WELCOME TO OLD TOWN SCHOOL OF FOLK MUSIC
We are pleased to present Old Town School of Folk Music’s 2015 Annual Report. This was a very successful year for the School, during which we passed several significant milestones. We are delighted to report that 2015 ended with an operating surplus of $590,000 — the third consecutive year with a budgetary surplus. As a result of this financial stability and consistent performance, we were able to retire the last of the construction bonds for the new East Building in December, making Old Town School of Folk Music debt-free once again. Throughout 2015, the board, administrative staff and faculty have engaged in an extensive strategic planning exercise, resulting in the adoption of our new plan in January 2016. It is a very forward-looking agenda, which proposes a deep level of engagement across our city in the development and delivery of our programs. To facilitate this process, the School created a new Department of Engagement and Innovation, which is already generating significant results. A summary of the Strategic Plan is appended to this report.

As ever, this success would be impossible without the dedication of our board of directors, teaching artists, staff, volunteers, students, concertgoers and donors. We thank you for your participation in the community of Old Town School, and look forward to taking the next steps together.

Bau Graves, Executive Director
Kish Khemani, Board President
ORGANIZATIONAL SNAPSHOT

Founded in 1957, Old Town School of Folk Music’s unique come-as-you-are style of music and arts education reaches thousands of people throughout Chicago each year. As the largest community art school in the United States, the School teaches and celebrates music and cultural expressions rooted in the traditions of American global communities, offering a wide range of music, dance, and visual arts courses. Each year, nearly 16,000 unique students choose from more than 3,900 accredited classes and 6,200 private lessons in our catalog. Additionally, 200+ concerts reach an audience of more than 100,000 each year, highlighting a diverse roster of local, national and international touring artists.

The Old Town School owns and operates two campuses situated in Lincoln Square and Lincoln Park, which include the 400-seat Gary & Laura Maurer Concert Hall and 150-seat Myron R. Szold Hall, along with classrooms, two music stores and cafes, as well as a resource center which houses over 20,000 recordings, books and other archived collections. More than 300 teachers and staff, 3,000 members, and over 400 volunteers aid in the effort at these locations. Square Roots, the annual music and craft beer festival produced by the School in partnership with the Lincoln Square Ravenswood Chamber of Commerce, brings in diverse musical acts, craft beer aficionados and music lovers from all over Chicago and the Midwest.

In addition to the Lincoln Square and Lincoln Park campuses, the School served more than 3,900 children and teens through Artist-In-Residence Programs in 18 different Chicago Public Schools, community centers and other facilities. To make our programs accessible to as many people as possible, the School annually provides more than $200,000 in financial aid to help children and adults alike enrich their lives through classes in music, dance and the arts.
EDUCATION PROGRAM
ENROLLMENTS

- Infants and Toddlers (Birth – 5 years) 9,410 23%
- Children (6 – 12 years) 8,336 20%
- Teens (13 – 19 years) 2,484 6%
- Adults (20+ years) 21,338 51%

TOTAL STUDENT COUNT 41,568

Note: Total does not include School Field Trips, ticketed performances, Artistic Engagement Services, Square Roots, nor Domestic and International Partnerships.

ATTENDEES BY
PROGRAM TYPE

- Group Classes 29,222 16%
- Private Lessons 6,223 3%
- Camps 240 <1%
- Workshops and Intensives 2,136 1%
- School Partnerships and Outreach Programs 3,983 2%
- School Field Trips 10,447 6%
- Ticketed Performances 59,075 32%
- Artist Engagement Services 33,125 18%
- Square Roots Festival 30,000 16%
- Domestic and International Partnerships: Performances and Classes 5,130 3%
- Iron Heart Chicago 6,000 3%

TOTAL ATTENDANCE 185,581

GROUP CLASS
REGISTRATIONS

- Wiggleworms 6,762 23%
- Kids Music & Art 3,672 13%
- Teen Music 501 2%
- Banjo 579 2%
- Dance 3,918 13%
- Ensemble 2,675 9%
- Fiddle 461 2%
- Guitar 6,321 22%
- Voice 1,486 5%
- Other 2,847 10%

TOTAL REGISTRATIONS 29,222
OUTREACH PROGRAMS

Guitars for Growth

Our Guitars for Growth program provides music instruction in electric guitar and bass to 450 incarcerated youth at the Cook County Juvenile Temporary Detention Center. This program seeks to empower students by cultivating music literacy, historical and creative understanding, emotional awareness and stewardship.

Artist Engagement Services

Artist Engagement Services provided performing and teaching artists for more than 680 concerts, classes and workshops at both public and private events. Highlights include our participation in:

- Chicago Botanic Garden’s various summer concert series
- Exceptional Wiggleworms at National Lekotek Center
- Chicago Park District’s Toddlers, Tunes, & Turtles events as well as Concerts in the Park at the Welles Park Gazebo and Polar Adventure Days
- Lincoln Park Zoo’s Locally Sourced concert series
- Pullman Travel, with live performances aboard the City of New Orleans
- Wiggleworms in Millennium Park’s Family Fun Tent all summer long
- Uptown Saturday Night free family concerts in Uptown
- Northbrook Public Library’s inaugural Family Concert Series
- Chicago Public Library’s One Book, One Chicago series at libraries city wide
- Assemblies at Ferst, a therapeutic day school, supporting students aged 7 to 21 years with diagnoses ranging from autism and intellectual disabilities to physical challenges and emotional disorders
- Partnership with Erikson Institute, providing professional development workshops for early childhood educators from China
- Music and Memories, a program of the Jewish United Fund which brings together families with young children and the elderly for singing and sharing
- So many special and memorable weddings, birthdays, marriage proposals and other private events; it is an honor to share in the milestone moments of so many Chicago families!

The School fosters ongoing relationships with organizations dedicated to providing lifelong learning as well as therapy services to our older citizens. We provided a weekly program at a dementia unit where patients regularly ‘awaken’ in ways their caregivers have not seen when exposed to music and encouraged to sing and dance along!

Bringing Music to Local Children’s Hospitals

Through generous funding and external partnerships, Old Town School of Folk Music is able to provide musical experiences for children and their families at each of these Chicagoland locations:

- University of Chicago Medicine Comer Children’s Hospital
- Shriners Hospital for Children
- Rush Children’s Hospital
- Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children’s Hospital of Chicago

Other Youth Outreach Programs

In collaboration with Carnegie Hall, Old Town School facilitated the Lullaby Project with students from Simpson Academy for Young Women, a Chicago Public School serving pregnant and parenting students from 6th through 12th grades. Young mothers worked with professional songwriters to create original lullabies for their babies. This powerful program culminated in a performance on the Old Town School’s stage, with full band accompaniment and recording.

Old Town School continues its long-term partnership with Chicago House, providing after-school music and enrichment experiences to more than 40 children impacted by HIV/AIDS.

We continue to serve children with special needs by providing tailored arts experiences at long-term partners Stuart G. Ferst School at the Anixter Center and Rush Day School at Rush University.
DISTRIBUTION OF FINANCIAL AID

- Adult/Teen Group Classes: $79,949 (34%)
- Kid Group Classes: $99,726 (46%)
- Private Lessons (adults and children): $44,602 (20%)

TOTAL REGISTRATIONS: $224,277

STUDENTS AWARDED FINANCIAL AID

- Adults: 246 (45%)
- Children: 264 (49%)
- Teens: 30 (6%)

TOTAL STUDENTS: 540
ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE PROGRAMS

In 2015, more than 3,900 children participated in Artist-In-Residence and Wiggleworms-In-Residence Programs in 18 different Chicago Public Schools and at the Carole Robertson Center for Learning. Additionally, over 10,000 children attended our field trip events at Old Town School.

“We love our Artist-in-Residence partners. I continue to grow as a teacher because of this program.”

– Sharon West, music teacher, Hurley Elementary School

“I really liked seeing how some students who do not typically excel academically were able to shine and build confidence working with the teaching artist.”

– Barbara Karrel, classroom teacher, Hibbard Elementary School
SUMMER CAMPS

“Maddie accomplished things that I can honestly say would not have happened if it wasn’t for her being at that camp. All of the kids, they were AWESOME. They learned to be there for each other too. That is such a gift to teach kids.” –Teen camp parent

“This is the most positive camp experience he’s ever had. This was a Renaissance Man experience for him. You can discover something about yourself at this camp. There are so many different ways to show your talent.” –Donna, mom of Atticus

In 2015, 262 kids from around Chicago attended our various summer camps, including two, four-week sessions for 4 to 6 year olds and 7 to 11 year olds, a one-week intensive Fiddle Camp, as well as our newest offering: Teen Arts Camp, presented in eight consecutive, one-week intensives.
CONCERTS

More than 100,000 individuals attended 350+ Old Town School concerts in 2014. The following is a full listing of all concerts performed in 2014. *Indicates a World Music Wednesday show **Indicates a Global Dance Party show

JANUARY
Okee Dokee Brothers
Renaud Garcia-Fons*
Swing Brasiliero**
Dobet Gnahore
Chicago Reel*
Fabian y su Bachata**
April Verch
H’Sao*
Pine Leaf Boys**
Bill Frisell
Celebrating Jobim with Paulinho Garcia
Josefina Rozenwasser & Matias Albamonte*
Orkestar Balkanski **
Anais Mitchell

Dirk Powell & Riley Baugus
The Gypsy Influence *
Heather Malyuk & Dan MacDonald **
Hugh Masakela & Vusi Mahlasela
Bela Fleck & Abigail Washburn ▶

MARCH
Jodee Lewis
Choro de lá pra Cá *
Midge Ure
Dervish
Heartbeat *
Ben Ottewell
AfriCaribe **
Altan

Kreyol Roots **
Led Kaapana & Mike Kaawa
Los Folkloristas
The Good Lovelies

APRIL
Los Panaderos *
Patti Smith ▶
Feufollet **
Dom La Nena
Ron Sexsmith
Wanees Zarour Ensemble *
Kobo Town **
Cecy Santana & Renato Anesi
Jeffery Broussard
Steep Canyon Rangers
Gangstagrass
Virasat Trio *
Steve Poltz
Kolaam **
Jeremy Enigk
Maritime Festival
Illapu & Colombina Parra
Bill Evans & Alan Munde
Oscar Peñas *
Los Perros Cubanos **
eighth blackbird
Nellie McKay
Jay Farrar / Rhett Miller
Come Sunday *
Lagbaja

MAY
Kanikapila **
Runa/Chicago Reel
Dolly Varden
Celebracion de Mayo! con Corrientes Chicago
Gurrumul
Trio Brasileiro *
Age Rangers **
Vetiver / EDJ
Eric Bibb
Inti-illimani
Freddy Johnston
Strings in Spring *
Mark O’Connor
Still Life with Drumming
Armel an Hejer and Thomas Moisson *
Avishai Cohen
Poetic Pilgrimage and Sidewalk Chalk *
Ecos del Pacifico **
National Tap Day

FEBRUARY
Chinchano *
Salsa Congress **
Sons of the Never Wrong
Tu B’Shevat
Allotar *
Olivia Chaney / Mark Dvorak
Modou Sarr **
Lady Smith Black Mambazo ▶
Luciano Antonio *
Greil Marcus
Orpheus Hellenic **
Sones De Mexico & Billy Branch

Jerry Douglas Presents the Earls of Leicester
Alash
Justin Roberts
Joe Filisko & Eric Noden
The Nile Project
The Itals *
Paulo Padilha
Lloyd Cole
Carpacho y su Combo **
Sones de Mexico
Tom Paxton / Janice Ian
Juanito Pascual *

9
JUNE
Newpoli *
Andy Schumm and his Gin Bottle Four **
Jug Band Summit
Shawn Colvin / Marc Cohn
Ensemble Español *
Chicago Samba **
Kina Zoré *
Orquesta Victoria **
Ottmar Liebert
Nabori *
Tadashi Endo
Becca Stevens
Peruvian Folk Dance Center **
Gill Landry

NOVEMBER
Slide Guitar Masters of OTSFM
Paul Brady
Allos Musica Ensemble *
Doug Paisley / Joan Shelley
Esso Afrojam Funkbeat **
Matt Brown & Greg Reish
Elizabeth Mitchell
Villalobos Brothers *
Frazey Ford
JoshuaDavis
The Grascals
Strayhorn Fringe Festival
Cheryl Wheeler
David Bromberg
Baladino
Aysenur Kolivar *

JULY
Bonnie Prince Billy
Rickie Lee Jones
Phil Angotti & Tommi Zender perform Simon & Garfunkel
Iron Heart *

DECEMBER
Sabrina Lastman Project *
Can I Get an Amen **
Donna the Buffalo / Peter Rowan
Dr. Ralph Stanley and the Clinch Mountain Boys
Wiggleworms 30th Bday
John Erickson / Typhanie Monique
George Winston
Dos Santos Anti-Beat Orquesta **
Jim Lauderdale
Songs of Good Cheer
Over the Rhine
Gad Elmaleh
Jay Farrar with Greg Silsby
Jorma Kaukonen

AUGUST
Watkins Family Hour featuring Fiona Apple ▶
Margarita Laso
Kristin Lems
Sugarcreek Road
Tinariwen ▼
the Church

SEPTMBER
Off to Farofa *
Swing Brasiliero **
Paa Kow Band *
Tambours Sans Frontieres **
Glen Phillips
Aziz Samaoui *
Frank Quitero plus Samuel Ocean
Patty & the Buttons **
Tim Kubart & the Space Cadets
Mike Peters
Heritage Blues Orchestra
David Wilcox

OCTOBER
Chicago House Institute **
Vieux Farka Toure
Baudelaire
Duo Violao Brasil *
Rory Block
Yair Dalal
John Lennon Birthday

MARK KOZELKE
Orisha Dance Chicago **
Cowboy Junkies
Cactus Blossoms
The Church
Del Barber/Lilly Hiatt
Jorge Emmanuelli & Los Ancestros *
Irish Xmas in America
The Nut Tapper
Chris Potter

SHAKERS
Mike + Ruthy Band
Literary Lunatics
Simdi Ensemble
The Gloaming
Pigpen Theater Co.
Alasdair Fraser & Natalie Haas
Andreas Kapsalis & KOZM *
Helado Negro
Alejandro Ziegler Quartet **
The SteelDrivers
Dan Wilson
Dave Specter
Juan Medrano Cotito and Golpe Tierra *
Craig Finn
Samuel del Real **
Special Consensus
Cactus Blossoms
Ustad Shahid Parvez Khan
Donnie Fritts
Daniel Rojas and Arpeggio Latino *
Barbara Furtuna
Mr. Sun / Michael Miles Trio
Milk Carton Kids ▶
Spooky Singalong w/ Dreamtree Shakers

CAYITO Y LA DISTINGUIDA *
Julian Lage
3 Women and the Truth
Ethnic Dance & Nicolae Feraru **
Shemekia Copeland
Cactus Blossoms
Tom Rush
Nano Stern
Ho Etso Taiko and On Ensemble *

JORMA KAUKONEN
Co-sponsor of the 2016 NEWpoli Ball
More than 60 acts on 4 stages over 3 days marked the Square Roots Festival, July 10 – 12, 2015

squereroots.org
40 free performances by 6 diverse Chicago musicians at over 30 CTA train stations and other public spaces across Chicago.

ironheartchicago.org
As one of the most unique fundraising events in the city, Blue Jean Gala 2015 combined a roaming feast through five, top-rated Lincoln Square restaurants followed by a concert featuring legendary artist Randy Newman. With over 350 individuals in attendance, nearly $400,000 was raised to support Old Town School’s one-of-a-kind outreach programs and financial aid opportunities.
Old Town School of Folk Music partnered with Mesirow Financial for a special concert in the James C. Tyree Auditorium. Over 200 guests were in attendance for this downtown event featuring Jonas Friddle and the Majority. The event raised more than $17,000 to support the School’s education and outreach programs.
The School hosted its’ second annual Distinguished Teaching Artist Awards with a celebration at Morton’s Steakhouse. The awards were established to honor exemplary Old Town School teaching artists, nominated by their peers, displaying excellence as a teacher, leader and for their contribution to the Schools’ community culture. The Awards ceremony was followed by a benefit concert featuring Arlo Guthrie at Harris Theater for Music and Dance.
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This program is partially supported by a grant from the Illinois Arts Council Agency.

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In Honor of Rinaldo Olff
In memory of Gwen Pippin *
In honor of Ethel Polk on her birthday
In honor of Jamie Rachlin
In honor of Gary Rejebian
In honor of Judith Roth’s Both Birthday *
In memory of Bob Simmons
In honor of Charles Vinpal
In honor of Michael Warner *
*indicates multiple gifts

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The Old Town School of Folk Music teaches and celebrates music and cultural expressions rooted in the traditions of diverse American and global communities.

*Old Town School of Folk Music enseña y celebra música y expresiones culturales arraigadas en las tradiciones de diversas comunidades de América y del mundo.*