

THE LIBRETTO

2025_2

**Gina
Monaco**

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NOMINATIONS MEETING OCTOBER 15

Official Journal of the Hamilton Musicians' Guild

Hamilton Musicians' Guild

September 2025 President's Report



Larry Feudo
President

I hope everyone had a good summer and kept busy with gigs and got to enjoy the unusually hot weather.

Things continue to improve for our Local with lots of MPTF work for our members.

In addition to several seniors' home performances, we provided co-funding to the Dundas BIA and the Concession BIA with their Streetfest and Sidewalk Sounds programs.

There was also co-funding for It's Your Festival, the Waterfront Trust and the Dundas Cactus Festival, which benefitted many of our members.

I attended the Canadian Conference for five days in August in Toronto. I took part in two days of training workshops and three days of the actual conference. Officers from across Canada represented their Locals voicing the concerns of their members.

HPO member Jessie Brooks was the OCSM (Organization of Canadian Symphony Musicians) Conference delegate, which was held in tandem with the Canadian Conference. Look for her report in this issue of the Libretto.

And it should come as no surprise to anyone following the P2 issue, many delegates voiced the concerns of their members regarding the unfairness of the P2 process as it stands.

What could have been a divisive debate turned out to be a constructive exercise resulting in a promise by AFM President Tino Gagliardi and Secretary Treasurer Ken Shirk to come up with a strategic plan to address the issue. There is no doubt that they are taking our concerns very seriously.

One of the Conference's requests was for a full time Symphonic Services rep for Canada as well as a part-time assistant based in Canada, both of which were agreed to.

Further proof of their appreciation for Canada is that the AFM Convention will be held in Ottawa in 2026. This will be the first time since 1973 that the Convention will be held in Canada.

As Vice President of the Canadian Conference, I am optimistic that relations between the AFM and the CFM leadership are in a very good place.

Lastly, this year all positions on the HMG board are up for election with the Nominations meeting taking place on October 15th and the Elections meeting on December 3rd, both taking place at the Coach and Lantern in Ancaster. We have use of the space upstairs at no cost to the Local. Hope to see everyone attend.

NEXT MEMBERSHIP MEETING WEDNESDAY OCT. 15

7:00 pm COACH AND LANTERN

Yours in solidarity,

Larry Feudo





Canadian Conference, Negotiations, and Ongoing Advocacy

by Allistair Elliott, AFM Vice President from Canada

In early August, Canadian Conference local delegates joined together with Organization of Canadian Symphony Musicians (OCSM) delegates in Toronto, Ontario, for a joint conference. The opportunity for local officers to share reports and hear from staff is key to representing rank-and-file voices. There was great representation of locals with delegates from across the country who intelligently articulated challenges and victories of our members and locals.

Not surprisingly, a central topic of discussion were the lengthy delays at US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) in processing P-2 visa petitions. This problem has been receiving attention on both sides of the border. Members who have been affected by incurring premium processing fees or having to cancel tours should keep an eye out for a series of Zoom town hall meetings. Watch your email for announcements with further information.

Last year we held an initial Zoom meeting with BreakOut West. It was an olive branch toward cordial discussions to negotiate a new agreement. Several attempts to follow up were met by nothing more than lip service and the usual avoidance tactics. Our invitation to sit down together to discuss history and move forward with negotiating an agreement was met with delays.

After pushing for further meetings, we were invited to submit an email proposal. Every suggestion to meet was responded to by hiding behind a board that I highly doubt had any real knowledge of what was being requested. Canadian Office legal counsel recently forwarded our proposal with a notice to bargain, and we await a response. At first account, it seems to be more delay tactics. So, BreakOut West remains on the International Unfair List until this situation resolves.

On the theme of bargaining, our recently concluded CBC agreement should be going out for ratification by the time this issue goes to print. We have also sent notices to bargain

to Canadian broadcasters Bell Media, Rogers, and Corus Entertainment.

As the government works on a budget, our prebudget submissions were sent in. As previously reported, our Creative Industries Coalition has been working on a Live Performance Tax Credit. That is the lead piece in our submission. We are also following up on several recommendations and amendments to our Copyright Act. We are asking for protections from generative artificial intelligence (AI). These include restrictions on the use of protected works in training AI, implementing legally binding measures requiring the disclosure of AI system training data, as well as recommendations to ensure AI generated content is clearly identified. Further recommendations include the proper implementation of the Online Streaming Act by the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) and an amendment of the definition of sound recording to ensure that performers and record labels receive compensation for the use of their works.

Conférence canadienne, négociations et défense de nos intérêts

par Allistair Elliott, vice-président de l'AFM pour le Canada

Au début du mois d'août, les délégués des sections locales de la Conférence canadienne se sont joints à ceux et celles de l'Organisation des musiciens d'orchestre symphonique du Canada à Toronto, en Ontario, pour une conférence conjointe. La possibilité pour les administrateurs locaux de partager leurs rapports respectifs et d'entendre ce qu'ont à dire les membres du personnel administratif est essentielle pour la représentation des voix de la base. Les sections locales ont été très bien représentées par des délégués de partout au pays qui ont bien décrit les défis que relèvent nos membres et les victoires qu'ils remportent.

Sans surprise, les longs délais des services de citoyenneté et d'immigration des États-Unis, les USCIS, dans le traitement des demandes de permis P-2 ont occupé une place centrale dans les discussions. C'est un problème qui occupe l'attention des deux côtés de la frontière. Les membres qui ont dû acquitter les frais relatifs au traitement « premium » ou annuler des tournées devraient garder l'œil ouvert au sujet d'une série d'assemblées générales sur Zoom. Surveillez vos courriels et vos réseaux sociaux pour obtenir plus d'information.

L'année dernière, nous avons tenu une première rencontre Zoom avec BreakOut

West. C'était une branche d'olivier que nous leur tendions dans l'espoir de tenir des discussions cordiales avec eux et de négocier une nouvelle entente. Plusieurs tentatives de suivi n'ont donné lieu qu'à de belles paroles et aux habituelles tactiques d'évitement. Notre invitation à s'asseoir ensemble pour discuter de l'historique de nos relations et pour aller de l'avant en négociant une entente ne nous a valu que de nouveaux délais.

Après avoir exercé des pressions pour obtenir d'autres rencontres, nous avons reçu une invitation à transmettre une proposition par courriel. Toute suggestion de rencontre a été écartée par le conseil d'administration, nous a-t-on dit, dont je doute qu'il sût vraiment ce que nous demandions. Le conseiller juridique du Bureau canadien a récemment transmis notre proposition accompagnée d'un avis de négociation, et nous attendons une réponse. À première vue, il semble qu'une nouvelle tactique de délai soit en cours. Ainsi, BreakOut West demeure sur la liste noire internationale jusqu'à ce que la situation s'améliore.

Sur le thème de la négociation, l'entente que nous avons conclue récemment avec la SRC devrait être transmise pour ratification d'ici la publication du présent numéro. Nous avons également envoyé des avis de

négociation aux radiodiffuseurs canadiens Bell Media, Rogers et Corus Entertainment.

Le gouvernement prépare actuellement un budget et nous avons transmis nos soumissions prébudgétaires. Comme je l'ai indiqué précédemment, notre Coalition des industries créatives travaille avec l'industrie à la création d'un crédit d'impôt pour les arts de la scène. C'est l'objet principal de notre soumission. Nous y faisons également un suivi de plusieurs recommandations et modifications relatives à la Loi sur le droit d'auteur. Nous demandons notamment des protections contre l'intelligence artificielle générative (IAG). Cela inclut des restrictions sur l'utilisation d'œuvres protégées pour l'entraînement de l'IA, la mise en œuvre de mesures contraignantes sur le plan juridique exigeant la communication des données d'entraînement des systèmes d'IA, de même que des recommandations visant à garantir que le contenu généré par l'IA soit clairement identifié. D'autres recommandations incluent la mise en œuvre effective de la Loi sur la diffusion continue en ligne par le Conseil de la radiodiffusion et des télécommunications canadiennes et une modification de la définition de l'enregistrement sonore afin de garantir que les interprètes et les maisons de disques soient rémunérés pour l'utilisation de leurs œuvres.

Hamilton Musicians' Guild Executive Board 2024-2025



Reg Denis
1st Vice Pres



Larry Feudo
President



Paul Panchezak
2nd Vice Pres



John Morris
Sergeant-At-Arms



Ryan McKenna
Director



Ron Palangio
Marshall



Lorelee McGuirl
Director



Haley Marie Donald
Director



Bruce Tournay
Director



Michael Bittle
Office Admin



Notice of Election of Officers—HMG Executive Board -Wednesday October 15 is Nominations Night-



2025 is an Election Year for all Positions on the Hamilton Musicians' Guild Executive Board:

- **President (and delegate to AFM conventions and conferences)**
- **First Vice-President (and delegate to AFM conventions and conferences)**
- **Second Vice-President**
- **Sergeant-at-Arms**
- **Marshall**
- **Four (4) Directors**

NOTES (from the HMG Bylaws):

- 1) **No member shall be eligible to be nominated for the office of President unless they have served on the Executive Board for a minimum of one (1) term.**
- 2) **No member shall be eligible to be nominated for offices other than President unless they have been a member in good standing of the Guild for the preceding 12 months.**
- 3) **The nomination of officers shall be held at the second General Meeting of each election year.**
- 4) **No member, who is not present, shall be eligible for nomination unless he/she has given proper sanction to stand for office, in writing, prior to the meeting. No member may stand for more than one office.**
- 5) **No member may nominate him/herself.**
- 6) **Prior to the nominations, it shall be made known to members that, by virtue of election and/or appointment to the office of President and First Vice President, they shall also be delegates to conventions and conferences of the AFM as per Article IX, Section 1 of the Guild Bylaws. If the First Vice-President is not able to attend, the Second Vice-President shall take their place.**
- 7) **The term of office for all officers shall be for a period of two (2) years commencing January 1st after the election.**
- 8) **The election of officers shall take place at the last General Meeting of each election year.**

Election Night will be Wednesday December 3



Sunday Singalong

Sunday September 28

Sunday October 26

Sunday November 30

Sunday December 28

3:00 pm

90 minutes

**The Move Room, 164
Ottawa St N, Hamilton**

Everyone can sing! No singing experience necessary.

Come with your voice ready to build vibrations through song. Expect to learn a little bit about the voice, practice harmony, laugh, play and be in the moment.

Gathering our voices in song can get us through hard times, be a powerful act of revolution, and create space for pleasure. This non-results-based gathering is intended to bring joy into our bodies while we sing together!

For more information or to book your spot:

[Piper Sings - Events](https://www.pipersings.com/events/)

<https://www.pipersings.com/events/>



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WEALTH ADVISOR

MARIE PHILLIPS

B.A. (Hons), RRC, CFDS, PFP, FCSI, MFA-P
marie.phillips@ipcsecurities.com
905-648-2425

As an amateur musician, Marie has channeled her passion for the arts into philanthropic endeavours that enrich her community.

One is the loneliest number ...



*When 2 or more new members join the HMG at the same time,
they save \$ 105 each in Initiation Fees!*

Only the lonely pay more.

*Get a friend, neighbour or your band members
to join the Hamilton Musicians' Guild with you
and save \$\$ big time!*

Phone: 905-525-4040

Email: local293hmg@bellnet.ca

www.HamiltonMusicians.org

Office Admin Report



This time last year, we moved the office. Within the same building downtown.

This time this year, we moved again. This time up to the Hamilton Mountain.

After many years in the old Union Gas Building downtown, and thanks to our newfound financial success, we were finally in a position to respond to complaints from members about the lack of parking when they came to visit us in the HMG office, about the deterioration of the downtown core and being accosted by drug-addled street people, about having to walk around human feces on the sidewalks, and having to put up with the cacophony of sirens responding to drug overdoses.

Regrettably, we couldn't change what has become of the downtown core, but we could change our address.

So we have moved up to 300 Fennell Avenue East, between Princess Bingo and the Crestmount Funeral Home (or, as they say in Shawshank Redemption, get busy livin' or get busy dyin'.)

The underlying reason for the move was primarily financial—to save the HMG money. More and more offices have moved out of the downtown core, and those of us who remained were paying more and more of the 'common area maintenance' expense - the most recent bill was for \$ 1400, which was more than our monthly rent. Our new accommodation has no such extra charges. The move took place over the July 1 weekend. Our telephone and internet services stay the same. Our new address is Suite 2B—300 Fennell Ave East, Hamilton Ont. L9A 1T2. Lots of free parking, and on the Route 17 and 26 HSR bus lines. We're on the 2nd floor of the 2-storey building attached to the Princess Bingo Hall: look for the entrance facing Fennell Ave.

Looking ahead for 2025 - In September, we restarted our monthly **Member Orientation Sessions** scheduled for the first Tuesday of each month. On the membership side of things, we are holding steady at 650+ members—we would like to grow.. The new credit card feature continues to be very popular, with about 20% of our membership choosing to use it rather than etransfer. And new members continue to join the HMG, spurred on perhaps by P2 visas and MPTF opportunities.

Later this year we will hold elections for the Executive Board. Given the happy state of our financial affairs, I expect there will be robust interest among members to join the Board. Nominations for all Board positions will take place during the general membership meeting October 15, has been announced on our website and by emails to members. The election will be held December 3. The term of office for all positions is two years, beginning January 1, 2026.

CFM Locals Active Membership Roster Comparison Chart

<u>LOCAL #</u>	<u>CITY</u>	<u>Sept. 15, 2025</u>
<u>406</u>	<u>Montreal</u>	<u>3035</u>
<u>149</u>	<u>Toronto</u>	<u>2922</u>
<u>145</u>	<u>Vancouver</u>	<u>1651</u>
<u>390</u>	<u>Edmonton</u>	<u>732</u>
<u>293</u>	<u>Hamilton</u>	<u>658</u>
<u>547</u>	<u>Calgary</u>	<u>587</u>
<u>180</u>	<u>Ottawa</u>	<u>562</u>

**Election of Officers—HMG Executive Board
-Wednesday December 3 is Election Night-**



2025 is an Election Year for all Positions on the Hamilton Musicians' Guild Executive Board:

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- **First Vice-President (and delegate to AFM conventions and conferences)**
- **Second Vice-President**
- **Sergeant-at-Arms**
- **Marshall**
- **Four (4) Directors**

Who can vote?

All Active Regular, Life and Student HMG members in good standing. Inactive members are not eligible to vote.

When?

Wednesday December 3, at 7:00 pm upstairs at the Coach & Lantern, 384 Wilson St East, Ancaster. (Just down the hill a little bit from the Tim Hortons).



Membership Matters



Membership Activity March 15, 2025 to September 15, 2025

WELCOME: NEW MEMBERS

Stephanie Braganza
 Paul Butcher
 Scott Cameron
 Spencer Camilleri
 Michael Cooper
 Dani Desmarchais
 Isla Ertl
 Rajen Gandhi
 Scott Gervais
 Stacey Hughes
 Sharon Lee
 Ryan Rejean Leger
 Karli Mulder
 Ronal Porter
 Michael Rushton
 Jesse Visser
 Marc Walker
 Paul Wynne

REINSTATED MEMBERS

Terry Branagh
 Piper Hayes
 Andrew MacTaggart
 Glenn Paul
 Carson Ritcey-Thorpe

SUSPENDED MEMBERS

Bill Bell
 Paul Kinsman
 Loeden Learn
 Omar Martin
 Goran Nikolic
 In-Hye Park
 Todd Reynolds
 Gary Rugala
 Aidan Stoddard
 Thompson Wilson-Shaw

EXPELLED MEMBERS

David Carillo
 Jesse Doreen
 Anthony Giavon
 Kyle Gottschalk
 Justin Hebb
 Jordan Johnson
 Philip Jones
 Michael Laforet
 Jacob McCauley
 Andrew McLeod
 Don Oakie
 Mario Pacheco
 Shubhneet Singh
 Philip Swain
 Jeremy Wilderman

RESIGNED MEMBERS

Laura Cole
 Aidan Collins
 Trevor Cooke
 Any Curran
 Damir Demirovic
 Keith Deschene
 Robert Dickson
 Trevor Fentum
 Thomas Gaasenbeek
 Marc Girard
 Miles Koseleci-Vieire
 Tom Lewis
 David Linfoot
 Michael Macaulay
 Dylan McDonnell
 Jordon McGovern
 Colin Morgan
 Matthew Mulholland
 Islay-May Renwick
 Nick Rhodes
 Robert Tomlinson
 Eric Trimmer
 Maggie Umanetz-Lertprasopsak
 Tony Vieira
 Finbar Wall
 Even Woods
 Inaya Zafar
 Patti Zonta

The HMG Local 293 Office sends out regular emails to members to keep you advised of your membership status and other important AFM news.

But we need you to tell us about any changes to your contact information.

This includes any changes to your email address, phone number or home address.

Call 905-525-4040 or email
 (office@HamiltonMusicians.org)
 to make sure we have your correct contact information.



January 13, 2025
Ottawa, Ontario

The Canadian Conference of Musicians' is proud to announce an agreement with ARTISTI!

ARTISTI is the Canadian licensing body that has been managing the collection and managing of neighbouring rights for musicians and artists in Quebec since 1997.

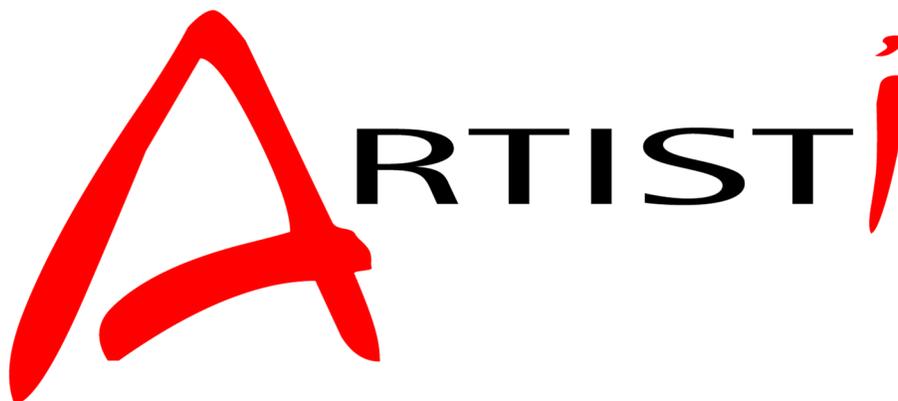
Upon the winding down of business by our former partner, MROC, ARTISTI has welcomed the vast majority of former MROC members and has approached the Canadian Conference to form an agreement similar to the one we had with MROC.

After productive negotiations we are delighted to announce that talks were successfully concluded in late December 2024.

This achievement was possible because of the positive relationship among all the parties involved.

Canadian Locals will direct all CFM members, to join forces with ARTISTI to ensure that their rights and royalties are protected and efficiently managed while enjoying personalized support and exclusive resources.

All HMG members are encouraged to sign up at <https://www.Artisti.ca/en/>





SUNDAY Singalong with Piper Hayes

3-4:30pm

The last Sunday of each month. Use your class pass or drop in!
Everyone can sing! No singing experience necessary.



the
MOVE
ROOM

Introducing Gina Monaco

(This is part of an ongoing series to highlight new members of the Hamilton Musicians' Guild)

Most people wouldn't dare start music school in their 50s, But Gina Monaco isn't most people.

A writer, editor, musician, and lifelong creative spirit, Monaco is now blazing her own trail through the world of music -- one that began not in youth, but in the margins of a rich and multifaceted life. "I've always been attracted to music," she says, "not just as a fan, but at a much deeper level. I think a lot about the effect it has on me and on others."

That reflective, passionate relationship with music eventually led her to pick up a guitar, take vocal lessons, and dive headlong into a formal education at Mohawk College where she stood out not only for her talent but her age. "I was in a class of kids with the average age of 20."

But the spark was lit long before that.

Gina's love of music began at six, when her grandfather gave her a tambourine for Christmas and taught her to sing Italian folk songs. Before long, she was performing for family and friends, tambourine in hand. But it was a chance moment -- hearing Nat King Cole's Mona Lisa on the radio -- that truly lit the fire. Captivated by the beauty of his voice, Gina picked up a guitar and started learning songs. But more than anything, she wanted to sing.

Her first professional chapter was not in music, but in journalism. Monaco started her career in Calgary, Alberta, working for a weekly newspaper and simultaneously launching a music magazine that covered the local scene. When she returned to Hamilton, she joined Creative Arts under the mentorship of Bill Powell, who taught her the business side of the arts. There, she served as editor of the organization's arts and entertainment magazine. That experience launched her into a successful freelance career, followed by a move to Manitoulin Island to take on the role of newspaper editor.

From there, her editorial career expanded into magazine publishing -- specifically B2B publications -- before she took a position at The Hamilton Spectator as Editor of Special Sections. But as the media landscape shifted, so did Gina.

"I was becoming disillusioned with journalism," she explains. "I saw what the future held." So, she pivoted, becoming a licensed mortgage agent, but she didn't stray far from her roots. She also became the editor of a leading industry magazine, which led to a call from the president of a national brokerage. In 2010, she joined his company as Director of Marketing Communications. Today, Gina is still active in the mortgage industry, now leading a team of agents.

Amid all this, she somehow managed to study at McMaster University, raise three sons, and circle



Gina Monaco



back to music -- the passion that never let her go. She went on to formally study Music and Jazz Vocals at Mohawk College, honing her craft with Juno nominee Ray Lyell, and Dan Clancy, lead vocalist of the iconic Canadian band Lighthouse. Today, she continues to work with acclaimed vocal coach Paula Tessaro, founding member of the Juno-nominated Ray Lyell and the Storm.

Now, Gina is carving out a vibrant second act -- this time, center stage -- as the frontwoman of The Enablers, a high-energy, multi-genre cover band with a heart for classic rock. Blending her musical training with decades of marketing savvy, she's proving that reinvention has no age limit.

Her current pursuits include performing with rock bands, studying piano through the Royal Conservatory program, and developing a music history project that traces the evolution of Canadian rock 'n roll from the 1950s to 1970. "It's a 'heart' thing," she says. "It's a way for me to use my storytelling skills and share my love of music and its history with others."

The project was sparked during a conversation with a classmate-- a young guitarist who dismissed Jimmy Page and Eric Clapton as "not particularly innovative." For Monaco, the remark wasn't just naïve -- it was creatively alarming. "How could he hope to create something new if he didn't know where the music came from?" she asks. The resulting project is part tribute, part reclamation -- a reminder that understanding history deepens both craft and appreciation.

But it's not all archival work and theory. Monaco is just as invested in the act of performance itself, though her approach is deeply introspective. "I had a vocal coach who told me I needed the courage to be vulnerable," she says. "So, when I approach a song, I try to find that part of me that relates to the story. That place of truth." It's not enough to sing well, she believes. You have to reach people. Move them. Make them feel seen. It's a journey.

Her path hasn't been without tension. As someone who worked for years in journalism and communications, often focused on hard-edged topics like real estate, finance, and economics, Monaco has sometimes struggled to reconcile that professional persona with her identity as an artist. "It's easy to forget that I AM a creative person," she says. "I spend my days creating order out of chaos with words and numbers. But it does deplete you. There are only so many creative units in a day."

And yet, she keeps creating. One performance for the Dundas Rotary Club's Christmas party stands out. Determined to break from their usual approach to carols, Monaco rearranged the format, brought in musicians, and assigned audience members vocal parts. "It was very different than what they usually did, and it was a success. That made all the time I put into it worth it."

Monaco's artistic worldview is rooted in effort and empathy. "Art isn't easy," she says, quoting Sondheim. "It's bit by bit, beat by beat. But I love the 'work' part -- the rehearsals, the arranging, the putting it all together." She's a perfectionist in the best sense: not someone chasing flawlessness, but someone forever reaching, questioning, refining. "I've had to let go of the idea that my musicianship has to be at a certain level before I can perform. That's been a big lesson."

When asked what she still wants to do, Monaco doesn't offer a bucket list. Instead, she offers a posture of openness. "I don't think about it in terms of what I haven't done -- I have it all to do. I want to keep learning. Keep singing. Keep writing about music. That's the plan."

(much of this article is credited to James Strecker)

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An exclusive AFM members only service.



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- ➔ Web hosting for new and existing sites
- ➔ Email and phone technical support



www.GoProHosting.com

Upcoming MPTF Gigs



The MPTF (Music Performance Trust Fund) provides grant money to AFM members who give free, public music performances.

Some of the basic criteria to receive this funding include:

- 1) The member (or majority of band members) must belong to the Hamilton Musicians' Guild.
- 2) All band members must belong to the AFM.
- 3) The Music Event must be open to all members of the public and be free for everyone.
- 4) The Event cannot be held in conjunction with a religious celebration, fundraising event, private event, or political event.,

- 5) The Event must take place within the HMG jurisdiction (roughly, Hamilton, Burlington, Oakville and up to and including Georgetown).
- 6) For more details, contact the HMG office or visit our website <https://www.HamiltonMusicians.org>

For the current year, we are able to provide 100% funding for gigs at Retirement Homes and similar residences (\$ 200 solo, \$165 for leader/\$145 for 'sidemen'), and for gigs at schools with Educational Content (\$165 solo, \$165/\$145 for bands).

All other gigs can be funded at 50% of Scale if the event host matches the other 50%.

If you negotiate a performance fee at less than Scale, we cannot involve the MPTF. You should try to get as much as you can at or above scale. Since we are subsidizing the co-sponsor, this should be quite straightforward.

For example, let's use a Trio. Scale is \$ 165 for the leader and \$ 145 for each 'sideman' for a total of \$ 455 (less 5% work dues). We would invoice the event host for half of Scale (\$ 227.50) and the MPTF would pay the other half. In this example, the band leader will take home \$ 156.75 and the sidemen will take home \$ 137.75 each. Any extra that you negotiated with the event host will of course be added to that.

Since May we have funded over 150 musicians in over 65 gigs ranging from solo acts to 5-piece bands at street festivals with the Hamilton Waterfront Trust, Dundas BIA, Concession Street BIA, and in Hamilton Public Library branches around the region. Upcoming plans include funding over 30 Hamilton Philharmonic Orchestra visits to area schools, celebrating Women's History Month in October, seasonal festivities in December, Black History Month in February and of course Jazz Appreciation month in April.

If you might have an upcoming gig, contact us before you negotiate your deal to find out if it might qualify for an MPTF grant. If we can subsidize the gig, then you should be able to negotiate a higher rate with the gig host.

The Recording Industry's



MPTF Scholarships

The Hamilton Musicians' Guild Congratulates

**Jack Reynolds
and
Simon Dawes**

On being awarded a

2025 MPTF Music Family Scholarship

To support their education in 2025/26.

Every year the MPTF awards

Over 100 scholarships

to full-time students

entering or continuing their college or university studies

2025 Canadian Conference of Musicians & OCSM Conference

by: **Jessie Brooks (Hamilton Philharmonic Orchestra) Delegate.**

Dates: August 8–12, 2025

Location: Toronto, Ontario, Canada

The 2025 Canadian Conference of Musicians, in conjunction with the Organization of Canadian Symphony Musicians (OCSM), brought together musicians, union leaders, legal advisors, and advocates from across Canada and beyond for a four-day event focused on the evolving landscape of the symphonic sector.

Friday, August 8 – Opening of the Canadian Conference of Musicians

The event opened with general sessions and networking opportunities for Canadian musicians, laying the groundwork for deeper discussions to follow.

Saturday, August 9 – Canadian Conference & OCSM Joint Sessions

The day kicked off with opening remarks and key updates from AFM leadership including:

- **Tino Gagliardi (International President)**
- **Ken Shirk (International Secretary-Treasurer)**
- **Allistair Elliott (VP from Canada)**

Key presentations included:

- **#NotMe App** by Rochelle Skolnick, focusing on harassment reporting tools.
- **Labor relations session** with Skolnick & Richard Sandals on collaboration between locals and orchestra committees.
- **ARTISTI** presentation by Matt Craig.
- Advocacy efforts summarized by **Rea Beaumont**, and a session on **allyship** led by **Beth Zare**.
- Two robust **Canadian Discussion** sessions addressed regional concerns and strategic priorities.

Sunday, August 10 – OCSM Conference Sessions

- Reports from the **OCSM President** and key committees.
- Pension updates by **Paul Versteeg-Lytwyn**.
- Insights from **Dan Beck** and other player conferences (ICSOM, ROPA, RMA, TMA).
- Communications strategies by **Antoinette Follett**.
- **Delegate Reports** and open forums on Canadian issues filled the afternoon.

A detailed session on **acoustics and hearing health** by **Dr. Caroline Traube**.

The evening concluded with a **social event** at the **Duke of York**.

Monday, August 11 – Advocacy, Legal, and Cultural Issues

Topics focused on organizational development and workplace improvement:

- **Katherine Carleton** (Orchestras Canada) on sector-wide issues.
- **Dr. Lee Bynum** led a discussion on workplace culture. Focusing on safer workplaces.
- Legal trends, bargaining strategies, and human rights accommodations with **Michael Wright** and **Danielle Stampley**.
- Musical instrument insurance program review by **Morgan Mackenzie**.

A detailed session on **acoustics and hearing health** by **Dr. Caroline Traube**.

The evening concluded with a **social event** at the **Duke of York**.

Tuesday, August 12 – OCSM Annual General Meeting (AGM)

The final day included:

- **Nominations, elections**, and passage of **resolutions**.
- A session on **diversity in programming** with **Rich Coburn** (BIPOC Voices).
- Discussions on creating **safe orchestra environments** with **Jemma Jones** and **Gwen Klassen**.

Conclusion

The 2025 Canadian Conference of Musicians and OCSM gathering successfully fostered dialogue on advocacy, diversity, legal rights, and the evolving needs of Canadian symphonic musicians. With strong participation and collaborative sessions, it reinforced the importance of unity, transparency, and proactive leadership within the orchestral music community.

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Hamilton Music Advisory Team



Ryan McKenna

As a Director sitting on the Board of the Hamilton Musician's Guild (HMG), I have also been privileged to sit at the table of the Hamilton Music Advisory Team (HMAT) representing the HMG. I have been able to share updates with that group about the work of the HMG. I have also been part of shaping conversations about developing relationships within, and related to, the music industry, which has led to a collective exploration of the value of fostering a community where co-operation lifts up all participants.

As Devon Hogue from Creative Industries explains, "HMAT is an integral part of our city's music ecostructure. It is an arm's length, community liaison group comprised of representatives from key stakeholder organizations (Venues, recording studios, large scale events, rehearsal spaces, musicians, and not-for-profit organizations) that acts as a resource for the city.

HMAT provides opportunities to connect and engage the industry through networking and professional development opportunities, advises city staff on proposed music initiatives, and helps move forward Hamilton's Strategic Music Business Plan. Hamilton has a wealth of talent, creativity, and opportunity that HMAT helps to harness and nurture. The city is grateful to the industry professionals that donate their time and energy to add value and vibrancy to our music sector."

Represented at the HMAT table are people from Creative Industries, Tune In Foundation, Hamilton Children's Choir, Judy Marsales Real Estate LTD, Hamilton Philharmonic Orchestra, Halo Studio, Hamilton Musicians' Guild, Hamilton Chamber of Commerce, Grant Ave Studio, Oakview Group, StereoRuss Media, Hamilton Public Library, Sinclair Creative Solutions, Taylor Oballa Murray Leyland LLP, Noisemaker, Main Stage Rehearsal Studios, and Sonic Unyon Records/Supercrawl. (Thanks to Lisa La Rocca for sharing this information.) Having such a varied group of participants always leads to great conversations, sharing of important perspectives and the discovery of new ideas.

Over time, we may be sharing items from HMAT that could be of interest and value to our membership. I am excited that we are a part of an initiative that represents fresh energy and enthusiasm for the role of music in the life of Hamiltonians.

- Ryan McKenna

The Business Side of a Band: Budgets, Bookings, and Branding

By Gina Monaco

For most people, being in a band looks like this: late-night gigs, adrenaline-pumping performances, road trips, and the shared joy of making music with people you love. And yes, that part is real. But behind every great show, there's another side most audiences never see:

The business side.

Running a band — especially one that's serious about playing professionally — isn't just about creativity. It's about strategy. It's about being organized, focused, and willing to handle spreadsheets and emails in between rehearsals and sets.

Here's a breakdown of what really goes into running a band like a business, from budgets to bookings to branding.

Budgets: Managing Money Like a Pro

Whether you're playing local clubs or corporate events, money matters. Equipment, travel, marketing, rehearsal space, website hosting, promo materials — it adds up fast. If you don't keep track, your band can quickly become a passion project that costs more than it earns.

Here's what smart bands budget for:

- Gig income splits: How will the money be divided fairly among band members? Will some be reinvested in the band fund?
- Expenses: Gas, gear maintenance, sound tech, and sometimes wardrobe or backdrops
- Promotion: Boosted social posts, video content, professional photos, or even a band website
- Savings: For future recordings, merch production, or emergency equipment replacements

Running your band finances like a small business builds long-term sustainability — and helps keep everyone on the same page.

Bookings: Securing Gigs and Building Relationships

Getting booked is about more than talent. It's about professionalism, persistence, and presentation.

A few essentials for booking success:

- Have a pitch-ready promo package (or "one-sheet"): Include your band bio, high-quality photos, links to live video, your genre, and your tech requirements
- Follow up consistently: Venues get tons of inquiries. A polite follow-up shows reliability
- Tailor your approach: A retirement home, a corporate event, and a local bar all want different things. Customize your pitch to match their vibe

Building real relationships with venues, bookers, and event planners is crucial. Be the band that shows up early, communicates clearly, and brings a good vibe. It goes a long way.

Branding: Defining Who You Are and Why It Matters

In a crowded music scene, your brand is what sets you apart. It's more than your logo or band name — it's the feeling people associate with your music and presence.

Ask yourself:

- What do we want people to feel when they hear our name?
- What story are we telling through our songs, visuals, and social content?
- Who is our audience, and how do we reach them authentically?

From social media posts to stage outfits to the tone of your emails, every touchpoint communicates your brand. Are you polished and professional? Gritty and raw? Fun and high-energy? Own it, and be consistent.

Branding helps:

- Attract the right gigs
- Build a loyal fan base
- Make you memorable in a saturated market

And yes, branding helps you justify higher fees. A well-branded band doesn't just play music: it delivers an experience.

It's a Business and a Band

The most successful working bands today understand that music and business aren't at odds — they're partners. You can love the art and still be strategic. You can jam and still plan. You can stay true to your sound and market it with confidence.

Running a band is work. But it's also a gift — to create, collaborate, and connect with people through music. And when you handle the business side with intention, you set the stage for bigger shows, better gigs, and a more sustainable future doing what you love.



Gina Monaco is a former journalist, editor, and marketing professional who now spends her time writing and blogging and as the vocalist for Gina and the Enablers, a multi-genre, but mostly classic, rock band.

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Marie Phillips

Marie Phillips, BA (Hons), RRC, CFDS, PFP, FCSI, MFA-P, has been in the financial services industry since 1992.

Wealth Professionals named Marie as the 2023 Female Trailblazer of the Year & as well as placing her amongst the leading Top 50 Women in Wealth. She has received the IPC Cares Award for Community Service, Value of Advice Awards, Best Client Experience Awards, and the George R. Robinson Award (from the Hamilton Musicians' Guild), and has been published / profiled in a wide variety of articles including BNN, the Investment Executive and the Wealth Professional.

Marie was a recipient of a music bursary and, although she did not pursue a career in music, the ARTS sector is where her philanthropy is focused. An active member in her community, Marie volunteers her time advocating for financial literacy and supports many more initiatives that helps recognize achievement and advancement for the Arts.

A graphic with the word 'MUSIC' in large letters. The 'I' is replaced by a photo of Marie Phillips speaking at a podium. The 'U' is replaced by a photo of a band performing. The 'S' is replaced by a photo of a group of people. The 'I' is replaced by a photo of a woman. The 'C' is replaced by a photo of a woman. Below the letters is the text 'FINANCIAL LITERACY IN THE MUSIC INDUSTRY'.

"She opened their eyes to some enlightening concepts that were unfamiliar to them."

Marie actively volunteers her time advocating for financial literacy and philanthropy in the arts sector and is also an amateur musician.

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NEXT STEPS PLANNING



P2 Work Permit FAQs:

1) USCIS Fees: The fees for the US **Department of Homeland Security** are as follows:

Regular Processing: \$510 USD

Premium Processing: \$510 USD + \$2805 USD (the two payments must be separate)

2) Processing Times:

Please note that processing times are determined by the US government, not the American Federation of Musicians. To view USCIS processing times click here <https://egov.uscis.gov/processing-times/>: -> Select "I-129 Petition for a Non-immigrant Worker, then, -> Under Form Category, select "P – Athletes, Artists, and Entertainers. The processing time noted is the length of time any specific USCIS Service Center took to complete 80% of files over the prior 6 months. Therefore, the file may be approved within that timeline, or in less time than that noted.

USCIS determines, through its central processing office in Texas, which Service Center (California or Vermont) the petitions are forwarded to. Approximately 35-days after the file has been in processing, the AFM will be advised which office is adjudicating the Visa, thereafter we will be able to provide a rough estimate of processing time remaining. In addition to USCIS processing times, please add additional time for the AFM office to review, process and courier the petition to USCIS.

While we try to submit all applications to USCIS within 72-hours of our office receiving them, there can be delays due to the volume of applications, holidays, or shipping delays.

*If you are a Permanent Resident, please take into consideration Visa Appointment Wait Times when you are preparing your application.

3) Transfer Notice: If you check the status of your application online and see that USCIS has "transferred" your file, this is normal. All applications are sent to the Texas USCIS office, and they transfer cases as needed to the Vermont and California offices. These are new procedures that the USCIS has implemented and will not affect the processing time of your application.

4) Consulate Interviews (Permanent Residents): Only P visa applicants with a prior visa who are applying in the same classification within 48 months of that prior visa's expiration date are eligible to have their interview requirement waived.

5) Canadian Banks Not Issuing USD Money Orders: Some banks across the country, most notably RBC, have stopped issuing USD Money Orders. If you are unable to obtain a USD money order through your Canadian bank, you may consider the following:

- * Obtain a money order from a US-based bank - you must hold an account or have other access to a US financial institution
- * If you hold or have access to a credit card issued by a US Bank, the fees may be remitted under the USCIS form at the following link: <https://www.uscis.gov/g-1450>
- * Obtain a money order from the US Postal Service
- * Inquire with a close personal or business contact who may have the ability to assist in obtaining a money order through either their Canadian or US financial institution.
- * If none of the above is possible, please contact immigration@afm.org or (416) 391-5161

Tuning up for airport security

Boarding an airplane with a precious musical instrument can be a worrying experience, but it doesn't have to be. And while some musicians are frequent fliers, others may never have taken an instrument in the air before.

CATSA knows that instruments can be rare and fragile, and wants to work with you to make sure you, and your instrument, arrive safely at your destination. Here's what you need to know, and the steps you can take, to make the security-screening process harmonious.



Passengers *do* have some choices about how to go through security.

Carry-on or checked?

You can choose between checking your instrument with the airline or bringing it into the cabin as carry-on luggage.

Consult your airline ahead of time to determine if your instrument qualifies as a carry-on (depending on its size, it may have to be checked).

- Remember that most airlines limit the number of carry-on items you may bring.
- The airline may give you the option of purchasing a separate ticket for your instrument.
- If you opt for carry-on, you must comply with the rules for permitted items.

Whether carry-on or checked, it is up to you to ensure that fragile items are packed properly and safely.

X-ray or manual search?

If you opt to bring your instrument as carry-on, or purchase a separate ticket, you'll bring it with you through the security screening checkpoint. You have a choice here as well: you can allow your instrument case to be scanned with the X-ray machine or you may request a manual search.

Kudos to Local 180 The Harp for first seeing this notice.

Adoro S.D.G. Silent Sticks

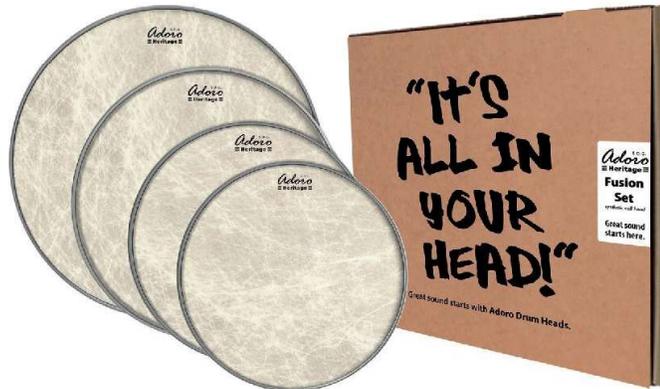


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Sending your instrument through the X-ray

If the instrument case is small enough to go through the X-ray machine safely, place it in a bin – don't hesitate to ask for assistance if you're not sure, and mention if the item is fragile.

Choosing a manual search

If the case is too large for the X-ray machine, or if you prefer to bypass the machine, your case and instrument will be manually searched by a screening officer.

- The screening officer will be careful with your instrument, however you should mention to the officer that the item is valuable, and if it is fragile.
- You may ask the officer to explain each step of the process before taking the action, so you can provide any special handling instructions.
- The officer will need to remove the instrument from its case in order to conduct a visual inspection of the instrument and a manual inspection of the case, including an explosive trace detection swab.
- Afterwards, the officer will offer to repack the case or let you repack it yourself.

Screening officers handle all passengers' belongings with care, but please let the officers know how important your instrument is to you and provide special handling information as early as possible during the screening process.

Be ready for automated screening lanes — at home and abroad

New CATSA Plus security lines have been installed at some airports in Canada, and there are similar automated lines in other countries. The new lines allow several passengers to divest their belongings at once, all sending bins to the X-ray machine. This makes the process more efficient, but travellers should be aware that it also means their bins may be interspersed with those of other passengers, and they may lose sight of their bins momentarily as they travel along the conveyor belt and through the X-ray.



At CATSA Plus lines, remember:

- You control how your items are divested and can choose to put your instrument case in your final bin so you can watch for it exiting the X-ray.
- As with regular screening lines, you may request a manual search so your instrument case does not need to be placed on the conveyor belt.

Kudos to Local 180 The Harp for first seeing this notice.

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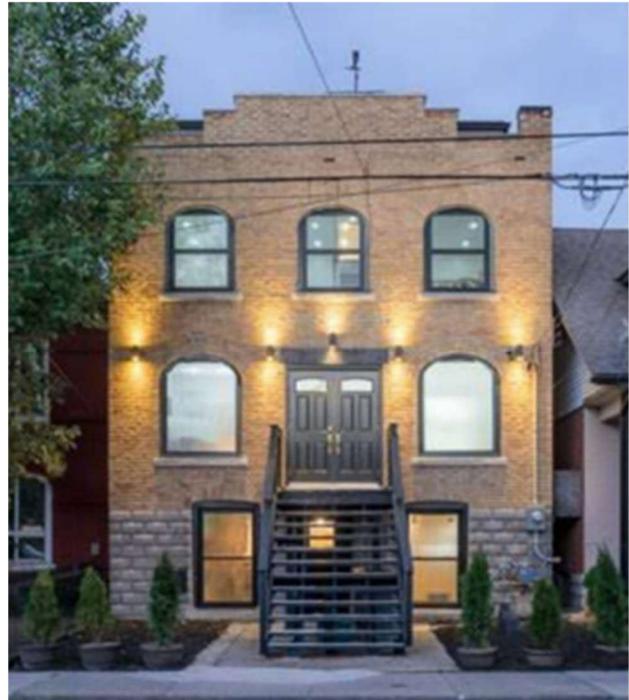
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Want to make some connections in the local music scene?

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*On behalf of the
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Rob Platsko (left)
and
Paul Panchezak
(right)
present a cheque to
Larry Feudo,
President of the
Hamilton Musicians'
Guild*

Photo by Donna Panchezak