



CMC

CLASSICAL
MUSIC
CHICAGO

**2024-25
IMPACT REPORT**





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If you're like me, you find these free lunchtime concerts a marvelous gift to Chicago. For a few years now CMC has provided an archive that provides free access to video recordings of these concerts, which amount to a gift to the world, as now anyone with an internet connection anywhere on the globe can enjoy these weekly concerts.

HYDE PARK HERALD

ABOUT CLASSICAL MUSIC CHICAGO

For nearly 50 years, Classical Music Chicago (CMC) has been a leading voice for accessible, world-class classical music in the city. Through our signature free concert series—Dame Myra Hess Concerts and Rush Hour Concerts—we bring exceptional live performances to the public, removing barriers to participation and fostering a welcoming space for discovery and connection. We are equally committed to education and community engagement, offering music as a source of inspiration, learning, and well-being in schools, community centers, and healthcare settings.

MISSION

CMC's mission is to open the door to the transformative power of classical music by presenting world-class concerts to people of all ages, backgrounds and means, and to foster the future of classical music by supporting and showcasing the next generation of classical musicians.

VISION

We envision a Chicago where classical music is a vital part of the culture, enriching the lives of people from all backgrounds and means, and where the next generation of classical musicians can flourish.

A LETTER FROM OUR BOARD PRESIDENT

Dear Friends,

As we reflect on the 2024-25 season, I'm proud of how Classical Music Chicago continues to grow—artistically, programmatically, and strategically. This past year marked a period of thoughtful evolution, as we deepened our commitment to accessibility, expanded our reach across the city, and strengthened the foundation for long-term impact. Through both new and long-standing programs, we connected more people than ever with exceptional classical music experiences, while continuing to invest in the next generation of artists and audiences.

This season was a defining one for CMC. Amid a rapidly shifting arts funding landscape—where foundation support for the arts continues to shrink and government resources remain uncertain—we've remained steadfast in our commitment to accessibility and artistic excellence. These principles are not only embedded in our programs but now anchor our long-term strategy. CMC is intentionally evolving into a more nimble, forward-looking organization—one that deepens its community ties while expanding its reach throughout Chicago.

Our Board has spent the past year focused on how to sustain and grow our impact. We're investing in strategic partnerships, exploring alternative revenue sources, and expanding the visibility of our mission-driven work. We're proud that attendance—both in-person and online—continues to rise, reflecting the enduring appetite for high-quality classical music presented in inclusive and accessible ways. We are thankful for the progress CMC's Associate Board has made with engaging new and younger audiences and supporters.

It is also inspiring to see our newest initiative, Concerts for Well-Being and Rejuvenation, flourish with the addition of four new partner organizations this season. These partnerships are not just programmatic—they are foundational to our long-term goal of embedding music more deeply in the social and civic fabric of Chicago.

Thank you for supporting our journey during this season of thoughtful growth. Your belief in our mission fuels everything we do. Together, we are ensuring that the joy and power of classical music will continue to resonate far into the future.



With deep appreciation,
Will McGrath
Board President

A LETTER FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends,

The 2024-25 season has been truly inspiring. Classical Music Chicago presented 109 free concerts, reaching more than 20,700 people in person, 25,800 online, and an estimated 10,000 weekly radio listeners through our partnership with WFMT. These numbers represent more than metrics—they are a reflection of lives touched, communities engaged, and artists supported. I'm especially proud that we've seen consistent growth in both our in-person and virtual audiences, a testament to the deepening connection between CMC and the people we serve.

The Dame Myra Hess Concerts brought 49 performances to life, introducing audiences to remarkable emerging artists from around the world. The Rush Hour Concerts series filled St. James Cathedral with energy and connection each Tuesday evening during the summer, showcasing the depth and brilliance of Chicago's classical music community. Through Concerts for Well-Being and Rejuvenation, we expanded our reach to include four new community partners, bringing the joy of live music to seniors and individuals facing health or economic challenges. And our Young People's Concerts introduced more than 8,800 Chicago Public School students to the beauty and power of live classical performance—often for the very first time.

At a time when funding challenges persist, your support is more critical than ever. The generosity of our donors, the dedication of our artists, and the strength of our partnerships enable us to bring world-class music into the lives of so many—free of charge.

As we look ahead, I feel a profound sense of hope. Classical music continues to speak to the heart, to unite communities, and to offer solace, joy, and inspiration. Thank you for helping us share it widely and freely.



With gratitude,
Mark Riggleman
Executive Director

DAME MYRA HESS CONCERTS

Inspired by the wartime concerts Dame Myra Hess presented in London, the Dame Myra Hess Concerts continue to offer a weekly moment of musical respite in the heart of Chicago. Since 1977, these free Wednesday afternoon concerts—held at Seventeenth Church of Christ, Scientist, Chicago, and broadcast live on 98.7 WFMT—have introduced audiences to outstanding emerging artists from around the world.

The 2024-25 season celebrated an extraordinary spectrum of emerging talent and a repertoire that spanned centuries, styles, and cultures.

Pianist Chaeyoung Park—a Rubinstein Competition finalist and Juilliard Artist Diploma candidate—delivered a radiant program weaving together Baroque and Romantic traditions, featuring works by Bach, Mendelssohn, Sokolović, and Franck.

Cellist Sydney Lee, winner of the Washington International Competition, joined pianist Victor Asuncion for an expressive performance of Janáček, Schumann, and Nadia Boulanger.

Another standout performance came from Ziggy & Miles Johnston, an acclaimed Australian guitar duo who made history as the first guitar duo to win the YCA Susan Wadsworth International Auditions. Their program featured Franck's *Prélude, Fugue et Variation*, Westlake's evocative *Mosstrooper Peak*, and Piazzolla's *Tango No. 1*, demonstrating both their technical brilliance and seamless collaborative artistry.

Whether experienced in person, online, or over the airwaves, the Dame Myra Hess Concerts remain a cornerstone of CMC's commitment to accessible world-class music.

49

Number of Concerts

9,182

Number of
Audience Members
In-Person

19,824

Number of
Audience Members
Online

90

Number of Artists

49

Number of Radio Broadcasts



STEINWAY & SONS

RUSH HOUR CONCERTS

Since its founding in 2000, Rush Hour Concerts have been a cherished part of Chicago's summer music scene, offering free, weekly chamber music performances. Presented on Tuesday evenings from June through August at St. James Cathedral, these 45-minute concerts offer audiences the opportunity to experience top-tier classical music in an accessible, informal setting. Many performances are also shared more broadly through excerpted radio broadcasts on 98.7 WFMT, bringing the music beyond the walls of the cathedral.

The 2024-25 series showcased the exceptional depth of Chicago's classical music community through standout programs featuring world-renowned artists and rarely performed works.

One highlight was The Art of the Clarinet Quintet, featuring clarinetist Susan Warner of the Lyric Opera of Chicago Orchestra in a stirring performance of Brahms's Clarinet Quintet. She was joined by Chicago Symphony Orchestra members Cornelius Chiu, Kozue Funakoshi, Youming Chen, and Daniel Katz.

The 2024 season concluded with a monumental interpretation of Mozart's Gran Partita, bringing together wind and brass players from the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra, and other leading ensembles in a joyful celebration of Mozart's masterwork.

Opening the 2025 season, pianist Victor Asuncion collaborated with string quartet members Stephanie Jeong, Matous Michal, Danny Lai, and Alexander Hersh for a soulful and dynamic evening centered on Dvořák's Piano Quintet No. 2.

12

Number of Concerts

2,501

Number of
Audience Members
In-Person

6,062

Number of
Audience Members
Online

55

Number of Artists

5

Number of Radio Broadcasts

5

Number of Concerts

212

Number of
Audience Members
In-Person

11

Number of Artists

CONCERTS FOR WELL-BEING & REJUVENATION

Through our newest initiative, Concerts for Well-Being and Rejuvenation, Classical Music Chicago is expanding access to high-quality live music by bringing performances to communities that are often underserved or overlooked. These free concerts take place in welcoming, accessible spaces and are designed to uplift and connect individuals of all ages and abilities—including older adults and those facing economic or health-related challenges. In the 2024-25 season, CMC presented performances at Kelvyn Park Senior Center, SelfHelp Home, Atlas Senior Center, and Connecting Edgewater, featuring artists from our Dame Myra Hess Concerts. We also continued our valued partnership with Rush University Medical Center and the Rush Generations Program and are actively exploring new collaborations to grow the reach of this vital program.

43

Number of Concerts

8,807

Number of
Audience Members
In-Person

62

Number of Artists

YOUNG PEOPLE'S CONCERTS

Now in its 43rd year, Classical Music Chicago's Young People's Concerts (YPC) continue to introduce Chicago Public Schools students to the world of classical music through engaging, live performances.

This long-standing program helps students explore core musical concepts while experiencing the power and beauty of professional classical music in a concert setting. By bringing accomplished musicians directly into schools, YPC offers many students their first exposure to live classical music—an experience that can broaden their horizons, spark curiosity, and foster a lasting connection to the arts.





2025 FUNDRAISER

Classical Music Chicago's 2025 Spring Fundraiser brought together more than 100 supporters at the historic Union League Club of Chicago to celebrate CMC's mission of making world-class classical music accessible to all. Guests enjoyed an elegant evening of cocktails and hors d'oeuvres while championing a legacy of artistic excellence, accessibility, and community engagement. Hosted by WFMT's Robbie Ellis, the evening featured a captivating performance by acclaimed guitar duo Ziggy and Miles. Thanks to the generosity of our community, the event raised more than \$45,000 in support of CMC's free programs and the exceptional artists who bring them to life.

More than
\$45,000
was raised
in support
of CMC's
programs
and artists.

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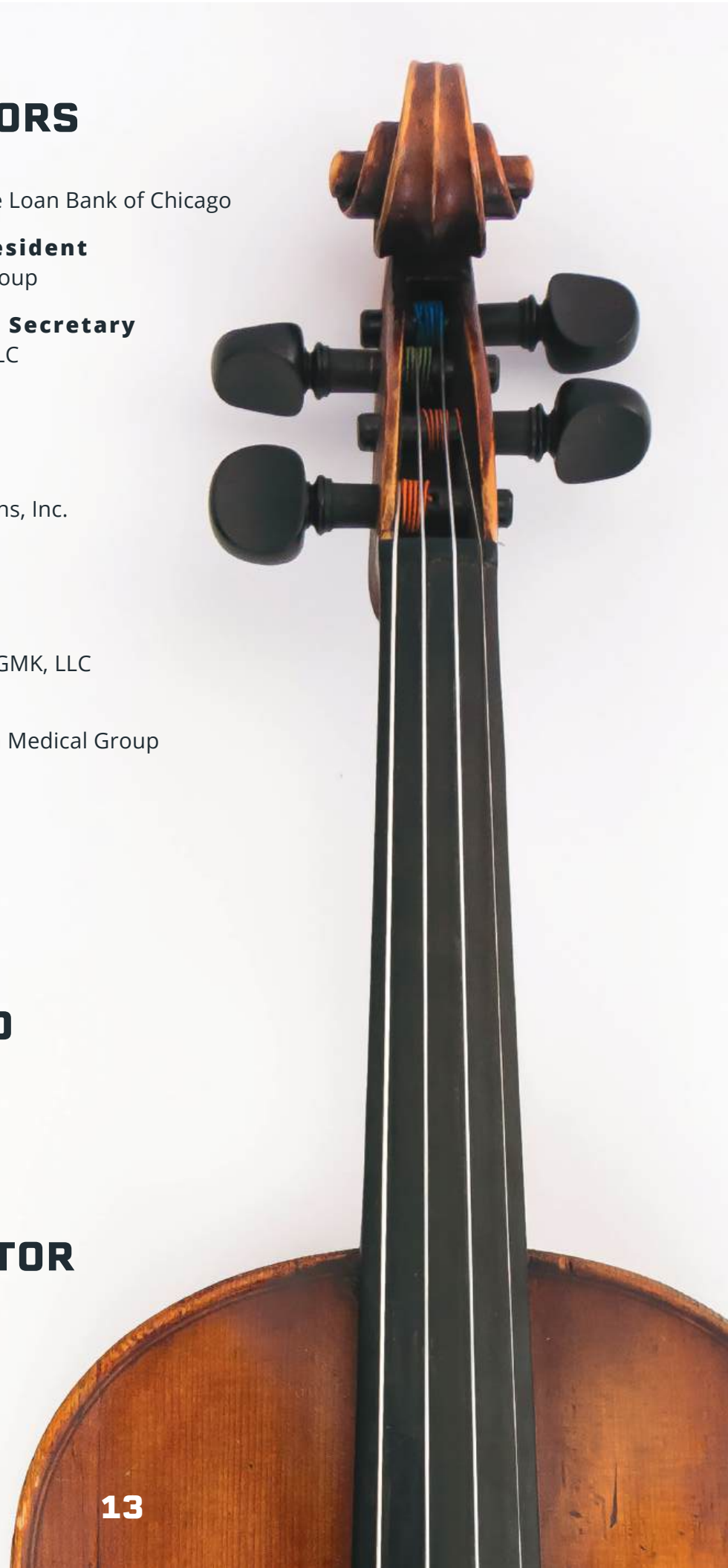
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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

MARK RIGGLEMAN



CHAMPION

THE ARTISTS WHO INSPIRE US

Artist and Concert Sponsorship is a powerful way to support Classical Music Chicago’s mission by directly investing in the musicians who bring our concerts to life. With a gift starting at \$2,500, sponsors help us provide meaningful performance opportunities, artist fees, and professional exposure for both emerging talents and celebrated performers.

Your support makes it possible for artists to share their gifts freely with thousands of listeners across Chicago—and around the world via livestream—while being recognized and valued for their artistry.

We are deeply grateful to our current
Artist and Concert Sponsors who make this work possible:

Robert & Isabelle Bass Foundation, Inc.

Rosalind Britton | Rowland Chang

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Join them in supporting the artists who move us.

Contact development@classicalmusicchicago.org
to learn more about becoming a sponsor.



Supporting the artists directly is deeply meaningful to me —
it allows me to see the tangible impact of my sponsorship.
ROSALIND BRITTON, ARTIST SPONSOR



FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

Statement of Activities Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2025

INCOME

Individual Donations	\$252K
Foundation Grants	\$141K
Government Grants	\$46K
Corporate Support	\$6K
Endowment Income	\$71K
Other Income	\$12K
Interest & Dividends	\$68K
Total Income	\$596K

EXPENDITURES

Artist Fees & Concert Expenses	\$188K
Employment Costs	\$350K
Professional Fees	\$20K
Office Costs	\$24K
Other Expenses	\$30K
Total Expenditures	\$612K
Net Operating Deficit	-\$16K

Statement of Financial Position Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2025

ASSETS

Cash	\$135K
Receivables	\$158K
Restricted Endowment Investments	\$2,098K
Operating Reserves	\$533K
Long-Term Assets	\$32K
Other Assets	\$1K
Total Assets	\$2,957K

LIABILITIES & EQUITY

Accounts Payable	\$6K
Net Assets with Restrictions	\$2,408K
Net Assets without Restrictions	\$9K
Operating Reserves	\$534K
Total Liabilities & Equity	\$2,957K

THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS!

Classical Music Chicago is deeply grateful to the individuals, foundations, and institutions whose generous contributions during the 2024–25 season made our work possible. Your steadfast support enables us to share exceptional classical music with audiences across Chicago—always free, always accessible. Thank you for helping us keep the music playing for everyone.

Sustainer (\$20,000+)

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