Dear Friends,

In our 84th year we took time to review, reflect and look ahead. Strategic Planning is a hallmark of any responsible non-profit. It’s the depth of the investigation and the knowledge gained that drives successful organizations forward.

Ovations new five-year plan, Ovations 2020, informs and energizes our future as both a local treasure and a national leader in the presentation of live performance.

Through numerous conversations with stakeholders – our Members, funders, community partners and loyal ticket buyers – we heard about your dreams and expectations. Moving forward, we will provide even more experiences, both onstage and off; reach further into our community to meet members where they are; and, playing to our core strength, we will innovate.

Ovations 2020 is our promise to you, our most steadfast supporters, and to the greater community we both hold dear. We promise that excellence will always guide us as we deliver what you value most about Ovations, ensuring that even more members of our community have the opportunity to experience and be inspired by the power and delight of the performing arts. (For more on Ovations 2020, please see page 13.)

With that, we are pleased to share with you our 2014-15 Annual Report. From the 28 performances to the 78 Ovations Offstage activities and the more than 34,000 people whose lives we touched last season, we believe you will see for yourselves the depth and breadth of what can be achieved when we work together. Thank you.

Gratefully,

Aimée M. Petrin
Executive Director

Michael A. Boyson
Board Chair 2013-2015

On the cover: Savion Glover, Metropolis Ensemble, Ira Glass Members-only reception, Audience members, Community Supper prior to The Nile Project.

Ovations Offstage

“ It felt like we were inside the music.”

— Dawn Stillings, Ovations Member, Cumberland
...the musicians were a HUGE hit! Kids have been gushing about them.

— Sarah Shmitt, Portland Public Schools on Khumariyaan
OCTOBER 29, 2014
Sam Green and Yo La Tengo: “The Love Song of R. Buckminster Fuller”
Performance at State Theatre

NOVEMBER 1, 2014
Béla Fleck, Abigail Washburn & Del McCoury Band
“A Family Affair” Lecture
Performance at Merrill Auditorium

NOVEMBER 6, 2014
Savion Glover: “STePz”
Open tech preview for local dance students
Performance at Merrill Auditorium

“It was truly an unbelievable evening. Béla and Abigail were amazing. Such talented musicians and such a lovely and warm rapport. My 14-year-old daughter who is learning Chinese and is a bit of a wiz on the upright bass was particularly inspired.”

— Suzanne Fox, Falmouth
As a huge fan of Ira Glass and listener of *This American Life*, it was one of the most amazing nights of my life. When I’m older, I’m very interested in having a career as a broadcast journalist; and speaking to him and listening to his program inspires me and increases my interest. Not only is his voice amazing on the air and in person, but his poise and intellect displayed when he speaks is something I aspire to develop someday. Thank you for your time and all that Portland Ovations does to bring people such as him up to Maine’s community.

— Allie Burns, Ovations Member, Brunswick
“[Merrill Auditorium] was amazing, many of our students have never been in a theater so grand. Our seats were amazing and the experience is one most will never forget. The actors and actresses were talented, emotional and humorous. They really brought the story of Harriet Tubman alive for our students in a more personal way than a movie or book.”

— Cynthia M. Sands, 7th grade teacher, Sanford Jr. High
Portland Ovations is batting .1000 in its selection of solo performers this year. First it was pianist Alexandre Tharaud, in a recital that can only be called transcendental. Wednesday night it was violinist Ray Chen and his collaborator (one cannot call him an accompanist), pianist Julio Elizalde, in another performance of a Beethoven sonata that was revelatory.

— Christopher Hyde, Portland Press Herald
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Nicole Sirois, Production Manager
Faith York, Usher Coordinator

MARCH 14, 2015
Broadway National Tour: “Memphis”
Performances at Merrill Auditorium

MARCH 18, 2015
Moscow City Ballet: “Swan Lake”
“Why Swan Lake?” Lecture
Performance at Merrill Auditorium

What a treasure Portland Ovations is and how lucky we are to have such a valuable resource in Maine. I became a Member, and recently increased my membership, because I felt like I wasn’t doing my part—I know ticket sales don’t cover the entire cost of bringing these wonderful performances to Maine.

— Marie Barbieri, Ovations Member, Brunswick
We learned a lot from the actors’ expertise to help us plan for our historical monologues work for the Boston Freedom Trail in the spring! Ashley and Tyler were so generous with their time, acting craft, personal stories, and skills!

— Antona Briley, Language Arts Teacher, Lincoln Middle School

MARCH 23–26, 2015
“Basetrack LIVE”
“207” Interview
Community Dialogue at USM
Community Social at Easy Day
School Visit to Lincoln Middle School
Performance at Westbrook Performing Arts Center
Post-Performance Panel with Cliff Trott, Tyler La Marr and community leaders

MARCH 28, 2015
Boston Camerata with Sharq Arabic Music Ensemble: “Sacred Bridge”
Artist Salon featuring
Anne Azéma
Performance at Hannaford Hall
Post-Performance Q&A

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Margaret M. Shiels
John D. Tewhey
Kimberly J. Twitchell
Lee D. Urban
Richard Vail
Anne Valentine
Sarah A. Verville
Margaret A. Wilkis
I thought that these guys were fantastic. Each song was its own musical adventure. I just never knew where each song was going and that is what made it so much fun to listen to. The women, the singers and drummer: if I were an alien and this was my first exposure to humanity, I would assume that it is the women who rule the world.

— Brett Pierce, Ovations Member, Freeport
MAY 1–7, 2015

Lucky Plush

Workshop with local playwrights
Creation/devising Workshop with local actors and dancers
First Friday dance performance by PATHS
Pop-up dance performance at Portland Jetport
Dance “Happening” at WEX Inc.
Rehearsals with Portland Community Chorus for “Flash Mob” during performance
“Dance/Theater/Dance/Theater” Lecture
Performance at Westbrook Performing Arts Center

WEX is committed to engaging with organizations, like Ovations, that foster innovation and creativity.

We’re looking for fun, collaborative ways to fuse both concepts into our work environment locally and globally. So, collaborating with Ovations is a most excellent start!

— Melissa Dudley, Arts and Innovation Coordinator, WEX, Inc.
“Another great performance. Portland Ovations never lets us down! I think we’ve been attending events for five years now!”

— Wendy Betts and Kristin Betts-Greenlaw, Homeschoolers from Casco
2014–15 BY THE NUMBERS

22,047 Attendees
28 Mainstage Performances
305 Performing Artists
5 Venues

12,192 people served by O2
78 O2 Activities
9 School-Time Performances
16 Free Lectures

34,606 people served by Portland Ovations made possible through...

592 Members
15 Sponsors
15 Foundations
In May 2015, Portland Ovations’ Board of Directors adopted an ambitious new five-year strategic plan. This exhaustive process was the result of more than 471 hours of time, 46 focus groups and community interviews, 2,169 patron survey responses and countless planning sessions with Board, staff and major stakeholders. The result is a plan that propels Ovations and this vibrant cultural community well into the future.

Over the next five years, Portland Ovations will deliver 250,000 arts experiences through 650 activities, animating as many as 40 different sites per season, while generating $14m of revenue through the local economy.

Portland Ovations is poised to raise Portland’s prominence as one of the great cultural cities in the U.S. by connecting even more members of our community with the power of the performing arts. Together we can ignite the thrill, inspire a connection and celebrate the vitality of Portland and the arts.

“I believe Portland Ovations is one of the best cultural assets in Portland and in the State of Maine.”

— Strategic Plan Survey Participant

2014–15 Annual Report
Ever since the decline of vinyl and the disappearance of blockbuster recording companies, who kept their stars in the public eye, it has been harder to attract large crowds to solo performances.....I mention this because Hannaford Hall had far too many empty seats for a concert that should have been standing room only. The weather may have had something to do with it, but so did the lack of the large publicity budgets that once benefited such stars....Tickets to Ray Chen were $42, with special discounts for people over 65 and to members of Portland Ovations. Children and students paid $10. Nothing remotely similar is available at these prices.

— Christopher Hyde, Portland Press Herald
Signature Events during the 2015–16 Season

“The Kite Runner”
Tuesday, February 9, 2016 • 10 am • Hannaford Hall, USM Campus, Portland

This one-person theatrical adaptation of the bestselling novel, The Kite Runner (2003), portrays the relationship between a privileged Pashtun boy and a young Hazara servant during the conflict in 1970s Afghanistan. Original Afghani music enhances the experience while audience members meet upwards of eight characters, each fully realized by this celebrated performer.

Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Dance Company
Wednesday, February 24, 2016 • 7:30 pm • Merrill Auditorium

In Play and Play: An Evening of Movement and Music, Maine dancers and musicians join the revered company in a rare live music and dance program that marries Tony Award-winning Bill T. Jones’ inventive choreography with some of the world’s best-loved and most seminal works of classical music. Featuring pieces by Mendelssohn, Mozart and Beethoven, Play and Play showcases the joy of dancers and musicians working together and includes the exuberant tour-de-force, D-Man in the Waters.

Wu Man with Shanghai Quartet: “A Night in Ancient and New China”
Thursday, March 31, 2016 • 7:30 pm • Hannaford Hall, USM Campus, Portland

Heralded “a force of nature” by Gramophone, pipa virtuoso Wu Man inspires composers from Tan Dun to Terry Riley and is a founding member of Yo-Yo Ma’s Silk Road Project. The Shanghai Quartet is one of the world’s leading chamber music ensembles, known for their passionate musicality and dazzling technique. Their brilliant program features a suite of traditional Chinese folk songs arranged by violinist Yi-Wen Jiang, solo pipa works, one of the great string quartets of the 18th century, and a world premiere by one of China’s most renowned composers, Zhao Jiping, best known for the films, Raise the Red Lantern and Farewell, My Concubine.

Each offered with Ovations Offstage events connecting our community to the artists and performances. Check portlandovations.org often for updates and information, like Portland Ovations on Facebook, and follow us on Twitter @portlndovations @ovationoffstage.