

# ONTARIO**PRESENTS**

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ONTARIO PERFORMING ARTS PRESENTING NETWORK

## ANNUAL REPORT 2015 – 2016

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The 2015 Showcase: Cosima Grunsky performs for Ontario Contact delegates in London Ontario

## Message from the President



### *Working Together*

This report focuses on OP's member accomplishments and achievements over the past eight months.

As you read through the report you will be struck by both the number and types of initiatives powered by OP members working together. These include OP's Block Booking program, the OAC's Ontario Dances and Theatre Connects initiatives, the Municipal Performing Arts Centre policy alignment project, the New Narrative + Metrics Task Force, the Ontario Classical Music Network's Digital Marketing Platform, the Northern Young Audience Presenter Development group, and the Audience Mapping project – all characterized by members working together to develop a collective practice.

While many of these initiatives have been in place for some time the network gained added purpose and energy a year ago when its members gathered in Brockville and crafted **Three Bold Ideas** to define the future in which we wish to live.

The three bold ideas are to create a **New Narrative & Metrics** for Performing Arts Presentation; harness the power of **Data Analytics** to build a bigger picture of our audiences; and develop an embedded culture of continuous **Professional Development** in our sector.

Each initiative is spearheaded by an OP member demonstrating the bountiful leadership resources that we have in our midst. As we gather for our 28th annual general meeting in Parry Sound, I want to pause and thank all of our members for their collegial willingness to work together and to our staff and funding stakeholders for the resources that help guide and support our work.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Colleen Clack". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Colleen Clack, President

## Overview

Ontario Presents is a province-wide network of performing arts touring and presenting organizations that work collaboratively to facilitate the distribution of live, performing arts shows – and their engagement with citizens – into communities across Ontario. The organization was incorporated as a not-for-profit network of performing arts venues in 1988 and has grown over the years to be an effective champion for the practice of performing arts presentation and community engagement. Its members include municipal performing arts centres; not-for-profit, volunteer, community presenters; touring artists/arts organizations, artists' agents, and industry service consultants.

Ontario Presents operates a number of participatory programs and services that help members build capacity, develop leadership and create opportunities to grow and diversify their audiences.

### *Mission*

To develop Ontario's presenting arts leadership through networking and professional development

### *Vision*

A live performance for everyone in Ontario: an active curator for the performing arts in every community: a lively engagement between the two.

In 2015/16, the network undertook a number of key initiatives to advance arts presentation and support its practitioners with services and tools.

This report is designed to provide an overview of the work we've done in the past fiscal year, with the year-end moved from July 31 to March 31, therefore covering period of eight months only from August 1, 2015 until March 31, 2016.

## Member Programs

### Tour Block Booking

Ontario Presents' block booking services provide presenting members with programming opportunities to book artists in partnership with other presenters. Block booking services also offer assistance with tour co-ordination, contracting, and marketing/promotion. Each season the block booking process starts in early September and concludes in early March.

This season 49 tours booked through Ontario Presents toured across Ontario resulting in 339 performances with artist fees of approximately 2.5 million dollars.

The 2016/17 block booking season ended with a total of 48 tours confirmed on behalf of 23 presenting organizations valued at \$2,108,775.00 in artist fees. This will result in 329 performances scheduled in Ontario venues for the upcoming season.

### Annual Blue Sky Day 2015

Each year, our network members come together to exchange valuable information on trends, issues, and opportunities and to discuss their plans for the year ahead at the annual Blue Sky Day.

This season the OP's Blue Sky Day was hosted by the Richmond Hill Performing Arts Centre. Over forty delegates from across Ontario attended the event on October 7, 2015.

The day was divided into two parts: the morning session was dedicated to the first block-booking meeting of the year. In the afternoon artists, agents and managers joined presenters for a facilitated conversation on upcoming challenges and opportunities in the Ontario Presenting Field. The session was an opportunity for members to share with their colleagues what they're working on and what is important for them and their communities. We ended the day with a discussion on future plans of working together to ensure a relevant and sustainable performing arts sector.

### Policy Framework for Municipal Performing Arts Centres

The Municipal Performing Arts Centre (MPAC) project's goal is to develop an optimal Operating Framework model or a guide for municipal presenters to bridge the gap between the municipal operating context and the larger presenting sector that is well established in Canada and elsewhere.

Led by Brian McCurdy, the MPAC leadership group is made up of 10-12 municipal venue managers who work together on developing a policy framework for municipal performing arts centres that captures how municipal PACs deliver public benefit, and how their structure and governance either furthers their mission or hampers their operations.



Brian prepared a document called *The Role of Ontario's Municipal Performing Arts Centres* that was shared with the MPAC group, other networks, and funders. The same day Brian made a presentation to Ontario Regional Office CAPF officers to better acquaint them with the role that municipal presenters play in the Ontario presenting and touring ecology. Brian has prepared a second presentation on the financial reality of municipal performing arts centres to make the argument that CAPF funding is essential to supporting MPACs' risk programming without which they would not be able to take curatorial risks.

### **New Narrative + Metrics**

The New Narrative + Metrics initiative is being headed up by Eric Lariviere and Suzanne Haines. The initiative grew out of last year's members' retreat as a Bold Idea wherein the Ontario presenting and touring field pro-actively undertakes to define its purpose and role in language that is clear and understood by presenters and their communities, authorizers, and funders. Accompanying the New Narrative will be a set of metrics by which the field will define its progress and by which it will be assessed by funders. Eric has pulled together a small team of members to work on the project and will convene the group at this year's retreat.

### **Community & Audience Mapping**

The Community & Audience Mapping service provides presenters with easy to comprehend analyses of their

community's demo/psychographics and social values. It compares the community profile with the presenter's audiences and reveals opportunities to broaden or diversify the programming appeal or marketing reach of existing programs. We were able to use this mapping program to investigate performing arts audiences across the GTA and discover patterns. In June 2015, Ontario Presents hosted a workshop to help the marketing staff from a number of performing arts centres use this data in their outreach strategies.

*"Because of the research that we have been able to do with Ontario Presents and Environics Analytics, we have an excellent snapshot of the social values, demographics, geography and other characteristics of our patrons. Using that information, we were able to customize our marketing messaging and tactics to grow our database to more than 25,000 email newsletter subscribers, thousands of followers on social media, 100,000 mailing addresses and more than 150,000 unique visitors to our website annually." - Julie Fossitt, Marketing Manager for Cultural Services at the City of Kingston (Grand Theatre).*

### Leadership Coaching Project

OP was successful in obtaining a \$10K grant from CAPACOA's Presenter Capacity Building Program to launch a pilot project in leadership coaching. Jane Marsland is heading the project and engaged master coach Andrew Soren, to host a 2-day workshop in Toronto in early February for six senior level managers who were coached in coach-like practice and received an overview of coaching and its benefits to personal, professional, and organizational growth and development. Each of the six is now enrolled in a six-month practicum led by Andrew in learning how to practice their skills with colleagues drawn from the Ontario and Atlantic regions. A total of 19 people are participating in the practicum who are being trained in Strengths Finding, Job Crafting, Goal Setting, Resiliency, and High Quality Connecting. The practicum finishes up in early September, results of which will be evaluated to determine next steps.

### Field Development

#### Community Engagement Learning Platform

With the support from the Ontario Trillium Foundation, Ontario Presents is in the process of developing a

Community Engagement Learning Platform. The purpose of this project is to assist presenters in their community engagement practices and to help them strengthen the ties with the diverse communities that they serve. With the help of the advisory group, the structure of the Community Engagement Learning Platform is now fully realized and clearly laid out. OP carefully selected a provider for the web/graphic components with the goal of creating a site that is dynamic, fun and interactive. The online resource tool is nearing completion. We plan to launch this learning platform in August, 2016. The resource will be promoted by OP and other networks starting in the fall ahead of a series of regional workshops to be hosted around the province.



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## Ontario Contact 2015



This year, Ontario Contact, Ontario Presents' annual performing arts conference, had over 250 delegates attending showcases, professional development workshops and conducting business during the three-day conference. Over fifty showcase and pitch artists presented their work during Ontario Contact in London. About eighty exhibiting delegates, including agents and artist management companies and other industry delegates, exhibited in the Contact Room.

Professional development workshops provided participants with opportunities to improve skills and competencies needed to continue to serve their communities by providing outstanding performing arts programming and engagement. Our keynote speakers, David Hogan and David Rogers of Victoria Playhouse Petrolia, kept us laughing while they made us think about how we view our audiences.

The 2015 Closing Party, organized by Showplace Performance Centre, kicked off Ontario Contact 2016 edition, which will take place November 3rd – 5<sup>th</sup>, in Peterborough.

## I Want To Showcase

I Want to Showcase is a collaboration between partner conferences led by Ontario Contact and Contact East whose goal is simple: to offer performing artists a site that is easy to navigate, understand and use. This new approach makes sense on a number of levels as it allows the artist to apply online to one or more conferences, increases their knowledge of opportunities, and has resulted in a broader field of artists to be considered. The partner conferences have begun to gather data to support the impact that they have on developing artist careers - tracking where the artists originate and how many are selected in comparison to those that apply. Meeting several times annually they discuss challenges and opportunities, collaborate on shared marketing strategies and assist in further development of the market.

There are 15 Canadian and US showcase events now participating in this innovative partnership. As a result, we have a more robust website as the costs are shared by all involved. Ontario Contact received 236 applications for the 2016 conference. The quality and diversity of artists has increased: 137 came from Ontario, 31 from Quebec, 23 from BC, 17 from the Prairie provinces, 14 from the Maritimes, 11 from the US and 3 from the Yukon.

Ontario artists still tend to dominate with 15 of the 28 selected being from Ontario.

### **Ontario Contact**

#### **2015 Award Recipients**

##### **Presenter of the Year**

Ronnie Brown, Oakville Centre for the Performing Arts

##### **Artist of the Year**

Kaha:wi Dance Theatre

##### **Agent of the Year**

Cheryle Hansen, Kids Entertainment

##### **Award of Excellence**

Brian McCurdy, recently retired  
Executive Director,  
The Burlington Performing Arts  
Centre

## Partner Programs

### Ontario Dances - Ontario Arts Council

Ontario Dances is a program of the Ontario Arts Council that is administered by Ontario Presents. Ontario Dances seeks to have more dance performances in Ontario communities and more people engaged, interested, and invested in dance at a local level in our province. The program aims to increase the range and diversity of dance available to communities in Ontario outside of the city of Toronto. The funding program for 16/17 has been renewed and will provide funding to nine, professional, multi-disciplinary presenters to present Ontario-based contemporary dance on their seasons and attend events in Ontario to see work. The Ontario Dances presenters meet yearly with other multi-disciplinary presenters from other provinces.

### Theatre Connects - Ontario Arts Council

Theatre Connects is a program of the Ontario Arts Council that is administered by Ontario Presents. This two-year initiative seeks to have more theatre performances in Ontario communities and more people engaged, interested, and invested in theatre at a local level. The project also aims to increase the range and diversity of theatre available to communities in Ontario outside of the City of Toronto. We are awaiting final news on the continuation of this program. OAC is intending to make Theatre Connects a permanent program and open it up for new submissions. Funding amounts will remain within the same, small envelope. OP is hopeful we can get this renewed.



**ONTARIO ARTS COUNCIL**  
**CONSEIL DES ARTS DE L'ONTARIO**

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## FRESH START – Webinar Series for Arts Presenting

Launched in November 2014, the *Webinar Series for Arts Presenting* is in its second year. Produced in partnership between Ontario Presents and the Atlantic Presenters Association, the webinar series is designed to help small budget and volunteer presenting arts organizations that are often managed on a part-time or volunteer basis, and have limited time and resources available for professional development.

In the current edition of the series, it is split into two levels, Introductory and Intermediate. The levels are geared toward small budget, volunteer presenters with minimal staff. By May 2016, we'll have hosted 22 one-hour webinars (2-3 presented each month from September to May). In total, we had 641 attendances, reaching about 330 participants, 95% of which attended multiple sessions. A range of 20 - 60 arts professionals from across the country participated in each webinar (30 people average). The recorded webinars have proven to be highly successful and remain an invaluable resource throughout the years. The recorded webinars from this year's series generated nearly 700 views.

The topics were chosen based on participant's feedback from a nation-wide survey of the regional presenting network in May 2015. The current series covers various aspects of presenting, from programming and contract negotiation to budgeting for shows, sponsorship, and strategic planning. Participants are also learning how to find an audience, attract youth and improve engagement by using social media.

Based on the participants' feedback during this current year, it is clear that the topics were appropriate and of great interest to participants, but we feel we can increase engagement by providing participants with a more in-depth discussion of areas of interest. The planning for 2016-2017 is underway.

*"Opportunities to access training, knowledge and skill development from experienced professionals for "free" in such an easy way is invaluable especially to volunteer organizations like ours." - Ros Battye (Welland-Port Colborne Concert Association)*

### **FRESH START - Ontario Classical Music Network Development for Volunteer Presenters**

With funding provided by the Department of Canadian Heritage, Ontario Presents took on a project to provide digital marketing support to five volunteer presenters, members of Ontario Classical Music Network (OCMN). Participating institutions are: Cornwall Concert Series, Orillia Concert Association, Port Hope Friends of Music, Sarnia Concert Association and Welland Port Colborne Concert Association.

The initiative will ensure that OCMN members have up to date Digital Marketing platforms powered by the latest online marketing practices, which will include website, social media, e-marketing and graphic design. To successfully implement this initiative, Ontario Presents contracted a part-time Digital Marketing Coordinator who will work with each OCMN members on enhancing their digital presence and driving attendance. Port Hope Friends of Music are the first organization to launch their 16/17 season using the platforms and the other three organizations are lined up to do the same.

### **FRESH START- Northern Young Audience Presenting Development**

With support from the Department of Canadian Heritage, the group of young audience presenters from Northern Ontario continued to strengthen their relationships, sharing information and resources as a network. Through block booking facilitated by Ontario Presents, they were able to plan 5 tours and 51 performances as well as one artist workshop for the 16/17 season. Trips to 4 children's festivals across Canada have been planned for summer 2016, which will allow the presenters to expand their curatorial knowledge and programming options for their series.



### FRESH START - Northern Dances

FRESH START- Funding from the Department of Heritage enabled the Northern Ontario Dances presenters to attend the Fall for Dance North Festival in Toronto on September 29 and 30, 2015. In addition to seeing performances at the festival, they attended national network meetings where the following topics were discussed: block booking for 17/18, information sharing within the network, shared web platforms, experienced presenters mentoring new presenters, and, most critically, aligning the regional programs to begin moving to a national one. The national network meetings gave the presenters the opportunity to engage with the Canadian dance scene and return to their communities with new ideas for dance programming.

### Indigenous Protocols Partnership Project

CAPACOA has received approval on its Seed application to the Ontario Trillium Foundation to undertake a year of research and consultation with First Nations communities on building understanding and connections between aboriginal artists, communities, and mainstream presenters and their communities. OP and the Indigenous Performing Arts Alliance (IPAA) are partners on the project with CAPACOA taking the lead. Results from the Seed project will be used to apply for a 3-year Grow grant to launch a systemic change initiative that will connect these communities and build bridges of understanding between them and their forms of expressive arts.



### IAMA Toronto 2016

Event Producer, Judy Harquail and Toronto Conference Chair, Chris Lorway headed a very successful 9-person, Canadian delegation to Utrecht in April 2016 to promote the IAMA Toronto event, November 10 – 12, 2016. Chris Lorway made an excellent presentation that was followed by a 4-minute video showing the people, the sites, and the city that will welcome delegates to Toronto. Confirmed funding by all levels of government includes the Department of Canadian Heritage, Canada Council for the Arts, Ontario Arts Council, and the Toronto Arts Council. IAMA has opened its registration for the Toronto event.



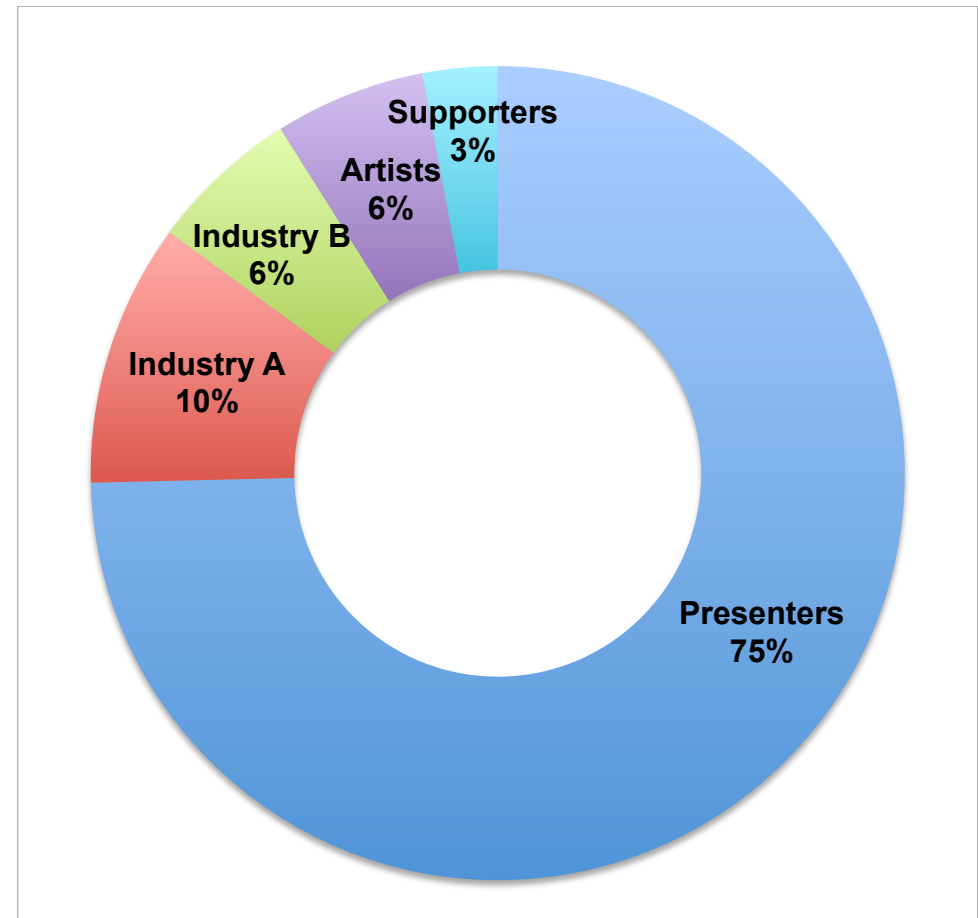
## Our Network

The Ontario Performing Arts Presenting Network (Ontario Presents) is a network of peers working together to advance the practice of arts presentation in Ontario. In year 2015/16, the network is comprised of 134 arts organizations, including presenters (volunteer and paid professionals), artist agents and managers, service professionals, artists and supporters.

## Our Values

The primary focus of the network is on the presenting practice and in pursuit of this, its members are guided by the following values:

- Encouraging, supporting & developing those responsible for the presentation of professional performing arts in the communities of Ontario.
- Fostering networking, professional development, advocacy & access to resources.
- Supporting our members' curatorial visions.
- Fostering and encouraging collegiality, trust, and openness within the membership.
- Encouraging the presentation of new art forms and the appreciation of quality and engaging performing arts performances.
- Developing strong & healthy leadership.



## Member Services and Communications

### New Network Portal and Fee Structure

In January 2016, Ontario Presents launched the new Network Portal and membership fee structure. To make it easier to join the network and renew membership, the new fees are flat (no more formulas!), with tiered Presenter and Consortia fees that are based on an organization's annual budget. Moreover, to widen the network and encourage participation, Associates from the same organization may now be added at no extra cost. The new portal optimizes access to and participation in the network. It includes network directory with participant profiles, a user-friendly sign-up form and network participants' discussion forum for members to connect with colleagues and share their knowledge.

### Websites

Ontario Presents continues to operate four websites: the main Ontario Presents website, the Ontario Contact Conference and Showcase Application websites, Block Booking online platform, and OAC's Ontario Dances website.

### Job Board

Industry Specific Job Board is located on the Ontario Presents website. Members can submit their job opportunities to be posted on the Job Board free of charge.

### Blog

An online Blog space on Ontario Presents' site allows for network updates and for members to post their stories, share ideas, and learn about their colleagues across the province.

### Discussion Forum

Located in the Members Area of the Network Portal, the Discussion Forum is designed to help members to instantly reach the network's wealth of knowledge by posing question, offer tips and advice, and provide answers to colleague's questions. Members are encouraged to subscribe in order to participate in the forum.

### Online Resources

The online resources page includes useful document, links documents and webinars pertaining to each category of Membership, from professional and volunteer presenting to artists and artist management.

### Ad Space

The ad space, available on both Ontario Presents and Ontario Contact websites, serves as a spotlight to highlight important initiatives and increase visibility in the presenting and touring sector in Ontario. Ads are displayed on almost every page of the web site and rotate as website visitors move from page-to-page. Packages start at \$35/month for Ontario Presents Members.

### **eNewsletter**

Ontario Presents continues to issue its monthly network eNewsletter with industry and member updates, upcoming events, granting programs deadlines, and announcements related to the annual conference Ontario Contact. Members are encouraged to submit their industry relevant announcements for publication in the network eNews. In the past year, readership increased to include over 2,300 industry professionals. Ontario Presents eNews average opening rate is 40%.

### **Online Meeting Platform**

Ontario Presents continues to use Adobe Connect services, a communications platform, to facilitate webinars, information sharing, and address urgent communications needs between members, networks, and other stakeholders. Ontario Presents is ready to respond by offering to its members an online space to meet, work, share and network.

### **Ontario Presents / Ontario Contact Mobile App**

Available for download for Android, iPhone and BlackBerry mobile phones, the App includes two apps in one: 1) Ontario Presents Mobile App with industry events throughout the year and 2) Ontario Contact App with Ontario Contact conference events. After Ontario Contact 2015, the number of app users increased from 395 to 563 industry professionals who have downloaded the app to

their mobile devices. The total of app launches has also increased to 3,328 (2,448 in 2014, 1,644 in 2013).

### **Social Media**

All member updates relevant to the touring and presenting industry are streamlined via integrated Ontario Presents' social media platforms (Facebook and Twitter). We currently have 436 likes on Facebook and 819 followers on Twitter.



@OntarioPresents



/OntarioPresents

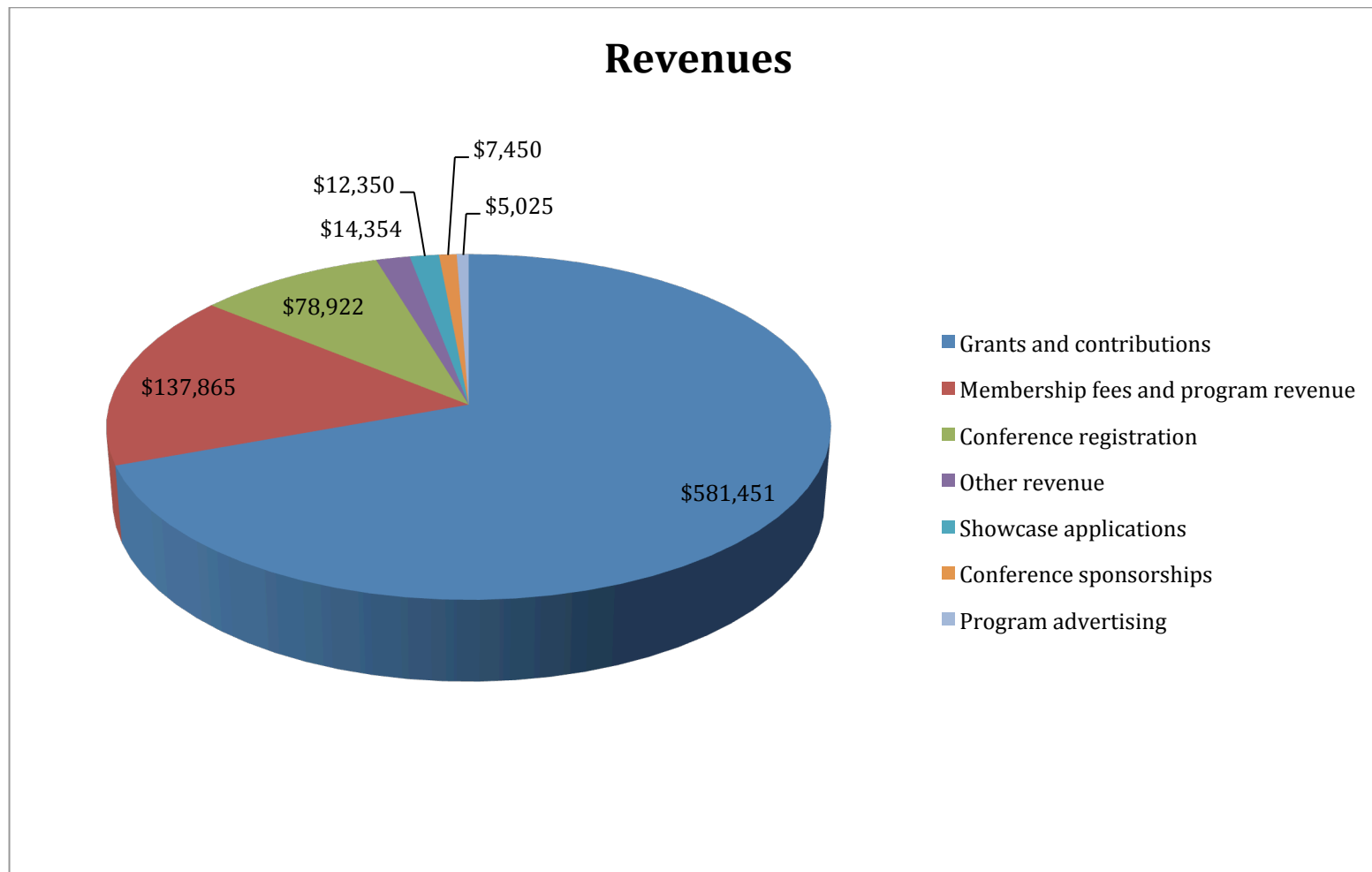
### **Member Surveys**

Regularly conducted Rental Rate and Municipal Investment Survey as well as other industry analysis are available for members on both regular and ad hoc basis.

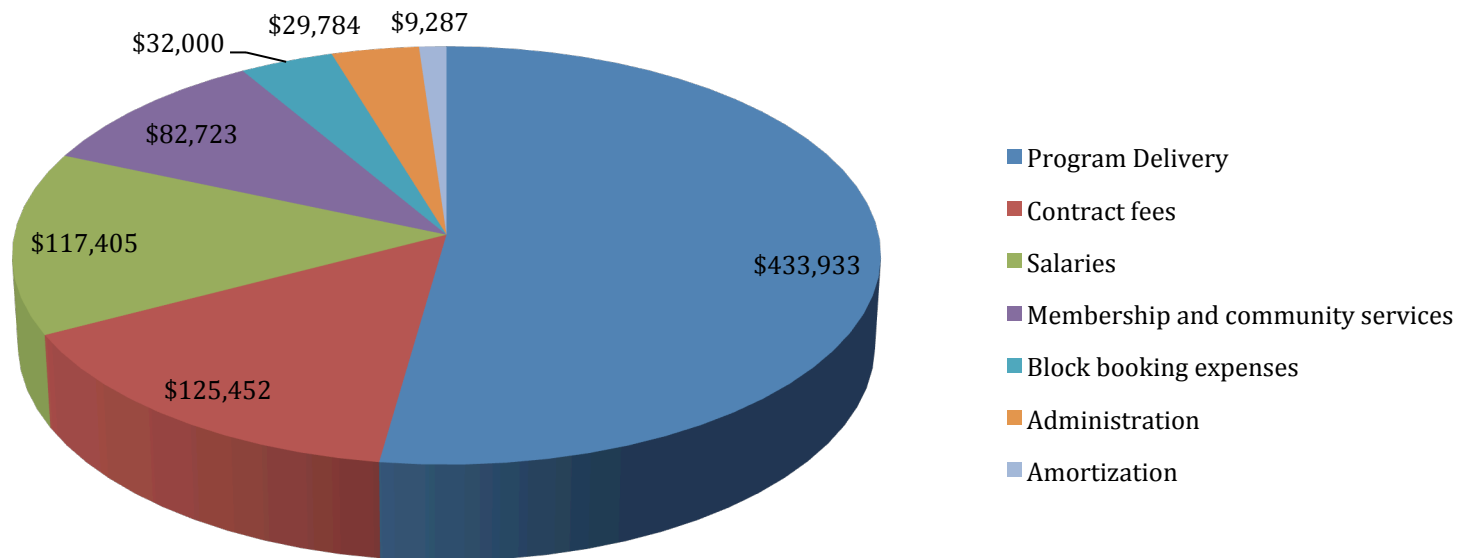
### **Other Membership Perks**

- An Affiliate CHRC Membership
- Discount on CAPACOA membership
- Registration rebate on the Business for the Arts' Sponsorship Series
- Mobile App Services and Discounts
- Discount at Westin Harbour Castle and Sheraton Centre hotels in Toronto
- Zipcar Membership and VIA Rail discounts

## Statement of Operations



## Expenditures



**BALANCE SHEET**  
**As at March 31, 2016**

	31-Mar <b>2016</b>	31-Jul <b>2015</b>
<b>ASSETS</b>		
<b>Current assets</b>		
Cash	\$122,228	\$109,661
Accounts receivable	92,119	5,657
Harmonized sales tax recoverable	20,578	9,583
Prepaid expenses	90,989	173,437
	<u>325,914</u>	<u>298,338</u>
<b>Capital assets</b>	<u>32,389</u>	<u>12,158</u>
	<u><u>\$358,303</u></u>	<u><u>\$310,496</u></u>
<b>LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>		
<b>Current liabilities</b>		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	\$87,354	\$19,220
Government remittances payable	5,094	3,532
Deferred revenue	158,073	196,795
	<u>250,521</u>	<u>219,547</u>
<b>Net assets</b>		
Invested in capital assets	32,389	12,158
Unrestricted	65,393	78,791
	<u>97,782</u>	<u>90,949</u>
	<u><u>\$348,303</u></u>	<u><u>\$310,496</u></u>

See accompanying notes to financial statements on behalf of the board of directors.



## Collaborative Partners

As we continue to develop the touring and presenting sector, collaborative partnerships are vitally important. Special thanks to the following partners for helping make our year a success:

**ArtsBuild Ontario; Atlantic Presenters Association; CAPACOA; Cultural Careers Council Ontario; Ontario's Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport; Orchestras Canada; Business for the Arts; CanDance Network, Made in BC: Dance On Tour, La danse sur les routes du Quebec, IAMA**

## Supporting Partners



## Board and Management

### Board Members

**President:** Colleen Clack, General Manager of Culture & Tourism, City of Guelph

**Vice President:** Sara Palmieri, Sales & Marketing Manager, Brock University Centre for the Arts

**Treasurer:** Eric Lariviere, General Manager, Flato Markham Theater for Performing Arts

**Corporate Secretary:** Patty Jarvis, Executive Director, Prologue to the Performing Arts

Alyson Martin, Co-President, Sioux-Hudson Entertainment Series

Jayson Duggan, Performing Arts Manager, Cultural Services, City of Kingston

Sam Varteniuk, The Registry Theatre

Ronnie Brown, Oakville Centre for the Performing Arts

### Staff Members

Warren Garrett, Executive Director

Judy Harquail, Program Director

Cheryl Ewing, Event Manager, Ontario Contact

Kaitlin Cockburn, Program Associate

Mila Ovchinnikova, Member Services & Communications Manager

Deb Daub, Senior Accountant

Jane Marsland, Healthy Arts Leader Project Lead

Brian McCurdy, Municipal Performing Arts Centre (MPAC) Project Lead

Robyn Chan-Kent, Digital Marketing Coordinator, OCMN Project

### Ontario Contact Staff

Dan Wood, Production Manager

Susan Habkirk, Contact Room Manager

Debbie Hind, Registration & Volunteer Manager

John McLachlan, Graphic Designer

Allan Hoch, Technical Director

Greg Hancock, Stage Manager

Daniel Macpherson, Sound Engineer

Alex Hoch, Cody Miller, Crew

**ONTARIO PRESENTS**

**Centre for Social Innovation**

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**[ontariopresents.ca](http://ontariopresents.ca)**