Dear Donors and Members,

2017 was an exciting and eventful year at WTTW and WFMT, and once again, it is a privilege to serve as Chairman of the Board of Trustees for this vibrant organization. I express heartfelt thanks to our talented, dedicated, and generous members, viewers, listeners, visitors, and Trustees who support us in so many ways. I am honored to work alongside you.

I hope you’ll take some time to look back on the year with us. WTTW was proud to premiere a comprehensive cross-platform initiative, My Neighborhood: Pilsen, which spotlighted one of Chicago’s most diverse and innovative communities with a documentary, town halls and community discussions, and a digital platform where compelling neighborhood stories continue to be told. WTTW produced an engaging 16-part digital series, Urban Nature, which followed biologist Marcus Kronforst as he explored animal and plant life in the “urban jungles” of Chicago, New York, and San Francisco. Geoffrey Baer traced the surprising history of the city’s premier tourist destination in Navy Pier: A Century of Reinvention. We also embarked on a new season of Check, Please! and welcomed Regina Spektor, Tom Jones, Blondie, Jon Secada, and more artists to Grainger Studio on Soundstage. Chicago Tonight covered the local, state, and federal elections with on-site coverage of the Democratic and Republican conventions, and presented regular candidate forums and immersive digital content. Victoria On Masterpiece made its debut, along with Newton Minow: An American Story; The Durrells In Corfu; Architect Robert Adam: A Place At The Table; a new animated kids’ series, Splash and Bubbles; and more local teachers were honored with Golden Apple Awards. And to round out the year, we explored Havana – Cuba’s vibrant, alluring, and rapidly changing capital city – with a whirlwind television tour and digital site featuring 360 video, a peek inside Geoffrey’s travel journal, and discovered new possibilities.

WFMT welcomed its first-ever artist-in-residence as KAIA String Quartet took us – and our children – on a musical video journey through South America. We brought our audiences more broadcasts from The Grant Park Music Festival, Lyric Opera of Chicago, and Chicago Symphony Orchestra, among many others, and welcomed numerous artists to Impromptu, Folkstage, and Live From Wfmt. The newly updated Levin Performance Studio served as the venue for many lively videos on wfmt.com and Facebook, and WFMT presented several installments of Classical Cabaret live from venues around the city. Finally, Chicago Tribune film critic Michael Phillips shared several themed incarnations of The Film Score.

WTTW and WFMT is fortunate to serve large audiences throughout our region and beyond, across all of our media platforms. WTTW, as the primary PBS member station in Chicago, reaches 3.2 million viewers and our website generates more than one million pageviews per month. WFMT delivers a weekly listening audience of 300,000 and serves 600,000 audio streams. The WFMT Radio Network is a leading creator and distributor of arts and culture audio programs and services, including Exploring Music with Bill McLaughlin and the Beethoven Network, for radio stations and other platforms around the world.

We have been grateful to have the support of numerous individual donors, corporations, foundations, and production partners who have made our mission a reality, including those of you who have made gifts of vehicles and remembered us in your estate plans. In particular, I would like to thank those who have spearheaded, and contributed to, our successful capacity-building campaign, Imagining More. You can learn more about the special individuals involved and the aspects of our mission it has made possible on page 65.

Thank you for choosing to invest in a cultural organization that for more than 60 years has existed only to educate, inspire, enlighten, and entertain our diverse community here in Chicago and beyond. None of it would be possible without your support.

2017 was an outstanding year, and we’re just getting started.

With appreciation,

James W. Mabie
Chairman of the Board
Window to the World Communications, Inc.
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WTTW11 – primary channel featuring WTTW Kids, WTTW local, national, and PBS content
WTTW Prime – “primetime all the time” channel
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WTTW World – signature documentaries, science, and news programming from around the world
WTTW PBS KIDS 24/7 – 24-hour children’s channel and live stream

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WTTW’s Chicago Tonight started off the fiscal year by partnering with the PBS NewsHour and NPR on coverage of the Republican and Democratic National Conventions, where Paris Schutz and Evan Garcia were embedded with the Illinois delegation. Paris provided live updates during the nightly broadcast, along with live tweets and Facebook Live videos during the primetime coverage. In addition to the dozens of stories on the Conventions, site visitors learned more about Vice Presidential picks Mike Pence and Tim Kaine in their own words, explored the history and architecture of Philadelphia, watched live streams of the Conventions, and much more.

Other programming highlights on WTTW included A Capitol Fourth, the live Independence Day celebration from Washington, D.C.; new seasons of Masterpiece Mystery: Inspector Lewis, The Great British Baking Show, and Wild Travels; also, a World Music Showcase taped at the Old Town School of Folk Music, Agatha Christie: Partners in Crime, and Unexpected Justice: The Rise of John Paul Stevens. Digital stories included a reassessment of urban coyotes; enrollment decline at Chicago Public Schools; intersex fish in a Chicago-area river; a voyage aboard a Tall Ship on Lake Michigan; and how to create the perfect garden.

The WTTW Great Food Fan Van, Grandparent Connection, and WTTW Readers Are Leaders Tour stopped off at many indoor and outdoor venues in some underserved areas around the city and suburbs to celebrate summer with young audiences. Kids and families participated in fun games and sing-alongs while being encouraged to practice good nutrition, stay active, and get ready for school.

WFMT presented more live broadcasts from the Grant Park Music Festival, both from Millennium Park and the South Shore Cultural Center, where Thomas Wilkins was the guest conductor. New seasons of From Carnegie Hall and LA Opera on Air commenced, along with a series of concerts by the Dallas Symphony Orchestra; and violinist Jennifer Koh was featured soloist with the CSO, led by visiting conductor Ludovic Morlot. WFMT’s digital features included majestic Lipizzaner horses dancing to classical music at Tempel Farms in Old Creek Mill, Illinois; Dave Schwan’s exclusive interview on Facebook Live with violinist Rachel Barton Pine backstage at Grant Park Music Festival; and program director David Polk’s chat with the Chicago Tribune’s longtime classical music critic John von Rhein at WFMT – their discussion covered the city’s cultural season just passed, the work being presented at summer music festivals around the Chicago area, and much more.
Violinist Rachel Barton Pine, Grant Park Music Festival
Mauritanian musician Noura Mint Seymali
Violinist Jennifer Koh
Conductor Thomas Wilkins, Grant Park Music Festival
Violinist Rachel Barton Pine, Grant Park Music Festival
Mauritanian musician Noura Mint Seymali
As the Summer Olympic Games got underway in Rio de Janeiro, WTTW audiences marked the 80th anniversary of a very different Games with *Boys of ’36: American Experience*, the thrilling story of the scrappy American rowing team that captured gold under the gaze of Adolf Hitler. Also, *Nazi Games: Berlin 1936* examined how the Nazis and the IOC turned a relatively small sports event into a global and mass media spectacle.

Also, audiences met *Koko: The Gorilla that Talks*, recalled Chicago’s civil rights movement in *King in Chicago*, watched as a new winner was crowned in *The Great British Baking Show*, revisited *American Experience* biographies of past presidents as citizens prepared to select a new one in the fall, celebrated the 75th birthday of folk icon Joan Baez, and looked back at *The Greatest Team in Pro Football History*: the Super Bowl champion 1985 Chicago Bears. WTTW.com introduced a new, in-depth education beat; followed Dr. Jane Goodall on a visit to Lincoln Park Zoo; delved further into police culpability in the Laquan McDonald case; got a rundown of a part-educational, part-culinary Asian Carp event organized by the environmental nonprofit group Friends of the Chicago River; and, in a thirst-quenching nod to the city’s turbulent political history, offered recipes for original Chicago cocktails.

Throughout the month, WFMT too paid tribute to the Rio Olympics with a cornucopia of Brazilian music, and celebrated the very best from summer classical music festivals across the globe, with special features on Carl Grapentine’s and Candice Agree’s daily programs. Live broadcasts from the Grant Park Music Festival continued with pianist Stephen Hough (who also answered questions backstage on Facebook Live) playing Rachmaninoff, Carlos Kalmar conducting Mozart’s *Great Mass* in C Minor, pianist Kirill Gerstein tackling the original 1879 version of Tchaikovsky’s First Piano Concerto, and violinist Christian Tetzlaff in Mendelssohn’s Violin Concerto in E Minor. Lisa Flynn also compiled a list of the top 10 violin concertos as selected by listeners. Audiences also heard a new work by Sean Shepherd performed by the Flux String Quartet as part of the *Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival*.

On WFMT.com, audiences were introduced to three Latino composers often compared to Mozart; learned about a Lyric Opera production of *Jason and the Argonauts* targeted to young audiences; and took part in an online poll to assist WFMT in rating the innovative projects being considered for the future WFMT Residency initiative.
August 2016

King in Chicago

'85: The Greatest Team in Pro Football History

Dr. Jane Goodall segment, Chicago Tonight

Asian Carp story, Chicago Tonight

#CHIMPSYM

Annual Report • 2017
Flux String Quartet

Pianist Stephen Hough

Violinist Christian Tetzlaff

2017 • Annual Report
This month, as students headed back to school, WTTW took part in a major primetime and digital initiative that has been central to our mission: Spotlight Education Week, which featured specials from *Frontline*, *NOVA*, *P.O.V.*, *Independent Lens*, *TED Talks*, *PBS NewsHour*, and more, culminating in the annual *American Graduate Day* celebration. And as always in the fall, there were blockbuster premieres, including new seasons of *Poldark* and *Indian Summers*; *PBS NewsHour*’s coverage and analysis of the first Presidential debate; *Frontline*’s acclaimed election-year series *The Choice* investigated the factors that shaped the Democrat and Republican candidates; and *Chicago Tonight* provided extensive coverage of local elections. A new special focused on the inspiring life story of WTTW’s chairman emeritus Newton Minow, and two others marked the 15th anniversary of the 9/11 attacks.

On WTTW.com, Jay Shefsky kicked off Hispanic Heritage Month with this profile of a talented Latino family reminiscent of the Von Trapps from *The Sound of Music*. Correspondent Paris Schutz investigated local power brokers possibly exerting undue influence in a local election. Education stories included the mystery behind the sudden departure of Chicago State University President Thomas Calhoun, and the process of converting former Chicago Public School structures into residential apartment buildings. And as the World Series approached, there was a timely report on efforts to curb injuries to student baseball players.

WFMT presented four concerts from the 2016 BBC Promenade season, from London’s Royal Albert Hall, including the annual season finale, *Last Night of the Proms*. Closer to home, audiences got a sneak preview of the upcoming Lyric Opera season with a live broadcast of *Stars of Lyric Opera* at Millennium Park. And WFMT welcomed a number of guests for live installments of *Impromptu*, including guitarist Jason Vieaux and harpist Yolanda Kondonassis, the Fifth House Ensemble, the Cavatina Duo, and more.

WFMT.com revealed how A 440 became the “standard pitch” to which all classical musicians tune their instruments. Other stories focused on transgender actress Laverne Cox (*Orange is the New Black*) as she paid tribute to iconic “women of color” who have inspired her; four surprising celebrities who play French horn; and a nostalgic review, from a 1968 WFMT program guide, of Greektown’s Parthenon Restaurant, which had just closed. The Studs Terkel Radio Archive worked with Radio Diaries and Project & to provide audio content for a national NPR series that revisited people interviewed in Studs’s book *Working*. 

Newton Minow: An American Story
September 2016

Churchill’s Secret on Masterpiece

Frontline: The Choice 2016

Cielito Lindo, Chicago Tonight
The Cavatina Duo

Stars of Lyric Opera at Millennium Park

Harpist Yolanda Kondonassis and guitarist Jason Vieaux

wfmt.com: Laverne Cox, *Orange is the New Black*
October ushered in new seasons of audience favorites on WTTW, and some exciting debut programming. Our popular restaurant review series Check, Please! and its essential website embarked on its 16th season as more guest-reviewers took their seats around the table to dish with host Catherine De Orio. Chicago Tonight once again provided wide-ranging coverage of the upcoming election with live candidate forums, cross-platform political reporting, and a comprehensive online voters’ guide. Two specials premiered: an electrifying Soundstage concert featuring chart-topping singer/songwriter Regina Spektor that also aired around the country; and Navy Pier: A Century of Reinvention, the latest multi-platform initiative hosted by Geoffrey Baer that explored one of Chicago’s most popular tourist destinations.

Other October premieres included The Durrells in Corfu; Do You Speak Chopin?; Nature’s Super Hummingbirds and Africa’s Gentle Giants; PBS NewsHour’s coverage of the Presidential and Vice Presidential debates; Bill Murray: The Mark Twain Prize and Norman Lear: American Masters; and a Great Performances look at the Broadway smash Hamilton.

On WTTW.com, in addition to the new Navy Pier site, audiences learned about a first-ever strike by charter school teachers and got some perspective from CTU President Karen Lewis. Other stories included an exciting fossil discovery by the Field Museum, a profile of new Nobel Prize winner Bob Dylan, and Phil Ponce’s exclusive interview with actress Geraldine Chaplin. On the Check, Please! site, two weekly blogs were launched: The World of Food and Cat’s Corner, along with a new season of David Manilow’s digital conversation series Chat, Please!

WFMT again teamed up with Lyric Opera of Chicago as Lisa Flynn and Lyric’s Roger Pines co-hosted live presentations of Wagner’s Das Rheingold – opening night of the new Lyric season – and Donizetti’s Lucia di Lammermoor. Baritone Eric Owens returned to WFMT with new editions of Eric on Opera, and singers from the Ryan Opera Center commenced a new season of studio recitals. Finally, two visiting ensembles joined host Kerry Frumkin for Impromptu this month: Calidore String Quartet and Danish String Quartet. Finally, Carl Grapentine presented his annual Morning Show Halloween Extravaganza.

On WFMT.com, audiences heard Sergei Rachmaninoff playing Chopin; got an inside look at the Grammy Salute to Music Legends; explored the politics of Prokofiev’s Romeo and Juliet to coincide with the Joffrey’s production; received a Postcard from Europe from Kerry Frumkin; and were spooked by WFMT’s special classical playlists in celebration of Halloween and Day of the Dead.
October 2016

Bill Murray: The Mark Twain Prize for American Humor

Great Performances: Hamilton’s America

Nature: Africa’s Gentle Giants

The Durrells in Corfu on Masterpiece

wttw.com/checkplease
Eric Owens in Lyric Opera of Chicago's *Das Rheingold*
WTTW and WFMT marked Veterans Day with the local documentary *Heroes on Deck* and specials focusing on Pearl Harbor, the Vietnam War, the USO, military medical advances, American Indian veterans, and much more. On WFMT, Michael Phillips of the *Chicago Tribune* brought back *The Film Score* with a special focusing on war movies.

Throughout that crucial election month, the *PBS NewsHour* team provided in-depth coverage of the national scene and *Chicago Tonight* focused on the local races. On WTTW.com, related stories included the possible local effects of a Trump presidency; the reaction of the Chicago Teachers Union to Trump’s pick for Education Secretary; the concerns of local DACA recipients; and more.

Also new and notable: four new specials in the PBS Fall Arts Festival. Audiences explored the *Secret Life of Babies* and heard *The Story of Cats*; and Dr. Henry Louis Gates, Jr. traced *Black America since MLK*. A new kids’ series, *Splash and Bubbles*, premiered, as did a new adaptation of *Anne of Green Gables*. And host and guidebook author Rick Steves paid WTTW an in-studio visit to share his invaluable travel expertise.

In advance of the holiday, WTTW offered a Sunday afternoon marathon of relevant Thanksgiving-themed cooking programs— including episodes of *Pati’s Mexican Table, Sara’s Weeknight Meals, America’s Test Kitchen, Steven Raichlen’s Project Smoke, New Orleans Cooking with Kevin Belton,* and *Surviving Thanksgiving with Sara Moulton* – to take the stress out of meal preparation.

There were also digital stories on Chicago’s new Cardinal, Blase Cupich; an interview with Robert Bathurst of *Downton Abbey*; a report on food allergy labels; and *PBS NewsHour* anchor and *Washington Week* host Gwen Ifill was remembered with a video compilation.

From Lyric Opera of Chicago, WFMT broadcast Berlioz’s *The Trojans* and Massenet’s *Don Quixote*. And a new season of *Live from WFMT* featured violinist Benny Kim, cellist Steven Honigberg, pianist Susan Merdinger, and the Dover String Quartet. Carl Grapentine hosted as eight classical music luminaries reflected on the profound value they have found in their art.

On WFMT.com, audiences enjoyed a fun quiz matching favorite foods to classical composers and a story detailing recipes composed by them; another story on the current political climate and its effects on the Chicago production of *Hamilton*; a timeline of the career of transgender composer Wendy Carlos; a performance of 12 Chopin mazurkas by WFMT favorite Vera Gornostaeva; and how choreographer Martha Graham named Aaron Copland’s *Appalachian Spring*. 
November 2016

Heroes on Deck: World War II on Lake Michigan

Chicago Tonight candidate forum with Eddie Arruza

Nature: The Story of Cats

Black America since MLK
Composer Wendy Carlos

Chicago Tribune film critic Michael Phillips at WFMT

Christine Goerke in Lyric Opera’s *Les Troyans* (Todd Rosenberg)

WFMT.com: The Film Score for Veterans Day

November 2016
December 2016

As 2016 drew to a close – a year when Chicago and the world marked the 400th anniversary of the passing of William Shakespeare – the distinguished Hollow Crown series presented three of the Bard’s stirring history plays – Henry VI, Parts I and II and, on Christmas night, Richard III starring Benedict Cumberbatch and Dame Judi Dench, who also welcomed a very special royal guest on Shakespeare Live! from the RSC.

December on WTTW also ushered in a variety of music specials for every taste, whether it was Welsh crooner Tom Jones, in a new Soundstage concert recorded in WTTW’s Grainger Studio; country legends Merle Haggard, Willie Nelson, and Ray Price; waltz king André Rieu; pop superstars The Carpenters; opera icon Placido Domingo; Broadway star Laura Osnes and the Mormon Tabernacle Choir; choruses from St. Olaf and Wheaton Colleges; the Boston Pops; and the New York Philharmonic. Also, American Masters profiled the architect Eero Saarinen; Great British Baking Show experts Mary Berry and Paul Hollywood offered several Masterclasses; and Call the Midwife returned with a new holiday special.

On WTTW.com, users got the inside scoop on Mayor Rahm Emanuel’s newly released emails; read an excerpt from a new biography of Chicago novelist Nelson Algren; met the creative team behind the Joffrey Ballet’s new production of The Nutcracker; traced the history of singer-songwriter Robbie Fulks on WTTW over the years; and enjoyed David Manilow’s new interview with Thai restaurateur Arun Sampanthavivat on Chat, Please!

This month, WFMT heralded the return of Saturday broadcasts from the Metropolitan Opera, including a Christmas Eve presentation of Hansel and Gretel. Audiences also heard the annual Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols live from King’s College Chapel at Cambridge University, plus Handel’s Judas Maccabaeus in honor of Hanukkah, sung by Music of the Baroque. And Live from WFMT featured Chicago’s Bella Voce, plus Matthew Hagle playing Beethoven. Rich Warren and The Midnight Special ushered in 2017 with his annual live broadcast from Levin Studio.

On WFMT.com, Lisa Flynn shared her lists of the best new classical Christmas releases and her 10 best classical recordings of 2016; audiences could also stream the 10 best live performances of the year on WFMT. Also, via two fun quizzes, they discovered which Nutcracker character represented their holiday spirit, and determined how well they knew Handel’s Messiah; revisited some vintage holiday ads from WFMT’s program guide over the years; and learned how neuroscience can improve a singing voice.
December 2016

Call the Midwife Holiday Special 2016

Chat, Please!

Great British Baking Show Masterclass

Dame Judi Dench, Shakespeare Live! from the RSC

Eero Saarinen: American Masters
Reggie Harris, WFMT’s Midnight Special

Pianist Matthew Hagle in Levin Studio

Live from the Metropolitan Opera: Hansel and Gretel

Bella Voce, Live from WFMT

WFMT.com: The Best Classical Recordings of 2016
On WTTW, 2017 began with the premiere of a new series from the U.K., *Victoria on Masterpiece*, telling the sweeping story of the ascension to the British throne of the teenaged Victoria Regina, queen of England throughout most of the 19th century. Also, Benedict Cumberbatch and Martin Freeman reteamed for a new season of *Sherlock*, and PBS's addictive homegrown series *Mercy Street*, set during the Civil War, returned as well.

This month, there was great news for our youngest audiences: WTTW launched a new, free, and localized PBS KIDS 24/7 channel that included the best new and returning series for kids, accessible over the air, on cable and dish channels, and as a live stream viewable on mobile devices, tablets, and over-the-top platforms. Basically, great children's programming accessible anytime and anywhere.

Locally, audiences rocked out to another season of *Soundstage*; Mark Bazer launched a new website and hosted more episodes of *The Interview Show*; and *Check, Please!* offered more new content. Also, *Great Performances* aired *Bel Canto* from Chicago's Lyric Opera.

On WTTW.com, audiences watched *Chicago Tonight*'s contentious interview with Mayor Emanuel; the Governor was quick to respond (on the eve of his annual State of the State Address), calling the exchange a “partisan rant from Madigan's mayor.” Other stories included a new book examining the Holocaust and Chicago's status as a “sanctuary city.” Also this month, the debut of a new section called The Playlist, featuring stories that connect our on-air and other content to local people, places, and history, including episode recaps (“Victoria Recap: The Romantic Age”); listsicles (“The Costumes from Mercy Street”); quizzes (“Which Sherlock Episode Are You?”); recipes with show tie-ins, and local connections to our most popular shows.

WFMT aired the Vienna Philharmonic's New Year's Day concert. Lyric Opera's season continued with a live opening-night broadcast of Bellini's *Norma*, with superstar soprano Sondra Radvanovsky in the title role. And WFMT hosts commemorated Martin Luther King Day, Mozart's 261st birthday, Schubert's 220th, and the 80th birthday of composer Philip Glass with the special *Music and Conversation with Philip Glass*.

On WFMT.com, a new website was launched for the WFMT Radio Network. Stories included Chicago's impressive number of Grammy nominees; from *Relevant Tones*, six contemporary works and the full live broadcast from Brooklyn's National Sawdust; an interview with soprano Sondra Radvanofsky; and a fun quiz that answered the question, "Which Mozart Opera Are You?"
Soundstage: Jon Secada

Great Performances: Bel Canto from Chicago’s Lyric Opera

The Interview Show with Mark Bazer

Soundstage: Jon Secada
Gustavo Dudamel, *New Year's Celebration from Vienna*  
(Adam Latham)
February 2017

As is the case each February, WTTW and WFMT provided a wide and diverse array of content in observance of Black History Month, including new profiles of the activist/writer Maya Angelou, congressman and civil rights icon John Lewis, and singer Roberta Flack; a new miniseries from Dr. Henry Louis Gates, Jr. exploring *Africa’s Great Civilizations*; and *Race Underground: American Experience*, about the construction of the country’s first subway system, plus a related local web story on the forgotten history of Chicago’s cable cars. WFMT also shared several web stories on African American music and composers.

WTTW and WFMT offered front row seats for rollicking new music shows on *Soundstage*; at two gala opening nights at Lyric Opera (Bizet’s *Carmen* and Tchaikovsky’s *Yevgeny Onegin*); to New York City Ballet performances in Paris; to the Library of Congress as Smokey Robinson was honored with the Gershwin Prize; and more. WTTW presented new episodes of *Check, Please!* and *The Interview Show with Mark Bazer*; and on Sunday nights, *Victoria on Masterpiece* and *Mercy Street* continued. In addition to weekly recaps of each, related web stories included a profile of Queen Victoria’s real-life chef, Charles Elmé Francatelli, who appears as a character in the series; a “Which Victoria Character Are You?” quiz; for *Mercy Street*, an interview with Chicago actor Gary Cole, one of the stars of the series; “Amazing Women of the Civil War”; and a Q&A with Chicago historian Pamela B. Toler. Also, a revealing story about the lucky man whose job it is to maintain *The Great Train Story* exhibit at the Museum of Science & Industry, and some recipes from *The Great British Baking Show*.

WFMT’s Fay and Daniel Levin Performance Studio, having been updated and given a new “green” electrical system, welcomed Carmen’s Joseph Calleja for a live Valentine’s Day installment of *Impromptu*. Back for a look at memorable movie musicals during the week leading up to the Oscars was Chicago Tribune film critic Michael Phillips. And *Live from WFMT* featured pianist Jenny Lin and singers from Chicago’s Haymarket Opera Company. On WFMT.com, audiences learned why Stewart Copeland, co-founder of the Police, was inspired to compose an opera, *The Invention of Morel*; heard an interview with Maya Angelou from the Studs Terkel Archive; looked at Frédéric Chopin’s favorite foods; and took Candice Agree’s challenging quiz, “Match the Musical Quote to the Movie It’s From.”
Smokey Robinson: The Gershwin Prize for American Music

Soundstage: Old Dominion

Music: Central Africa’s Cross-cultural Conversation

Soundstage: Jason Isbell
Chopin-Inspired Dishes to Make Your Taste Buds Sing

By Angela Lee | February 20, 2017

If you are what you eat, will eating some of Chopin’s favorite foods help you at the piano? Maybe not. But you may find inspiration from these dishes from World Cuisine, created during the 17th International Fryderyk Chopin Piano Competition. The restaurant curates three, four-course menus that combine cuisines from the composer’s native Poland, as well as from his adopted city of Paris, France. Maybe one of the twelve dishes below will encourage you to compose some of your own Polish-French Fusion recipes.

wfmt.com: “Chopin-Inspired Dishes”
As March (and spring!) arrived in Chicago, WTTW fittingly launched a new 16-part digital series *Urban Nature*, in which host and evolutionary biologist Marcus Kronforst told engaging stories about nature and wildlife thriving in Chicago, New York, and San Francisco. Also, Geoffrey Baer highlighted the newest recipient of the Richard H. Driehaus Prize at the University of Notre Dame, British architect Robert Adam. Geoffrey and his crew traveled to England and Scotland to create an engaging documentary and robust accompanying website.

Also this month, WTTW aired the dramatic season finales of *Mercy Street* and *Victoria on Masterpiece*, a new special celebrating *Ken Burns: America’s Storyteller*; and two rousing installments of *Soundstage* featuring Tom Jones and Blondie. From the creator of *Last Tango in Halifax* came a new drama about the literary Brontë sisters, *To Walk Invisible*, one of several programs for Women’s History Month. And there was a film that traced the history of Wisconsin’s “old-fashioned” supper clubs. Finally, travel expert Rick Steves paid a visit to WTTW to explore the history and traditions of *European Easter*.

WTTW.com featured a story that connected a new exhibition at the Illinois Holocaust Museum and Education Center with the new film *Dead Reckoning: War & Justice*; shared a popular classic chewy oatmeal cookie recipe; and posted interviews with Rick Bayless about the past “30 Years of Frontera Grill”; Cécile Fromont, from the series *Africa’s Great Civilizations*; and the Executive Producer of the *PBS NewsHour* on covering news in the age of Trump. And *Chicago Tonight* looked at how candy-flavored tobacco is hooking a new generation of smokers – kids.

On WFMT, the Saturday Metropolitan Opera broadcasts continued; highlights were Rossini’s *William Tell* and Mozart’s *Idomeneo*. Guests on *Impromptu* included the Valparaiso Chorale, members of the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, and winners of the Marilyn Horne Song Competition. And from the Chicago College of Performing Arts, there was a recital by pianist Vassily Primakov. WFMT.com shared the moving story of Holocaust survivor Joseph Feingold and how the donation of his prized violin changed the life of its 12-year-old recipient as well as his own, as he became the subject of the documentary *Joe’s Violin*. Other features included a biographical opera that combined 100 melodies of Frédéric Chopin and, among several other stories for Women’s History Month, a Q&A with Grammy-nominated sitarist and composer Anoushka Shankar (yes, daughter of Ravi Shankar and sister of Norah Jones).
March 2017

To Walk Invisible on Masterpiece

wttw.com/urbannature

EXPLORE the WILD SIDE of CITIES

wttw.com/urbannature

Soundstage: Blondie
March 2017

Pianist Vassily Primakov

Joe’s Violin

Sitarist and composer Anoushka Shankar
April marked the premiere of an exciting cross-platform initiative—My Neighborhood: Pilsen, which utilized television, community engagement activities and events, a website, social media, and a public awareness campaign to shine a spotlight on a group of local residents working together to make their South Side neighborhood a better place to live. The premiere night was marked by a live Chicago Tonight town hall which also streamed live on WTTW.com and lives at wttw.com/myneighborhood, which also includes extensive web-exclusive video and other continually updated content that tells the stories of individuals who have risen to the challenge.

Also this month, several popular series returned: Father Brown and Death in Paradise on Saturdays (where they were joined by the quirky new Australian series 800 Words); and Call the Midwife and Home Fires on Sundays. A searing installment of Independent Lens, Newtown, explored the mass killing at Sandy Hook Elementary School; a man learned How to Find Love Online; a three-part series marked the centenary of America’s entrance into World War I; several moving programs recalled the Holocaust; Frontline followed a man who spent a year eating only fish; and a new special told the exciting story of the Space Race.

On WTTW.com, audiences recapped Call the Midwife and Home Fires; met comedians featured in the Independent Lens film The Last Laugh; watched Chicago Tonight’s interview with the newly minted Chicago Police Union president, Kevin Graham; viewed a gallery of “Forgotten Chicago” structures worth remembering; heard from citizens demanding benefits in connection with the upcoming Obama Presidential Center, and from an exhibit developer at the Museum of Science and Industry about the museum’s “Science Storms.”

WFMT presented its third Classical Cabaret, live from the Chopin Theater, with Robbie Ellis once again hosting. Also live: the Vermeer Quartet’s annual performance of Haydn’s cycle The Seven Last Words, a Holy Week presentation from LaSalle Street Church. Finally, WFMT presented more concerts from Carnegie Hall, beginning with Venezuela’s Simon Bolivar Symphony.

On WFMT.com, the KAIA String Quartet took audiences on a musical journey through Latin America. Other new content included a special web feature that traced how the music of Prague and Mexico City came together in Pilsen; a story on how singers memorize the notoriously difficult opera scores of Philip Glass; and a nostalgic trip back in time to hear the Metropolitan Opera’s first Black tenor, George Shirley, perform an aria from Mozart’s Cosi fan tutte.
April 2017

Independent Lens: Newtown

Frontline: The Fish on My Plate

My Neighborhood: Pilsen

Death in Paradise

wttw.com/myneighborhood
Robbie Ellis, WFMT Classical Cabaret

wfmt.com: George Shirley

The Vermeer Quartet
May 2017

WTTW commenced the month on Facebook Live, covering the red carpet at the James Beard Awards. This was something of a theme for the month, as American Masters profiled Mr. Beard himself, along with French chef Jacques Pépin and television’s original “French Chef,” Julia Child. From Masterpiece came two new specials: King Charles III, which imagined Prince Charles’s ascension to the British throne; and Dark Angel, in which Joanne Froggatt (Downton Abbey) played Britain’s first female serial killer. Victorian Slum House followed modern-day adventurers experiencing life in poverty in the 19th century; Nature explored a dolphin community via Spy in the Wild, and audiences watched Plants Behaving Badly; several exposés of America’s prison system; and finally, the National Memorial Day Concert and the National Geographic Bee.

As federal funding for public media once again came under threat, audiences were encouraged to share their own stories and check out resources at wttw.com/ILoveWTTW.

WTTW.com delved into royalty on television (Victoria, The Crown, and the upcoming King Charles III) and why Americans are so obsessed with it. Also, interviews with the filmmakers behind NOVA: Poisoned Water and Frontline: Bannon’s War; chef Jacques Pépin’s views on how the culinary scene has changed since the 1950s; and a story on notorious serial killers Mary Ann Cotton (subject of Dark Angel) and H.H. Holmes. Chicago Tonight’s digital stories included a look at Lake Michigan’s first floating water park; “Homegrown” gardener Jeanne Nolan’s tips for growing terrific tomatoes; and the Chicago Public Schools’ “Safe Passages” routes for students. The My Neighborhood: Pilsen website profiled the local muralist Hector Duarte.

On WFMT, the live Metropolitan Opera season concluded with Strauss’s Der Rosenkavalier, starring Renée Fleming, followed by a weekly series of rebroadcasts of Lyric Opera productions from the past season. And for Memorial Day, Chicago Tribune film critic Michael Phillips’ The Film Score looked at music from war movies.

On WFMT.com, as KAIA String Quartet began its WFMT residency, they explored musical traditions of Latin America through videos fun for all ages: audiences could groove out to candombe from Uruguay, play polyrhythms in joropo from Venezuela, and sing along to a mariachi song from Mexico. Also, there were tips on how to win music competitions, even if you lose; a look at the personal archive of Spanish pianist Alicia de Larrocha; and what some of some legendary composers might look like if they ever cracked a smile.
Renée Fleming, From the Metropolitan Opera: Der Rosenkavalier

Paul Lewis (Molina Visuals)

Alicia de Larrocca

KAIA String Quartet
Dancer Irene Rodriguez performs in Grainger Studio.
On Wednesday, May 3, WTTW and WFMT held the organization’s annual gala, the theme of which was Evening in Havana in anticipation of Geoffrey Baer’s upcoming special and website, Weekend in Havana, set to premiere in July. The evening’s dedicated and hard-working event chairs Renée and Lester Crown devised a magical and unforgettable experience that celebrated the unique beauty and vibrant culture of Cuba’s capital city, for the more than 400 generous supporters who attended.

As they arrived, guests posed for photos in front of a large and colorful mural of Havana, and then moved on to mojitos and hors d’oeuvres in WTTW’s exotically decorated Grainger Studio. There, they were entertained by some dazzling performers whom Geoffrey recruited during production in Cuba the previous December: Afro-Cuban jazz musician Roberto Fonseca and vibrant flamenco dancer Irene Rodriguez. Also featured in the film was young architect Daniel de la Regata, who made the trip to Chicago as well.

After the performance, guests headed outdoors, where they enjoyed an elegant dinner under the stars in a large transparent tent. Jewell Events Catering provided the cuisine, accompanied by libations from Terlato Wines. The dinner commenced with remarks by WTTW Chairman James W. Mabie and President and CEO Dan Schmidt. After dinner, many in the crowd worked off some of the food and drink with an energetic salsa lesson led by Geoffrey’s Cuban friends, and departed with smiles and some special gifts, including branded mojito glasses with recipes, chocolate cigars, and treats from Swirlz Cupcakes.

This lively and fun evening raised more than $1 million in support of the organization’s mission, thanks in part to lead sponsor BMO Harris Bank and trustee Peter McNitt, and a good time was had by all!
Attendees in Grainger Studio

Director Henry Godinez and Geoffrey Baer

Newton Minow enjoying the evening

Applause for gala chair Renée Crown
As the fiscal year came to a close, Anglophiles rejoiced as WTTW premiered some great content from “across the pond,” with new seasons of The Great British Baking Show and Grantchester, and welcomed three new series: The Coroner, My Mother and Other Strangers, and an incarnation of Prime Suspect that introduced us to a young Jane Tennison as she is just starting out as a detective in 1973.

Also on WTTW11 this month: the annual Golden Apple Awards for Excellence in Teaching, hosted by Brandis Friedman. We observed LGBTQ Pride Month and aired the 76th Annual Peabody Awards, and shared the JFK Inaugural Gala from January 1961 – it never aired due to a massive snowstorm; and presented new concerts by Johnny Mathis, Paul Simon, and the band Journey. We revealed The Story of China and followed wildlife during The Great Yellowstone Thaw. Finally, audiences enjoyed Free to Rock, which explored how rock ‘n’ roll may have been instrumental in ending the Cold War.

On WTTW.com, audiences could read weekly recaps of Grantchester and My Mother and Other Strangers; interviews with David Rudman of Spiffy Pictures (creators of Nature Cat) and with the makers of the three-part series The Story of China; and recipes from The Great British Baking Show. On the My Neighborhood: Pilsen website, there was a profile of Eleazar Delgado, proprietor of Pilsen’s Jumping Bean Café; a feature explaining how Chicago Mariachi Project helps attendance at Benito Juarez Community Academy. Chicago Tonight stories included Amanda Vinicky’s report from Springfield about the state budget stalemate; and Nick Blumberg’s story on Exhibitionism, a “rocking” Navy Pier retrospective of The Rolling Stones.

WFMT presented KAIA String Quartet as its first ensemble in residence, and they took audiences on a musical journey through Latin America via a succession of web stories and videos. The station also aired the 2017 Grant Park Music Festival from Pritzker Pavilion at Millennium Park, which commenced with Vadim Gluzman playing Tchaikovsky’s Violin Concerto. Later June concerts included Stravinsky’s complete Firebird ballet score, plus Missa Latina by Roberto Sierra. Finally, there was another WFMT Classical Cabaret live from the Chopin Theater.

On WFMT.com, featured included 6 Songs to Send You “Over the Rainbow”; four stories to celebrate LGBTQ Pride Month; a demonstration from Norma conductor Riccardo Frizza of how to make pasta alla Norma; and a treatise on the Puerto Rican folk music styles bomba and plena.
Eleazar Delgado,
My Neighborhood: Pilsen

The Great British Baking Show

The Great Yellowstone Thaw

Grantchester Season 3 on Masterpiece

The Story of China

Ava DuVernay, Peabody Awards 2017
KAIA String Quartet – In Residence

Music of Chicago’s Latino Composers

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Violinist Vadim Gluzman, Grant Park Music Festival

wfmt.com: “KAIA Kids Around the World”

Classical Cabaret host Robbie Ellis
Community Engagement

WTTW Kids BIG IDEA Tour
In March, WTTW Kids introduced the WTTW Kids BIG IDEA tour, created to encourage children between the ages of 2 and 7 to learn via live performances and excerpts from WTTW Kids’ most popular shows, promoting the concept that a BIG IDEA is a solution to a problem, an answer to a question, or something that has opened a child’s mind to a new understanding.

WTTW Kids Great Food Fan Van
In its 10th anniversary year, the WTTW Kids crew made healthy exercise and good nutrition a fun adventure for children, parents, grandparents, and caregivers. Each event included a live concert performance by Miss Lori of Miss Lori’s CAMPUS, nutritional food and drink sampling, one-on-one interaction and education, and costumed characters.

WTTW Kids Grandparent Connection
The mission of the WTTW Kids Grandparent Connection program is to give seniors a deeper sense of fulfillment and children a greater understanding of their elders. Each event took place at a senior living facility, during which children aged 7-9 took part in minor physical activity and games with their new elderly friends.

Public Events
WTTW and WFMT hosted a wide variety of public events in connection with our content throughout the year. The costumed character Nature Cat engaged with kids and families, and there were also author luncheons at the Union League Club, and fun WTTW Trivia Nights.

Throughout the year, WFMT hosted live broadcasts in front of audiences around the city: from Lyric Opera of Chicago; at the Chicago Cultural Center (the weekly Dame Myra Hess Memorial Concerts), from the Grant Park Music Festival (which also included lively Facebook Live videos); and from various locations for WFMT’s Classical Cabaret and other events. WFMT also welcomed guests to the Fay and Daniel Levin Performance Studio for live broadcasts in the Impromptu, Ryan Opera Center Recitals, Folkstage, and Live from WFMT series.
Community Engagement

The Grandparent Connection

Golden Apples winner announcement

The Grandparent Connection

Annual Report • 2017
Community Engagement

Do You Speak Chopin? screening at the Arts Club

My Neighborhood: Pilsen event at Benito Juarez Community Academy

Victoria screening at Chicago History Museum

WTTW Kids BIG IDEA TOUR
Imagining More is the boldest campaign in our history and is designed to ensure that our future is filled with everything our audience loves—and expects—from WTTW and WFMT. The campaign stems from the organization’s strategic plan to harness the power of public media to strengthen our community and enrich the lives of our audience members. We seek to be a positive force by sharing programming that encourages the best of humanity. The Imagining More capacity-building campaign is centered around the following themes:

**More Storytelling** – supports the advancement of innovative, multimedia storytelling on local and national platforms that that people of all ages can enjoy. As our capacity for storytelling grows, so does our audience’s access to high-quality content that inspires and empowers.

**More Possibility** – builds our infrastructure and ability to advance our expanded activities well into the future, and strengthen our flexibility to adapt to a continually evolving media landscape.

**More Community** – enhances our ability to bring our diverse community together via events and programming that spark meaningful dialogue, broaden horizons, and provide energizing learning experiences.

This year saw the start of the public phase of the Imagining More campaign, and the honor roll of Imagining More supporters continues to grow. We offer our deepest thanks and appreciation for our philanthropic partners’ generosity, enthusiasm, and shared vision for the vibrant future of WTTW and WFMT.
Imagining More

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Imagining More
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Fiscal 2017 Financial Information
July 1, 2016–June 30, 2017

(In thousands)

**Assets**
- Cash and investments: $46,708
- Accounts and pledges receivable, net: 6,820
- Property and equipment, net: 16,909
- Other assets: 2001
- Total Assets: $72,438

**Liabilities and Net Assets**
- Liabilities:
  - Accounts payable and accrued expenses: $5,007
  - Long-term notes payable: 18,800
  - Other liabilities: 4,077
  - Total Liabilities: $27,884

**Net assets:**
- Unrestricted: $22,518
- Restricted: 22,036
- Total Net Assets: $44,554
- Total Liabilities and Net Assets: $72,438

Statement of Activity* for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2017

**Revenue**
- Members and contributions: $27,889
- UMIGO and production sponsorship: 6,790
- Corporate underwriting and advertising: 4,014
- Federal grants: 4,089
- Other: 712
- Total Revenue: $43,494

**Expenses**
- Programming and production: $27,856
- Member services and marketing: 6,546
- Sales and underwriting: 2,466
- Fundraising: 2,278
- IT, building, administration, and finance: 4,311
- Total Expenses: $43,457

Increase in Net Assets from Operating Activities: 37

*Reflects $2.5 million in non-cash depreciation expense
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