



الاوركسترا الكندية العربية
The **Canadian** Arabic Orchestra



The Canadian Arabic Orchestra
Annual Report

2016



When we began our journey, we were determined to revive Arabic music in Canada and to educate others about this vast musical, cultural heritage.

In addition to the importance of reviving old masterpieces, we are also keen on introducing new composers and contemporary works of art. We also believe in the importance of combining Arabic & Western classical works and creating new interesting Oriental-Occidental music that exemplifies the fact that the world is becoming one big village.

It has been a great pleasure to prepare the programs for the various concerts that we have held so far. The approach that we started with was a more general one; we made sure that the music that we prepared was familiar to everyone, taking the older generation back in time to the old country while also engaging the younger generation with light tunes that were familiar to their ears.

Our first two concerts *“A Journey through Arab World Music”* & *“Autumn Tunes”* focused on the different regions, involving every region from Morocco in the West to Iraq in the East. In January we performed *“East Meets West”*, a fusion concert which combined Arabic classical music with Western classical music. *“Nostalgia”* was a concert for Mother’s Day, with an intimate setting where the audience was asked to sing along.

Our current season **2015/2016** which kicked off in September has been nothing less than perfect. During this short time, our achievements surpassed our wildest expectations, including the establishment of the Canadian Arabic Choir, who performed our season premiere *“Speak to me of My Land”*, a selection of beautiful songs dedicated to different Arab cities by the legendary Fayrouz.

In November we performed *“Memories”* featuring the soloist Muna Bahumaid, who sang songs of Umm Kulthoum, written by her songwriter **Ahmad Rami** and **composer Riad Al Sunbati**. This concert was performed again in Ottawa in February 2016, with an audience of over 600!

In January we gave our audience a taste of modern Arabic music written in the style of classical Arabic composers. The concert entitled *“Tarab in Our Time”* featured pieces by **Charbel Rouhana**, **Naseer Shamma**, and **Simon Shaheen** among others and hosted **Bassam Bishara** on the Oud as our guest musician.

Our most recent program *“Mwashahat”*, features ten choir members who brought this very old musical form back to life with great songs from **Andalusia**, **Syria** and **Egypt**. The program was performed in **Toronto**, **Mississauga**, **Ottawa**, **Kitchener**, and **Montreal**.

The Canadian Arabic Orchestra is an exceptionally close knit family, and we look forward to the coming seasons, as we continue to grow and welcome new members and perform in more cities across Canada. We are proud of the achievements we have made so far, during our short journey, and we are pleased that the orchestra is of such great importance to the Arab community here in Ontario.

Our aim is to reach out to the non-Arab communities as well and educate them about the rich musical culture that we have. We are very grateful to have such great dedication and support from our members and audiences... Thank you so much.

Sincerely
Lamees Audeh





The Canadian Arabic Orchestra has been extremely diligent in bringing back the music that reflects the grandeur of the rich Arabic culture in such a way that makes us proud to be part of this culture and of this organization.

Since it was founded in **2014**, the orchestra has been extremely successful in reaching audiences from all over Canada in such a short period of time. In addition to the great efforts that the founders and members are putting to make this success a reality, this can also be attributed to the strategic approach of organic growth in terms of both the educational and the entertainment aspects of every performance.

A reflection of this success in reaching such a great number of fans and audiences is evident in the growth of the audience numbers from the beginning till the present. We are proud that the orchestra has so far relied almost entirely on its own ticket sales in covering its expenses and has not applied for any grants yet. CAO impact and reach will definitely multiply once we join hands with public and private sponsors who are keen on bringing a unique tone to their social contributions.

As part of the strategic plan of expanding its audiences and reach, during this season 2015/2016 the orchestra will hold concerts in **Ottawa, Kitchener** and **Stratford in Ontario** and for the first time, in **Montreal** during May 2016.

All in all, the CAO holds a lot of promise for the future. The quality and the level of performances have moved in wide strides, and we as a board, are very happy to provide full support for the success of the strategic plans of the orchestra, and we invite the whole community to support us in bringing this beautiful dream closer to reality.

 *Message from the Board of Directors*

Sincerely
Abdullah Al Khalidi



 *Message from the President & CEO*

The Orchestra has set out since its very first concert, to improve and develop its artistic level, convey its educational message and to reach as many people as possible in the various communities that comprise Canadian culture. From the very first concert that we held in June 2014 we have been growing dramatically, reaching more and more people across the *GTA and Canada*. This is all due to the dedicated board of directors, wonderful musicians, great volunteers, and wonderful audiences, whom without, this successful expansion wouldn't have been possible. I would like to thank you all for your time, dedication and love for this music.

In such a short period we have managed to reach to so many people across Canada from both the Arab community and the non Arab communities that make up the Canadian culture. We have created a new, serious musical trend in the area that has not been present before. We managed to bring back the true face of Classical Arabic music by both educating and entertaining the public with this great music. Also, the orchestra has started to train children to play Arabic musical instruments which are both beginnings to the establishment of the Arabic Music School and the junior Canadian Arabic Orchestra. This will hopefully pave the way to becoming one of the main resources of Arabic music in North America.

It is always an exciting experience to arrange the programs for our different concerts, as we try always to celebrate the music of the past while establishing new trends such as combining western classical music with Arabic music or modernizing pieces from the Classical Arabic repertoire.

Slowly and steadily, we are making progress towards our strategic goals such as creating the music school, introducing Arabic music through educational concerts while cooperating with other cultural bodies to promote this culture and this music.

We believe that the future is very promising, and we look forward to our concerts in *Ottawa, Montreal, Kitchener* and *Stratford*.

Sincerely
Wafa Al Zaghhal



Our Vision

World Harmony One Note at a Time

Our Mission

To Connect, Enrich and Inspire Through Music



Orchestra Members

Board of Directors

Abdullah Al Khalidi

Nada Shocair

Hany Audeh

Administrative Staff

Wafa Al Zaghal

CEO and President

Lamees Audeh

Founder, Vice President & Music Director

Ruba Zouzou

Operations & Fundraising Manager

Eddy Sulaiman

Sales & Marketing Representative

Nadine Taha

Graphic Designer & Social Media Admin

Marcelle Aleid Dahdal

Media Coordinator



Orchestra Members

Piano

Lamees Audeh

Qanun

Wafa Al Zaghal

Double Bass

Jesse Boxer-Meyrowitz

Choir

Ruba Zouzou
Nour Khedder
Tamadur Al khatib
Muna Bahumaid
Zainab Warne
Rabee Bakriyeh
Mohammad Ben Khedda
Hasan Tamim
Diala Aleid
Kinda Aleid
Fadwa Othman
Omar Najjar

Violins

Eddy Sulaiman
Basel Theodory
Sama Tarazi
Hannah Constantin
Nicolas Royer- Artuso

Oud

Jamal El Ali
Nicolas Royer- Artuso
Radwan Al Taleb
Aowss Yaldiko

Percussion

James Freeman
Milad Bouchaaya
Jade Atallah

Viola

Tala Khoury

Cello

Andrew Downing

Eddy Sulaiman

born in Baghdad, Eddy was drawn to music from an early age. He started to play the keyboard before settling on the violin, which he took up in 1995. He studied the violin at the **Edward Said National Conservatory of Music in Ramallah- Palestine** and played both Western and Arabic classical music with numerous groups including **Maqamat, Edward Said and Daniel Barenboim Orchestra and Yalalan**. He performed in **Ramallah, Jerusalem and Bethlehem**. He attended many workshops, musical summer camps including workshops with renowned musician Simon Shaheen in Talita Qumi. In 2005 he worked as an instructor at the Kufiyeh Music School in Birzeit, teaching violin skills and techniques. He currently lives in Toronto, performs with many local groups and with the National Arab Orchestra in Detroit.

Featured Musicians



Artistic Achievements of 2014/ 2016

Cultural and artistic contributions:

Bringing this type of Classical Arabic music to Canada was like quenching people's thirst to what they left behind in their old countries. The Arabic music heritage is extremely rich and beautiful, but it has been underrepresented in the past few decades all over the world. Many musical institutes have been working tirelessly to bringing this music back to life and exposing it to the world in general. Many factors contributed to this music to start dying out, and it is important to keep it alive because of it being a reflection of the rich cultural heritage of the Arab world. Canada, in particular, is a great place to revive this music due to the fact that when people come to Canada from the Arab world they normally have one thing in mind and that is to settle in the new country and find appropriate work, and basically people forget about the beautiful music that they left behind. So when a music event of this volume happens here, it is like a long forgotten treasure that they found again. After about two years of successful performances, this music has become an addiction...

Since we started, we have been very consistent with our musical program and with the way it is delivered to our audiences. Our main focus is to educate the audiences about Arabic music and to make sure that whenever we introduce a new idea that it resonates with each individual in different ways. This takes a lot of preparation, and we always have a segment of our concerts dedicated to explaining certain aspects of the pieces we perform. This approach has made our audiences wait in anticipation for the next concert to see what the theme will be about, and many expressed that they love to know about the pieces during the concerts. We find that the effectiveness of explaining things on stage right before or after a certain piece is a much more effective tool than writing them in the program.

Expanding the repertoire:

As we mentioned earlier, the first concert that we held was an ice breaker in which we showed our audiences a piece from every region in the Arab world. The themes have developed over time from more general pieces taken from all over the Arab world to specific subjects in which we focus on a certain composer or a certain form of music. This shows how the tastes of our audiences are evolving from the general to the particular and more specific. We seek to enrich the audiences' experiences with every new concert and every new theme with this vast heritage.

“Great musicians! A great performance. Very captivating and inspiring. I am glad they are here in Canada to bring joy to my family here.”

William Warne

“Just out from Mississauga concert, it is a great honor watching you and having people like you presenting our real culture. You are amazing, keep it up”


Wisam Butrus



🎵 Giving to the Community:

The orchestra gives back to the community by participating in fundraisers, community events and educational programs.

- Celebrating with Marvin Heights Public School, it's 50th Anniversary. *Mississauga, June 2014.*
- IDRF's 30th Birthday, commemorating IDRF's 30 years of humanitarian service. In the event 'A Fusion of Rhythm and Hues', House of Moments. *Toronto, August 22, 2014.*
- Ibrahim Nasrallah evening of poetry, with the Arab Canadian Cultural Group ACCG. *Mississauga, October 10, 2014.*
- Benefit concert for the Emmanuel Howard Park Church Outreach Program, Sponsored by the Classical Music Conservatory. *Toronto, April 19, 2015.*
- IDRF Gala 2015 for Crisis in Syria. Sheraton Parkway. *Toronto, October 2, 2015* "....Canadian Arab Orchestra regaled the guests with beautiful melodies from Syria".
- The Canadian Palestinian Professional Foundation CPPF 3rd Annual Gala. Lakeshore Convention Centre, *Mississauga. November 28, 2015.*
- Supper with Syria, a fundraising event to bring two Syrian families. Artscape Wychwood Barns, *Toronto. November 29, 2015.*
- Marvin Heights Public School "Mosaic". *Mississauga, May 12, 2016.*
- Zaytouna Dabkeh. *Mississauga May 15, 2016.*
- Polycultural Immigrant and Community Services "Polylicious". *Mississauga, May 20, 2016.*

A portrait of a man with short brown hair and a beard, wearing a dark suit, white shirt, and dark tie. He is looking slightly to the left of the camera with a neutral expression.

born and raised in Regina, Saskatchewan, James received his first drum set for his third birthday. At the age of 7 he began to study trumpet and played both trumpet and drums in concert, jazz and marching bands. James continued his musical studies at Montreal's McGill University, completing both a Bachelor's and Master's Degree in Music. Since discovering a passion for Arabic music, he has studied with Dr. Ali Jihad Racy, Simon Shaheen, Bassam Bishara, Suleiman Warwar and legendary Fairuz percussionist Michel Merhej. In addition to performing Arabic music with the Arabesque Dance Company Orchestra he has performed with the New York Arabic Orchestra featuring Marcel Khalife. James is currently on faculty at the Kingsway Conservatory of Music teaching trumpet, drum set and hand percussion.



Educational Concerts:

We have also started to conduct educational concerts in which we introduce Arabic musical instruments, rhythms and songs for school children in the GTA.

- Park Lawn Junior and Middle School April 9, 2014
- Arabic Summer Camp July 20, 2015

Welcoming Syrian Refugees to Canada:

The Orchestra aims to involve as many people as possible in the events we hold by making these events accessible to people from all over the community. At the moment, it is very important for us to make the Syrian refugees feel welcome in their new home and so we have started giving away tickets for Syrian refugees in every city we perform. It is important that these individuals are culturally nourished and not only providing them with their basic needs. This will increase their feeling of belonging to Canada; their new home.

 *No doubt about it, you literally ignited the audience with your magnificent performance and most importantly, your beautiful spirit.* 

Najat Naser

Guest Artists:

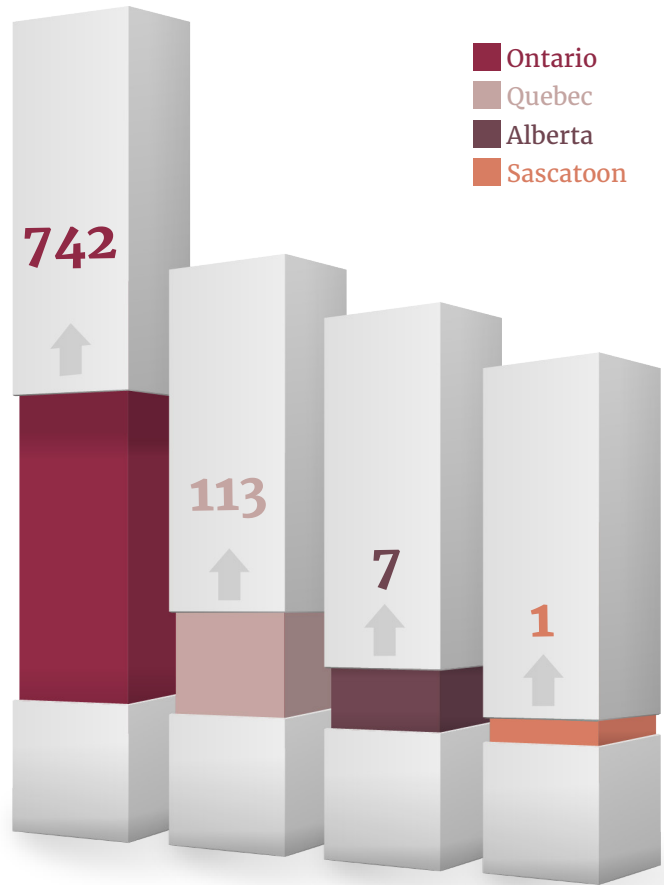
In the performance *"Tarab in Our Time"*, the orchestra highlighted compositions by modern Arabic classical music composers from the Middle East. We hosted the distinguished musician and Oud player Bassam Bishara and jointly performed pieces by Charbel Rohana- Lebanon, Alfred Jameel- Egypt, Simon Shaheen- Palestine, Marcel Khalifeh- Lebanon, Naseer Shamma- Iraq, and others.



Social Media

Using social media has been the best way for us to stay in touch with our audiences regarding our upcoming concerts, it has been the only means for bringing people from all over Canada to know about the group so far. Our Facebook page has received over 2,700 likes in less than two years since its launch with a constant growth in the number of people our posts reach on a regular basis.

Mailing list Chart form 2014-2016

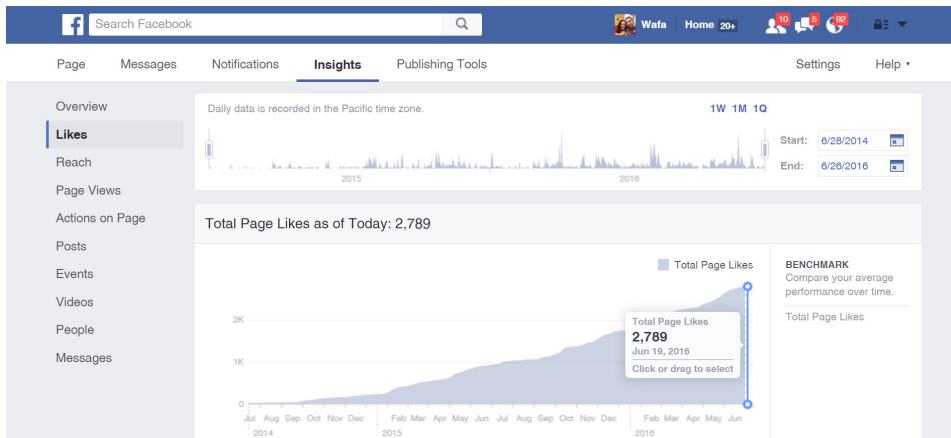


Milad Bouchaaya

is a professional percussionist who specializes in Middle Eastern hand percussion instruments. He performs on a regular basis in groups across the GTA. Miled also plays the piano, guitar, violin and oud for his own personal enjoyment.



(CHART FROM FACEBOOK SHOWING GROWTH OF PAGE LIKES)



https://www.facebook.com/ArabCanadianMusicOrchestra/insights/?section=nav/People

Country	Your Fans	City	Your Fans	Language	Your Fans
Canada	1,972	Mississauga, ON, Canada	442	English (US)	2,025
Egypt	117	Toronto, ON, Canada	390	English (UK)	304
United States of America	106	Montreal, QC, Canada	212	Arabic	264
Israel	66	Ottawa, ON, Canada	176	French (France)	114
Syria	65	Oakville, ON, Canada	103	French (Canada)	42
United Arab Emirates	61	Cairo, Cairo Governora...	56	Spanish	7
Jordan	46	Laval, QC, Canada	52	Portuguese (Brazil)	4
Saudi Arabia	41	Calgary, AB, Canada	51	Italian	4
Palestine	36	Damascus, Damascus ...	49	Hebrew	4
Lebanon	31	Hamilton, ON, Canada	46	Spanish (Spain)	2

See More

Muna Bahumaid

A Yemeni native Canadian Singer. Muna Grew up in a family of artists and musicians; her grandfather was the first theatrical play creator/director in Yemen. Performing and simply being on stage became second nature to her from an early age.

Although she tries to focus on Classical Arabic music, Muna enjoys all kinds of music from various cultures and languages. Her taste in music ranges from «you need to listen to this!» to «I know, please don't judge me!». Aside from Arabic songs she sings in Portuguese, English, French and Indian.

She won first place in many singing competitions in Ottawa and performed nationally across Canada with MATHA (Arabic Jazz Band) and Baladna (Palestinian band).

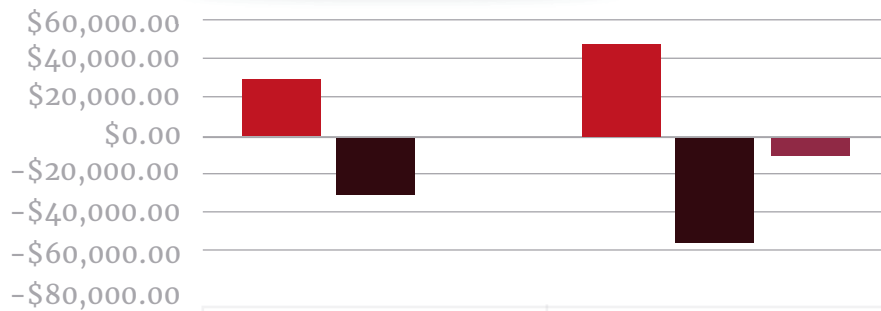
Her favorite Quote is: «Being a singer is a natural gift. It means I am using to the highest degree possible the gift that God gave me to use. I am happy with that.» - Aretha Franklin



 **Financial highlights:**

Revenues	Year ended August 30, 2015	Year ended August 30, 2016
Tickets	\$27,097.26	\$44,274.00
Educational concerts	\$300.00	
Collaboration concerts & Festivals	\$2,750.00	\$3,000.00
Grants	\$0.00	\$0.00
Total Revenue	\$30,147.26	\$47,274.00
Total Expenses	-\$29,862.05	-\$54,934.32
Excess of revenue over expenses for the year	\$285.21	-\$7,660.32

Financial Highlights



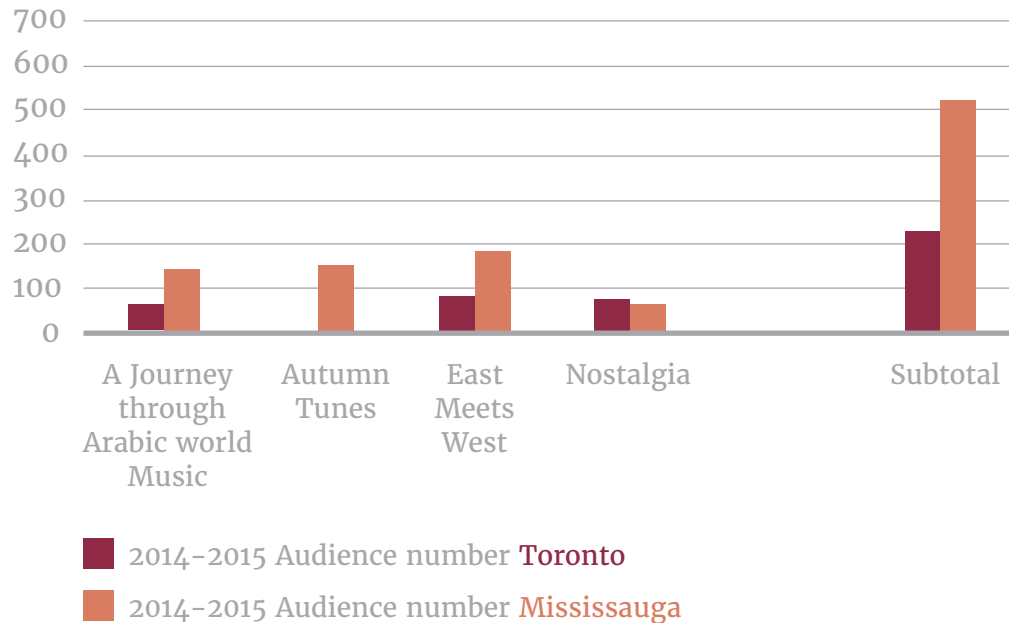
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■ Total Expenses	-\$29,862.05	-\$54,935.32
■ Excess of revenue over expenses for the year	\$285.21	-\$7,660.32



Audience growth
2014-2015 Audience numbers

Concert	Toronto	Mississauga
A Journey through Arabic World Music	78	166
Autumn Tunes		173
East Meets West	100	217
Nostalgia	90	71
Sub Total	268	627
Gross total	895	

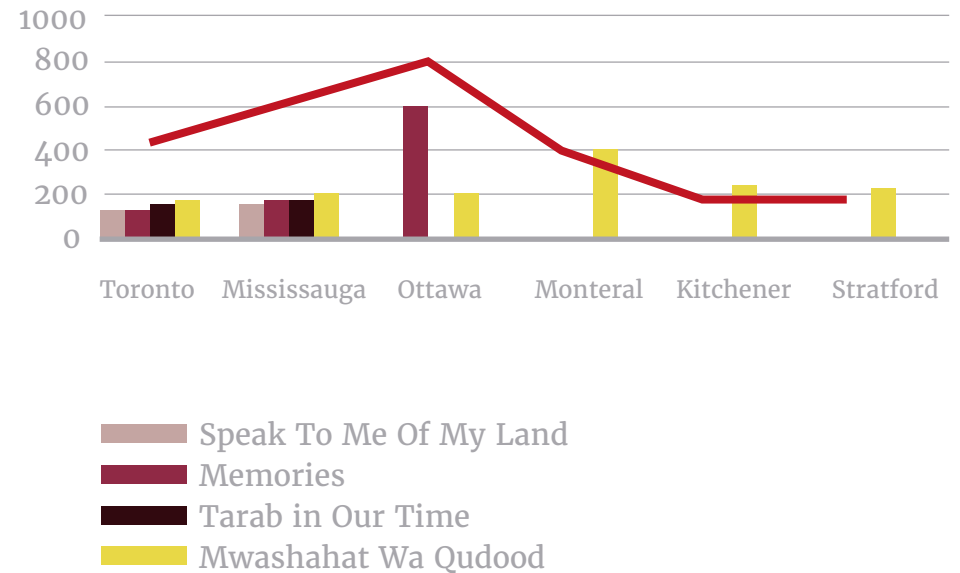
2014-2015 Audience growth



Audience growth
2015-2016 Audience numbers

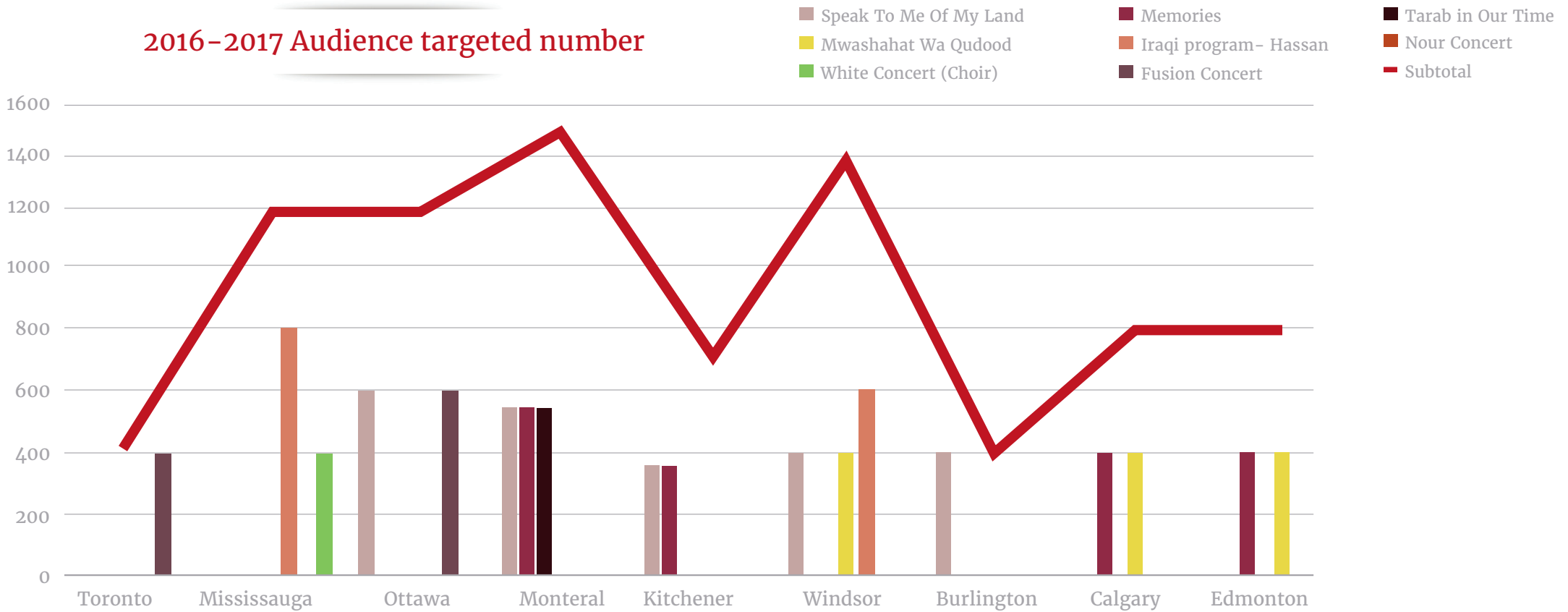
Concert	Toronto	Mississauga	Ottawa	Montreal	Kitchener	Stratford
Speak to me of My Land	104	128				
Memories	101	142	601			
Tarab in Our Time	119	134				
Mwashahat Wa Qudood	151	200	200	400	200	200
Sub Total	475	604	801	400	200	200
Gross total	2680					

2015-2016 Audience growth



Concert	Toronto	Mississauga	Ottawa	Montreal	Kitchener	Windsor	Burlington	Calgary	Edmonton
Speak to me of My Land			600	500	350	400	400		
Memories				500	350			400	400
Tarab in Our Time				500					
Mwashahat Wa Qudood						400		400	400
Iraqi program- Hassan		800				600			
Nour concert									
Fusion Concert	400		600						
White Concert (Choir)		400							
Sub Total	400	1200	1200	1500	700	1400	400	800	800
Gross total	8400								
# of Concerts	18								
# of Cities	9								
# Of Programs	7								

2016-2017 Audience targeted number





Our Volunteers

The success of the orchestra is widely due to the dedication and hard work of our volunteers, whose contributions have been nothing less than amazing. These individuals contribute their time and effort because they believe in our music and in our message.

The beautiful thing is that each one of these people comes from a different region, and we have not met some of these wonderful people in person yet. Their names, regions, and contributions are mentioned below.

To them, we owe a big thanks!!!

Our Volunteers

Alaa Helali	[Coordinator, Calgary]
Dalia Ashry	[Promotional video, Toronto]
Dr. Mohammad Al Sharif	[Logistics, Ottawa]
Jamal Al Qaryouti	[Al Watan Newspaper, Mississauga]
Janan Arafa	[MC Ottawa concert April, 2016]
Khawla Awwad	[Ticket sales, Mississauga]
Lara Zahabi-Bekdash	[Public Relations, Toronto]
Louai Sinno	[Logistics, Hamilton]
Majdi Al-Ramahi	[Usher, Kitchener]
Manal Sawalha	[Ticket Sales, Kitchener]
Mirna Shadeed	[Media, Mississauga]
Mirvan Matini	[Usher, Kitchener]
Mohamed El Hadidy	[Mississauga]
Mohammad Fteih	[Oakville]
Mohamed Hameed	[Usher, Kitchener]
Mohammad Haroun	[Sakher Sabeel Newspaper, Mississauga]
Nadine Soliman	[Coordination, Montreal]
Najat Nasser	[Coordination, Kitchener]
Oussama El-Mohtar	[Strategic Planning, Ottawa]
Patricia Nesci	[Choir training, Toronto]
Paula Barros	[Costumes, Mississauga]
Rany Audeh	[Box Office and logistics, St. Catharines]
Rita Mansourat	[Coordination, Montreal]
Roda Atallah	[Ticket Sales, Kitchener]
Samer Kassis	[Coordination, Montreal]
Sami Ahdab	[Logistics, printing and Box office, Mississauga]
Sharon Burlacoff	[From The Kingsway Conservatory of Music Toronto - for providing the space for our rehearsals]
Shireen Abu Khader	[Choir training, Toronto]
Tamadur Al Khatib	[Group Photoshoot, Mississauga]
Tareq AbdulHadi	[Usher, Kitchener]
Tom Bigas & Jordan Abraham	[Sound Technicians, Hamilton]
Wesam Orabi	[Usher, Kitchener]



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