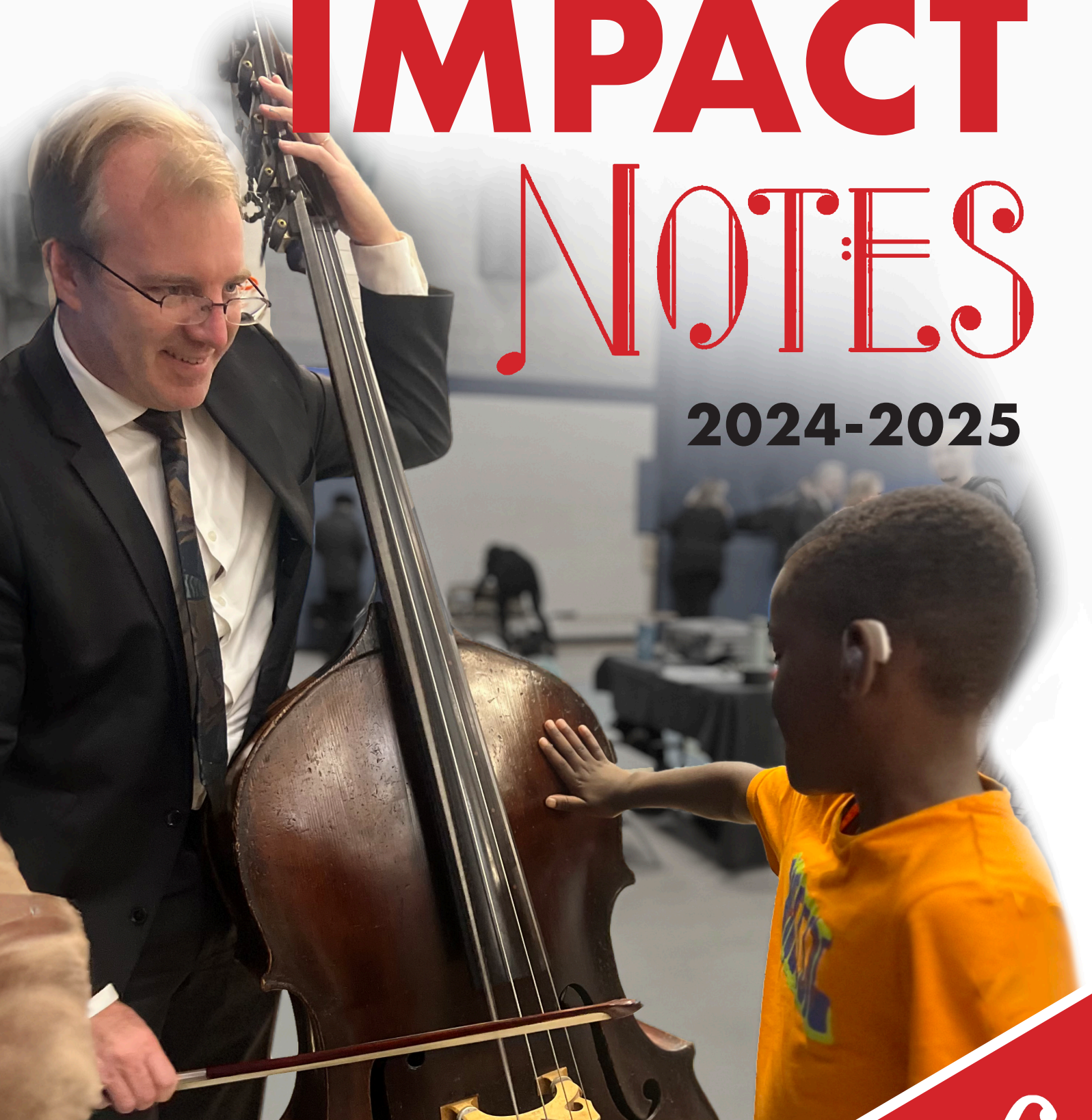


Windsor **Symphony** Orchestra

IMPACT NOTES

2024-2025



Connecting people through music.



Our Mission: Connecting People Through Music.

The Windsor Symphony Orchestra (WSO) is a leader in the arts and culture community of Windsor Essex. With over 40-45 mainstage concerts in the historic Capitol Theatre along with many performances in locations in and around Essex County, the WSO connects people through music all year long.

The 2024-2025 season was a great success that included concerts from *The Golden Age of Film* to *Beethoven 7* along with a special new partnership with the City of Windsor. The city and the WSO collaborated on the renaming of a parking garage in the downtown core. The parking levels in the Pelissier Street garage will be named after famous composers – Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, and Tchaikovsky. The WSO was invited to announce the project with a free concert on the main level of the garage that over 350 people attended. This fall, the WSO will perform again as the city unveils artwork in the garage, all part of the City of Windsor’s Strengthen the Core downtown revitalization plan.

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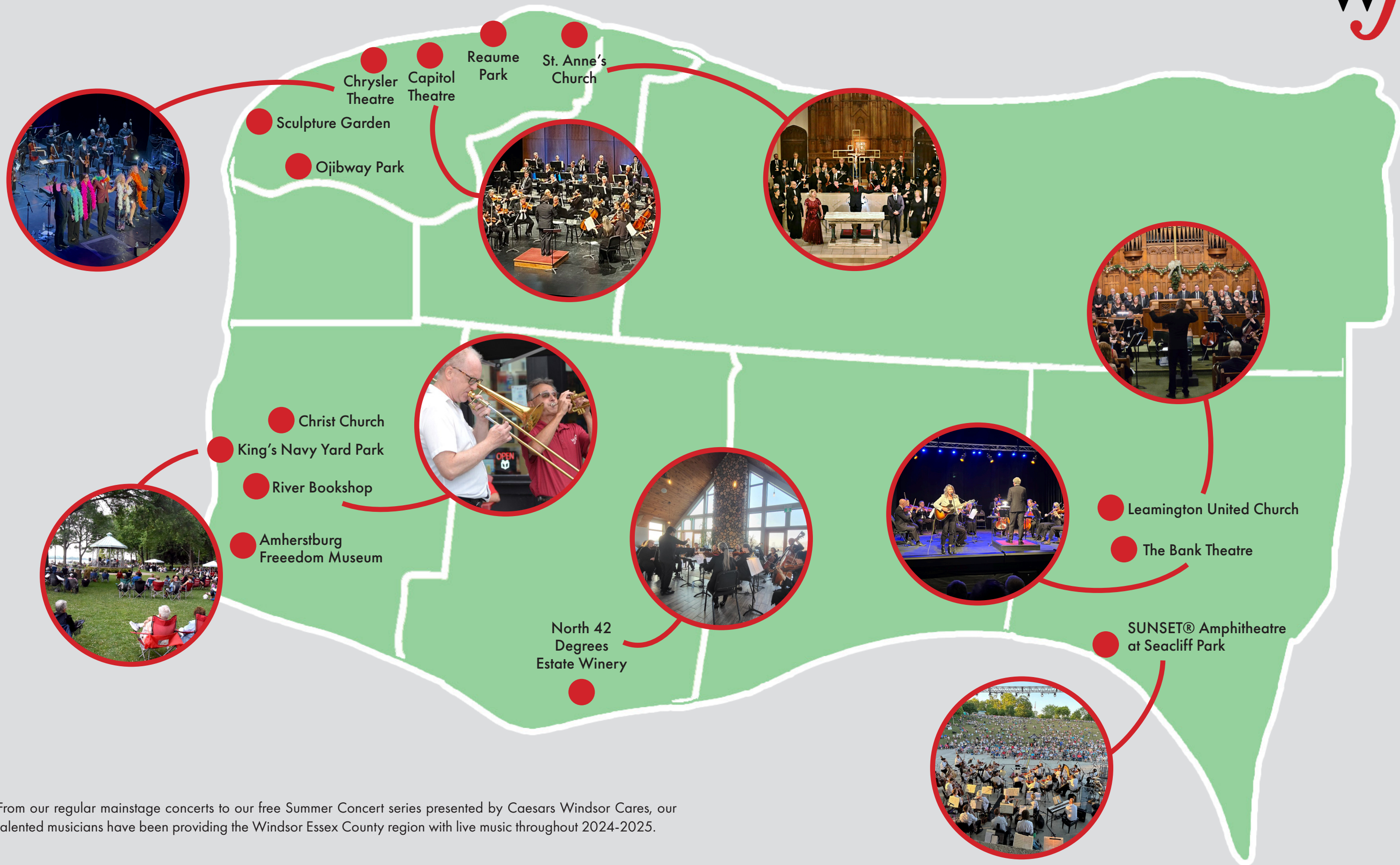
Margaret Gillie

HONORARY LIFE MEMBERS

Eleanor Finn
Alastair Fleming
The late Joseph Huber
Barb Kuker
Kathleen McCrone
Morris Sager
Stephen Savage
The late Herb Stammler
Madelyn Weingarden & the late
Arthur Weingarden



Sharing Music Throughout Windsor Essex



From our regular mainstage concerts to our free Summer Concert series presented by Caesars Windsor Cares, our talented musicians have been providing the Windsor Essex County region with live music throughout 2024-2025.

WSO by the Numbers



45

Mainstage **concerts** performances.

18,619

Patrons attended WSO events

4,000

Complimentary tickets & vouchers given to community partners:

- Canadian Mental Health Association
- Easter Seals Ontario
- Family Respite Services
- Windsor/Essex Humane Society
- Pride Fest
- Ronald McDonald House
- Windsor Rotary Clubs
- Kidney Foundation of Canada
- Hospice of Windsor & Essex County
- Big Brothers, Big Sisters

5 FREE

Outdoor Summer Concerts in Windsor Essex.

27

Education concerts at schools throughout Windsor Essex.

19,000

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

1,400

Seniors saw the WSO perform at their retirement home or senior centre.



2024-2025

Season Notes



Continued Excellence

The WSO was thrilled to be recognized in a blog written by tourism writer, James Hills. James joined the WSO for an OnStage concert and wrote: "If you're looking for something a bit more *classy*, despite it being a relatively small city the Windsor Symphony Orchestra is top notch and we were treated to what was hands down the most enjoyable indoor orchestral concert that I've experienced in years. They offer a series of *onstage* performances where you are sitting there just feet away from the performers while you sip Ontario wines and enjoy slices of Windsor-style pizza."



Rocking in the Concrete

Downtown Windsor's parking garage at Pelissier and Park Streets was abuzz last fall with the sounds of the WSO. The orchestra was invited to perform in the garage to launch the City of Windsor's new initiative to rename the garage "Park in Perfect Harmony" and to revitalize the space with a new mural and renaming of each floor to reflect classical composers. There is an audio component to this great project: the WSO has recorded pieces from each composer to play in the elevator upon each floor. A one-of-a-kind experience in our city!



WSO Family Performs Together

Musical memories were made when all orchestras of the WSO came together for a special *Side by Side* concert. The concert featured the Windsor Symphony Orchestra, The Windsor Symphony Community Orchestra, and the Windsor Symphony Youth and Junior Youth Orchestras.



New Resident Conductor Steps On the Podium

Maestro Geoffrey Larson raised his baton to conduct the WSO's OnStage and Café concerts last fall. Maestro Larson continued his work with the WSO's Youth Orchestra, Community Orchestra, and in the Education concerts both at the Capitol and in schools around Windsor Essex.

Education & Community Outreach

Music appreciation is a lifelong endeavour. That’s why the WSO makes music education and community outreach a priority. In the 2024-2025 season, the WSO partnered with the Greater Essex County District School Board and the Windsor Essex Catholic District School Board, performing concerts in schools and collaborating on the Strings Project at F.W. Begley and Marlborough public schools, with both the WSO Music Director and Resident Conductor visiting secondary school bands. In addition, more than 19,000 students visited the Capitol Theatre for WSO education concerts.

27
Education concerts at schools throughout Windsor Essex.

19
Performances at elementary schools took place as part of the **Strings in Schools Project** — a partnership between the WSO and the GECDSB.

12
Music for Health performances at long term care homes, senior centres, and hospitals throughout the Windsor Essex community.

19,000
Students experienced the WSO at their schools or at the Capitol Theatre.

7
Classroom visits by the WSO, featuring Q&As with Maestro Robert Franz, Resident Conductor Geoffrey Larson and WSO musicians.

1,400
Seniors experienced the WSO either in-person or online at their retirement homes, senior centres, or while in hospital, free of charge.



Maestro Robert Franz conducts the school band at Assumption High School during a Maestro Visit.



Resident conductor Geoffrey Larson answers questions from students at an Education Concert.



Percussionist Stefan Kitai shows a young child how the timpani works at a WSO concert.



Students outside the Capitol Theatre after a trip to experience a WSO concert.



WSO musicians Konstantin Popović and Peter Wiebe speak with residents at Cardinal Place Retirement Home after a Music for Health performance.



A student-led initiative, musicians of the WSYO brought music education to hundreds of students at the GECDSB’s summer learning programs for the third summer.

Meet WSO Musicians



LILLIAN SCHEIRICH

Concertmaster

What is your favourite WSO moment?

"There have been so many, but all of my favourite moments are when the conductor makes the audience laugh. When we are laughing we are at ease, we feel less stressed and we can enjoy the music together. When we all laugh together everything is better."



KONSTANTIN POPOVIĆ

Assistant Concertmaster

What is your favourite WSO moment?

"My favourite moments are whenever I sit in my orchestra chair beside my wonderful stand partner Lillian Scheirich, with my other fellow musicians around me. When I'm having a bad day for one reason or another I remind myself that I 'play' for a living, that I am still in my proverbial 'sandbox' with toys."



JEAN-FRANÇOIS ROMPRÉ

Principal Flute

What is your favourite WSO moment?

"I don't have a single favourite as there are many, but a few come to mind. In the 1990s during a performance of Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* I discovered the power and beauty of music in an aria for solo baritone with two oboe d'amore. The world would be a better place if everyone listened to it. Also, a complete Mendelssohn's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in the early 2000s, along with Shostakovich's *5th Symphony*. More recently, Shostakovich's *9th Symphony* in November 2021."



MARGARET GILLIE

Clarinet

What is your favourite WSO moment?

"I always enjoyed the WSO's Christmas Pops run-out concert to St. John the Baptist Church in Amherstburg. It was always our last concert of the season, and it was often snowing and the kids in the audience were all so excited. In particular I remember the year the power went out moments after the start of the concert. We all sat in the dark for some time, before musicians gradually started to play carols and the audience sang along. It was a lovely moment."



BENJAMIN STORM

Principal Trombone

What is your favourite WSO moment?

"Getting to play Bartok's *Concerto for Orchestra* in September 2024 was a very memorable experience for me since I'd had to study and practice it a fair bit when I was in school. It was also my first full season playing with the WSO. There are great moments in every concert I've played here!"



JULIE SHIER

Bassoon

What is your favourite WSO moment?

"A favourite memory for me is when the Windsor Symphony Orchestra travelled to St. John's, Newfoundland in 1997 to perform in the Cabot 500 Festival alongside Newfoundland Symphony Orchestra and choirs from around the world."

Donors make a difference.

The WSO’s Education and Community Outreach programs are possible due to the generous support of the Windsor-Essex community. Providing access to live music for young people is a priority for the orchestra as there are several positive benefits of exposure to music at all ages.

Donations also help support the Music for Health program which allows WSO quartets to perform in area retirement homes, senior centres, and hospitals.

There are many ways to make a gift to the WSO and have a meaningful impact on our community. Monthly donations, gifts in memorial, sponsorships of concerts or donations to the WSO’s endowment fund all create the capacity needed to continue the breadth of programming that makes a huge impact in Windsor-Essex.

Contributing to Windsor-Essex

The WSO offers something for everyone.

From the classics performed in the Masterworks Series to the annual WSO Rocks! concert, all styles and tastes are offered each WSO season.



Music is for everyone.

The Capitol Theatre

Downtown Windsor’s Historical Gem

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, 4th Wall, Arts Collective Theatre, Windsor Dance eXperience, and more.

During the 2024-2025 season, the Capitol Theatre welcomed over 30,000 guests at more than 100 events, with over 200 booked days. Highlights include: Canadian Arabic Orchestra, Edmunds Towers’ *The Nutcracker*, Black Kids in Action, and the Kiwanis Music Fest Awards.



The WSO Guild



For over 60 years the WSO Guild has been a valuable member of the Windsor Symphony Orchestra family, dedicated to supporting the orchestra by donating its time at concerts and organizing fundraising events.

The Windsor Symphony Orchestra Guild is composed of hard-working volunteers of various professional backgrounds who, through a variety of activities raise funds for music outreach programs run by your orchestra. Over the years the Guild has held many fundraisers, from fashion shows to antique sales, pasta dinners, bake sales, wine raffles, Share the Wealth draws and more.

The Guild welcomes anyone who enjoys supporting music, music education, and young musicians in the Windsor Essex community.

The logo features a stylized 'W' and 'O' in white, with a red swoosh connecting them.

Windsor **Symphony** Orchestra

Robert Franz, Music Director



Patti Lauzon
Executive Director
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Connecting people through music.