've heard it, I'm not sure

A: It's okay, they have this brand in Romania and a designer came to our meeting. She told us how to how they are promoting a new car. And she said, it's kind of the same, you have to do with with your career. If you have something new to show to people, just do it, but she told us how to do, for example, how to do a curriculum vitae, a CV, or how to do a short, biography, to just to how to apply to a program how to describe your activity on internet was interesting. It was something interesting, because that that those things came from completely different person, not, not, musician, you know.

L: Yeah, so that's interesting to hear a new perspective on that.

A: Yeah. Yeah, exactly. Yeah, and I think they did, how they teach us how to, how to do that, how to promote yourself in a way. Yeah.

L: So a big, a big part of what are we are trying to accomplish with this project is figuring out ways that foundation can promote their young talent programs to gain more interest in it or maybe more sponsors to get funding for their, their program so we're trying to learn about how artists, promote themselves and how artists might figure out a program and things like that.

A: Yeah it was amazing because, because not just for money for some for scholarship. They taught how to use that that money to yeah, for our career, because you cannot spend that money with we own it for yourself. We have, we have a plan. For example, you can buy costumes, you can buy digital stuff to record yourself, you can apply for competitions, to pay the tax or or travel, or yeah, it's not, you cannot spend that money, just for yourself. Yeah, you have to prove to them that you you spend 2000 euro each year for for your career, yeah.

L: So that's a good thing that they do to make sure that you're spending that money on things that you need to spend it on.

A: Yeah exactly because at the beginning of the year you have to do a plan. Like, like for the for the entire year at the end of the year, month by month, what I'm doing this month. Yeah, which competition right, which which master classes I wanted, yeah.

L: Right. Okay, that sounds like a good organized way to do the program. So would you suggest the program to other fellow artists? Like suggest them join the program or things like that so they'd be interested in applying as well?

A: I have to say I'm one of the ambassadors of the program because I'm really telling to the young musicians to apply for this and every time in every interview that I had, I was talking about this program because it's, it's for real for me was the biggest step in my career and they helped me a lot to come from a from a country from a countryside of Romania, to come to Bucharest to learn every everything about music musicians life, about how to be on stage, how to work with the conductor how to work with the, with the stage director, how to talk in a, in a interview, how to live because also we have... Ah! This is another interesting part. I just got an idea. We have a very good collaboration with, with the national TV.

L: Oh awesome

A: To be in front of the camera. At my age was horrible. First time.

L: I bet! You must have been so nervous.

A: Yeah, I was. And yes, step by step. They told me, which, how to create a text, because, yeah, you have to be prepared in front of the camera for an interview, not, yeah things that that they don't need.

L: Exactly.

A: And yeah, how to deal with the emotion, with a camera. Yeah, yeah I participate in many many TV interviews or shows like for cultural shows.

L: Yeah, So going a little bit more into you promoting on your social media pages. Have you ever promoted the fact that you were a part of this program?

A: Yes, yes, especially when I was a member of this program. I had a lot of posts of of my activity in this program because I had concerts, I told you I have concerts events with with sponsors and if you follow me on Facebook if you search for old pictures you can see there are many many photos from those concerts, yeah.

L: Okay, that sounds awesome. For this next portion of the interview, we will go more into following an art career in Romania. So, when you were just starting to pursue a career in Romania, were there any obstacles or barriers you faced during that experience?

A: I was very lucky, yeah. After this program and after Conservatoire immediately, I got a job to the opera house in Bucharest, to the [inaudible] Theatre in Bucharest, I have many collaboration with the Philharmonics, in, in the whole country. Yeah, I did my debut in, in Russia. Then I participate in France at the competition. It's called the it's called the [George Enescu parit] and I did that, that competition in 2014. And, for example for that competition, I applied with the support of the Princess Margaret foundation. Yeah, at that moment was called the princess margaret foundation. Yeah. Yeah. And, yeah, it was nice. For example, in 2014 was my first time when I go outside for my country to another country.

L: That's awesome! It must have been a really cool experience to perform in another country that's like another goal that checked off off your list.

A: Yea and everywhere, where I, where I get I in my, in my presentation in my resume, I was a member of the Royal Margaret Foundation

L: Where do you think you'd be in terms of your career if you would never have found the foundation, or the young talents program.

A: I don't understand...

L: Where do you think you would be if you were never a part of the young talents program?

A: Good question. I never asked myself all this. I think everything in my life came with a reason. And this foundation, this program was one of this, this reason, and I really don't know but I never asked myself, yeah, what, how, my life...

L: By at least by the things you've said, this being a part of this program, kind of jumped started your career a little bit and allowed you to gain experiences in competition. And, yeah, so, yeah...

A: But really good phrase, so if everyone is at the start of their career, without, without this without the support, like this program. Yeah, they have to work, maybe three, three times more than, then, then, a member of the than me. But I was lucky. I wasn't at the start with the others, I was three steps in front, four because of this program, I have to say here. This program, right after this program, my career starts like a real career.

L: We want to hear that because we just love to know that we're working with a foundation that really helps young artists.

A: I don't know how many, how many people who was were in this program will will talk with you...

L: I think you're like the 10th person we've interviewed so far, where it's great to hear about all the different stories

A: But my colleagues, I have to say, all my colleagues who took part from this program, they are now in the one biggest house opera houses in, or, or they're doing a very big career. Yeah, I know cellists, sopranos, mezzo sopranos, I know the pianist, yeah, they are doing now, a really, really big, big career. And I'm happy to be one of the, one of those.

L: That's awesome. I'm so glad that this program allows you and all your colleagues to gain some success in your, in your opera career. Just to wrap up this interview, we're running out of time here I don't want to take too much of your time...

A: If you have any question let's say one or two more questions.

L: Most of these questions got answered indirectly... Were you aware of other musicians or artists that face any barriers in arts like support or financial situation who are trying to pursue a career in music?

A: I'm not sure if I understand myself I'm sorry.

L: I asked you before if there were obstacles you face in pursuing a career. But, have you seen any artists or other musicians, or was like this idea common amongst musicians to have obstacles in pursuing a career.

A: Yes, especially, especially this year with with the pandemic, I have, for example, my, my colleagues from from the conservatory, not everyone is doing a career now is actually, they are not performing anymore, which is horrible. And, yeah, but now they, they just have to wait for an opportunity because, is, this program is made just for people bit for a young musician between 14, or 24, years. So now, it's too late to apply for this kind of program, but if they weren't accepted this program. So, at that moment when I applied for this program, you can imagine, I, they choose only 15 people. So, the others were good, but not everyone. Yeah, you know what I mean?

L: Yeah. Yeah, I know.

A: But, I don't know. I'm sad with this because I had also some, some weeks ago, an interview for the National University of music from Bucharest. And I told them, they are not really connected with real life. The conservatory is not. Yeah, it's not real connected to their real job, the real business what what that means, you know, after the conservatory people are staying home because the orchestras, for example, they have no places, new places for young people, or the ensemble's of the opera or operetta theatre or, I don't know, it's so difficult to get into ensemble. And, yeah, also the choirs, if we, as opera singers. If we graduate conservatory, we have no choice. Yeah. So, once again I'm, I tell you, I was so lucky.

L: Yeah, I'm so glad you got that.

A: Yeah. So in Romania, unfortunately, at this moment. There are not so many options for young musicians.

L: Yeah, we found that out the heartbreaking to hear that.

A: Yeah, it is. That's why I know I got the opportunity to come here, but I have to say I really want to go home to do my career at home to have my audience to have to understand my, my people my. Yeah, to have my friends to. Yeah, it was very difficult also because my family is in Romania, and I have to live alone and yea.

L: So, we talked a lot artists that left Romania, was it because there was not as much opportunity to work in Romania?

A: This is, this is, unfortunately, very very true. Yeah, also because the institutions the cultural institutions in Romania, are very how to say... very connected with the politics. Yeah, is, for me, this is not not not very good. Not good at all. To because the arts, doesn't match with the politics and yeah, the arts are four soul, not for a business, but yeah but also people have to understand that to be a musician, to be I don't know, to be dancer to be it's a job in Romania, they still think that we are doing this just for our pleasure, It's a hobby.

L: Yeah.

A: But it's not. It's a way of life of work every day, every day.

L: Yeah, we learned there's that stigma everywhere in the US a lot of artists that are trying to pursue a career in that don't have a lot of support is seen as a hobby or something to just enjoy but not gain a career and or something like that. That's a hard thing to face as artists around the world.

A: Yeah. Also, for example, for in [conko] in the conservatory in Bucharest, are every year 27 places, 27. Can you imagine every four years are graduating hundred people from there, 100 opera singers, where can they perform? Where?

L: Yeah.

A: Yeah, is so insane, insane. Which means, because, because the conservatory needs that for money from the government needs students and, but they don't think what is happening with with those students, right after graduation.

L: Yeah, that makes sense.

A: This is the for the long, long story short, with the, with the young artists in in Romania. Not many, not, not so many choices.

L: Heartbreaking. It was great to hear all these stories, I'll cut this interview since we ran over and I don't want to take any more of your time. But um, we really appreciate everything you told us, and...

A: So for example now, no, thank you very much for inviting me. I am sorry because we finished the interview in a sad...

L: I know, it's okay though, I really wish you the best of luck for your performance in June I hope you still get to perform in person. We'll be sure that once we get everything transcribed, we'll send it over to you over email so you can read it as well.

A: Okay, thank you very much! Can I do a screenshot for Instagram?

L: Yeah of course! We'll do the same thing we'll take one photo. Everybody smile!

A: Yeah, it's perfect!

L: It was great to meet you and we'll be messaging you soon.

A: Thank you so much for inviting me it was a pleasure. All the best towards your project!

L: We wish you the best of luck, have a great rest of your night!

Interview 11:

Interviewers: Ryan (Conductor), Lexi (Notetaker)

Interviewee: Anonymous Current Member

R: So before we begin, do you have any sort of questions about our research or some of the work that we're doing.

A: Actually not. It sounds clear for me.

R: Excellent. And then one final question is do you agree to participate in this interview.

A: Yeah, of course.

R: Okay, fantastic. Alright so with that sort of more formal stuff out of the way, let's just begin by having you tell us a little bit about your background like where you're from, what age you got accepted into the young towns program, that kind of stuff.

A: Well, My name is [REDACTED]. I'm from Romania, from a town named [unintelligible]. In this moment I study my master degree in Bucharest. So, this is my first year. When I take this scholarship Margaret the royal family and I have 24 years.

R: Okay, awesome. So can you talk about some of the work you do, right, you mentioned you're a musician and the survey.

A: Yeah, I'm a guitar player, classical guitar and I am singing all the time.

L: Awesome, When did you start playing the guitar?

A: At the age of 10. Yeah, 10 years.

R: Awesome. Okay so, um, can you talk a little bit. So you mentioned in the survey right you found out about the program through Facebook. So, so could you explain this discovery more thoroughly.

A: I don't know, it was just, I think that they, they paid for, for advertising and just showed it my scrolling on Facebook.

R: Okay Cool. Can you talk about like how well you think that program is known in Romania?

A: I think that it is known by the musicians, by the students and childs from School of Arts. But I don't think that they know everything that, what is happening in this this program, they know that is exists a scholarship. But they don't I don't think they that they know about all the opportunities they are giving to us.

R: I see, right. So, Why were you interested in being a part of this program?

A: Well, first, first time after this pandemic situation. It sounds It sounds really good to have some, some concerts, even if they are on online. For the moment, because everything was closed. So, this is a very big opportunity after one year of playing. And also, they have some concerts, I think that's the right word. When we are discussing different features, or are working in this area of art so, they are given to us their, their experience.

R: Awesome. What were some of your feelings when apply, like, if you think the program was selective or any, any sorts of feelings.

A: I don't know, it was just ok let's try it. I don't know, something really special.

R: Sure, sure. And could you talk about some of the things you had to do with the application process?

A: What did I have to do in the application?

R: Yeah so did you have to audition or send in some of your work that you've done.

A: Okay yeah In the first part of beginning to complete the application for, and also with that application I sent my recording of me. And after that, they call me they liked my recording. And we started, we started to have some interviews with them.

R: Okay, awesome. So you know what were some of your expectations. So I know you're kind of the program is sort of just recently begun. So could you talk about some of the expectations you've had before starting it?

A: My, My expectations for where those concerts, you know. Yeah, the concerts.

R: And have you done any of that experience in the program so far?

A: Sorry I don't understand.

R: Have you gotten to perform through uh-

A: Oh Yeah, yeah, I had already performed two times.

R: Awesome and how, how did those events go?

A: Really nice. It was really good organized, they called us all the time. And told everything about our everything was very organized.

R: Awesome, awesome. And how would you say, how has covid, sort of, impacted these performances?

A: Well, I think that the emotions was really, really, really big. But also it was really happy a really happy moment.

R: Were able to perform in front of an audience or did have to all be like remote?

A: Sorry?

R: Did you get to perform in front of an audience or was it like streamed online?

A: It was just streamed online, but in the room was from stuff, I don't know, maybe three or four something like that. So it was kind of.

R: Yeah yeah for sure. Um, have you had other any other events in the program so far that haven't been strictly performing?

A: Um sorry, can you repeat please?

R: Yeah, for sure. Um, had there been any experiences in the program already that you know weren't just performing but maybe getting to know other members or hearing other people like talking about certain aspects of, you know, presenting yourself or promoting?

A: Yeah, I met there some other colleagues that got the scholarship and also, it was an interview, I don't know, I don't know exactly. I think it's a radio or something like that but I don't remember the name.

R: Cool, so can you talk more about some of the topics that were covered.

A: Okay. It wasn't something really... let me remember. It was a very short, maybe one minute or two, or something like that. So it was about why are we there. We talked about this scholarship and opportunity that it was.

R: Gotcha. See. Um, let's see. So, what other experiences do you expect to participate in for the remainder of the program?

A: I was expecting for those mentors. I'm really excited to meet I don't know, artists or something. People who can give us from their experience. And, yeah, I think this is my expectation right now.

R: Okay, awesome. Let's see here. So going beyond, you know, your experience with this young talents program, I want to talk more about, in general, some of the experiences you've gone through just sort of following a career in music in general. So can you talk about it there been any barriers or obstacles that you faced in pursuing a career in music?

A: I don't know it's hard to say but the first is trying to do our best in every concert in every contest that we're playing. But beyond this, I don't know I think that there are not so many opportunities to play in front of an audience for the young people in general.

R: Gotcha. Yeah, that makes sense. So, let's see, you mentioned you're currently in university right.

A: Yeah.

R: So could you talk about, you know, your, your time there, and maybe how the young talent program may sort of influence, some of your work or experience, while a part of it.

A: Well, this, this program is influencing because I know at the university they are preparing us for the stage, and here they are putting us on this thing. So this is very nice because the university don't have so many programs to perform. In my opinion, of course.

R: Yeah, for sure. Um, so, is this scholarship that the program is giving. Is this going to be helpful in sort of in attending university. Or I guess more in general, what does receiving the scholarship from the program mean for you.

A: The scholarship. I don't understand the question.

R: So in terms of the scholarship, you know, is that going to be is that sort of critical money that you're receiving to go towards your education, or you know, can you tell us what you plan to do with the scholarship.

A: Okay. About the money that we receive Okay. Well, yeah, I think that's really important because, In general, I don't know, maybe things It's quite expensive. So, because of the corona times, I started to take some microphones for recording at home. And with the scholarship I would like to take video camera to can, because I want to make my own videos at home, and try to promote or something in different contests, over, maybe for audiences. It would be nice to make my own videos.

R: Yeah For sure. I think that's an excellent point.

L: Because I picked out your YouTube account. You're, you're really talented with your guitar playing, and I did notice that the videos that you had uploaded where you're performing. So you're interested in maybe making your own videos at home?

A: Yeah, and also maybe when, when I have a concert somewhere and they don't have the microphones and the video recording to bring mine and make my own video from there, live.

R: Yeah, absolutely. So can you talk about the financial feasibility of, you know, art or music education in Romania?

A: I don't know what to say about this. I think that, in general Romania is not in some excellent music education in general. So, it doesn't have so many opportunities for scholarships. Something like this for musicians. Yeah, I don't know.

R: Do you see yourself staying in Romania, after you graduate or after the program?

A: Not necessarily, I don't think so.

R: Interesting. Yeah, we've you know in a lot of the alumni of this program we've talked to, you know, a lot of times they're definitely in different parts of Europe, answered echoed a lot of the similar things you've said so.

L: A lot of them said there weren't a lot of opportunities in Romania to perform or gain experience's performing so a lot of them move to like Germany or Austria. Some even moved to Italy I think.

A: Yeah the problem is that we don't have so many events for classical music in general. This is one of them. And the second is that most of them, if they are existing they are not paid for us. So we are playing, of course for our experience so this is a good thing. But then, not all the time.

R: Yeah, I think that's that's a great point.

L: Ryan did you want to go more into like the promotion?

R: Yeah yeah for sure. Um, so looking at your, your survey results, You know, it looks like you use Facebook and YouTube and, and you use YouTube to have a page for your work. So can you talk about you know some of your feelings regarding promoting yourself through social media?

A: I don't know. I don't know how to promote myself very well, so I'm just putting my videos there. I'm sending to some friends. I'm distributing on Facebook. Some kinds of this. So, it's hard, it's, maybe I should learn more about this how to promote myself. But, except friends, and parents or something accepting them. They are not some outside you, I don't know how to say, attributes or something like that.

R: Gotcha. Um, so, is that, is sort of learning how to promote yourself through social media, a skill, you want to learn while in the youth talents program?

A: Yeah, this would be awesome if we could do that because I think it's very important in these times.

R: Now, Was that something, you were going to the program, you were expecting to learn about, or was it something you hadn't considered that might be an opportunity they will give you?

A: Well, I don't know, I hope that we can learn this in this program and the mentors, but I don't know if this isn't the one of the point of problem for them.

R: Yeah, sure. Do you think it's possible for the foundation to reach a larger audience and if so, you know, what are some of the suggestions you might make that would allow them to do so?

A: I think that they can, they can reach a bigger audience and promote a lot of us, but I don't have so many knowledge of how they can do this or not. But I hope that they help us and they already helping us with the scholarship. I don't know, after one year I didn't play anywhere I had two concerts and it was so nice.

R: Yeah, absolutely. You know, during the- When you sort of found out about the program and when you were applying, you know was it easy to find information about the program, or, you know, did you have to sort of ask a lot of questions or How well do you feel-

A: No, no actually, it was really, really easy. I have seen that advertising from from the scholarships from the scholarship I access the link from their website, and it was everything that I should know about the program, and also about the application so it was really nice.

R: Awesome. And then so based on your time in the program so far, would you say there's things you've experienced that, you know, they haven't, you know, sort of clearly promoted or could they explain that, that would be something you're doing

A: Can you repeat please, sorry I don't understand.

L: Yeah. So a part of our project is trying to figure out some things that you and other members get to participate in or in or experience. And it's something that the foundation hasn't promoted so we're looking for more things that the program can promote more to get like more people interested. So we were looking to see if there was anything that they hadn't told you about or you weren't aware of participating in that you had participated in already or are going to that you like weren't aware of participating and while you were applying for something like that.

A: Yeah yeah sure sure I understand, I think it's kind of perfect what they're promoting. I don't know what they can do more they're really hard workers. So, they are giving a lot of opportunities. Also, they are trying to make a make of course they decisions all the time. So, yeah, it's a very big opportunity they are doing a lot so I don't think they need to do more, just to keep it like this. And to inspire others to do things like this because the young people from Romania, young musicians need this stuff.

L: So, a part of our project was to possibly give some recommendations on what the program can promote to like help gain an audience. And we've been asking some interviewees what they might think they would enjoy seeing on like the social media pages or websites and some said that they might enjoy seeing past work or performances from like past members of the program. Would that be something you'd be interested in seeing like maybe some past artwork or videos from the musicians playing or anything like that?

A: Yeah, yeah. this can be a point For us, we know what is happening in this program, it's not such a big deal, but maybe for the outside the audience, it would be a good idea to see more about what is happening in this program.

R: Yeah, I think that's a great point. So, based on your time so far, you know, would you recommend or suggest this program to fellow artists.

A: Sorry, can you repeat it? Sorry sorry.

R: Yeah yeah no problem. So based on your time in this program so far, would you recommend, or would you tell you know other artists about this program?

A: Of course, sure, for sure.

R: Awesome. And then, um, you know what might you tell them you know sort of musician to musician, about, you know, some of the experiences you've had so far.

A: Well, the first thing I tell them that they really make you to feel like an artist. You know because this is for the young artists. So, we are making us to feel that we are for real an artist when we are on the stage or when they are talking to us. They, they treat us like people. So, this is the first point. The second is the opportunities with the concerts. Which for me is the best, the best part.

R: Awesome. Yeah, that's, that's a great response. Has there been anything in the program so far that you've been unhappy with?

A: Until now, no. For the moment I think that there will not be problems.

R: Sure, sure. Lexi have we hit everything?

L: I think. Let me check one more time. Yeah, I think we covered everything. Is there any last things you want to mention to us, that could help us with our project or anything like that.

A: I don't know. No, I actually don't know how I can help you because in general the problem with the young artist and the artist classical musician in general to put in front of audience in Romania and they are not promoting So, Yeah, it's, it's kind of hard here to make things general. So I don't know how I can see a solution.

L: Yeah. Well, a good thing that we've heard from a lot of alumni, is that through this program they gained a lot of opportunities, like maybe with putting it off putting this on their resume or just like making connections, professionally. So I wish you the best of luck with that and I hope that through this program you can gain some good opportunities for your future career, and anything like that so we wish you the best of luck with that.

A: Sure. Thank you. Thank you very much and sorry for my english, it is not so perfect.

L: No you did great, don't worry.

R: Yeah absolutely. Actually I do have one final question I just remembered. You know, could you talk a little bit about the process of, you know, like finding an agent or requiring an agent, as a musician

A: Well first for music, they are not existing. Yeah, they are missing for all kinds of classical music. I actually don't know one. And I think I should know one at my age. Yeah, so now you can do just have to I don't know talk to someone and talk to someone asking, or someone to come to you and you want to meet them.

L: Yeah, we've talked to a few alumni members that are musicians and they've mentioned, the process of having an agency. Yeah, and they said right now it's been tough finding an agent, especially with being in classical music. So, but they did say like having an agent is helpful because they also help promote you, as well as like you promoting yourself so that's definitely something that might help you figure that out a little bit in the future it if you end up able to find one, but either don't know the situation entirely in Romania, but yeah.

A: Yeah, I hope that our industry, classical music, will maybe go off in time I hope.

L: Yeah, we do. Okay well thank you for talking with us. We really enjoyed hearing your insight on the program and promoting yourself in Romania and stuff like that. We really appreciate it and if you have any other comments or questions about our research, you can email us through our email that we've been communicating with. And if you want to know anything about our research like results or anything like that we can send them to you in the future.

A: Yeah sure that would be nice.

L: Yeah sure no problem.

R: Also keep in mind so after this is done if you'd like anything you said off the record, reach out to us and we'd be happy to accommodate any concerns you might have.

A: Yeah everything is okay don't worry about this

L: Thank you for talking with us and have a great rest of your evening I think it's there or afternoon-

A: Yeah yeah afternoon. Okay thank you.

L: See you later, bye

R: Thank you yup take care

A: Bye

Interview 12:

Interviewers: Chris (Conductor), Madeline (Notetaker)

Interviewee: Anonymous Current Member

Translator: Diana Costache

Chris reads the consent form to the interviewee and Diana translates to the interviewee.

The interviewee gives permission to record.

Demographic questions:

Where are you from?

Cyprus. She lives in Romania since she was six years old. Her mother is Romanian, her father Greek.

It is her first year in the program, she is 19

What are some specific kinds of art she likes to do?

She started with painting, since she was a kid. In high school she did sculpture. Now at university she studies graphics.

Discovering the young talents program:

She found out through a colleague, her teachers supported her to enter the program.

How well do you feel the program is known?

In the arts high school, the program is well known. But she doesn't know that about the music part.

Experiences in the program so far:

She didn't have a lot of experience since the program started in March, but for the moment she is happy to be here. She likes the exposition that they had last month. and the work they did earlier today, brainstorming for the next event.

Expectations coming into the program?

she had a lot of expectations, she was very excited to be a part of the program. she likes the idea of the summer camps, but is aware that covid is making the program a little bit harder to conduct.

How selective?

Yes, she was very nervous! There were a lot of people that applied to it. She was surprised to get in.

Favorite part so far?

She enjoys the current team they have, there is an exhibition in may about the elderly. They are trying to integrate the RMFR's elder program with the young talents program, and she is excited about this.

What are some of your overall goals?

she doesn't have specific goals by the end of the year, but she hopes that this year will be good with the mentorships and exhibitions. Also with working with the musicians and actors, and other visual artists from other backgrounds.

Pursuing a career in the arts in Romania:

Current level of schooling and plans to continue studying art?

she wants to pursue her studies and thinks about going into a masters degree for sculpture and graphics. she wants to stay with people from this field, she doesn't want to spend time with people who don't encourage art.

Are you planning on studying in Romania?

She wants to start in Romania but then study abroad in the future

Financial feasibility in Romania?

It was hard for her because she studied guitar as well, and there are a lot of expenses with music.

Friends of hers or people she knows that tried to pursue higher education in the arts but couldn't

She had a friend who started art and his parents couldn't afford his studies.

Do you follow other artists on social media?

Yes, she has a lot of artist friends on social media.

Specific content?

She watches every content she likes, the way the work makes her feel is more important than the technique. She doesn't look for a specific theme.

Insight into how the foundation can improve social media?

She only knows social media for herself.

COVID?

The pandemic helped her to discover herself and to have more time to work and she doesn't feel that the pandemic affected her work. For her, it was a period to stay by herself and work independently.

Anything else?

She doesn't know

Interview 13:

Interviewers: Lexi (Conductor), Ryan (Notetaker)

Interviewee: Anonymous Alumni

A: I do agree to participate and no I don't have any other questions.

L: Awesome. Cool. Thank you. Alright, so to start we just want to learn a little bit more about you and some of your demographics so we kind of want to learn, about where you're from, your age, when you were accepted into the program, and things like that.

A: So I'm from Romania of course. I'm 26, this year, in July. I was accepted in this program, the year before. So I was 24 when I signed in with this program, it was kind of my last chance because the program has a limit of age, which is 24 so I was just lucky to be... to be in this program. And it was for about a year, maybe a year and two months, something, something like that. It was because of COVID and everything in between, and the world being upside down. The thing is that the management of the program decided to expand a little bit the deadline so we could, how should I say, we could take advantage of everything in this program, a little bit longer because a lot of us, me included, couldn't participate in many competitions that were internationally because they were canceled or all just postponed. So because of that they, they said that they will extend a little bit the deadline, in which we had to manage our money that we received. So, yeah, it's been it's been a year and a couple of months. Yeah.

L: Gotcha. Okay.

A: I should add that I'm a fashion graduate. And I have also a diploma, a bachelor degree in history and theory of arts. So I'm have double speciality so I don't know how to translate this in English to make sense, but it's the fashion and history and theory of art, so I have to two degrees.

L: Awesome congratulations on that that's very impressive. Um, and so we saw that you indicated that you were a fashion designer for your specialty for the Young Talents program, could you specify how long you've been doing this? like how long you've been into fashion?

A: In studying fashion it's been... this is the sixth year. So, a Bachelor Degree in in our university is for three years, and a master degree, which I already graduated in 2020, is for two years so this will be my sixth year into fashion after graduating last year, last summer.

L: And what made you decide to go into fashion? Going into university?

A: This is kind of silly story but it's true. My mom is a tailor. So, I've been around her and tailoring and everything in between since I was a child, and it grew on me. And I wanted to become a fashion designer, before I even know how to spell designer. So, for real, and I decided to do this because of a lot of reasons first of all because I enjoyed it, I enjoyed the process of creating clothes, but also because being short, it was a struggle to find clothes that actually fit me, and I know, I know a lot of girls have, have the same problem as I do. So I said, then why not? Why not make clothes that actually fit and have a story and be something that's not out there yet. So, yeah, basically this were my reasons why I started, but after studying I discovered so much more about fashion and I'm so into it now that I probably wasn't even before it. Because, like I said before, I was more into creating the garments into tailoring and patterning, because that's how I grew up. You know, I didn't know actually the aesthetic part art of fashion, or the artistic part of fashion and after studying that for a couple of years, it actually grew even more on me so I have even a deeper passion for fashion now.

L: You're so talented! I was looking at your Instagram, and I'm obsessing with like all of your stuff. If there's any way I could like purchase any of your stuff like I totally would because I am obsessed with it. And I was telling Ryan before the interview, I was like, this girl she's going to be big in the fashion world I can...

A: Thank you, thank you, oh I'm blushing!

L: You're welcome. Like Project Runway or like any of those shows I could see your work definitely be winning on this stuff like you're extremely talented.

A: Thank you.

L: You're welcome

A: I just been participated in some international competition and just the I'm waiting for results now. But, yeah, thank you.

L: Well, we wish you the best of luck for that.

A: Thank you.

L: Yeah, so now we'll just go to our survey response-based questions just to learn a bit more about your promotion and your artwork so you could you expand actually on your experiences with promoting your work on social media so we saw that you post on Instagram, and also your YouTube account. Could you just maybe explain some more of like the experiences that you've gone through, while doing that.

A: I have a Youtube channel, but I'm not posting regularly, how I should have to actually grow it. On my Instagram, I've been for maybe two years, I like Instagram, for, for sure I'm extremely late probably that's why I'm going so so slowly, but from Instagram what I can say from my experiences is that people see it as... things that you post in order to just show off. I don't find Instagram to be actually, that kind of social engagement at least in my experience, like I said it's people showing off, where they've been what they've done and things like this. So because of that I treated my, my Instagram as more of an online portfolio. Because it's really hard to post something about me and fashion and everything that I've done so far and mix it up and it's just, I don't know, in my opinion, that makes sense like that. I know people who does that and... for me it doesn't work, is just that doesn't work. and what I'm going to say about Instagram is that one of my biggest collaboration that I could have been part in was from Instagram, from someone who discovered my, my fashion on Instagram. The project was just bigger than I expected. And just wasn't... how should I say this... they were looking for something that I wouldn't give them at the moment, but it was a really big deal for me being discovered like that. I mean, it's really small it's, like, I didn't even know how that happened.

L: Yeah, even, even if you didn't really get to participate in it as much as you thought that shows that in the future you could have more of these opportunities especially once you start to grow your show your social media profiles.

A: But Instagram is really big, internationally, especially in USA, but it's not so big, in, in Romania. In Romania, Facebook is dominant is the main social platform that everyone uses. So, because of that I also have a Facebook page but I also treat it like a portfolio. But again, it's not something that I do frequently. And recently, I started, I started. TicTok account, so I'm posting there too, because it's such a big platform, it's...

L: Yes it is.

A: It would be remiss for me to not post there. So, yeah, my gripe with social media wasn't just so fabulous, let's say.

L: Um, so I have noticed because I'm I'm pretty big on TikTok I don't post much but I do watch a lot, and I've seen a lot of fashion designers gain a lot of recognition on there from what I've

noticed, a lot of videos will go viral when people show, like the process of how you make a certain garment. So that's kind of some maybe some idea of what you could post. I've noticed, like, people take some sort of clothing and then restyle it and remake it into something else that something maybe, I don't know, but I've noticed that you can definitely gain some recognition on TikTok for fashion.

A: And way bigger than expected, actually. The TikTok experience for me, it's the opposite of Instagram. It has that social element to me. You see real people engaging in content from real people up there. So it's not that fake it's not that just that show off what we've done and what we can purchase. So maybe that's why I'm enjoying so much TikTok too, probably because of that. But yeah, it's something.

L: It's, it's definitely like brings out your creative side using that. So it can be functional. Okay, and going a little bit into more questions, have there been any like techniques that you've used to try to gain any recognition on the social media platforms? Maybe like posting on certain times or using hashtags or anything like that?

A: Yes, for sure, using hashtags, posting at certain times when I see that my followers are more active, and posting consistently every day maybe once every two days at, at least, at least. So, yeah, it's, it's quite a lot, actually, especially when I'm working on something or I'm concentrating on something else, I sometimes forgot to post, and I see the numbers going down, so definitely posting consistently it's the probably the best strategy.

L: Yeah, it's it's hard to, because I've had the thoughts of trying to gain some fame on TikTok by posting, but it is hard because you have to just keep up with it you can't just gain... you can't just gain a following overnight And so that's that's the tough part for social media. You stated how you discovered the young talent program in the survey, could you just explain a little bit about how this kind of went down about how you discovered the program?

A: Through Facebook actually, I seen one designer that I follow. He's in a different city in a different university, but I follow his work because I like what he's doing. And I saw a post from him that... something similar, regarding this program that he got into this problem, or something like this, and I click on it because I wanted to know what's going on. So, yeah, but it was a Facebook post for sure. It was a Facebook post from him. And he was a year before me and I think he's now in the program, too, so yeah.

L: Maybe we talked to him, possibly we've talked to a good amount of people so far, maybe like 15 or so, possibly. Yeah. Do you think it might be possible, or no... To start off, do you feel that the program is well known in Romania and not just like the art community, in the fashion, and music community, but maybe even in a broader sense?

A: Not, not that much. I mean I don't know people who are talking about this program, even if they have not necessarily this program but this foundation itself. Not, not that much... us between artists and in my university too, but no people around me that are not into art don't know.

L: Gotcha. And do you think it might be possible for the foundation to use certain ways to gain a larger audience? Is there anything that you could think of that they could do to maybe broaden their interest?

A: In my opinion, with arts in general because I've studied history in the area of arts, when something gets big in art, it's because someone out there, translated that something artsy for everyone else to understand. So, if they really want to grow outside of art, any type of art, music fashion, visual art in of itself, they should have something that will translate to any other group of people that may not be so interested in art, at first, at least something that will connect with more people, and stories always do that.

L: Yeah, so our project is basically trying to one help the foundation gain a larger audience using techniques on different social media platforms. And it's also where we're trying to figure out certain things that they should be posting to gain a larger audience so an idea that we had was to gain some of these quotes from some of the people we interviewed to possibly have them share, like if they talk about like experiences and like things that they enjoyed. We figured that maybe more people would be interested in hearing, like first hand accounts versus their program just talking about the things that we do. Also we heard from other people that if they posted artwork from past from past numbers in the program that more people might be interested. For example like we've, we've had to do some presentations throughout the week, or throughout the past couple of weeks. And a lot of people in our class, like seeing our presentations have been most interested in the artwork that we've posted, and these people aren't necessarily into art. So I think that kind of shows that if maybe the foundation posted, like, works from like the fashion industry or, like maybe past music that people made, or like past drawings, paintings that possibly other people might be interested in, would that be something that you would be as well?

A: Yes, for sure. And another thing that I've noticed with their social media, it's not diverse enough, meaning that we in this program, 15 if I'm not mistaken, 15 from visual arts and 15 from music. Think about how diverse... think about how diverse, this actual group in itself is. So, seeing that from my experience that they only promote music from different artists on just the exhibitions or paintings, more on more often than other type of art. It's in my opinion not diverse enough because this diversity will actually bring in people that might be interested in one of that. Maybe people aren't interested in not necessarily in fashion, or what I do, but maybe in ceramics, or sculpture, or other type of photography for example, I had a colleague that was a photographer. So, being a little more diverse in their post and what they promote from the artists

that are in the program, or just have been in the program in the past, in my opinion, it will be better.

L: Yeah, so you're saying maybe post stuff from like every different type of art that grabs. That's definitely a good idea. Because maybe people won't realize that their type of art is what they're looking for as well as they just see paintings or different instrumental music.

A: Exactly. and I understand... how should I say this... from their perspective I understand why they do this because.... And I've met people who really think this from, and they are teachers in Visual Arts. They don't understand fashion for example, they don't understand why it is a form of art, why it is more than just design itself. They don't understand actually what we did. And I think people who don't understand that regarding visual art for example sculptures why they look like that, or paintings why there are just three strokes on the background and it's called painting. So that's why I'm saying it's really important to be a little more diverse in this because you never know who sees it, and you actually, if you want to promote visual art, then promote every visual artist that actually was in your program. In my opinion that could be the best for them.

L: Awesome. Thank you for that advice. Okay.

R: Yeah, I have a question. So would you say that's because the the program and generally how its run, it seems like it's more traditional or...

A: For sure, for sure. When it comes to design and any kind of design even it's for product or for graphic design or anything like that, they don't promote as much. Sometimes I think it's because they don't understand it, why it is a form of art. But actually, that's the future, look at what technology brings us today, what type of art. It developed over the time. So, in my opinion, there are really talented people that should have gained a little more recognition if it was for the foundation to promote a little bit more of what they've done over that span when they were at least in the program.

L: Understandable. Okay, just to learn a bit more about what you did accomplish in the program, so to start before you even were in it. Why were you interested in being a part of this program?

A: It will sound bad, but it's because of the money. Being an artist, it's really hard because you have to have funds to create, but at the same time, you cannot sell because you didn't create it. So it's a vicious cycle. And I needed that money. The program itself promotes art and helping artists that cannot develop themselves at the pace that they have should... let me rephrase that. When I applied for, for this program, it was 60% about the art, and 40% about the social aspect of it. So they want you to help people who are talented but also don't have the means to promote their art or to create actually. And they scouted people who are actually in the lower social categories so

classes, lower classes. Because of that aspect, they want to help people who are actually talented but don't have the means to do so because even if you are a musician, having an instrument, it's really expensive, and sometimes the parents doesn't have that kind of money to to buy to their kids, even if they are extremely talented. So, the reason why I applied was actually this one because I needed the money and my family wasn't able to provide me as much as I needed in order to create and fashion is an expensive field, actually.

L: Yeah, I bet, because you need to... you need by all the materials like the machines that you use, and so much more. I bet.

A: Yes, and when it comes to... I know a lot of designers from my university who doesn't even know how to tailor and pattern. So they have to go to a tailor and pay that tailor in order to have their designs done. So, I actually saved a lot of money because I know how to do that but the materials and fabrics and everything else they are expensive. So, and having a collection which are, at least, at least five outfits, that's a lot.

L: Yeah, we've, we've only actually talked to musicians and, like other visual artists, but we haven't actually talked to a fashion designer, yet, so I'm pretty curious to see like the kind of experiences that you went through and like you participate in that were different than the other types of artists so could you maybe talk about some things that you participated in?

A: I participated last year in three international fashion design competitions. But I should have participated in the two presentation fashion shows, but they were canceled. And my collection is still in process of making, because it was such a slow line, even, even the fabrics that I ordered online, they took so long to get to me, it was... it was an entire experience. But, yeah, it was a little bit harder for me, comparing with the other visual artists, because they could have have their materials at their disposal. The fabrics that I've ordered, I ordered them from Korea. And it just took such a long time, and it was, it was in processing, anyway. Yes, because I wanted some special fabrics. So because I needed those kind of fabrics and because they were some special holographic and reflective and something that I couldn't get here, I searched online, I found them. Placing the order, it was fine. But the rest of the distribution was chaos.

L: Yeah, and I can actually picture the exact fabric you were talking about, because I was looking at those... or maybe not exactly one.

A: Exactly. Some of them yes...

L: Some of them I was looking at some of those, those pieces on your on your Instagram I don't know if you posted those but I did see some like holographic pieces.

A: From a part of them, I would have made the garments, but not from all and yeah my experience with this year in which I was part of the, the program, it was more of this, I mean me trying to get into competition, me trying to receive my fabric, me being in the process of creating them, so I wasn't really promoting anything, I wasn't really out there in the social world virtual social world, because I actually was working on a lot of stuff, but, yeah.

L: Understandable. Um, and what would you say was maybe like your favorite part of the program? Like maybe the biggest thing that you learned, or something like that?

A: What I enjoyed the most was the community. The community aspect of it. I really felt that I was part of a group that actually was passionate about the same things that I was, and finding that it's really, really nice it's surprisingly relieving. And having mentors who guide us in... they seem such trivial things, but for us, it meant a lot, for example, how to make a good portfolio. I wasn't taught that in my university I was taught by these mentors, on how to have a great CV or simple and trivial things like this that actually helped me more than, than I actually thought they were. So yeah and this this aspect being, being part of communities was this was the best feeling.

L: So would you say maybe that that aspects of the program kind of exceeded your expectations?

A: Yes, for sure.

L: Cool, awesome to hear.

R: Were those experiences something you were expecting to, you know, learn or go through in the program or were they a surprise to you?

A: More of a surprise for me. I mean, I wasn't expecting such mentorship. I was expecting more of... on the artistic part or, how to create, but they were about everything else, regarding that. Like I said, How to make a great portfolio how to apply for a job in creative art, or how to apply for an exhibition and things like this which I've never heard talked before. Not in university not in other, other situations. So that was the most surprising aspect because like I said that's where I feel like I learned the most.

L: Awesome. We're, I'm, I'm glad to hear that you got to learn more about that. Okay, so next is to shift towards the last last section of this interview we don't want to take up too much more of your time but um so you stated that you were attending a university in Romania. So you you've graduated already or...

A: Yeah, in 2020. In the middle of the pandemic.

L: Yeah that stinks. So, are you still in Romania or are you planning on going somewhere else to pursue your career?

A: At the moment I'm still in Romania. I'm still studying, meaning, I'm still in my university in a different program, which is for teaching. So I could be in the future, a teacher or professor. The thing is that at the moment because of this course, I'm in Romania, but I for such a long time, I want to be a designer at Montclair, which is in Milan. So, probably, I will go in Italy to to further my career. So, yeah, I don't think... let me just say something. What I want to do in my career and in fashion is almost impossible in Romania, because we don't have such big brands. We don't have such developed fashion industry, like in other parts of Europe. So me just wanting to be a designer just to design something, not to be part of every process in the creation of the garment, that's basically impossible to find here, because here there are just small studios that do everything. And most of them are custom or order base type of businesses. So, I've been in an internship like that. So I know what I should expect from Romania in fashion industry, but the thing is that I want, just to be a designer I want to design a want to create. And I actually want to also be creative director at the fashion brand. So here I cannot achieve that. So in order to achieve that I have to move someone, somewhere else, such as Paris or Italy or London maybe. But, yeah, my first step will be Montclair because I just, I'm in love with that brand I want to work there. I will apply this year there. So, it's exciting.

L: Um yeah we've talked to a lot... a lot of people who have or planning to probably leave Romania just based on the fact that there's not a lot of opportunities as well. Would you agree on that in terms of not just fashion but music and other visual art?

A: When it comes to music. If you're not a pop artist you don't have a place here. And I know a lot of musicians that are in this program, don't actually do pop music they do more of Opera, or instrumental type of music. So it's really hard to have a place here, because of that, in visual arts is also something like this. If you have international recognition, everyone in Romania, will think you're the best. But if you are the best in Romania, even if you are, no one thinks like that. Because they somehow, and I don't know why, associate your fame or your status in art, or just your talent, based on your international recognition and it's stupid, but this is the reality so I understand why a lot of artists would want to go to other countries for that. And even if they come back in Romania, which a lot have, now after they achieve certain milestones in their career internationally. They, they still had to have that part of their life when they leave Romania. It's, it's heartbreaking. But it's it's the reality.

L: Gotcha. And so if you do end up leaving Romania, do you think that you'll like keep that part of you like that Romania, part of you like with you there. I don't know how to exactly phrase this, but we're just like curious if you'll like keep that... Ryan, we were talking about this earlier, do you have a good way to say it?

R: Yeah. I think we were talking about earlier was... shoot, I can think of it but I mean, I guess, I guess it generally know like once you start going abroad, I guess, you know, actually I don't even know how to phrase it...

L: Yeah, so when we were talking about with our advisors, the fact that a lot of people leave. But not just the fact that they want to leave Romania, but only because of the fact that there's not opportunities there. So, would you be like ever interested maybe and coming back. Once you gain your success, like is Romania and like being there and like growing up there and living there was that like an important part of your, maybe like identity, I guess, and like you coming back would be something good? I don't know. I don't know how to rephrase this but maybe if you if you understand what I'm trying to get at...

A: Yes, I understand what you are saying. The thing is that I am different from a lot of people that I know. Because, I, I, let's say it like this. I'm from Romania, Romania, okay. But I'm half Hungarian from my mother's side. I have a cousin, in a family. I have a cousin in Italy and a cousin and an aunt in Spain. So my family's already torn apart. When it comes to me, gaining my information or entertainment, or news, even, it's either from the far west, which is, USA, where you are in... maybe that's why I'm such good at English, but also because I've studied so much in English, because of the information it's way, way... a lot more. That's why I'm trying to say, than it is translated in Romanian. The translations just give me headaches. They're so bad. They are so bad. And, when it comes to also news and entertainment and art and fashion especially I go to the other side of the word in the Far East, in Japan and Korea. So I'm, I'm really in between. When it comes to, well, everything my influences in my art, and the way I think, my mindset, the way I speak, everything about me is just me being in between me having this duality of a personality. That's why me leaving Romania just to pursue my career, it's not something that my family didn't know already, so they somehow expect this. Also my family is in another part of Romania, I already left them to study. The thing is that having my family here will also always bring me back. Because my sister and my mom are already here. They will always already bring me back because I want to visit them I want to be with them, no matter where I will go in the world or what I do in my career, I will always come back to them. So, that's what keeps me in Romania, actually, not. And I always say this, Romania is a beautiful country, but the people suck. Yeah. Yeah for real. It's just because of mentality, because they are so traditional in so many wrong ways. And because the systems, all of the systems are broken and, and the thing is that what I'm trying to say, even if I will go in another country just to pursue my career and just to be what I want to be, I will always come back. Just at least just to visit. Just to be with my mom just to be with my sisters. I will always come back. Maybe, maybe, if I can get them with me. Maybe, then I will visit Romania just as a tourist, not as a, as I know I don't know how to say this, I will not come back just to live here, unless I actually have a steady career and I have enough money to just don't feel the need to save.

L: Gotcha. I got it. All right, just because we've kind of went over a time a bit, we don't want to take too much of your time so we appreciate...

A: If you have any questions, I will. It's fine, it's fine if I'm, I know I speak a lot, and I know I know...

L: No we're like totally open the speaking as much as possible, we love to hear it. Ryan did you have any other questions you want to ask before?

R: No I don't think so I think everything's been hit.

L: We've covered most of everything. We will reach out to you if we have anything else you might want to ask maybe if there's anything else you want to tell us. You could reach back out to us as well. And if you're also interested in seeing some of our results from these interviews in our project in general. We are totally open to sharing that with you, we will be finished up within the next few weeks. So if you're if you're interested, we'd love to share that with you.

A: Of course of course

L: cool.

Interview 14:

Interviewers: Madeline (Conductor), Ryan (Notetaker)

Interviewee: Anonymous Current Member

M: Awesome. So you have the right to review and or delete any responses leader by emailing the research team at the email that we contacted you with. And if this is requested the interviewer is required to remove from the notes anything wish to be removed. Do you have any questions about this research?

A: Oh, for now, not really.

M: Okay. And finally, do you agree to participate in this interview.

A: Yep.

M: Awesome. Great. Alright, so just to get started, we wanted to learn a little bit about who you are. So could you tell us a little bit about where you're from, and what kind of art you make.

A: My name is [REDACTED] and I am from a little village, not really from the shore of Romania, but I'm studying here from 2017, I think. Now I'm in. I do have an MA, and I'm studying fashion design. Currently, that's it I think so.

M: Awesome. So, how many years have you been in the young talents program?

A: This is my second year.

M: Second year?

A: Yes.

M: Awesome. And how old are you right now?

A: 22

M: Awesome. Cool. So, as a fashion designer have you always been interested in fashion design or is like did you start with something else before?

A: Um, I just draw and paint. I loved it. I went to a club near my city and I wanted to go to like college, I think so, if before what I'm doing now. There were like two places in painting and fashion design and in the last meeting I decided to go fashion design. I didn't know much about

it, but I had a great teacher. And I go, even to the Olympics in the national face. And I don't know I did it naturally, somehow, my family doesn't have like a background for this kind of art or fashion. We had simple lives, but I don't know, it's natural for me to do that.

M: That's great. Yeah. So could you explain a little bit about what inspires you, when you work?

A: I don't know, like nature or animals like butterflies and flowers. I always like flowers. I spend a lot of time in nature. I had ships and I sat with them like from eight to 16. And also I talk about some other aspects of society in my art work. I try, I know, I was subjects but so, sustainability. I don't know, race, community it depends on the mood I think so, but that's it I think.

M: That's awesome. Yeah, it's awesome that you have so many different inspirations. That's really cool. So to kind of go back about the young talents program. So you were accepted. So did you do last year's program as well?

A: Yes.

M: Okay. So when you're applying what was that process like for you and how did you feel?

A: Um, well I did my portfolio. And that was actually just my work all together and presenting it first year. I actually applied three times. First time I didn't was admitted because I didn't have so much work done, and it was my first year at university. But the second year I did go prepared and I don't know I had emotions but I talked with passion about my work and I said you know what, this is me, this is what I do and if this is good enough, I'm thankful. Anyway, [Dean jury?] was really great. I was really happy to talk to them because they are really great people and we learned a lot from them. I know this year It was really short because I had the bigger portfolio and they knew me better. But it was really nice because they are artists and teachers in the jury and it's, it's great to have feedback from them, you know, even if you are selected to go to them and talk to them, it's a privilege, I think.

M: That's Great, and how selective have you felt that the program has been, like, was there a lot of competition, when you were applying?

A: I didn't think about that I think it depends on the year, I think so. It is competition because they are the best in a way. Somehow I have a colleague that applied. This is the fourth year for him he's an alumni. And he, his financial side isn't the best you know but he fights so much and becomes like the greatest from our, our art school. And I think that's the thing that makes you want to do more and be better, you know, because they also have social requirements. I think so yeah. Yes, it's competition, like I really have great artists around me and. Yeah.

M: Awesome, and just lost the question I was about to ask. Um, yeah so during the program. What would you say were some of your favorite parts about being a member? Are there any memories that stand out to you?

A: This is it could be sad. Because I got in a program, when the pandemic started and we couldn't do the summer camps or mentorship with artists like face to face and that was the minus. We had it online. So that was really nice. Even if we, we are music and arts, and we go even to the meetings with the musicians and we and they're really cool, like to be in this bubble, even if it's music, it's also art for us in with not being able to go to school or be surrounded with other artists. I think it is great because they are bringing that to us. Like this meetings online, like, even face to face with that I think so, yeah, I didn't have that much. Now I think they tried to make it in summer. I go, [Cam?] or something I had, I heard about them in very nice from the first chorus, that I have applied to the first.

M: Yeah, we've heard a little bit about the camp from some of the other people that we've interviewed. So I really hope that you guys are able to get something this summer, with everything that's going on, but like as a fashion designer, are you like what kind of events, do you usually do with your work?

A: Well, we had expositions right even last year and this year, and we expose clothes and prints. And that was really great thing. We like in our school we have like the [garden?] for the final years and we are going to go there and help organize the [garden?]. We have like fashion weeks. It's really a recent this event. Fashion Week in [some place], it is in autumn and spring but again we have covid. We have also other fashion shows in the country. Our teachers are really good at promoting us. And we have contest. It's after fashion from Paris or San Francisco depends where. It's really great contest for us. We have in Bucharest like, I don't know how to call it. Like a magazine with vintage stuff and we had our collections and presented them we sold. Something like that. We have a lot of other things that we have also a festival that has a section for fashion design. It's really nice because you get money to buy fabrics and maybe have a presentation in the city or have an exposition or museum for the year one or two. It's really, really good. And the other events organized by the [something], like everyone come see local events, you know, and we present also there.

M: That's great.

A: Yeah, a lot of opportunities. Sorry for my English I know it's not perfect

M: No, no, No, no, you're doing great. I know that like we have our little transcript going on on the bottom, and zoom just kind of struggles a little but. And it's not doing great today, we're getting everything you're saying. So to kind of talk a little bit more about some of your survey

responses, I think you said that you heard about the foundation through another person, is that correct?

A: Yes, the friend I talk about. He told- Actually, my teacher told me in 12th degree I think so, but I didn't apply then it was so much. Then I apply I think so in the first year of college. Yes, because I saw that my colleague did apply and the money that he got and the connection that he had with the other artists was really beneficial for him.

M: Yes. And so, could you talk a little bit about how the money and the scholarship, how that aids you as a fashion designer.

A: It's, it's a lot you know because last year I had this contest in [unintelligible] and I buy a lot of fabric a lot of it. It was really expensive, like for me would have been like my monthly rent, you know.

M: Oh wow!

A: Yeah, it's a lot so it's really helpful, like the money are really good for us. We can I don't know by the fabric, maybe I did pay my photo shooting. You know, I did buy a laptop, because the other one I just hate it, and it is really easy because use Photoshop or other programs and it's really doing your work easy. Um, I buy a lot of stuff and my collection, my final collection I believe from the money that they gave me. Um, I paid for the transport the two pieces that I made for the contest in Paris and I had the exposition in Bucharest. I don't know, I, I have some. I don't know, nothing else. I don't remember right now.

M: Yeah. That's okay. So during the program do you have any specific skills or anything that you want to accomplish this year during the program.?

A: I don't know I'm taking it easy because I'm working, not in my domain it's really sucks. I don't know I'm trying to finish this year school and next year will be my finals in May. So I'm keeping money for that for that final collection. This year I want to participate in as much things that can like contest and expositions and have that. I don't know, and I saw, how do I say, meetings with the mentors are really, really awesome. And I don't know they give you hope because, yeah, it's quite hard. I had a talk today with a teacher and he, and she said, you know, even in other domains, even if you finish you can open, in my case, a brand or something freelance because you need a lot of money. So you need to take it easy and I don't.

M: Yeah, of course, sort of kind of go off of that. Do you have any plans for you said that you're graduating University next year. Do you have any plans for, where do you want to go after university?

A: Oh, I think I want to become a teacher, so I will follow, we have course. I know that I need to do that from autumn and i think i want to do another two years, like my doctorate and I don't know how to translate it.

M: Yeah it's the same here.

A: I know it's really, another year of school. I really want to go to London, I love Central Saint Martins and what happens there. It's really awesome and inspiring. That will be a dream. I don't think I can reach there. But I think I would become a teacher because now I'm giving like private lessons to the girls and boys that want to follow fashion design. And I really love it like it's not really work for me, for me. And maybe creating fashion and maybe open up something of mine.

M: Yeah, that sounds really cool. That's awesome that you're so passionate about the teaching and everything as well. They say that like the best jobs are the ones that don't feel like work. But yeah, let me look through my questions again. Alright so to kind of shift what we're talking about a little bit. So our project is focused a lot on like social media, and promotion. So could you talk to us a little bit about your relationship with social media currently?

A: I stay a lot on Instagram and that's not good. I had a page with my art and stuff. And I got some followers, but I stopped i think i think that i had much work at school, you know, and I felt that my work isn't that good so why do you want to share it with people. I have one YouTube channel with, like, tutorials, how to draw and stuff but also they're not that great. I know I had a Facebook page. also like my art but I don't post it there. I don't like Facebook, and that's about it I think so, yeah. I would like to have nicer Instagram page but my phone is dead. So I hope, I want to create something really nice you know like to have live and to present me. I think that I have a lot to learn. And after that I want to share with the people. Even now I have a lot of support and my friends, or I know people that I know, really share my stuff. And that's really nice.

M: Yeah. And could you speak a little bit more about what you didn't like about Facebook?

A: I don't know why my mom stays on it and she shares, all this stuff that I don't like it, and I see a lot of groups of old women in men that talk. I don't like so much bad stuff and they have age you know and and then like, if your children see that because or maybe there are some people that they don't know how to use it and they post something really really bad, and you're looking at that and they're seeing no one sees it. I know I can use that isn't always more easy, no than that, then Facebook, and I don't see. I don't know, I'm bored to Facebook. I don't think it will last that much

M: Yeah, yeah, I can kind of see that too. It's definitely especially in America it's a much older audience that uses Facebook so I don't know if that's the same in Romania.

A: Yeah, yeah, yeah,

M: Yeah I find Instagram a lot easier as well. Especially when you're sharing artwork and so like image based. I think that aspect of it is nice. But talk a little bit about the foundation to when you were applying Did you look at all their social media pages?

A: Yes, I did look the first year at some YouTube videos about them the program and what they do. And, I don't know, it was emotional for me. Because I knew I needed the money to support My master class and everything, and I wanted to be a part of that, you know, I was crying while watching. I don't know if on Instagram, I don't, seen if they have so much, or I think that their team could be more organized or they could post more about our artworks, you know.

M: Yeah, yeah, absolutely.

A: On Facebook I watched them, because they post news about the other problems that they have and I really really support them. and I think they do a really great job.

M: Great. Yeah, thank you. Yeah, that's really helpful because our project is trying to build their social media, and so we're trying to figure out what like the members are interested in seeing more on their social media page. So would you say like the videos are more your favorite part or?

A: Yes. on YouTube they are very nice. On Instagram I think they have to work on it.

M: Okay, yeah. That makes sense.

A: And their site is nice. I think so.

M: Yeah like their main website?

A: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

M: Okay, great. So, when you were accepted into the program, um like I know you said you don't use social media much for your own work, but did you share on like any personal pages that you were part of the program?

A: Oh, sorry I didn't get the question.?

M: Oh yeah. Um, so when you were accepted into the young talents program Did you share that online?

A: Oh, oh, I don't remember. I share stuff, like if they call for entries, I share it, because I know that I have colleagues that maybe I don't, it will be helpful for them, and also for the foundation. Even I want to apply I don't want to have competition I think that everyone's pray. I don't see, I don't try to talk about my stuff, a lot I don't know why I think it's worry or fades away if I say too much. I have a friend that does that. Also posts her grades, and I think it's-

M: Oh wow.

A: Also she shares every contest or every thing that she does really good. It's good for her I think so but not not me necessarily

M: Yeah., I mean everybody goes through it differently.

A: Yeah, yeah.

M: Yeah like we've talked to some people who said that posting on social media builds their confidence, and we've talked to other people who feel differently, where they worry about like perfection and putting out like stuff that really represents them so it's, we've seen like both sides. So it's been really interesting talking about that from like an artist perspective for sure. So to talk more about kind of going forward into an art career, like could you speak a little bit about some of the barriers or obstacles that artists in Romania might face?

A: Oh, I don't know, I think that us artists, we are really sad. Some of us, but I don't know. I think it's a gap somewhere. I tried to make a project about that. I'm working on it. For example, for fashion design there are a lot of colleagues that say, Oh, I don't have what work. Where do I go, Also in the fabric like these big companies you know they pay you very little money. And I had a colleague that work there and the medium was really bad she got a bad salary and I don't know. It's about the ethics, I think so. And I'm hoping we have a system for fashion design in our country not necessarily. I saw in [clothes?]. You know It's like [something] but a little bit in the center. The really great is the best actually college for fashion and arts, because they know to promote themselves, and they had projects with Riana, and they have a big galla and the big stars from Romania go there, you know, so I think that this tea and to not talk to people, it's really important. As an artist, I think sometimes you get a bit worried, and you fall in the trap be like, Oh, I can't do art. I will go and work in a restaurant or something I would make money and that will need. But I think if you work really hard, maybe you've suffered some years, but after all you'll get there. I don't know, they are minuses in our industry. I have friends from graphic and

they apply for a job at the museum and they got rejected because some friend of the manager there got the job, you know. I don't know really, for example, know that you can go and do back into the sheep for animal Balenciaga Sunday Queen and you can learn a lot of stuff. Or in Paris, I don't know. Here you can go to the little showroom or something you know and learn with a lady that doesn't know, very very very much no but it's a step. I don't have anything else in mind.

M: Thank you for talking a little bit about that. So, what ways do you feel like the program, like the young talents program like prepare some of their artists for going into a career? Do you feel like there's a good system in place, or?

A: Last year we had some alumni that helped us with the CV and we do our portfolio and they showed us examples of how we should do them. And this year, they asked us for a newer version of our CV, you know, for examples and how artists should present themselves on the side is really good because you don't know you do an [unintelligible] on the internet, you're like, Oh, I'm an artist but you look like a technician technician. The mentors talk about their professional stuff and that's helpful. Also, and I think because they're having helping us with this part. So by being on time we have an exposition or sending some stuff. I know, organized and being clear about our vision. Yes it helps.

M: Awesome. Uh sorry I'm just looking through my list of questions seeing if I missed anything. Oh, and so far have you made any professional connections during your time at the program?

A: I don't think so, it's just a professor from Bucharest, that really appreciates my work and they present it there. Other than that, not necessarily with my colleagues, but just like friends and professional I don't think so. But I have like a girl calling that got some butterflies there is really awesome. And I think that our last exposition, she saw some of them.

M: Oh nice, are those the ones that they've been posting on the Facebook? I think I saw some of those.

A: Yeah she has really awesome work.

M: Yeah, I think I saw some pictures of those, those are really cool. That's great though that they're able to sell some of those. Ryan was there anything that you wanted to ask my lines just blinking on some of these questions?

R: Could you talk about if you've, if you've had any sort of negative experiences in the program or anything comes similar you might want to talk about?

A: I don't think so because even if I, last year wasn't my great year, and even if I didn't send something that they asked for so they come at me and say Yo, you didn't do that. They knew I had work to do and in the last month of the year this so in my CV and my you everything I know was done that I work. They didn't judge me, because maybe I wasn't necessarily there when they asked that. But I don't think you can talk about negativity in this program, they're really nice and Diana, and [name] are really really good, and they try to help you pretty much good to hear.

M: Yeah, we've been working with Diana, a lot. She's been a contact for doing this project, and we've had a really good time talking with her. But yeah, is there anything else that you feel that we should know about you as an artist, or your time during the program that we haven't discussed yet?

A: I don't think so, just that it really has me financially, because I don't really have my parents to help me or anyone else, just my teacher sometimes, and that's I don't know, they were my fans. It was really privileged to be part of it and I'm very happy that this year I got in it again because I wanted to give up sometimes because of the pandemic and everything, but it was the [unintelligible] for me to continue and pursue my passions and somehow, so I don't think it's really much to me I don't know how to describe it in words.

M: It's good to hear. Yeah, thank you so much. So, unless Ryan has any more questions I think that's all we wanted to ask today.

R: Yeah. Yep.

M: Great, well thanks so much for your time.

Interview 15:

Interviewers: Chris (Conductor), Lexi (Notetaker)

Interviewee: Anonymous Current Member

Translator: Diana Costache

20 years old, studied university of arts graphic traditional arts second year in university I studied in art highschool in (some place) I was passionate about art from a younger age. I like a lot of nature, plants, book where you press plants. I incorporate plants in my art works and I discovered this passion lately when my teacher gave me work and I discovered that I love to do things with plants. I really like to mix medias and to try new ways of drawing and expressing myself to art.

Prefers Instagram: Its not such a big deal, I started this out and I don't know it doesn't show my work to a lot of people because I don't have a lot of followers but I feel like people can see better and see that people can appreciate my art. I feel like I do this thing and its good and sometimes I feel like its not enough and with the social media it helped me with confidence and getting positive feedback helps.

Why are you sharing your work? For you or for others?

Its kind of both, sometimes I am into seeing how many likes or interactions I get with my posts. But its actually just for sharing and maybe in the future I am going to open a sit and promote that and share some things that will incorporate my work.

You stated how you discovered the Young Talents Program in the survey. Could you explain this discovery more thoroughly?

Through another person: I was with one of my colleagues that was with me in this program and she shared it with me said it was really nice and that they promote and support the artists and so I was interested in that and then applied.

Do I share I am a part of this program with others? Yeah I always tell my friends that I have this project with the program and that when I applied I really told my other colleagues to apply and share what they couldn't because they have a bigger income.

Do you think it is possible for the foundation to reach a larger audience? If so, what would you suggest in the foundation reaching a larger audience? Maybe sponsors. Instagram has a thing with sponsors. It has a lot of more reach. I think that people like to see behind the scenes things and if they would know more about people in the program that they would be more interested in the program. If I'm a non-artist and saw this I could share it with my artist friends.

What were your feelings when applying? It was a lot of mixed feelings a lot of work to do, I had homework and tasks from university and when I made my portfolio for the program I was under a lot of pressure but it was really rewarding and after I was accepted I was really happy and excited to be accepted and be apart of this program.

Competitive? It depends on how many people apply, I don't know how many people are involved. I didn't know how good the other artists are applying to this.

What were your expectations prior to joining the program? This would be based on information provided in the application and what you learned through the website and social media of the Foundation.

I would like to experience right in this moment we had some activities that are coming. I already met people from my area of interest and this was something I expected here.

Favorite thing so far: Exhibition, we had had and the art gallery in Bucharest. It was my first one in my life and I was really excited for this and today I went to the foundation to make the packages for children, and I was happy to meet people that are involved in this program.

What are your goals you want to accomplish, and skills you want to obtain?

I would like to like to buy art stuff for my work because I use bad tools and have good work and need to buy better materials for my work. I have been told this by my professors. This is something im looking forward to, to meet people is something I am looking to for this program.

Are you attending or interested in attending art/music school in Romania? If you do, what one do you attend?

University: I really felt that I got a lot of knowledge and my teacher really appreciates an artist that has a lot of knowledge and before the pandemic we were going to a lot of museums and I really loved that and this is a thing that I really appreciated. So I wanted to go to museums and exhibits but I don't have much time for it. She brings us a lot of books and lends them to us and I feel really lucky because she brings me these "doors of knowledge" and opportunities to learn. She has a lot of fun ideas in making art and I am learning a lot.

Obstacles in the career of arts: Something I feel like some information, the financial situation and yeah.

Having support: I really think that the support of the people is really important for me as an artist. Getting feedback is nice for my heart because all I wanna do is transmit feelings to my viewers. I am trying to make people feel from viewing my art. My schools and family support me and I was really lucky for that. The university tells me stories about other people that think

that their work is not important so I'm glad I have this support from my family that not all people have. They always want to see more of my art and they are really want to see me growing and that this is my calling.

Future plans?: I have thought about going far this is a big world, sometimes I dream about going to other countries to experiment with different medias and I want to experiment with other universities I don't know I don't have a really set plan for my future (she is only 20). I would like to go for a master degree in other countries. I saw that other universities are really expensive. I am going to think more and search. I talked about going out because I have studied to become a teacher along with university. The years I already studied I could finish other places but I don't know.

Plans to apply next year, it is a very nice experience and I had so much joy when I was accepted. There are such nice people and I was so excited to meet everyone.

Was the scholarship a helpful aid in attending art/music school? What did receiving the scholarship mean for you?

It really helped me because it helped me buy materials and I needed better materials and it was just expensive.