



GMF GENEVA
MUSIC
FESTIVAL
GEOFFREY HERD, DIRECTOR

15 YEARS
2011 - 2025

2025 Annual Report
May 15 - June 8, 2025



To our Geneva Music Festival Community,

Thank you for your support, patronage, and friendship as we celebrated our 15th-anniversary season, a festival of music and wine. The season was a resounding success, delivering exceptional artistry to Geneva and the Finger Lakes, providing educational opportunities for our youth, and ensuring that all community members—from college students to seniors—have access to world-class music.

Fifteen years is a milestone for the festival and for our community. Together, we have created a legacy of culture and connection in Geneva. We have demonstrated the creativity, resolve, and dedication of our community and created something beautiful for the region. Geneva is such a special place, and what we have built together is a remarkable demonstration of that uniqueness.

From the classics like Schumann's piano quartet to new works by Caroline Shaw, from the masterful fiddling of Michael Cleveland to the virtuosic improvisations of Cécile McLorin Salvant and Sullivan Fortner, the festival highlighted excellence across genres. We set record ticket

sales, attracting patrons from throughout our state and beyond.

As always, our community has my deepest gratitude as you strengthen and continue to build our organization. This season we had strong corporate support from Lyons National Bank, Friendly Ford, and Massa Construction, along with many other partners. We also made significant strides in our endowment campaign, ensuring that generations to come will be able to experience the Geneva Music Festival as part of their summers in the Finger Lakes.

I wish you all the very best and can't wait to share the 2026 season with all of you soon.

Sincerely,

Geoffrey Herd
Geneva Music Festival
CEO and Artistic Director

Meaningful Numbers

The 2025 season brought together two of the Finger Lakes' most cherished traditions—music and wine—for a truly multi-sensory experience. In a region renowned for its vibrant wine scene, the season's theme honored the artistry of local winemakers alongside the artistry of our acclaimed musicians. This unique pairing of world-class performances and regional flavors played a key role in attracting over 400 first-time attendees.

30% growth in ticket sales
Stronger community engagement

400+ first-time attendees
Expanding access to world-class music

1,100+ students reached
Connection to the power of music

31 artists across 6 venues
Artistic excellence, community-wide

Ticketed Events

audience
1,200+
52 students

The festival reached 1,200+ audience members, representing a 30% increase in sales from the prior season, and an all-time high.

World-Class Artistry

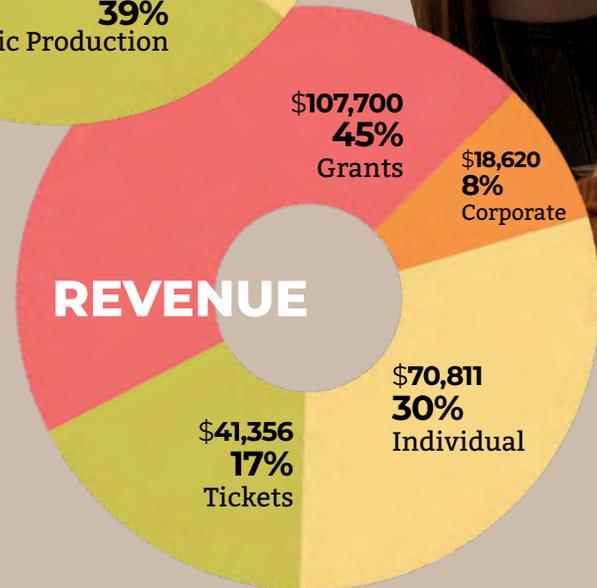
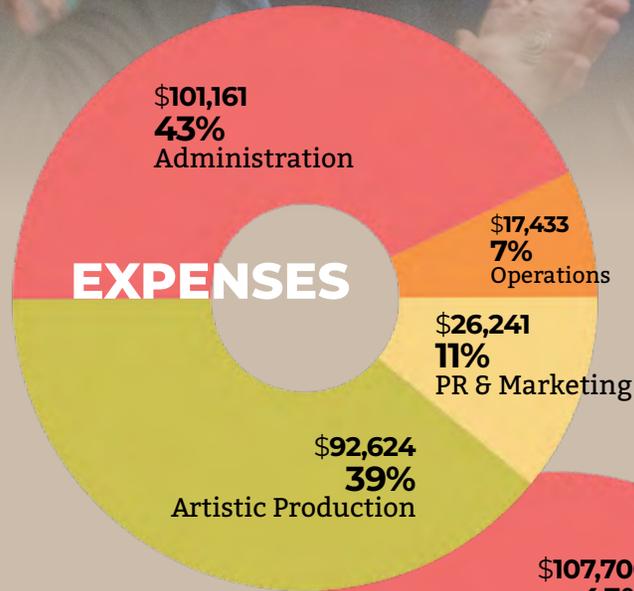
We brought world-class music to six distinct venues across Geneva. Featuring 31 artists, rooted in chamber music and extending to baroque, jazz and bluegrass, we showcased the artistic excellence that has always defined our festival and the collaborative spirit that fuels it.



2025 Expenses & Revenue

Accomplishments

This season marked a year of strategic growth. We hired a dedicated marketing professional, which contributed to a roughly 30% increase in ticket sales and record-breaking attendance across several performances, including multiple sold-out shows. We met our revenue goals once again, expanding our list of successful grant applications, including the Guido and Ellen Palma Foundation.



Raise a Glass to Our Hosts

To the wineries that shaped our season

Their generosity brought local flavor to our stages and helped create immersive experiences.

Billsboro Winery
Keuka Lake Vineyard
Airy Acres Vineyard
Hermann J. Wiemer Winery
Ravines Winery

To the hosts who made our artists feel at home

Our deepest thanks to the generous individuals who opened their homes and spaces to house our artists.

Amanda & Naved Amed / Geneva On The Lake
Jehan Wick & Kristin Welch / Geneva On The Lake
Anne & Jerry Buckley / Park House
John Lechner
Fran & David Herd
Hilda & Michael Collins
Hampton Inn

The festival was made possible through the generosity of many local hospitality partners. We partnered with regional wineries to offer complimentary tastings at select performances, with one serving wines by the glass and donating the proceeds directly to the festival. We're also deeply grateful to the venues that hosted our events and to the community members who opened their homes and spaces to support our artists.

To the venues that welcomed us

Intimate, local settings made each concert feel personal and meaningful.

Cracker Factory
Ravines Winery
Linden Social Club
Gearan Center for the Performing Arts
The Presbyterian Church in Geneva
Geneva on the Lake





Our Promotional Blend

We transitioned our marketing efforts from volunteer-led to professionally managed by hiring a dedicated marketing professional with a background in marketing, graphic design, and digital communications, primarily with nonprofit organizations. Her strategic planning skills helped us stay organized and execute our marketing more thoughtfully, giving campaigns the time they needed to build momentum and strengthen the festival's presence.

Social Media Growth & Engagement

This year marked a leap forward in our social media presence, largely driven by strategic paid advertising efforts, which has been underutilized in prior years.

Highlights:

Reach: **+20.2%**

Link Clicks: **+96.5%**

Page Visits: **+106.6%**

New Followers: **+7.2%**

Our top-performing content was human-centric and story-driven content, followed by ticket sale announcements, lineup reveals, and youth/community highlights.

PR Coverage & Media Impact

Our public relations efforts saw significant growth this year due to more strategic outreach.

Highlights:

- Increased media coverage from 8 published articles in 2024 to 23 in 2025.
- Partnered with the Finger Lakes Times, resulting in 8-10 editorial articles in exchange for an ad package, expanding our regional presence cost-effectively.
- Gained an unsolicited review from NYS Music after a press contact attended our final concert.
- Achieved additional visibility through partner e-newsletters, radio interviews, and event listings across local media outlets and tourism platforms.

Festival concerts were announced on four radio stations, with two stations hosting live interviews with artistic director Geoffrey Herd accompanied by artists from the festival.

Email Communications

Our email list reached 1,260 subscribers this season. We sent 22 newsletters, with an average open rate between 45-50% and clickthrough rate of 3.9%.

Despite sending fewer emails in 2025 than our prior season, the campaign generated significantly more revenue: up 44% year-over-year. Approximately 40% of the festival's ticket revenue came in via newsletter links.

Print Advertising & Materials

This season, we invested in targeted print advertising through local newspapers and tourism publications, along with one paid blog post on a regional tourism website that sees up to 100,000 visitors during peak seasons. Ticket sales generated from the post at least offset the cost, and increased awareness among a broader tourism audience.

We also produced and distributed a range of print materials, including:

- Rack cards, posters, and donor brochures, shared within the community and directly at our events.
- A larger brochure mailed to 1,100+ households in our regional audience.

These efforts supported brand visibility, donor outreach, and event attendance throughout the season.

“

**What superb musicians,
an absolute delight to
watch and hear!”**



Sips & Sounds: 2025 Lineup Highlights



Saturday, March 22, 6:30 PM

Spring Benefit Concert: Eliot Heaton and Pauline Martin Cracker Factory

In anticipation of the season, the Geneva Music Festival welcomed supporters and friends to its annual Spring Benefit Performance, an elegant evening of music, wine, and community in support of the festival's mission. Designed to include both a celebratory performance and a fundraising auction, the event featured a vibrant program performed by violinist and Geneva native Eliot Heaton alongside pianist Pauline Martin. The evening's repertoire included works by Mozart and Grieg, concluding with a set of virtuosic character pieces that showcased the performers' expressive range.

Paired with a festive atmosphere including hors d'oeuvres and desserts by Mike Pavone of Anorah, wines from Hermann J. Wiemer Winery, and cocktails crafted by Joe Kennedy of Linden Social.

Spring benefit auction donors

- 41 Lakefront Hotel
- Advance Auto Parts
- Anorah
- Anthony Road Winery
- Apollo's Praise
- AutoZone
- Bagels & Cakes
- Barrett Marine
- Bennett, Sheila
- Big aLIce Brewing
- Billsboro Winery
- Blush by CVDesigns
- Bogan, Debbie
- Bogan, Michael
- Bonacci, Jane & Tom
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- Dove Block Project
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- Empire Coffee & Donuts
- Empower Skin and Scalp Spa
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- Finger Lakes Times
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- Gearan, Mark & Mary
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- Geneva Foreign & Sports
- Historic Geneva
- Geneva On The Lake
- Hermann J. Wiemer Vineyards
- Hosmer Estate Winery
- J-March Auto Sales & Service
- Jones, Shawn Marie (F.L.O.A.T.)
- Keuka Spring Vineyards
- Kindred Fare
- Kitchen Theatre Company
- Lake Drum Brewing
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- McClure, Thomas
- Main Deck Restaurant
- Microclimate Wine Bar
- Midas
- Miltner, Karen & Dennis Ferlito
- Muranda Cheese Company
- North Shore Wellness Club
- Otterbacher, Ardys
- Pedulla's Wine & Liquors
- Ravines Wine Cellars
- Red Newt Cellars
- Renee Shimp Massage
- Rochester Museum and Science Center
- Seneca Lake Kayak
- Seneca Sailing Academy
- Sheldrake Point Winery
- Silver Thread Vineyards
- Sonnenberg Gardens and Mansion
- State Historic Park
- Southpaw Grooming
- Staving Artist Woodwork
- Stomping Grounds
- Sunset Bowl
- The Elephant Restaurant
- Tradition Chevrolet
- Trek Bicycle Geneva
- Trombley's (Steve Shannon) Tire & Auto
- Twisted Rail Brewing
- White Oak Nursery
- WomanMade Products
- Wyckoff, Stephen & Janet

Special Appreciation

- Lyons National Bank (LNB)
- Finger Lakes Times
- Tim and Sandy Merwarth
- Hermann J. Wiemer Vineyard
- Hobart & William Smith Colleges

Saturday, April 12, 7:30 PM
**Blake Pouliot & Henry Kramer:
Carnegie Hall Recital Preview
Concert**
Gearan Center

Blake Pouliot, *violin*

Henry Kramer, *piano*

As a special spring presentation, the Geneva Music Festival welcomed violinist Blake Pouliot and pianist Henry Kramer for an intimate preview of their upcoming Carnegie Hall recital. In this rare off-season appearance, the duo offered a captivating and emotional performance, giving local audiences a first look at two artists' Carnegie Hall debut. Performances like this are examples of the festival's commitment to bringing world-class artistry to the Finger Lakes year-round.

Bao Zhi Yang, Ambush on All Sides

Leoš Janáček, Violin Sonata

Sergei Prokofiev, Violin Sonata No. 1 in F Minor, Op. 80



Thursday, May 15, 7:30 PM
W4RP
Ravines Winery

Josh Henderson
violin, electric bass

Julia Henderson
cello

Mikael Darmanie
piano

Rick Martinez
drums



The 2025 season of GMF opened with a genre-defying performance by W4RP, an ensemble known for their bold fusion of classical music with jazz, bluegrass, rock, and beyond. The group brought a unique sound and creativity, offering audiences an adventurous listening experience. Set against the picturesque backdrop of Ravines Winery, this unique opening event set the tone for a memorable festival season.

Ravines wines were available for purchase by the glass, with all proceeds benefiting the festival.



Thursday, May 22, 7:00 PM
**Special Event: Musical
Mixology**
Linden Social

Francesca dePasquale, *violin*
Geoffrey Herd, *violin*
Eric Wong, *viola*
Max Geissler, *cello*
Henry Kramer, *piano*

Following rave reviews in 2024, GMF partnered with Linden Social in downtown Geneva for a second year to create an intimate evening blending music and gastronomy. Guests enjoyed an up-close preview of the upcoming Tradition & Innovation concert, performed by GMF resident artists, while mixologists at Linden Social served up beautifully-crafted cocktails and food.



Friday, May 23, 7:30 PM
Saturday, May 24, 7:30 PM
Tradition & Innovation
Gearan Center

Francesca dePasquale, *violin*
Geoffrey Herd, *violin*
Eric Wong, *viola*
Max Geissler, *cello*
Henry Kramer, *piano*

The festival continued with Tradition & Innovation, a program designed to complement the festival's Wine and Music theme. Featured works explored how music and wine both express their origins, much like terroir in wine, where climate, soil, and tradition shape their character. Just as Finger Lakes wines carry the distinct imprint of steep slate soils and deep lakes, the featured composers: Mozart, Corigliano, Margaret Brouwer, and Dvořák, speak from their cultural soil, shaping their work through the influences of their environment.

Paired with a complimentary wine tasting by Billsboro Winery.



*Mozart Piano Quartet
in E-flat Major, K 493*
*John Corigliano Snapshot
Circa 1909*
*Margaret Brouwer
Demeter Prelude*
*Dvorak Piano Quintet
in A Major, Op. 81*



Thursday, May 29, 7:30 PM
Friday, May 30, 7:30 PM
Old World Roots
Gearan Center

Geoffrey Herd, *violin*
Blake Pouliot, *violin*
Eric Wong, *viola*
Clive Greensmith, *cello*
Anna Petrova, *piano*

Our resident artists returned to the stage with Old World Roots, a program that journeyed through French and German masterworks, inviting audiences to consider how music, like wine, captures the distinct personality of its heritage. Featuring works by Ravel, Brahms, and Schumann, the evening offered a multi-sensory experience, deepening appreciation for the stories behind both the music and the grapes.

Paired with a complimentary wine tasting by Keuka Lake Vineyards.

Maurice Ravel String Quartet
in F Major
Brahms Piano Trio
in C Minor, Op. 101
Schumann Piano Quintet
in E-flat Major, Op. 44



Saturday, May 31, 7:30 PM
Cécile McLorin Salvant & Sullivan Fortner Duo
Gearan Center

Cécile McLorin Salvant, *vocals*
Sullivan Fortner, *piano*

This year's festival featured one of the most highly regarded jazz vocalists of her generation, Grammy-Award winner Cécile McLorin Salvant in an intimate duo performance with virtuoso pianist and master improviser Sullivan Fortner. The concert sold out weeks in advance, demonstrating both artists' extraordinary reputations and the excitement surrounding their appearance. Audiences were captivated by the pair's remarkable chemistry on stage. Offering such close access to artists of this caliber is a hallmark of the Geneva Music Festival experience.

Paired with a complimentary wine tasting by Airy Acres.



Sunday, June 1, 7:30 PM
The Sebastians
 The Presbyterian Church
 in Geneva

Later in the season, audiences were treated to a shift in time and style with the arrival of The Sebastians, a dynamic Baroque ensemble making their Geneva debut. The group performed on period instruments in a program that evoked the sounds of Venice's Ospedale after dark. They brought passion and elegance to works by Vivaldi, diving deep into the legacy of Venice's most celebrated composer, as well as Bach, Telemann, and others. The program also featured a contemporary work by living composer Robert Honstein, bridging centuries in a night that showcased the enduring power of Baroque music.

Georg Philipp Telemann Sinfonia Spirituosa in D Major

Robert Honstein Barcarolle from Night Scenes at the Opsedale

Vivaldi Concerto for violin in G major, RV 308

Baldassare Galuppi Concert a quattro in G minor, IBG 22

Bach Menuet I-II from Cello Suite No. 2 in D minor, BWN 1008

Vivaldi Concert in D Minor for Violin, RV 248

Honstein Notturmo from Night Scenes at the Opsedale

Vivaldi Concert for four violins and cello in B minor, RV 580

Thursday, June 5, 7:30 PM
 Friday, June 6, 7:30 PM
German Legends
 Gearan Center

Geoffrey Herd, *violin*

Clara Lyon, *violin*

Masumi Rostad, *viola*

Eric Wong, *viola*

Hannah Collins, *cello*

Clive Greensmith, *cello*

Esther Park, *piano*

GMF artists returned for German Legends, celebrating the timeless power of German musical tradition alongside contemporary American vision. Just as Hermann J. Wiemer brought the artistry of German winemaking to the Finger Lakes, this program honored the rich legacy of German Romanticism through works by Schumann, Mendelssohn, and Brahms, paired with living composer Caroline Shaw. Nearly sold-out audiences each night gained a deeper appreciation for how these centuries-old legacies live on, both in the music and in the glass.

Paired with a complimentary wine tasting by Hermann J Wiemer.



Schumann Fantasiestucke for Cello and Piano, Op. 73

Mendelssohn Piano Trio in C Minor, Op. 66

Caroline Shaw Entr'acte

Brahms Sextet in B-flat Major, Op. 18



Sunday, June 8, 4:00 PM
Michael Cleveland & Flamekeeper
Geneva on the Lake

Michael Cleveland, *fiddle*
Chris Douglas, *vocals, bass*
Nathan Livers, *mandolin, vocals*
Josh Richards, *guitar, vocals*
Jasiah Shrode, *banjo*

The festival concluded with an afternoon of bluegrass with IBMA Fiddle Player of the Year Michael Cleveland and his band, Flamekeeper, who brought their electrifying performance to the lakeside stage of Geneva on the Lake. Cleveland's blazing technique and adventurous spirit have earned him a Grammy Award and acclaim as one of the finest bluegrass musicians of his generation. Due to overwhelming demand, the concert sold out multiple times, first prompting additional seating, then lawn-only tickets, underscoring the enthusiasm for this unique performance.



What a wonderful evening of meaningful and engaging music!"



We are so impressed by the music and the outstanding artistry of the musicians. The room makes them accessible to the audience so that their skill and efforts are visible and appreciated."

Geneva Music Festival Board of Directors

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Music That Connects: Community Outreach

Music yields many benefits, from improved academic achievement to providing an outlet for personal expression. That's why purposeful, no-cost engagement with young people and the wider community remains a core part of the Geneva Music Festival's mission. We aim to bring live chamber music to students and community members who might not otherwise have the opportunity to experience it.

Each season, many of our acclaimed artists take time to share their talents beyond the stage, in Geneva's schools and within the local community.



1,300+
outreach audience

1,060
students
primary,
intermediate,
high school

150
community
audience
members

8 outreach
venues

“
My favorite part was
dancing in my seat.”

W4RP Educational Residency

W4RP led a transformative, week-long educational residency in Geneva, across multiple schools and community sites.

- St. Stephen's Church
for students from St. Francis & St. Stephen's School and Children's Hour
- Geneva YMCA
- St. Peter's Arts Academy
- Boys and Girls Club of Geneva
- West Street Primary School
- North Street Intermediate School
- Geneva High School
- Finger Lakes Welcome Center

Free Public Preview Concerts

In addition to school visits, the festival hosted three free preview concerts: one at the Geneva Public Library and two at the Finger Lakes Welcome Center.

“
I really enjoyed
watching the piano
man's skills. He moved
his hands so fast.”



“
The music
reminds me
of a sunny
day at the
beach and
it made me
happy.”

Cheers to Our Supporters

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 New York State Council on the Arts with the support of the Office of the Governor and the New York State Legislature.

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Media Sponsors

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Additional Thanks

Carolyn Maftciu, *Executive Assistant*

Erica MacArthur, *marketing*

Jan Regan, *photography*

Nadja von Massow, *graphic and web design*

Dan Godwin & Jim LaRonde, *audio recording/engineering*

Bree von Bradsky, *video engineering*

Tunwa Rattanapimol, *Festival Assistant*

Joe Pepper, *piano tuning*

The Printing Center, Wilson Press, & Print Services at HWS, *printing*

Gifts received after 6/10/25 will be acknowledged in next year's concert program.



GMF GENEVA
MUSIC
FESTIVAL
GEOFFREY HERD, DIRECTOR

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