



# ANNUAL REPORT 2023

---

Halifax Dance Association  
1505 Barrington St.  
Halifax, NS  
B3J 3K5



# MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD

---

Dearest Halifax Dance Community,

I hope this letter finds you well. As we end another fiscal year, I'm excited to share the achievements that have marked Halifax Dance's journey this year. It has been a significant time of growth, inclusivity, and community engagement, as you'll see in this report.

This was the first year for many on our board, and I'm so grateful for the level of dedication that each member brings to the table. With fresh perspectives and a shared passion for our mission, the board has helped steer Halifax Dance toward new heights.

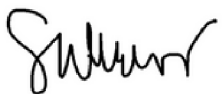
My daughter likes to say that Halifax Dance is her second home, and I get it since there is always a feeling of community in our studios. Parents connecting over coffee, our Inclusive Movement students bonding with our older dancers, companies in residence, and more. It's an inspiring community space that our board is so happy to support.

This is all thanks to the tremendous efforts of our incredible faculty and staff. Thank you for your experience, time, and dedication to our dance community. We would especially like to thank Amy for her hard work and focus this year, and we wish her all the best as she embarks on her upcoming maternity leave. We're thrilled Kate will be stepping up as the interim Executive Director, and we are happy to welcome Olivia MacLean as interim Program Director. We are all looking forward to celebrating our 50th year ahead, filled with great memories, celebrations, and gratitude.

As a not-for-profit, we are blessed to have such generous supporters, especially The Craig Foundation, Jumpstart, the provincial government, and all of our donors. Thanks for your continued support and partnership. Finally, thanks to YOU, our members. We would not be here, preparing to celebrate our 50th year, without your unwavering support. Bravo!

Looking ahead, I am confident that with the collective efforts of our members, board, staff, and community, Halifax Dance will continue to thrive and make a lasting impact for years to come.

Warm Regards,



**Sarah Williams**

BOARD CHAIR



# FROM STUDIO TO STAGE

---

Productions and performances have, at last, resumed in our city and have played a monumental role in shaping our year, allowing us to once again share the magic of dance with our community. Our young dancers shone brightly on several stages, delivering captivating performances in productions such as our beloved annual tradition “The Nutcracker”, the

**Holiday Show** and the **June Show**. In October, our dancers-turned-zombies captivated spectators along Halifax’s waterfront in their performance of Michael Jackson’s “Thriller”, and then graced city streets in December for the **Parade of Lights**. Passersby could also catch our Intensive Training Program dancers performing in the windows of The Maritime Centre as part of **Nocturne**.



## OUR OWN REVOLUTION

In January, Halifax Dance embarked on a new initiative that is near and dear to our hearts. In collaboration with **Revolutionnaire** and with the guidance of Nia and Justice Faith-Betty, we began “Our Own Revolution”, a full-spectrum action-plan tackling diversity, equity and inclusion across our entire organization. As a leader in the community, it is our goal to become the paradigm when it comes to creating spaces where everyone feels safe and welcome. This dedication required training at various levels of our organization, as well as deep analysis of our current policies and procedures. Notably, our revised dress code now fosters individuality and expression, reflecting our commitment to nurturing dancers of all ages, backgrounds, and abilities. We are excited about this transformative chapter and looking forward to creating real, long-term change not only within our organization but as part of the larger community as well.

# ARTISTS AT WORK

Halifax Dance remains the community hub for artistic creation and professional production, constantly filled with the energy of working artists. Notably, both Ballet Jorgen and Marie Chouinard held rehearsals at Halifax Dance this past year and our studios proudly hosted **Cecchetti Canada's National Teachers Conference**, welcoming esteemed ballet instructors from across the country. Our Companies in Residence have once again found a home within these walls and have produced and rehearsed works prominently featured in renowned festivals, events and shows such as Nocturne (Drifted), Coastal Currents (Votive) and Where Dance and Music Meet (Mocean).

*"I believe that being a collective in residence is key in progressing an underserved community so that our members can grow and thrive to reach their best potential."*

*-I'thandi Munro, Drifted*

## THE YOUNG COMPANY



Our Young Company, lovingly sponsored by **Irene & Robert Orr**, has achieved so many accomplishments this past year. From their incredible student showcase featuring their own choreographic works, to their May season show under the direction of Kathleen Doherty, their artistic expression and growth continues to inspire us. Their participation in The Bluenose Marathon, which raised an impressive \$3,500, showcased their commitment to dance and community.

# AROUND THE STUDIO

*"Halifax Dance is my second home and I look forward to going to class everyday. I can't express my love for this studio and the amazing people that make it what it is today!"*

*-Maeve Boyne, ITP Student*

## NBS & LEAD

Halifax Dance joined forces once again with **Canada's National Ballet School** to take part in their nationwide **Sharing Dance** movement, as well as LEAD, a free workshop for female-identifying participants between 16-25 to take on leadership roles within their community. Our workshop included dance classes from talented instructors and a guest panel of professional artists featuring Ithandi Munro, Angela Mahoney and Diana Rutherford.

## A SPACE FOR SOUND



Studio 2, "The Irene Orr Studio", saw an upgrade with the installation of sound buffering acoustic panels, enhancing the overall studio experience for everyone but most prominently our Inclusive Movement dancers and live music classes. Poor acoustics result in an echo effect, which can be detrimental to the experience of dancers with sensory sensitivities. Improving the sound quality in our space is paramount and we look forward to working towards making these improvements in all 5 of our studios.

## ADULT CLASSES

The Adult programming at Halifax Dance has seen impressive growth this past year. With a multitude of pop-up classes from guest instructors, social gatherings such as Bar After Barre, and a captivating performance by our Adult Ballet dancers at the library, we are so inspired by the commitment and ambition of our loyal adult students.



# IN THE COMMUNITY

---



Our commitment to outreach and community remains steadfast. We are grateful to have had the opportunity to deliver multiple free classes in public spaces such as the waterfront and the Halifax Central Library. Our Dancing Downtown project, sponsored by the **Downtown Halifax Business Commission**, allowed us to offer classes to the public in diverse styles such as African dance, Breakdancing, and Ballet as well as opportunities for younger audiences like our Mini Movement and Kids classes. In April, we presented “Sharing Stories Through Movement” at **Halifax Central Library**. This event featured performances from our very own Young Company, guest performers, and our Adult Ballet dancers, as well as Sharing Dance classes for all ages and abilities taught by Kate Houston, and an energetic Hip Hop class taught by Grace Flemming. Sharing Stories Through Movement was created to inspire movement and connection. We look forward to sharing more stories like this in the future.

## THE EVENTS

---



This past year our studios were filled beyond just classes and rehearsals, but also with several events that brought the community and our valued supporters together. We held a donor appreciation event complete with wine and cheese, and a ribbon cutting to officially mark the naming of Studio 3: The Berkeley Studio. In April, our entire space was bustling, as children hopped from studio to studio for our **Easter Extravaganza**. Soon after, we held a night for our beloved grown-ups: Wines from Coastal Vines, featuring red and white wines from Nova Scotia, California, Italy and Australia, food pairings, and a silent auction. These events contributed over \$5,000 to our fundraising budget .

# MESSAGE FROM THE TREASURER

---

Dear Halifax Dance Community,

As we reflect on the 2022-23 fiscal year, I look at this year as a year of recovery. A year in which we saw the organization take steps to return to its pre-covid form, with full studios and hallways, with growing classes, and a bright future ahead.

The past few years have been tough for Halifax Dance financially, as we continued to bear the operating costs needed to run the organization while at a lower level of registration because of the pandemic. Thankfully, we have been able to rely on some strong years of small surpluses that have helped offset the challenges faced by lower registration. We have, however, kept the deficits small thanks to many incredible donors and other cost savings as and where possible, while focusing on maintaining the delicate balance between financial responsibility and the delivery of exceptional dance education.

With Halifax keen to return to attending events and other live performances, we saw incredible attendance at various events, and new opportunities to showcase the work done at Halifax Dance, including waterfront performances, and a new community performance and workshop: Sharing Stories Through Movement, to name a few. These performances and community outreach have all contributed greatly to the increased enrollment as well as some of the performance revenue we are seeing. The Nutcracker was once again a staple, and the incredible attendance helped bolster the performance revenue for the organization.

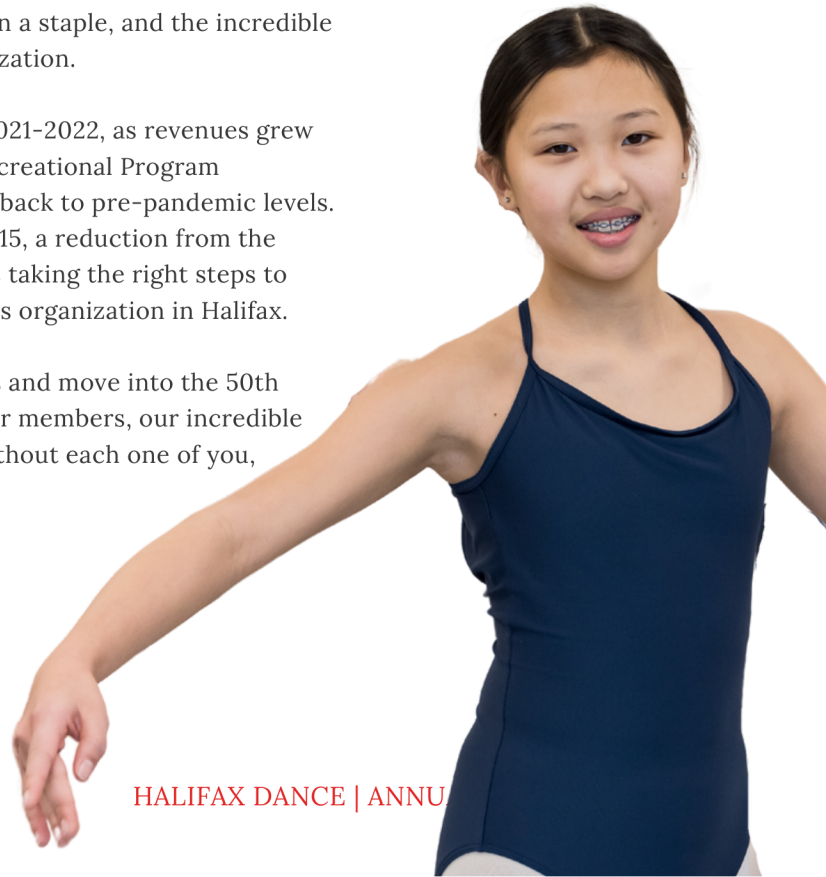
Financially, we looked to continue building on the momentum of 2021-2022, as revenues grew more than \$200,000, largely driven by an incredible increase in Recreational Program enrollment, returning the Saturday morning rush at Halifax Dance back to pre-pandemic levels. This increase helped reduce the overall deficit for 2022-23 to \$10,715, a reduction from the previous year of \$99,940. We are confident that the organization is taking the right steps to ensure a fiscally responsible and sustainable future as a leading arts organization in Halifax.

As we look to continue building on the success of the past 49 years and move into the 50th anniversary celebration, I would like to finish off by thanking all our members, our incredible staff, and all of the generous supporters both past and present. Without each one of you, Halifax Dance would not be where it is today.

Yours truly,

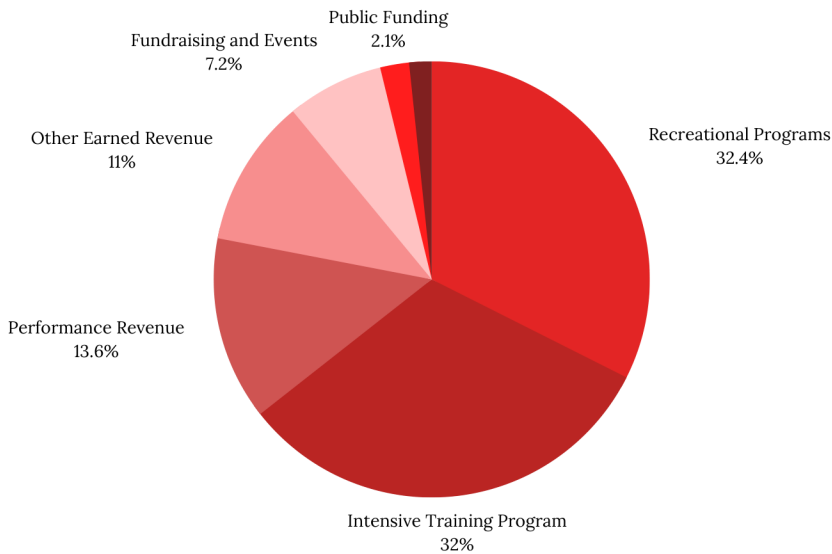
  
**Joseph Murphy**  
TREASURER

HALIFAX DANCE | ANNUAL REPORT

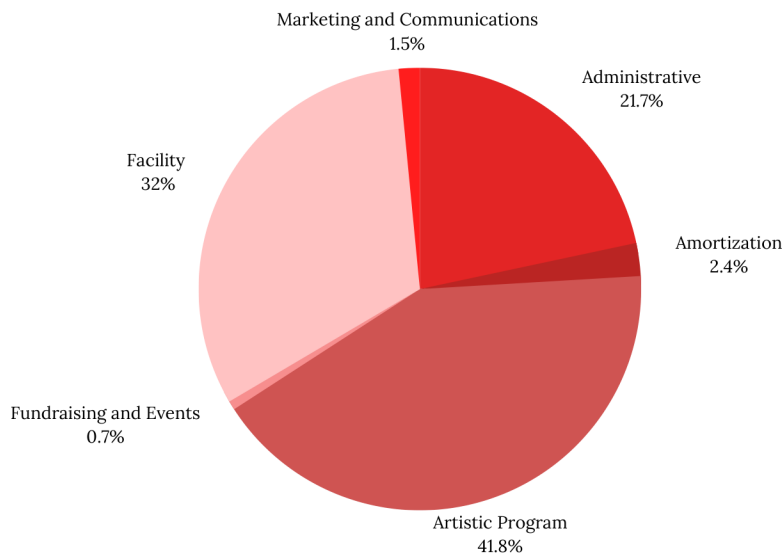


# BY THE NUMBERS

## REVENUES: \$775,546



## EXPENSES: \$786,261



*"At Halifax Dance, my child has had stellar opportunities to learn different genres of dance, perform in fun events all over the city, feel a sense of belonging and team spirit in a community that cares about her, make friends, grow confidence, and have a lot of fun!"*

-Leah Cahill, ITP 4 Parent





Kate Houston leading a group of young dancers at The Halifax Central Library as part of our Sharing Stories Through Movement Project. Adaptable for all ages and abilities, this “Sharing Dance” choreography was taught and presented to hundreds of spectators at Paul O’Regan Hall.

Once again, the enchanting world of The Nutcracker came to life in a mesmerizing collaboration between Halifax Dance, Symphony Nova Scotia, and Mermaid Theatre. Halifax Dance’s talented performers, accompanied by the live, captivating melodies of Symphony Nova Scotia, are skillfully woven together with the artful puppetry of Mermaid Theatre.



The Young Company took centre spotlight at our Wines From Coastal Vines event. This exceptional evening not only brought together a mix of familiar and new faces but also served as a platform for the YoCo dancers to showcase their talent. Wines From Coastal Vines also featured incredible donations from local businesses for our silent auction as well as delicious eats from Certainly Cinnamon.

A new addition to our programming, our “Baby and Me” class fosters socialization and exploration of movement for both grown-ups and their little ones. Through this program, we strive to provide a nurturing environment for parents or caregivers to bond with their little ones through dance. Halifax Dance remains committed to making the joy and benefits of dance accessible to every stage of life.



# BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Sarah Williams (Chairperson)**      Samantha Antonio      Kirstin Poole  
**Clare Bilek (Vice-Chairperson)**      Michelle Boutilier      Jennifer Taylor  
**Joseph Murphy (Treasurer)**      Sarah Laughlin      Keisha Turner  
**Natalie Ash (Secretary)**      Bhreagh MacDonald

# STAFF & FACULTY

**Amy Wttewaall (Executive Director)**  
**Kate Houston (Program Director)**  
**Angela Mahoney (Director of Development)**  
**Grace Flemming (Marketing Coordinator)**  
**Cathy Penney (Front Office Manager)**

# INSTRUCTORS

Isaac Abriel	MacKenzie Greenwell	Emma Purdy
Jocelyn Barbier	Tyler Hall	Julie Robert
Mariella Belleza	Sarah Hopkin	Sarah Rozee
Solène Bernier	Kate Houston	Diana Rutherford
Jen Briand	Sherry Lee Hunter	Gillian Seaward-Boone
Joy Chiekwe	Meredith Kalaman	Grace Skinner
Sara Coffin	Emma Kerson	Kendra Walker Rex
Kathleen Doherty	Michèle King	Jane Wooding
Nathaniel Dooks	Olivia Maclean	
Marel Eager	Mary Lou Martin	
Penelope Evans	Katrina Phillip	
Grace Flemming	Lisa Phinney	

*"Having many years' experience in Dancer Development and Teacher Training, I can say that working with the management, faculty and dancers of Halifax Dance has been and is outstanding. The respect, support, and sense of joy in what we do flows generously throughout the organization."*

*-Jane Wooding, Ballet Teacher at Halifax Dance*

# DONORS

James Arithi	Dynamic Dancewear	Natalie Keyes	Elizabeth Sequeira
Roisin Carew-Arithi	Marel Eager	Killiam	Heather Sibley
Ballet Jorgen	Brett Elliott	Layers	Greg Stiner
Barrington Florists	Debbie Elliott	LiveArt	Lee Cameron Surette
Tracey Beamish	Melanie Elliott	Allie MacDonald	Sweet Janes
Bev Charlton	Wade Elliott	Jana MacGregor	Sweet Pea
asher boates	Ashley Faddoul	Karen MacKinnon	Taz Records
Body Wrappers	Maureen Faunt	Tricia MacLeod	The Armview
Cherie Brennan	Micheline Fautley	Anne Mahalik	The Bookmark
Brightwood Golf and Country Club	Fireworks Gallery	Connie A Matheson	The Flower Shop
Canada Games Centre	Four Points Sheraton Hotel	Erica McIlquham	Braden Urquhart
Gerald Carew	Lisa gardner- Weagle	Fiona McLaughlin	Nancy Van Eyk
John Carew	Garrison Brewery	Annmarie Mentink	Da Wang
CGI Inc.	Clare Goulet	Erin Mentink	The Windsor Foundation
David Chafe	Halifax Thunderbirds	Lucia Mentink	Dana Wood
de la Poupe Business Consulting	Steffie Hawrylak-Young	Halifax Mooseheads	Steffie Hawrylak-Young
Patrick Charlton	Mark Heerema	Neptune Theatre	
Kjeld Mizpah Conyers-Steede	Inkwell Boutique & Wozzles	Nightingale Spa	
Veronica Cowley-Keating	Chris Ipe	Irene Orr	
The Craig Foundation	Brian Janes	Robert Orr	
Heather Cruickshanks	Jeremy Vaughn	Yajun Pan	
Dan Desgrosseilliers	Gerald Sheff & Shanitha Kachan	Pat Charlton Art	
Discovery Centre	Mila Kazakoff	JP Pineo	
Matthew Dobbelsteyn	Richard Kazakoff	Cindy Rowsell	
Downtown Halifax Business Commission	Kent	Carla Ruttgaizer	
Dream Dog	Elaine Keyes	Gillian Seaward-Boone	

