

Soundwaves

2022–2023 Impact Report

Connecting People Through Music.

Celebrating 75 Years



75
YEARS



Windsor **Symphony** Orchestra

Robert Franz, Music Director



Dear friends,

***A new season and a different world...
Were people ready to gather together to experience
live musical performances? What about our community
partners? What had changed for them?***

These were the questions and the challenges for the WSO during the **2022-2023 season**, as our world emerged from the cloud of the pandemic. After two years of connecting through streaming and on-line programs, we were finally able to gather, face-to-face, to experience the magic of live performance. The season included a **world premiere** and partnerships with community organizations celebrating the impact and history of the Black community in Windsor Essex. Our work in education made a qualitative leap with the **Strings in Schools** project, in partnership with the **Greater Essex County District School Board**. We also released our first CD in 16 years. We hope that ***Christmas, eh?*** will become a perennial favorite for the Holiday Season!

Our season was that and so much more. Underpinning the statistics and the stories that we share in this, the 2022-2023 Soundwaves Report, is the support of our donors, sponsors, community partners and patrons. Without you, there would be no music.



Pianist Jeffrey Biegel, composer Farhad Poupel, and Maestro Franz participate in a post-concert talk, discussing Poupel's world premiere.



The WSO launches its holiday CD, "*Christmas, eh?*" at the WFCU Centre.



Robert Franz

Robert Franz
Music Director



Sheila Wisdom

Sheila Wisdom
Executive Director



Deb Severs

Deb Severs
President, Board of Directors



40

Mainstage concert performances.

14,768

Patrons attended WSO events.

26

Education concerts at schools throughout the Windsor Essex community.

9,143

Students experienced the WSO at the Capitol Theatre or their school.

1,145

Seniors saw WSO performances at their retirement homes, seniors centres, or while in hospital.

Season Highlights



WSO Celebrates 75 Years

- The WSO kicked off its **75th season** with Beethoven's *5th Symphony*. This piece was performed by the WSO in 1947 at Patterson Collegiate.
- Continuing the celebrations, Quartetto Gelato joined the WSO on stage for a **Birthday Bash**. This quartet features WSO Assistant Concertmaster Konstantin Popović.



WSO Welcomes New Assistant Conductor

- In October 2022, the WSO welcomed **Francisco Hernández Bolaños** as its new Assistant Conductor. Throughout the season, Maestro Bolaños conducted the Family Concert Series, the annual WSO ROCKS! concert, and all education concerts at schools and the Capitol Theatre.



Concert Firsts & World Premieres

- The WSO shared the stage with **Drag Queen Randy Roberts** for a *Cabaret Night*.
- A composition by Iranian composer **Farhad Poupel**, "*The Legend of Bijan and Manijeh*," which included the WSO Chorus singing in Farsi, made its world premiere on the Capitol Theatre stage. The WSO also performed a world premiere of **Farhad Poupel's** "*Childhood Memories*" at their spring concert, *From Paris to Persia*.
- Tuba player extraordinaire, **Jarrett McCourt**, performed the world premiere of French-Canadian composer, Nicole Lizée's, daring and innovative Tuba Concerto "*1000-Sided Die*."



75
YEARS

Windsor Symphony Orchestra
Robert Franz, Music Director



WSO Launches Holiday CD

• In December 2022, the WSO launched its holiday CD **"Christmas, eh?"**, featuring music by Canadian composer Rebecca Pellett, and narration by **Peter Mansbridge**, of a story written by hockey legend **Bobby Orr** and author **Kara Kootstra**. This was the first album produced by the WSO in 16 years.

• Always a community favourite, the annual **WSO Holiday Pops** had a "Grinchy" twist featuring baritone Reginald Smith Jr. singing "You're a Mean One, Mr. Grinch."



The Capitol Theatre Turns 100

• In February 2023, the Capitol Theatre celebrated its **100th anniversary**. Complete with performances by the WSO, the WSO, and other arts groups, hundreds of Windsorites stopped by the theatre for tours, presentations, and a screening of *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, which premiered in 1938 at the Capitol Theatre.



Celebrating Black History Month

• Partnering with the **Windsor International Film Festival** for a screening of the film *Oscar Peterson: Black + White*, the WSO held an "Oscar Peterson Celebration." This event included the film, along with a concert featuring Peterson's music, performed by pianist Thompson Egbo-Egbo.

• The WSO performed music by **Joseph Bologne**, **Jessie Montgomery** and **Florence Price**. Vocalist **Florine Ndimubandi** also made her WSO debut, singing at the Amherstburg Freedom Museum and Sandwich First Baptist Church. Both locations are tied to the Underground Railroad.



Education & Community Outreach

26

Education Concerts at schools throughout the Windsor Essex community and at the Capitol Theatre.

9,143

Students saw the Windsor Symphony Orchestra perform at their schools.

20

Rehearsals at elementary schools took place as part of the **Strings in Schools Project** — a partnership between the WSO and the GECSDB.

13

Classroom visits by the WSO, featuring Q&A's with Maestro Robert Franz, Associate Conductor Francisco Hernández Bolaños and WSO musicians.

13

Music for Health performances at long term care homes, senior centres, and hospitals throughout the Windsor Essex community.

1,145

Seniors experienced the WSO either in-person or online at their retirement homes, senior centres or while in hospital, free of charge.

This year, the WSO and the Greater Essex County District School Board enhanced their partnership with a commitment to provide a **live concert to every student** in kindergarten to grade 6 in their Board over a three year period. In the 2023-2024 season, the same partnership will begin with the Windsor Essex Catholic District School Board.



Students participate in the **Strings in Schools Project**, a partnership with the Greater Essex County District School Board. Held at Marlborough and Frank W. Begley, a WSO quartet plays in an "open rehearsal" style, allowing students to interact, ask questions, and develop life skills.



Elementary students listen to a concert by the WSO, one of many **education concerts** put on throughout the school year. The WSO visits schools throughout Windsor Essex to bring music education to young children and introduce them to the Orchestra.



Senior residents enjoy music by the WSO as part of the **Music for Health** initiative, a program that brings music into seniors' residences and hospitals across Windsor and Essex County, increasing access to the WSO.

WSO In Your Community



The Windsor Symphony Orchestra was named a "Champion for Education" by the Greater Essex County District School Board. This award is presented to organizations who provide exceptional programs or support to schools, students, and staff.



The always-popular Family Concerts were a hit at the Capitol Theatre. These concerts are interactive and include crafts, music, and stories. Keeping tickets at only \$5, the WSO makes music accessible for all.



The Windsor Symphony Youth Orchestra quartet performed 42 times throughout Windsor Essex.



WSO staff attended Pride Fest in August 2022, spreading the word about *Cabaret Night with Randy Roberts*, a Pops Series concert. Roberts, a drag queen, wooed audiences with his uncanny impersonation of Cher.



Musicians of the Windsor Symphony Youth Orchestra led concerts at the GECSDB's summer learning program, bringing music education to hundreds of students. Through this student-led initiative, the WSYO presented concerts in both French and English, taught students about collaboration, instruments, and compositions.



Helping shine a spotlight on the importance of music in education, Maestro Robert Franz led a large ensemble of high school musicians on Music Monday. An annual event, musicians perform simultaneously at other venues and similar Music Monday gatherings across Canada.

The Capitol Theatre...

Home of the Windsor Symphony Orchestra!

A hub for arts and culture in downtown Windsor, the Capitol Theatre is a treasure for the community. Twice saved from demolition and closure thanks to community support, the Capitol is now owned by the City of Windsor. Since 2012, the WSO has been the primary tenant and manages the Theatre on behalf of the City of Windsor. As was the goal when the Capitol was first saved in the early 1990s, the Theatre continues to be an incubator for local performance and film arts.

The WSO embraces its role as Manager of the Capitol and the role of this heritage gem in the evolving history of downtown Windsor. Leveraging the Capitol Theatre to encourage and support the growth of arts and culture in the downtown is a priority in the WSO's most recent Strategic Plan.

The Capitol Theatre is the home and primary performance venue for the Windsor Symphony Orchestra, Windsor International Film Festival, Arts Collective Theatre, Windsor Dance eXperience, 4th Wall, and more.

During the 2022-2023 season, the Capitol Theatre welcomed over 27,000 guests at 90+ events, with over 214 booked days.

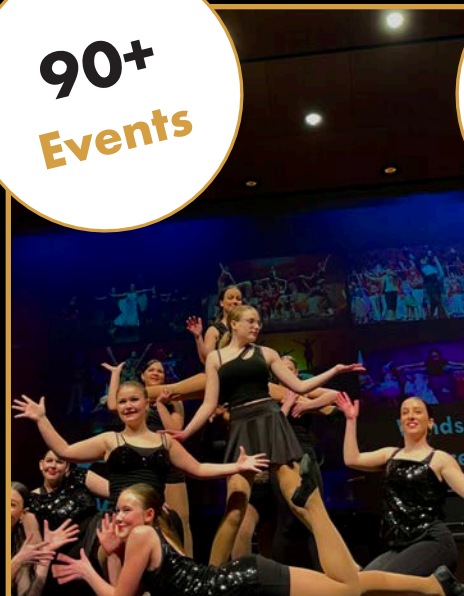
Highlights include: Canadian Arabic Orchestra, Edmunds Towers' *The Nutcracker*, Black Kids in Action, and the Kiwanis Music Fest Awards.



27,000
Guests



90+
Events



214
Days
Booked



THE CAPITOL

100 YEARS THEATRE WINDSOR EST. 1920



City of Windsor Councillor, Jo-Anne Gignac, speaks at the Capitol Theatre's 100th Year Anniversary celebration.

Built in 1920, the Capitol Theatre celebrated its 100th Year Anniversary on February, 18th, 2023.



The Capitol Theatre, 1948.

"As [WIFF] grew and grew and grew, we suddenly realized the Capitol was the point of incubation for the whole festival. Without its presence... the festival is not possible."

— Vincent Georgie, WIFF Executive Director

"Every performance at the Capitol Theatre is incredible. I would recommend everyone go at least once in their life."

—Patrick (Google Review)

"Beautiful theatre that hosts a variety of different shows! Great peek in to Windsor's history as well! Definitely worth checking out!"

—Stacey (Google Review)



WSO Strategic Plan

Through exceptional performance and education, the WSO is an indispensable cultural asset within the Windsor Essex community.

Pillar 1 | Being a Catalyst for the Arts

The WSO aims to be a catalyst for the arts in Windsor Essex, encouraging and activating initiatives that raise the stature of arts in Windsor and Essex County. This season, the WSO partnered with different arts organizations in the city to create a "cultural hub" at the Capitol Theatre, including:

- **Art Windsor Essex** for a presentation on the letters of Vincent Van Gogh.
- **Windsor International Film Festival** for a showing of the Oscar Peterson documentary "Black + White." This event was paired with the WSO concert "A Celebration of Oscar Peterson."
- Students of the **St. Clair College** Music Theatre Program joined the WSO on stage for a Broadway concert with vocal star Charlotte Knight.



Patrons view art at the WSO's interactive presentation "Vincent Van Gogh: from Darkness to Light", a partnership with Art Windsor Essex.

Pillar 2 | Ensuring Sustainability

The WSO aims to ensure sustainability through fundraising.

Most donors want to see their gifts help the community they care about and have an impact on the organization's well being. The WSO does this by:

- Bringing **education concerts** to schools and sharing music with young children while providing our musicians with performances opportunities.
- **Building partnerships** with arts organizations to expand prospect pools and revenue streams while also expanding arts initiatives in the community.

Pillar 3 | Maximizing Community Engagement

The WSO aims to grow its audience and expand the reach of the organization.

The WSO carefully plans all programs and initiatives to ensure maximum awareness of activities is brought to all types of audiences, and music is accessible for all. The WSO does this by:

- Providing **special concert opportunities** to groups with limited access, including Family Respite, seniors in long term care homes, Children's Aid Society, and more.
- Increasing its **digital footprint** with music education resources available for all grades.
- Participating in community activities like Windsor Pride Fest and CBC's Sounds of the Season, and taking part in seniors' expos and various vendor booths.



The WSO sets up at Amherstburg's Active & Aging Well Expo, providing information on concerts, Capitol Theatre events, and free activities.

Pillar 4 | Organizational Effectiveness

The WSO aims to create internal efficiencies through the formalization of processes and the maximization of digital tools.

The WSO streamlines internal, day to day work to ensure the most energy goes towards bringing music to the community. This includes:

- Developing **video recording** and **streamlining capabilities** at the Capitol Theatre.



Students participate in the WSO's Digital Education Concert Series. This series is available year round and includes free activity worksheets for teachers.

Your Support is *Instrumental!*

The 2022-2023 WSO Concert Season and our Education and Community Outreach programs were only possible because of the generous support of donors, sponsors, foundations, and community leaders.

The Windsor Symphony Orchestra relies on this support for approximately one-third of annual operating revenue. Thank you to everyone who invests in the WSO to connect people through music.

The WSO's impact in Windsor Essex would not be possible without the support of:

474

Donors

25

Sponsors & Foundations

\$226,187

Total Donations

\$259,192

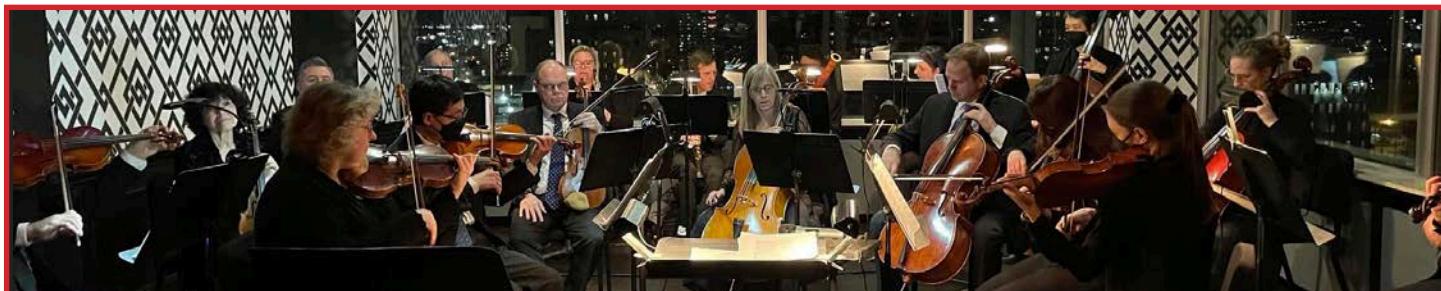
Total Sponsor &
Foundation Support



WSO Assistant Concertmaster, Konstantin Popović, and pianist Michael Karloff perform at the 11th annual Midwinter Musical Feast, a fundraiser for the WSO.



Alex Toldo of The Toldo Foundation announces their gift of \$100,000 in support of 'The Future Fund', the WSO's endowment.



The WSO performs at Skyline Serenade, an event in support of the WSO at Fourteen Restaurant and Sky Lounge.

W^SO Windsor **Symphony** Orchestra

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