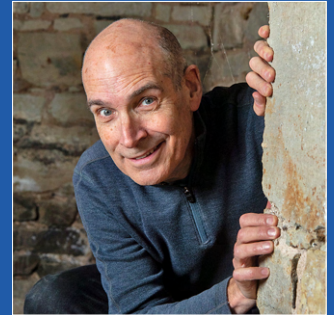


ANNUAL REPORT

2024

A YEAR OF STORIES

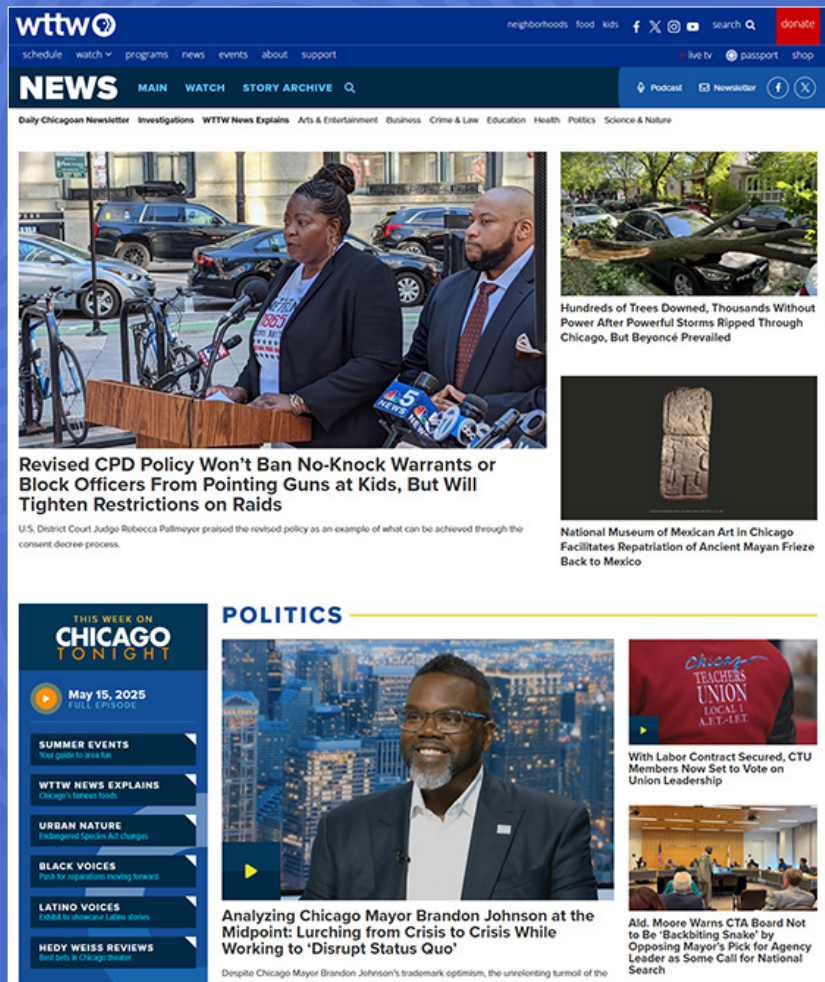


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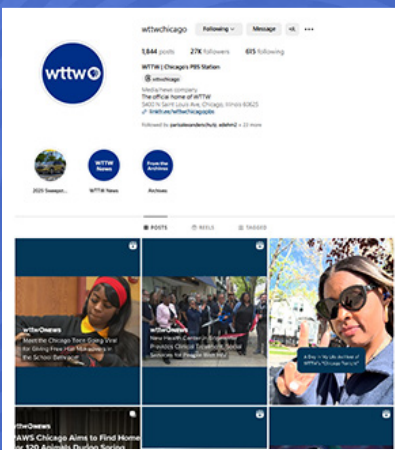
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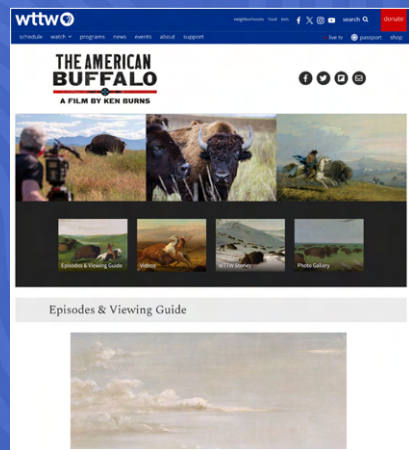
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American Buffalo microsite homepage

Cover photos, left to right: Cellist Zlatimir Fung, Grant Park Music Festival, Photo: I-Jung Huang; *Firsthand*: Homeless, Alba Gomez, Photo: Lloyd DeGrane for WTTW; Soprano Karen Slack, Grant Park Music Festival, Photo: Kia Caldwell; Geoffrey Baer, *Chicago Mysteries*, Photo: Liz Markel for WTTW

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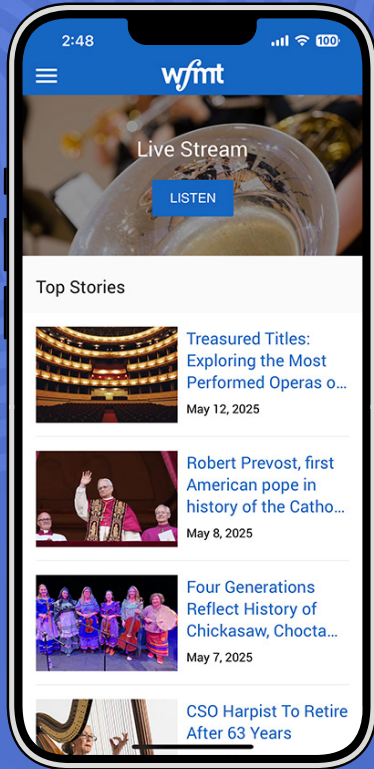
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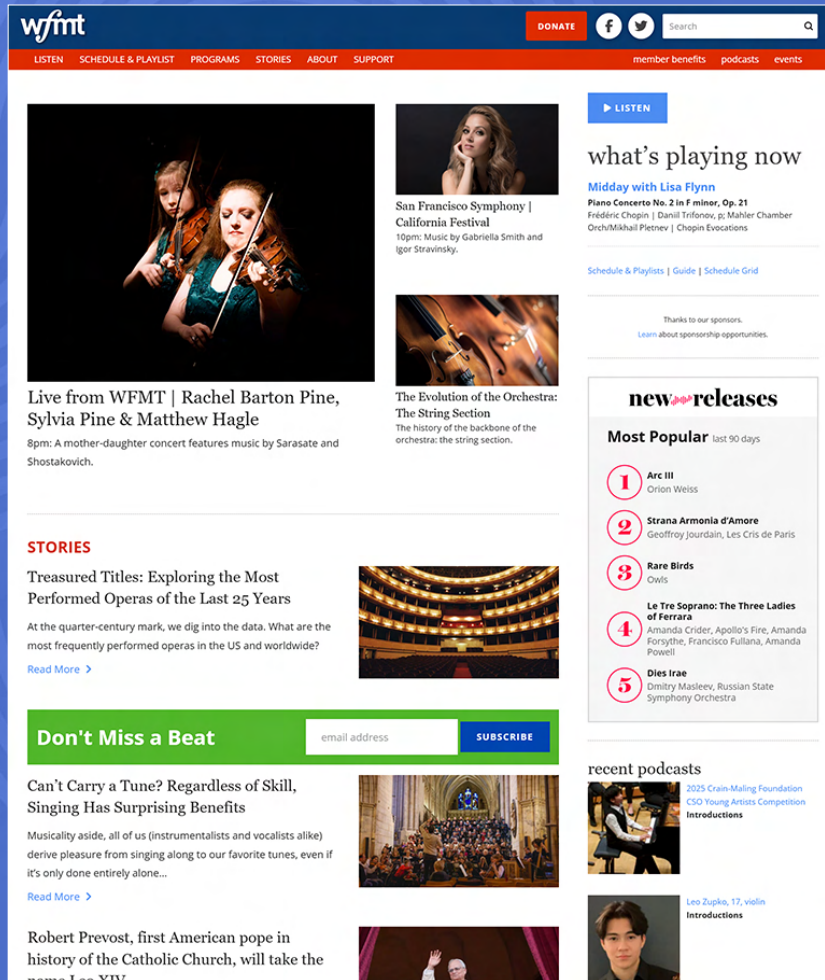
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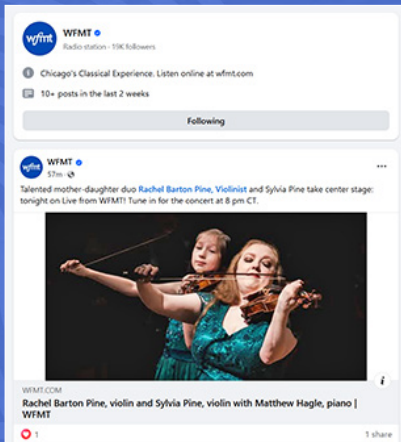
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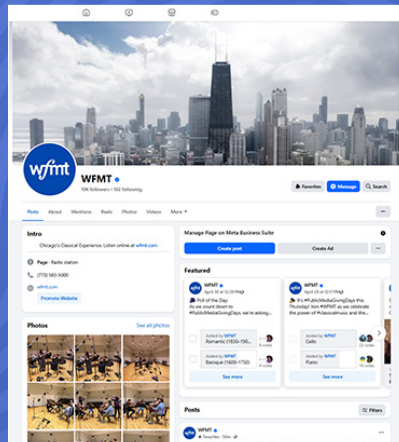
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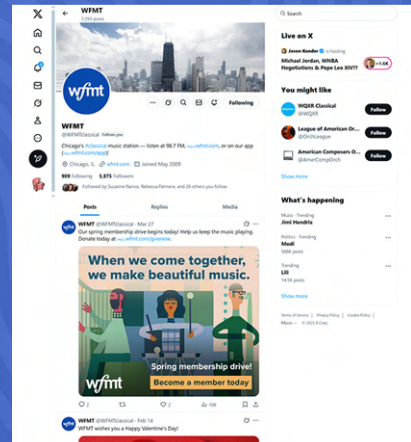
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Grantchester - Tom Brittney as Will Davenport



Great American Recipe contestant Ted Pappas



Human Footprint host Shane Campbell-Staton



Ravinia Festival Chief Conductor Marin Alsop



Martin Clunes as Doc Martin with Buddy



Gesualdo Six, Secret Byrd

Photo: Kudos and Masterpiece

Photo: PBS

Photo: Nathan Dappen Day's Edge Productions

Photo: Adriane White

Photo: Ash Willis

Photo: Buffalo Pictures and A3MI

JULY

To kick off fiscal 2024, ahead of its September broadcast premiere, WTTW Passport members could binge season 9 of the British comedy series *Doc Martin*, starring Martin Clunes as the hilariously hemophobic Dr. Martin Ellingham. Also that month, season 8 of *Grantchester* launched, along with a new drama series, *D.I. Ray*. The second season of *The Great American Recipe* featured a local competitor: Edison Park native and Western Springs resident Ted Pappas. As always, Americans celebrated Independence Day with *A Capitol Fourth*, the live concert from the grounds of the U.S. Capitol; British pet owners and their dogs went to *Puppy School*; *Nature* brought us another quirky menagerie of *Animals with Cameras*; and in the new series *Human Footprint*, biologist and university professor Shane Campbell-Staton explored how our species is transforming the planet and what those changes reveal about us.

Summer on WFMT brought the arrival of more music from the great outdoors! Throughout the month, WFMT brought listeners live concerts from the *Grant Park Music Festival*, including the annual Independence Day celebration of American music conducted by Christopher Bell and a presentation of Elgar's Cello Concerto featuring the young award-winning cellist *Zlatomir Fung* in his Grant Park debut. WFMT was also excited to share a program by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and special guests live from *Ravinia Festival* – the organization's chief conductor *Marin Alsop* led a program titled "Turn Up the Joy," described as an expanded version of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, with African drumming and a jazz trio. And WFMT presented "Mass for Five Voices" from *Secret Byrd*, the acclaimed theatrical concert celebrating the 400-year legacy of William Byrd featuring Gesualdo Six and Fretwork.





Photo: Gordon Buchanan, BBC

Animals with Cameras: Eastern Grey Kangaroo



Photo: Peter Marlow, Magnum Photos

Once Upon a Time in Northern Ireland



Photo: Marco Borggreve

Stile Antico



Photo: Filipe DeAndrade

Nature: The Hummingbird Effect



Photo: Sky UK Ltd

Puppy School



Photo: Sarah Katarina

Great Performances: Vienna Summer Night 2023 - Elina Garanca

AUGUST

This month, WTTW News and *Chicago Tonight* launched a new reporting initiative – *A Safer City* – to dive deep into neighborhood crime, violence, and public safety. This essential, solutions-driven journalism focused on the impact of living around and with regular violence; what public safety officials and the police are doing about the problem; how segregation and our physical environment – community centers, parks, streets, sidewalks, and highways – drive or stem crime and violence; how social media comes into play in everyday criminal activity; and what analysts and academics can bring to the discussion.

Also in August, WTTW presented the five-part series *Once Upon a Time in Northern Ireland*, to mark the 25th anniversary of the end of The Troubles. *Nature: The Hummingbird Effect* took viewers to biodiverse Costa Rica. Great Performances shared a performance of Leonard Bernstein’s “Kaddish” Symphony by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra at Ravinia Festival. *Curse of the Spencers* examined the turbulent family life of the future Princess Diana; a new special, *All Creatures Great and Small: Chapter Three*, went behind the scenes with the cast, creators, and designers of the heartwarming series.

And WFMT transported listeners “across the pond” in August with performances from the annual BBC Proms summer music festival. The popular “*First Night of the Proms*” featured the BBC Singers with the BBC Symphony Chorus and Orchestra. Throughout the month WFMT featured early music ensemble *Stile Antico*; the *BBC National Orchestra of Wales*; and pianist *Daniil Trifonov* as soloist in Mason Bates’s Piano Concerto. Closer to home, WFMT continued to share more performances from Chicago’s summer festivals at *Grant Park* and *Ravinia*. lay in everyday criminal activity; and what analysts and academics can bring to the discussion.





America Outdoors with Baratunde Thurston

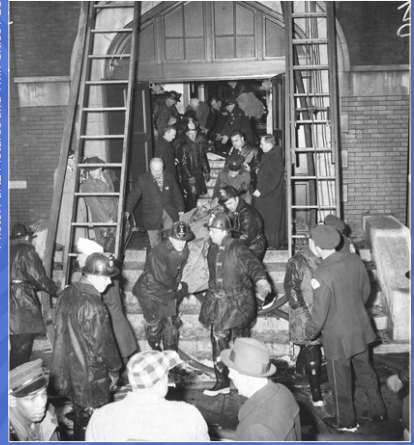


Photo: Part2 Pictures and Twin Cities PBS

Photo: Chicago History Museum, MDN-0000054; Chicago Daily News

Chicago Stories: Angels Too Soon - The School Fire of '58



Photo: Sherwin Lainez

Violinist Joshua Bell



Photo: Eric Cheng

Composer Osvaldo Golijov



Photo: DN-0064813-Chicago Daily News, Chicago History Museum

Chicago Stories: Jane Addams – Together We Rise



Photo: Mainstreet Productions

Unforgotten Season 5 on Masterpiece

SEPTEMBER

This month, WTTW launched an all-new season of *Chicago Stories*, the only weekly documentary series dedicated to uncovering the sweeping history, rich diversity, and breadth of human experience that shaped our great American city. This season included the tragic *Our Lady of the Angels* school fire, the engineering feat to *reverse the flow of the Chicago River*, the rebellion staged by *George Pullman's rail workers* as they fought for their independence, *Mayor Richard J. Daley's* rise to power and stubbornness in the face of cultural change, Nobel Peace Prize-winning settlement activist *Jane Addams*, how Chicago became the *candy-making capital* of the world, AIDS activist *Danny Sotomayor*, and the rise and fall of *Chicago's mail order industry*. Each film featured its own companion *website* with a rich array of supplemental content.

September also saw the return of some of our blockbuster British dramas – including *Professor T*, *Unforgotten*, and *Van der Valk*, and the premiere of two new *American Experience* programs focusing on *racial desegregation* and an *American Masters* profile of labor leader *Cesar Chavez*. Finally, *America Outdoors with Baratunde Thurston* examined what it is to embrace an outdoor way of life.

WFMT's weekly series *WFMT Presents* had an exciting lineup for September, including a conversation with the acclaimed Grammy Award-winning violinist *Joshua Bell*, who shared his new album and discussed his role as director of the Academy of St. Martin in the Fields, the London-based chamber orchestra. There was also a preview of the *Milwaukee Symphony's upcoming season* with a focus on American pianist *Simone Dinnerstein* and Argentine composer *Oswaldo Golijov*. And a new five-part series on *Exploring Music* traced the storied 132-year history of the *Chicago Symphony Orchestra*.



OCTOBER



Annika on Masterpiece - Nicola Walker



Black Oak Ensemble



Chicago Stories: The Pullman Porters and the Railroad Rebellion



Introductions - Amelia Zitoun



The American Buffalo, a Ken Burns film



Pianist Jeremy Denk on WFMT Presents

OCTOBER

This month, Ken Burns returned with a new two-part special, *The American Buffalo*, a journey through more than 10,000 years of North American history and across some of the continent's most iconic landscapes, tracing the animal's evolution, its significance to the Indigenous people and landscape of the Great Plains, its near extinction, and the efforts to bring the magnificent mammals back from the brink. The film also streamed on WTTW's companion website at wttw.com/american-buffalo.

Also in October, the fall season of WTTW's documentary series *Chicago Stories* continued with George Pullman and his workers' fight for their autonomy, the urban renewal initiatives of Mayor Richard J. Daley and the repercussions that followed, a profile of Hull House founder Jane Addams and the women who helped her realize her vision, and a look at how Chicago became the world's foremost manufacturer of a product we all know and love: candy. This month also brought viewers second seasons of *World on Fire*, *Annika*, *Hotel Portofino*, and *Native America*, a portrait of the beauty and power of today's Indigenous world.

WFMT featured a month of concerts from the 2023 BBC Proms ending with the "Last Night of the Proms" led by Marin Alsop. This month's *WFMT Presents* series included an interview with American pianist and MacArthur "Genius" Fellowship winner *Jeremy Denk*, and *Introductions* shared the first live-to-air recital of the new school year with young cellist *Amelia Zitoun*. WFMT bid farewell to the 2023 Ravinia season with *the Black Oak Ensemble* performing their acclaimed program *Silenced Voices* and, from St. Tim's Coffeehouse in Skokie, Ohio Rust Belt singer/songwriter *Ben Gage* made an appearance on *Folkstage*.



NOVEMBER



Black Tulip on Live from WFMT



Hotel Portofino - Natascha McElhone



Chicago Stories: The Outrage of Danny Sotomayor



Violinist and composer Jessie Montgomery



LA Opera: Pelleas et Melisande



The Dooky Chase Kitchen: Leah's Legacy

Photo: Lisa Howe-Ebright

Photo: Eagle Eye Drama, Ltd.

Photo: Jiyang Chen

Photo: Craig T. Matthew

NOVEMBER

In November in advance of Thanksgiving, WTTW's focus was on food, as area chefs shared delicious and unique recipes, invited viewers to explore cultural traditions, and offered tips for making what we eat healthier, tastier, and easier to prepare. On wttw.com/food, users could access interviews with local chefs, recipes for the holiday season, and feature stories about the culinary scene in Chicago, and they could subscribe to WTTW's biweekly *Deep Dish* newsletter.

Also that month, WTTW unveiled the final two Chicago Stories documentaries of the fall season. *The Outrage of Danny Sotomayor* profiled a fiery activist leading the fight for AIDS treatment, and *The Rise and Fall of the Mail Order Giants* recalls how Sears, Roebuck and Montgomery Ward forever changed the way we shop. Also in the schedule were two harrowing new documentaries from *Frontline*: one following journalists as they cover – and then escape from – [the Russian siege of Mariupol, Ukraine](#); and the other examining the response to the devastating [school shooting in Uvalde, Texas](#). And on Sunday nights, WTTW brought viewers *Annika*, *World on Fire*, and *Hotel Portofino*; and a three-part documentary: *A Town Called Victoria*, the story of how a community came together in the wake of a hate crime.

WFMT Presents previewed CSO MusicNOW's [Montgomery and the Blacknificent 7](#), curated by Mead Composer-in-Residence Jessie Montgomery. On *Live from WFMT*, the series included performances from the [Orion Ensemble](#) and [Black Tulip](#). Riccardo Muti conducted Schumann's Violin Concerto featuring [Julia Fischer](#) and Tchaikovsky's Manfred Symphony for the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, and WFMT aired LA Opera's production of Debussy's *Pelléas et Mélisande*, sung by a star-studded cast that included Will Liverman and Susan Graham.





Mary Berry's Highland Christmas



Call the Midwife Christmas Special



Carols as Home with Imani Winds



The Most Beautiful Places in Chicago 2 - Geoffrey Baer



Lookingglass Alice



Chicago a cappella's Miracle of Miracles

DECEMBER

This month on WTTW, host, writer, and producer Geoffrey Baer returned with *The Most Beautiful Places in Chicago 2*, a sequel to the popular special from the spring, because one program couldn't possibly encompass all the eye-popping spaces, places, and public art around in the city and surrounding areas. The [companion website](#) included much more about each of the sites, including the Lavezzorio Community Center in Auburn Gresham, created by famed architect Jeanne Gang; the "twin" Prairie-style Carl Schurz High School and James H. Bowen High School; and the Frank Lloyd Wright-designed Stephen A. Foster House in the West Pullman neighborhood. Also, there was a treatise on Chicago's most beautiful birds and where to find them with Chicago Bird Alliance's Matt Iglecki.

Throughout December, WTTW also ushered in the winter holidays with special programming that included an all-new *Call the Midwife* holiday special, *Season of Light: Christmas with the Tabernacle Choir* featuring Lea Salonga and Sir David Suchet (better known as Agatha Christie's legendary Belgian sleuth Hercule Poirot), the irreverent slapstick BBC farce *A Christmas Carol Goes Wrong*, a documentary exploring the *Cultural Expressions of Kwanzaa*, and, for Great British Bake Off fans everywhere, the festive *Mary Berry's Highland Christmas*.

On WFMT, listen for the holiday sounds of Chicago a cappella's *Miracle of Miracles: Music for Hanukkah*, Candice Agree's daily nod to *Christmas Around the World*, *Kwanzaa Stories* with LaRob K. Rafael, *Carols as Home with Imani Winds*, and the annual favorite *A Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols* from the Chapel of King's College, Cambridge. And at the end of the month, WFMT welcomed 2024 with a live Folkstage tribute to singer-songwriter Steve Goodman, *New Year's Steve*.





Photo: Richard Dumas

All Creatures Great and Small on Masterpiece



Photo: Playground Entertainment and Masterpiece

Photo: © Potboiler Productions; © Sky UK Limited

Funny Woman - Gemma Arterton



Photo: Julia Wesely

Great Performances from Vienna - Conductor Franz Welser-Möst



Photo: Charles Osgood

Michael J. Miles and Jill Kaeding on Live from WFMT



Photo: Masterpiece

Miss Scarlet and the Duke - Kate Phillips



Photo: Todd Rosenberg

Pianist Jorge Federico Osorio on Live from WFMT

JANUARY

As calendar year 2024 arrived, WTTW welcomed back several member favorites including the heartwarming *All Creatures Great and Small*, based on the books by James Herriot and set in the beautiful Yorkshire Dales in the 1930s and '40s. Also in January, viewers could return to Victorian London with new episodes of *Miss Scarlet and the Duke* and to the quaint fictional village of Portwenn, Cornwall for the 10th and final season of *Doc Martin*. In addition, WTTW rounded out Sunday nights with a new series, *Funny Woman*, about a small-town beauty queen who attempts to make it big in TV comedy in 1960s London. And from Australia, *Ms. Fisher's Modern Murder Mysteries* followed the niece of a famous woman detective (the elegant '20s-era Phryne Fisher of the earlier series) who set out to investigate her famous aunt's disappearance. To get the latest on PBS dramas and mysteries and a schedule, viewers could subscribe to WTTW's *Dramalogue* newsletter.

On WFMT, 2024 began with an annual tradition: *the New Year's Celebration with the Vienna Philharmonic* live from Vienna's Musikverein, hosted by actor Hugh Bonneville (*Downton Abbey*); *the concert also aired* on WTTW that evening. And this month, WFMT brought listeners a new season of orchestra concerts with the *Dresden Staatskapelle*, *The Hallé in Manchester*, Paul Lewis and *the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic*, and the Berlin-based *German Symphony* led by Marin Alsop. Closer to home, a variety of artists paid a visit to WFMT's performance studio for *Live from WFMT* and *Folkstage*, including renowned pianist *Jorge Federico Osorio*; banjoist/guitarist and Oak Park native *Michael J. Miles* and cellist *Jill Kaeding*; piano duo *Claire Aebersold and Ralph Neiweem*; and many more.



FEBRUARY



Photo: McGee Media

Gospel host Henry Louis Gates, Jr.

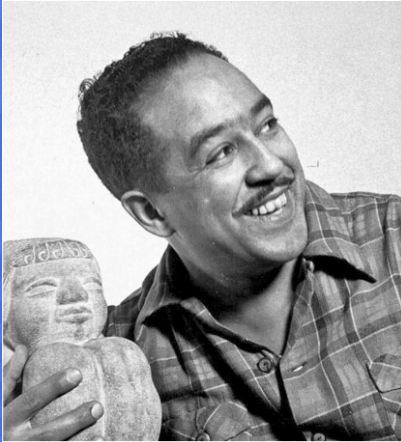


Photo: Gordon Parks

I, Too, Sing America: Langston Hughes



Photo: Dahlia Katz/jpeg

Scott Joplin's Treemonisha

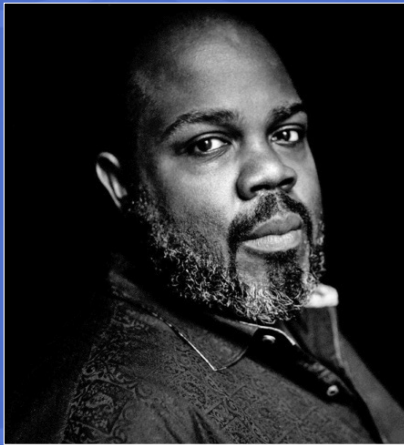


Photo: Richard Dumas

Reginald Mobley - BBC Proms



Photo: Lloyd DeGrane for WTTW

Firsthand: Homeless - Yolanda



Photo: Alabama Public Television

Shuttlesworth

FEBRUARY

This month, WTTW unveiled the 2024 installment in its award-winning multi-platform *Firsthand* initiative, this year focusing on the challenging experiences and unique perspectives of five unhoused individuals across Chicago neighborhoods in *Firsthand: Homeless*. The [website](#) included the five documentaries, filmed expert talks on various aspects of homelessness, related stories, a discussion guide, resources, and more.

To mark Black History Month, WTTW presented *Gospel*, a new two-part miniseries from Dr. Henry Louis Gates, Jr. that took viewers deep into the origin story of Black spirituality through sermon and song, beginning in Chicago. The special was augmented by a live concert celebration with top artists performing gospel classics. Also new this month were *The Dream Whisperer*, chronicling how a basketball team from a small, historically Black college triumphed over adversity; *Shuttlesworth*, the story of Birmingham civil rights leader Rev. Fred Shuttlesworth; and *Indie Soul Journeys*, a docuseries that profiled independent soul music artists across America. On a separate note, the Los Angeles Philharmonic and Gustavo Dudamel celebrated architect [Frank Gehry](#) on *Great Performances*.

On WFMT, *Introductions* kicked off [Black History Month](#) with a special program of highlights that included works by William Grant Still, Adolphus Hailstork, Miriam Kessler, Rhiannon Giddens, and more. The schedule also featured the new miniseries *Celebrating African American Artists*, which included an interview with [composer, trumpeter, and pianist Terence Blanchard](#) hosted by Chicago Tribune film critic Michael Phillips. Relevant programming continued with *I, Too, Sing America: Music in the Life of Langston Hughes* hosted by Terrance Knight; a special presentation of [Scott Joplin's Treemonisha](#); and [Reginald Mobley and Baptiste Trotignon](#) performing original spiritual arrangements and works by Florence Price at the BBC Proms.



MARCH



Photo: Elliot Mandel

Dame Jane Glover - Music of the Baroque



Photo: Paola Kudacki for Met Opera

Soprano Lise Davidsen - Metropolitan Opera



Photo: Lisa Walker

Listening to Singers: Sylvia McNair and Pearl



Amy Tan: Unintended Memoir - American Masters



Photo: Julian Johnson

Nolly on Masterpiece - Helena Bonham Carter

Photo: Quay Street Productions and Masterpiece



Zora Neale Hurston: Claiming a Space

Photo: Library of Congress, Estate of Jane Belo

MARCH

March is [Women’s History Month](#), the annual celebration of trailblazing women who have made important contributions to our society and culture. Throughout the month, WTTW shared profiles of remarkable women in American history including Supreme Court Justice [Sandra Day O’Connor](#) and [Zora Neale Hurston](#) on *American Experience*, [Twyla Tharp](#) and [Amy Tan](#) on *American Masters*, and [Ida B. Wells](#) and [Jane Addams](#) on *Chicago Stories*.

Also in March, WTTW premiered the new *Masterpiece* drama series [Nolly](#), whose title character was played by two-time Oscar nominee Helena Bonham Carter. Noele “Nolly” Gordon, one of the most famous faces on British TV in the 1960s and ’70s, was unceremoniously fired from her hit show at the height of her career. The miniseries was a bold exploration of how the establishment turns on women who refuse to play by the rules; a wild and outrageously fun and wildly entertaining ride through Gordon’s most tumultuous years; and a sharp, affectionate, and heartbreaking portrait of a forgotten icon. On a separate note, WTTW celebrated St. Patrick’s Day with a new two-part program, *My Ireland*, hosted by actor, director, and singer Adrian Dunbar.

WFMT kicked off Women’s History Month in March with [a special episode of *Introductions*](#) featuring works by female composers – including Fannie Mendelssohn, Jessie Montgomery, and Cécile Chaminade – performed by young local musicians. [Dame Jane Glover](#) led Music of the Baroque’s performance of the St. Matthew Passion, Bach’s dramatic sacred masterpiece; and soprano [Lise Davidsen](#) returned to the Metropolitan Opera as Lenora in a new production of Verdi’s *La forza del destino* and an interview with Grammy-winning American soprano [Sylvia McNair](#) on *Listening to Singers*, plus a dedicated edition of [The Midnight Special](#).



APRIL



Photo: Todd Rosenberg

Galvin Cello Quartet



Photo: Liz Farina Marikel for WTTW

Chicago Mysteries, Geoffrey Baer at Graceland Cemetery



Photo: Expectation, Happy Tramp North, BBC, and Masterpiece

Guilt Season 3 on Masterpiece - Mark Bonnar



Photo: Marc Hauser

Live from WFMT: Corky Siegel



Live from WFMT: Rachel Barton Pine

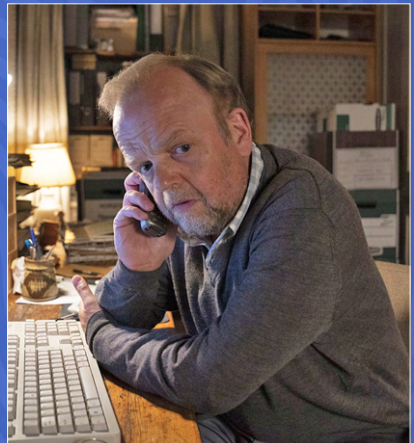


Photo: ITV Studios and Masterpiece

Mr Bates Vs The Post Office - Toby Jones

APRIL

This month, host Geoffrey Baer attempted to solve some of Chicago's most baffling questions in WTTW's fun new special, *Chicago Mysteries*. Working with a team of fellow sleuths, Geoffrey deployed his detective skills to answer burning questions such as: Did a UFO fly over O'Hare Airport? How did the alligator later named "Chance the Snapper" suddenly appear in Chicago's Humboldt Lagoon? Is Hull House haunted? Why don't Chicagoans put ketchup on their hot dogs? The show's [companion website](#) dug into even more unsolved mysteries.

Also in April, WTTW welcomed a new season of the dark comedy-mystery series *Guilt* and a four-part series that caused quite a stir in Britain - the based-on-a-true-story drama *Mr Bates vs The Post Office*. On Saturday evenings, WTTW presented *My Life is Murder*, a new series from New Zealand and Australia that starred Lucy Lawless as a retired detective-turned-breadmaker, and another series from Down Under, *The Brokenwood Mysteries*, about a police inspector who discovers an unusual number of murders in a quaint rural town.

WFMT's Levin Performance Studio was a busy place in April as *Live from WFMT* welcomed back an eclectic group of favorite artists - *The Galvin Cello Quartet*, piano duo *Claire Aebersold and Ralph Neiweem*, violinist *Rachel Barton Pine and pianist Matthew Hagle*, and *Corky Siegel's Chamber Blues*. Also live from our studio, *Introductions* featured [the three finalists](#) from the 2024 Crain-Maling Foundation Young Artists Competition, including a true trailblazer - 16-year-old *Jaden Teague-Núñez* - who won first prize playing an instrument that had never before appeared in the contest: the steelpan. And WFMT celebrated Passover with a special appearance by the *Maxwell Street Klezmer Band* with renowned Cantor Pavel Roytman.





Nature: Grizzly 399 and cubs



Composer Reena Esmail



Julia Bullock in *El Nino*



Metropolitan Opera: *Madama Butterfly*



Photographic Evidence: *The Corky Lee Story*



Repairing the World: *Stories from the Tree of Life*

MAY

This month on WTTW, the award-winning series *Nature* took viewers to Wyoming's Grand Teton National Park to meet its most famous bear, *Grizzly 399*, as she raised four young cubs while grappling with the effects of climate change and human encroachment.

Of course, May is also [Asian American and Pacific Islander \(AAPI\) Heritage Month](#), and WTTW's relevant content included *Meet and Eat at Lee's Garden*, a filmmaker's poignant look back at her family's restaurant; *Photographic Justice: The Corky Lee Story*, the story of an activist photographer whose striking images of Asian American life inspired many; and *The Vow from Hiroshima*, following a survivor of the devastating atomic blast. WTTW also commemorated [Jewish Heritage Month](#) with programming throughout the month including a new documentary, *Repairing the World*, about Pittsburgh's community response to hate in the aftermath of the 2018 assault on three congregations at the Tree of Life synagogue.

WFMT celebrated [AAPI Heritage Month](#) in May with a special episode of *Introductions* featuring music influenced by Indian, Chinese, Japanese, and Korean cultures, including works by Reena Esmail, Tan Dun, Mischa Zupko, and Manuel de Falla and Zarin Mehta. And don't miss the Metropolitan Opera's production of Puccini's *Madama Butterfly*, and a work by the prolific Japanese film composer Shigeru Umebayashi: *Yumeji's Theme* from *In the Mood for Love*. To mark Jewish Heritage Month, composer Jake Heggie and *Chicago Tribune* reporter Howard Reich join WFMT to preview the world premiere opera *Before It All Goes Dark*, based on the true story of a man who learns he is the sole heir to a priceless art collection stolen by the Nazis and discovers a Jewish identity he never knew.





Art and Pep



Cellist Alban Gerhardt



My Life is Murder - Lucy Lawless



Miriam and Alan: Lost in Scotland



Firsthand: Homeless – The Migrant Experience, Jose and family



Soprano Karen Slack - Grant Park Music Festival

Photo: Hauswirth CO

Photo: Blink Films

Photo: Abel Aracena for WTTW

Photo: R.J. Entertainment

Photo: Kia Caldwell

JUNE

As fiscal 2024 neared its end and Chicagoans welcomed summer, WFMT brought listeners a new season of *The Grant Park Music Festival*, live from the Pritzker Pavilion in Millennium Park. And to mark Juneteenth, WFMT aired a special concert by the Grant Park Orchestra led by Carlos Kalmar and featuring soprano and [Lyric Unlimited Artist-in-Residence Karen Slack](#). The program, called *Songs of Freedom*, featured Jessie Montgomery's *Five Freedom Songs*, based on the historical anthology *Slave Songs of the United States*, and Chicago composer Margaret Bonds's *Montgomery Variations*, a work dedicated to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. The Grant Park season on WFMT that month also included performances of [Antonín Dvořák's Cello Concerto](#) with Alban Gerhardt, the suite from Richard Strauss's comic opera *Der Rosenkavalier*, Haydn's *London Symphony* led by guest conductor Ludovic Morlot, and the world premiere of *Water Nymphs* by Brazilian American composer Clarice Assad.

This month, WTTW's award-winning multiplatform *Firsthand* initiative explored *The Migrant Experience* with five new short documentaries and a wealth of related content. For LGBTQ Pride Month, WTTW revisited the *Chicago Stories* documentary *The Outrage of Danny Sotomayor*, about the political cartoonist and equal rights crusader who fought for better AIDS treatments for his community. Along with it, WTTW premiered *Art and Pep*, a film about the founders of the iconic Chicago gay bar Sidetrack that has served as a pillar of the city's gay business district; *To Be Takei*, tracing the incredible life of *Star Trek* actor and author George Takei; and *Miriam and Alan: Lost in Scotland* with Hollywood actors Miriam Margolyes and Alan Cumming who take a rollicking tour of Scotland, with a side trip to America.





Brandis Friedman interviews Judy Woodruff



Gala Chairs Lester and Renée Crown



President and CEO Sandra Cordova Micek and trustee Kristina Van Liew



WFMT host Lisa Flynn and WTTW host Geoffrey Baer



Steve Crown with Sandra and Jack Guthman



Will Liverman performs

CELEBRATION 2024

Chaired by Renée and Lester Crown, Celebration 2024 promoted the mission of WTTW and WFMT by highlighting our core value of curiosity. On May 1, 2024, the organization welcomed 400 guests for a cocktail hour, engaging program, and elegant seated dinner at the Union League Club of Chicago.

Guests enjoyed a musical performance from Grammy Award-winning baritone Will Liverman, and a fascinating interview with *PBS News Hour* senior correspondent Judy Woodruff conducted by *Chicago Tonight* anchor Brandis Friedman. WTTW and WFMT were pleased to present Sandra and Jack Guthman with the WTTW | WFMT Renée Crown Leadership Award for their exemplary leadership and longstanding commitment to this organization and others throughout our city.

Celebration 2024 received more than 140 gifts from business, philanthropic, and civic leaders, raising nearly \$1,340,000 in essential general operating support for WTTW and WFMT.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



WFMT Introductions in the Community, November 2023



Learn & Play: Grandparent Connection, May 2024



Screening event - Chicago Stories: The Outrage of Danny Sotomayor, October 2023



WTTW Gospel Showcase, April 2024



Kids at Donkey Hodie event, May 2024



WTTW Community Engagement Team and Daniel Tiger at Festival del Niño, June 2024

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

WTTW and WFMT have a unique opportunity to [reach beyond our platforms](#) to build connections with Chicago’s many communities to enrich lives, engage communities, and inspire exploration. In FY2024, WTTW hosted almost 100 events in the station’s strategic focus areas (Society & Culture, Early Childhood, and Access to the Arts), reaching more than 80,000 people. Many Society & Culture screenings featured films focusing on minority communities and their stories, including *Finding Your Roots*, *20 Days in Mariupol*, *The American Buffalo*, and *Wild Hope*. WTTW hosted previews and discussions of four original multiplatform productions – *The Outrage of Danny Sotomayor*, *Ida B. Wells*, *House Music: A Cultural Revolution*, and *Firsthand: Homeless*.

WTTW Kids continued to offer Daniel Tiger at Pilsen’s free Be My Neighbor Day, Nature Cat online summer and winter camps, monthly activity calendars, and [WTTW Kids Learn & Play](#) series in Chicago public libraries. Learn & Play rolled out its latest intergenerational tour, Grandparent Connection, in senior centers. WTTW also brought Nature Cat to Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum’s Summer Fest, and Draw Together in Highland Park. WTTW’s Nature Cat Girl Scout Explorer Patch program engaged kids in Ohio, North Carolina, Utah, and Texas, while Nature Cat visited families at Kids to Parks Day events in Miami and Colorado. New to the scene, Donkey Hodie hung out with families at Elmhurst Art Museum and demoed a new pop-up exhibit at Lincoln Park Zoo.

WTTW also hosted a Gospel Showcase at Shiloh Seventh-Day Adventist Church, a night featuring local and national artists such as Karen Clark Sheard and Lamar Campbell. In the classroom, WFMT’s [Bach to School](#) program provided instrument sets as well as lessons at all [Chicago Commons](#) locations, Chicago’s second-largest Head Start and early childhood education provider. Johnnie Colemon Elementary Academy toured the station and learned about careers in radio. Finally, WFMT hosted an [Introductions in the Community](#) event at Senn High School, in which students participated in a performance of the Saturday morning program featuring talented pre-college classical musicians.





Nick Blumberg reporting for WTTW News

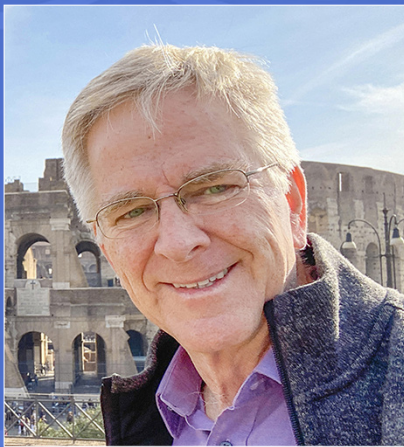


Little Bird



Great Performances: Audra McDonald

Photo: PBS



Rick Steves Europe

Photo: Rick Steves' Europe



Chicago mayor Brandon Johnson is interviewed by Brandis Friedman

Photo: Michael Izkierdo for WTTW News



Mary Berry Love To Cook

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

FISCAL 2024 JULY 1, 2023-JUNE 30, 2024

(in thousands)

Assets

Cash and investments	\$61,002
Accounts and pledges receivable, net	2,758
Property and equipment, net	20,139
Other assets	8,979
Total Assets	\$92,878

Liabilities and Net Assets

Liabilities:

Accounts payable and accrued expenses	\$2,785
Long-term loans payable	7,400
Other liabilities	6,248
Total Liabilities	\$16,433

Net assets:

Without donor restrictions	\$45,977
With donor restrictions	30,468
Total Net Assets	\$76,445
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$92,878

Revenue

Direct public support and development	\$23,195
Underwriting and production sponsorship	9,434
Program licensing and facility rental	1,170
Federal and state grants	4,025
Other	3,057
Total Revenue	\$40,881

Expenses

Programming and production	\$30,187
Fundraising	9,089
Business Support (or Administration)	4,538
Total Expenses	\$43,814

Increase in Net Assets from Operating Activities (\$2,933)

Statement of Activity for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2024



Photo: McGee Media

Gospel - Tyrell Bell and the Belle Singers



Independent Lens: The Tuba Thieves



Photo: American Public Television

Paul Hollywood Goes to Hollywood



Photo: © Danilo Acosta

Pianist Daniil Trifonov on WFMT



Photo: Jessica Howes PBS SoCal

Art Happens Here with John Lithgow



Photo: GBH, 2025 WGBH Educational Foundation

Antiques Roadshow: Junk in the Trunk 14

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(as of June 30, 2024)

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(as of June 30, 2024)

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Thank You!

All of us at WTTW and WFMT
thank you for your support.

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