



2024 – 2025
Annual Report
July 2024 – June 2025



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Who We Are

Mission & Vision	05
Message From the Board Chair	08

What We Do

School of Dance	12
School of Music	14
Centre for Music Therapy	16

How We're Doing

Financial Report	18
Testimonials	20
Staff & Faculty	22

WHO WE ARE



Mission & Vision

For over 130 years.

The Maritime Conservatory of Performing Arts has strengthened the artistic community and cultural life of Nova Scotia and the Maritimes by training and nurturing future artists. We are a recognized leader of performing arts education and music therapy for individuals of all ages, inspiring a lifelong love of artistic expression for all through high quality music and dance instruction and programming.

Today, more than 1000 musicians and dancers of all ages and skill levels come to study each year at the Conservatory. Our programming serves infants, children, adults, and seniors alike, creating a space where all members of our community receive a warm welcome. This includes traditional instruction in music and dance, as well as innovative community-centered initiatives like music therapy services and partnerships with community organizations serving individuals who might otherwise not have access to music and dance instruction.

2023 – 2026 Strategic Plan

The Conservatory strengthens the artistic community and cultural life of Nova Scotia and the Maritimes by training and nurturing future artists. It inspires a lifelong love of artistic expression for all through high quality music and dance instruction and programming.



VALUES

Diversity and Inclusion | We encourage and welcome everyone and their differences in identity, skills, and talents.

Equity and Accessibility | We strive for equitable access to opportunities in all our programs and offerings.

Respectful engagement | We support the dignity and rights of all by nurturing a culture of respect in all our endeavours.

Integrity, honesty and transparency | We act ethically in all our endeavours.

Excellence | We support individual and group achievement by providing excellence in all of our instruction and programming.

Creativity | We encourage creativity, new ways of thinking, and artistic risk taking.

Community | We support the growth and development of our internal “family” of students, faculty, staff, and Board, while actively nurturing external connections to other artistic, educational, and public communities.

What a year!

2024-2025 was a remarkable one at the Maritime Conservatory, most notably for the wholesale changes in leadership.

We recruited and hired a new Executive Director, Chloe Kline, who arrived with two decades of leadership experience in a school of performing arts – experience that includes participation in a major capital fundraising campaign. As a longtime teacher and professional violist, she combines a deep understanding of what makes an organization like ours tick with the clear-eyed perspective of someone new.

Chloe has already made a significant impact on myriad operational bits and pieces and the long-term, strategic path of the place. If you haven't met her yet, I hope you will soon. She's a delight.

A couple of months before Chloe landed we welcomed a new Dean of Music, Neven Prostran, who returned to the Conservatory after three years teaching and working with music organizations in Germany. In the year since he landed, Neven has strengthened the ranks of our already-superb music faculty, introduced new program offerings, created more performance opportunities and, with Janet Bradbury, the Dean of Dance, entirely new opportunities for music and dance students to work and perform together.

Leadership changes also reached into the Centre for Music Therapy, where longtime Music Therapist Paige Ryerson was promoted to Director. She, too, is leading with purpose and openness and finding more ways to connect with clients and build strong connections in our community.

Thank goodness we had stability in the School of Dance, where Janet Bradbury continued to provide focussed, solid leadership and continuity through all of these changes!

The management team at the Conservatory is stronger, more cohesive and focused than ever.

As you'll read in the following pages, the Conservatory ended 2024-25 in a solid financial position with another unqualified audit. The Schools of Music, Dance and the Centre of Music Therapy all saw growth in overall numbers, in program offerings and in opportunities for students.

And every day, behind every studio door and in every performance space, students and teachers, music therapists and their clients produced artistic alchemy. They are working together to strengthen skills, confidence and community, and to bring art and beauty to a world sorely in need. Thank you for your support.

Gratefully,

Rick Alexander, *Chair of the Board of Governors*

WHAT



WE



DO



SCHOOL OF DANCE

We welcome people who want to infuse their life with dance. Our inclusive and accredited program will give you the foundation and the freedom to express yourself through movement, at home or on the world stage, at any stage of your life.

2024-2025

The 2024-2025 year was full of accomplishments for the students and faculty of the School of Dance. Our faculty grew to 19 highly qualified instructors who offered a wide range of classes and private instruction in Ballet, Ballroom, Composition, Conditioning, Contemporary, Jazz, Modern, Pointe, Silver Swans Ballet, Tap, Theory, and Variations. Student enrolment was steady between 380-400, up slightly from 350-380 in 2023-24.

Summer programs saw a significant increase in participation. Dance Camp enrollment grew by approximately 41%, from 143 to 202 participants, and our Dance Intensives, Junior Intensive, and adult evening classes all ran successfully. Our Teacher Training Program ran with a full slate of first and second year courses. Our students once again were entered for Ballet Examinations with a perfect 100% pass rate for exams both with Cecchetti Canada and the Royal Academy of Dance. Many of our students earned Distinction and/or Honours in these prestigious examinations.

The School of Dance also celebrated several memorable performances, including Snapshots performances on Friday, December 13th and Saturday, March 1st. Our major production was Alice, The Ballet, performed at the Spatz Theatre in February, and we also offered a slate of Spring Recitals at the Spatz Theatre in June. In addition, we held two Early Childhood Movement Celebrations in the Lilian Piercey Hall in May and June.

Outreach programs included performances for over 600 schoolchildren, and performances at Northwood Halifax Campus, as well as our ongoing collaboration with St. George's YouthNet. These outreach programs provide performance experience for our students and extend our programming to the broader community. The 2024-25 year saw us develop deeper ties to our community, and expand our range of course offerings. We look forward to continuing our mandate in the coming years.

SCHOOL OF MUSIC

We'll help you live a creative musical life that enriches yourself and your community by giving you the language and perspective of music—through highly skilled and passionate musical instruction.

2024–2025

The School of Music continued to experience strong enrollment numbers and engagement in private lessons, ensembles, workshops, masterclasses, and more. With over 1,000 unique registrations for School of Music activities, participation in music lessons continues the strong pattern demonstrated over the past several years.

Children's programming featured notable expansion with the new Merry-Go-Round program, and our Kindermusik program became tri-lingual with offerings in English, French, and Ukrainian. Three new private lesson instructors and one Kindermusik instructor joined the faculty, and composition became a formal teachable subject under the new Theory & Composition department.

The quality of our teaching spaces was improved with a significant reorganization and decluttering effort, and the addition of two new private teaching studios, allows us to better serve the various needs of our patrons.

We continued to remove financial barriers and reward excellence by distributing approximately \$34,000 in scholarships, awards, and bursaries. Further initiatives developed this past year such as the Valerie Bellamy Harp Lending Program continue to address these barriers and provide students with opportunities to learn, regardless of socioeconomic status.

With the foundation for growth laid with more teaching studios, faculty members, and general systems improvements, the coming year will focus on:

1. growth in enrollment
2. increase programming options
3. building more internal resources for our students and faculty,
4. and increasing community involvement through partnerships and collaborations.

This will yield more performance opportunities for our students, more financial support, more engagement with community members, and more reasons to become a member of our family. Think community. Think Conservatory!

CENTRE FOR MUSIC THERAPY

Our certified music therapists help Nova Scotians access the healing power, and joy, of music, right in the heart of Halifax.

2024-2025

The Centre for Music Therapy continued to develop and thrive during 2024-2025. In September 2024, the Centre experienced a change in leadership when Anna Plaskett stepped down as the Head of Music Therapy, and Paige Ryerson was hired as the Director of Music Therapy. While three organizations (including 9 groups) remained clients of Anna's upon her departure, client numbers in the Centre for Music Therapy have remained stable. Our overall clientele number was 116 for the year, a slight decrease from 117. This decrease reflects the organizations that remained with Anna Plaskett, but was balanced by a 14% increase in our individual clientele, from 64 to 73.

Our work with schools and preschools, including institutions like Beech Tree Academy and Admiral Westphal Elementary, continued to thrive, and new partnerships were made with Kids at Research Early Learning Centre, Harrietsfield Elementary and Kingswood Elementary.

We expanded our long-term care services to include Saint Vincent's Nursing Home in addition to the continued services at Northwood Care. The Centre formed new community partnerships with Peter's Place, Hearing and Speech Nova Scotia and Akoma Family Centre, and maintained partnerships with Easter Seals, L'Arche Halifax, Our Neighbourhood Living Society, Metro Community Living, Quest Society, Gateway Homes, Regional Residential Services Society, Connections Dartmouth, Dartmouth Adult Services Centre, Club Inclusion, Prescott Group, Laing House, Colonial Homes, and Department of Community Services.

Our music therapy team consisted of 11 music therapists - 7 Certified Music Therapists, 2 Music Therapists seeking accreditation, and a Director of Music Therapy (also a Certified Music Therapist). The Centre's on-site group, Seniors in Song, remained an integral program and has inspired the development of new group programming within the Centre for Music Therapy in the future.

We continue to see growth in individual and group participants, and growing demand for music therapy services, and look forward to continuing to expand and deepen the work of the Centre for Music Therapy in 2025-2026!

2024-2025 FINANCIAL REPORT

The Conservatory’s financial position remained strong during the 2024-25 fiscal year with an 8% increase in revenues from program participation. Associated increases in costs were carefully managed, resulting in a modest surplus of \$34,559 at the end of the year.

An independent audit was conducted by G&R Chartered Professional Accountants, who provided an unqualified audit report, finding the financial statements to fairly present the Conservatory’s financial position as of June 30, 2025. The Conservatory’s assets were valued at \$1.84 million, an increase of \$143,758 from the previous year. This included a 25% increase in the Conservatory’s investment funds, which are substantially restricted for scholarships.

Donations, grants and fundraising continue to be crucial for the operation of the Conservatory and the preservation of our building.

REVENUES

Programs and Performances	\$1,828,956
Donations, Fundraising, Grants and Other	178,024
Rentals	91,113
Investment Income	57,025
	\$2,155,118

EXPENDITURES

Programs and Performances	\$1,318,845
Operating Costs	649,533
Building Costs	152,181
	\$2,120,559



“ Faculty at the Conservatory are so caring, taking the time to get to know the students in order to best support and encourage individuals within a group setting. The sense of belonging that comes from the supportive environment enables risk-taking that builds confidence. There is tremendous joy that comes from time spent at MCPA.

- Wendy Walsh, Parent

“ My mum had dementia and died one year ago. She lived at home with us, and Emily was her music therapist. Emily utterly transformed mum's every Sunday afternoon in the living room. What a gift she gave to mum and all of the family to generate such joy.

- Daughter of Music Therapy client

“ When I first walked through the front door of the Conservatory, guitar in hand, any anxiety I may have held about my decision to pursue lessons fell away. I immediately felt welcome. I had the sense that I was in the right place at the right time. What I have since experienced and come to understand is that the Conservatory is so much more than an institution dedicated to excellence in the development and encouragement of artistic aptitude and ability. It is a place for everyone -- no matter stage of life or level of ability -- who feels the urge to express themselves through music and dance. It is a place of belonging that offers the embrace of a community. In these days of distraction and felt separation, involvement with such a community of spirit seems especially poignant.

- Alan Ward, Board member, student

BOARD OF GOVERNORS

Rick Alexander, *Chair*
Danielle Keating, *Vice-Chair*
Christopher Hopgood, *Vice-Chair*
Kathryn Burlton, *Treasurer*
Edie Hancock, *Member*
Niel MacIntyre, *Member*
Alan Ward, *Member*

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS

Chloe Kline, *Executive Director*
Janet Bradbury, *Dean of Dance*
Neven Prostran, *Dean of Music*
Frances Royle, *Music Faculty Representative*
Cole Richardson, *Dance Faculty Representative*

STAFF

Chloe Kline, *Executive Director*
Janet Bradbury, *Dean of Dance*
Neven Prostran, *Dean of Music*
Paige Ryerson, *Director of Centre for Music Therapy*
Jeffrey Hale, *Administration*
Noah Enns, *Registrar*
Cynthia Creaser, *Staff Accountant*
Olena Yanchuk, *Development Coordinator*
Laura van Herk, *Assistant Dean of Dance*
Kate Mitchell, *Costume Designer*

Custodians

Elyse Davidson
John Richards

Weekend & Evening Staff

Iliana Cole
Katherine Norris
Svitlana Kapusta
Lukas Donovan



The Maritime Conservatory is one of the largest and longest-standing arts education institutions in North America. Its success relies on the active support of community members through volunteering, program participation, and financial donations.

To help to ensure everyone has the opportunity to enjoy a musical life, please donate. It's easy!



Scan the QR code or visit
maritimeconservatory.com/donate
You will automatically receive a tax receipt.



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