

# musica intima

VOCAL ENSEMBLE



Annual Report  
2024/25





**musica intima** performs and operates on the stolen territories of the Coast Salish peoples, including the territories of the xʷməθkʷəyəm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish), and səliłwətaʔt (Tseil-Waututh) Nations. We are continually working towards redress through intentional programming and fruitful relationship building and collaborations with Indigenous artists.

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# President's Report

New beginnings, with support from all of you.

As we find ourselves in the midst of **musica intima**'s 33rd season, I'd like to reflect on some of this organization's accomplishments. Those of you who came to our New Canon season opener might recognize some of these remarks, but I thought some of it should be preserved for posterity as part of our yearly reports.

To date, **musica intima** has commissioned and premiered over 30 new Canadian choral works, workshopped new ideas by composers at various career stages, and we have made many new friends from various cultures and artistic genres, inside and outside of the established choral tradition. We are determined to carry on and to make the next 33 years even more remarkable.

This has been a difficult year of transition and change for **musica intima**, but we look upon this experience as an opportunity to grow, learn, and move onwards and upwards. I want to thank Lucy Smith and Jacob Gramit for their years of commitment to this ensemble, and sincerely wish them well on their new paths.

With these changes, we feel extremely grateful, and indeed lucky, that one of our long serving altos has stepped forward to be our new Artistic Manager. Not only does she bring to this role a

wealth of experience as a singer, pianist, conductor, and music educator, but coming as she does from the ensemble, she provides us with a crucial link to those 33 years of **musica intima** organizational wisdom.

The Society received many applications for the position of General Manager and we interviewed a number of excellent arts administrators. In the end, we chose an experienced, dedicated, and insightful arts professional that we knew could hit the ground running. Rita Ueda was known to many of us as a composer, but she has proved time and again over the course of this season that she's also an exceptional administrator. I'm deeply grateful for her tireless commitment to this work.

Finally I'd like to thank our many supporters. With the dwindling of some public grants, and some unexpected delays on others, our individual donors, private foundations, and our board stepped up to fill the breach and kept **musica intima** running this year. We couldn't do what we do without your help, and for that help we are extremely grateful.

**Troy Topnik**  
PRESIDENT  
**musica intima** SOCIETY

## Board of Directors

|                                                  |                                                |                                                            |
|--------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Troy Topnik</b><br>President                  | <b>Brigid Lumholst-Smith</b><br>Vice-President | <b>Dan McFaull</b><br>Treasurer                            |
| <b>Katherine Evans</b><br>Singers Representative | <b>Lisa Slouffman</b><br>Director              | <b>Anne Louise Aboud</b><br>Director - term completed 2025 |



Photo: Heritage Hall

## Ensemble Singers 2024-25

|                             |                         |                         |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| <i>Sofia Avelino</i>        | <i>Kira Fondse</i>      | <i>Kate Medcalf</i>     |
| <i>Stephen Baker</i>        | <i>Matthew Gorlitz</i>  | <i>Danny Najjar</i>     |
| <i>Tabitha Brasso-Ernst</i> | <i>Deanna Gestrin</i>   | <i>Lucy Smith</i>       |
| <i>John Carpenter</i>       | <i>Jacob Gramit</i>     | <i>Risa Takahashi</i>   |
| <i>Lee Clapp</i>            | <i>Kiyomi Hori</i>      | <i>Asitha Tennekoon</i> |
| <i>Sam Dabrusin</i>         | <i>Hilary Ison</i>      | <i>Gloria Wan</i>       |
| <i>Oliver Dalton</i>        | <i>Anja Kelly</i>       | <i>Jamie Yoon</i>       |
| <i>Katherine Evans</i>      | <i>Melodie Langevin</i> | <i>Patrick Zhu</i>      |
| <i>Renee Fajard</i>         | <i>Steve Maddock</i>    |                         |

# Administrative Staff

## 2024-25

**Jacob Gramit**  
Artistic Manager - term completed May 2025

**Lucy Smith**  
Operations Manager - term completed May 2025

**Risa Takahashi**  
Artistic Manager - appointed August 2025

## 2025-Present

**Risa Takahashi**  
Artistic Manager

**Rita Ueda**  
General Manager - appointed September 2025

# Artistic Activities

**new canon II**  
September 2024  
Performances: Vancouver • Abbotsford

The second annual *new canon* focused on Indigenous, women, and POC composers, drawing from tour programs presented in Spring 2024. The program included works by Indigenous composers and long-time friends of the ensemble, Andrew Balfour, Sherryl Sewepagaham, and Ian Cusson, alongside new connections Ily Matthew Maniano and Joanne Metcalfe. It also featured new-to-**mi** works by Tracy Wong, Shireen Abu-Khader, Saunder Choi, and Nicholas Ryan Kelly (*novum musica* emerging composer program cohort 2024).

**Solicitude**  
December 2024  
Performances: Sechelt • Surrey • Vancouver  
Workshop: Vancouver, with Hussein Janmohamed

*Solicitude: Music to Shine in Darkest Winter* featured the voices of **musica intima** alongside music by Russell Wallace, a Lil'wat composer and singer. The program explored winter through Indigenous musical traditions and perspectives, paired with works reflecting the season from **musica intima's** own and various cultural traditions.

Additional repertoire by Reena Esmail, Saunder Choi, and Hussein Janmohamed broadened the cultural and musical scope of the program, contributing a range of contemporary voices within a cohesive artistic framework.

Due to health reasons, Russell was unable to join the performances. As the project was developed in collaboration with him, his artistic presence remained central through the program.

**ding dong!**  
December 2024  
Performances: Ladner • Vancouver

The ninth edition of the annual concert series ding dong! continued its tradition as **musica intima's** irreverent alternative Christmas show. A long-standing audience favourite, the program revisited ensemble and audience-loved arrangements from the past nine years, highlighting the beauty and power of a cappella singing while maintaining the series' playful, unconventional spirit. This season's edition also marked a return to **musica intima's** roots, focusing on unaccompanied voices. The program featured seasonal favourites in folk, blues, and rock styles, arranged by **musica intima** members, balancing musical excellence with accessibility, humour, and strong audience engagement.



**NAGAMO**

February 2025  
Performance: North Vancouver – Cancelled due to snow  
Workshops: Vancouver • UBC

Following the highly successful Montreal + Ottawa tour in 2024, **musica intima (mi)** brought the **NAGAMO** tour to Vancouver. Cree composer Andrew Balfour and **musica intima** performed the mi-commissioned album, ‘Nagamo’ (which means ‘Sings’ in Ojibway). This ground-breaking, 2022 Juno Award-nominated project “reimagines the musical dialogue between the nations of the so-called New World and Old World,” says Balfour.

“During the beginning of the 17th century, several Chiefs and esteemed Indigenous leaders journeyed to Europe in the hope of forging alliances. In many cases, they were treated as respected ambassadors. Nagamo explores the fantastical idea of what might have happened if the sharing of music, and the respect of culture had continued.”

Andrew travelled to Vancouver for a week of workshops that was scheduled to culminate in a concert at the BlueShore Financial Centre for the Performing Arts in North Vancouver. Unfortunately, heavy snowfall resulted in the cancellation of the BlueShore performance, as well as two additional workshops at Capilano University and the NOW Society.

**Where You Go**

May 2025  
Performance: Vancouver  
Outreach Concert: Vancouver, Grandview Park

**Where You Go (WYG)** is the continuation of our ongoing collaboration with Olivia C Davies, choreographer of mixed-Anishinaabe, French-Canadian, Finnish, and Welsh heritage. Weaving together voices, dance, lighting and costume design, WYG is an immersive journey through love, friendship and devotion. Davies' writes: ‘In a world where the only event that keeps you moving forward is the potential that you will meet your beloved once again, haunted by words said and unsaid, and by regrets and hopes unfulfilled, abandoning the struggle for power in a field of possibility after the loss, they wander here where damages are repaired, love knows no bounds and the only way to go is up’.

WYG featured two works: *Klangenfort Redux*, a new work inspired by Savannah Walling’s 1976 text and choreography, and *Where You Go*, **musica intima**’s original collaboration with Davies, filmed in 2022. **musica intima** performed a live score with music by David Lang, Luca Marenzio, Rebecca Dale, and Jóhann Jóhannsson.

Additional Outreach

**Song-cology**

2016–Present

Since 2017, **musica intima**’s professional singers have returned each week to the BC Cancer Agency in Vancouver to lead a community choir known as **Song-cology**. For one hour, people whose days are shaped by urgency and care gather simply to breathe, listen, and sing together. Clinicians stand beside administrators, researchers beside support staff, voices meeting in a shared space that feels separate from the demands of the workday.

What happens in the room is important and meaningful. The choir offers a place to reset, to reconnect, and to experience colleagues not only through their roles but as fellow human beings. This organizational choir is aligned with BC Cancer’s culture program, which aims to build resilience to workplace stressors and strengthen teamwork and relationships across the agency. Music becomes the meeting point where those goals take on a human shape.

Research from the World Health Organization and studies in healthcare settings continue to affirm what participants often express more simply: when people feel connected to each other and to a shared culture, they are better equipped to manage stress, collaborate well, and sustain their work. Through this rewarding and meaningful program, **musica intima** contributes to that sense of connection, supporting the well-being of staff and, in turn, the patients and families they serve.

**Remembering, Aloud**

November 2024

For the fourth consecutive year, **musica intima** was invited by Little Chamber Music to participate in an outdoor Remembrance Day ceremony held in the veterans’ plot at Mountain View Cemetery. This year, **mi** commissioned Russell Wallace, a Lil’wat composer, to create a version of his choral work Forgotten Warriors, which honours the Indigenous soldiers who fought for the Crown in WWI and WWII. The work was performed by **musica intima** before the ceremony began at 11 AM.

**Cantando Festival**

April 2025

**musica intima** participated in the Cantando Festival in Whistler, BC, offering both a featured performance and an educational workshop. The visit combined artistry and mentorship while sharing **musica intima**’s unique collaborative approach to ensemble singing with participating musicians and educators.

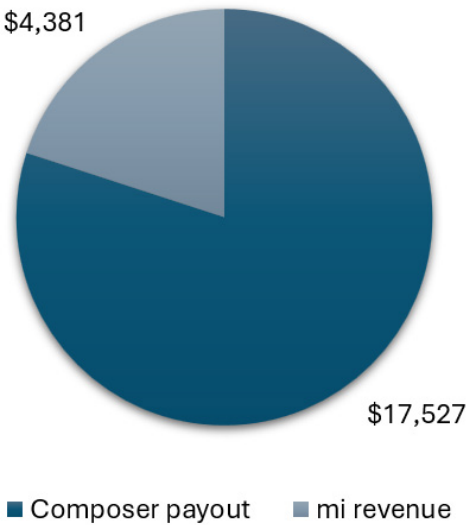


# musica Printima

Many years in the dreams of ensemble singers, musica printima was formally established in 2022 as a composer-centric, exclusively digital publisher. With a small but distinctive catalogue of music commissioned by, written for, or performed by **musica intima**, the imprint was created to ensure that composers' intentions were respected in the publishing process and that revenues flowed directly back to the artists.

Under this model, 80% of earnings from musica printima sales went to the composer, recognizing that these works would not exist without their creative leadership.

NET Sales 2024-25  
\$21,908



## Printima Composers

### KISIWÎPÊHKAHAM

Sherryl Sewepagaham

### NAGAMO

Andrew Balfour

### NOVUM MUSICA new music from Emerging Composers

Hope Salmonson  
Mari Alice Conrad  
Nicholas Kelly  
Katherine Petkovski

### BY ARRANGEMENT

Lane Price

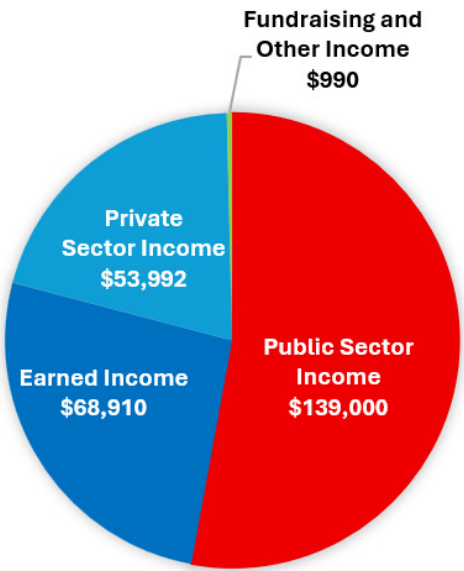
### Shift contemporary choral

Leslie Uyeda  
Katherine Goheen  
Emily Millard  
Joelysa Pankanea  
Jeffery Ryan  
Malika Tirolien  
Kristopher Fulton  
Alex Vollant  
Ramona Luengen  
Nicholas Ryan Kelly  
Beverly McKiver  
Hussein Janmohamed

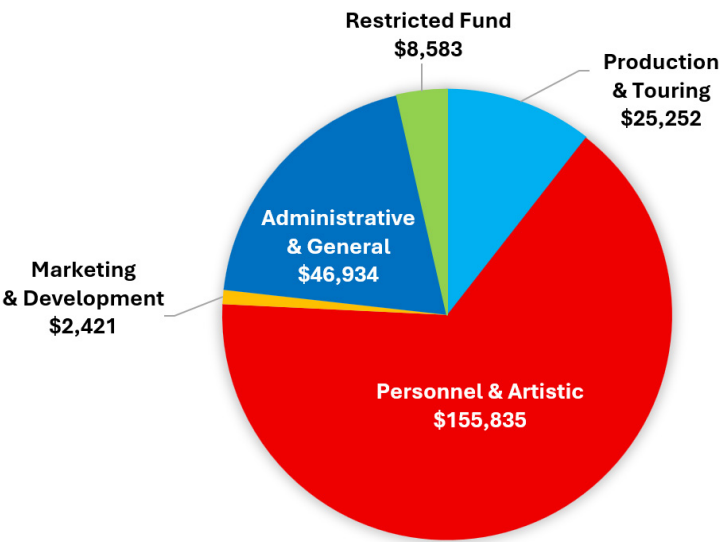
# Financials

|                     | 2025       | 2024       |
|---------------------|------------|------------|
| Total Revenue       | \$262,892  | \$353,573  |
| Total Expenses      | \$239,025  | \$404,343  |
| -----               |            |            |
| NET INCOME          | \$23,867   | (\$50,770) |
| Accumulated Deficit | (\$40,434) | \$10,336   |

Total Revenue 2024-25



Total Expenses 2024-25





# General Manager

As I begin my tenure as General Manager, I am struck by the realization that our success today is a living tribute to the passion of everyone who has been part of our story since 1992. I feel incredibly lucky to join a lineage of such dedicated voices and hands. **musica intima** stands among Canada’s leading new music vocal ensembles, recognised for imaginative programming and a sustained commitment to social equity, diversity, and Reconciliation. That reputation was built through years of patient, often unseen work that shapes what eventually reaches the stage.

I would like to begin by thanking my predecessors, Jacob Gramit, Artistic Manager, and Lucy Smith, Operations Manager. Their stewardship has been tireless. The 2024–25 season reflects their shared vision, marked by artistic clarity and thoughtful curation. The results are awe-inspiring. What they leave behind is not only a successful season, but a legacy of excellence that continues to guide the organization.

I am grateful to the Board of Directors for your trust and generosity during this transition year. Leadership changes can be delicate moments for arts organizations,

and your steadiness has made this one feel possible.

To the ensemble, thank you for welcoming me so warmly. The depth of listening and shared purpose in your work is immediately clear. And to Risa Takahashi, our new Artistic Manager, thank you for your openness and collaborative spirit. This beginning feels less like a handover and more like a conversation already in motion.

*The ground is shifting. The old maps we were given, and those we drew through years of work, no longer seem to match the cultural terrain.*

Across Canada and beyond, the arts sector is moving through a period of real adjustment. Economic realities are tightening, audience behaviour is shifting, and the assumptions that once underpinned how we make and sustain art no longer feel secure. Long-standing funding structures and organizational habits are being questioned, sometimes productively, sometimes urgently. In this moment, the work ahead is not to withdraw, but to think and act together with greater clarity. **musica intima**, alongside our broader musical and artistic community, will need to share knowledge, resources, and imagination as we navigate what comes next. At the same time, we must continue to centre social equity and diverse representation in our artistic choices and community building. Our responsibility as artists remains unchanged: to create new cultural meaning, to engage seriously with Reconciliation, to help shape the future of Canadian culture, and to continue taking artistic risks that ask something honest of both performers and audiences. Resilience, for us, will come from rigour, generosity, and a willingness to meet uncertainty with curiosity rather than fear.

Assuming this role fills me with both gratitude and purpose. Joining a community so deeply committed to artistry and care is a profound honour. I am excited to help shape our next chapter together, building on the remarkable legacy that precedes me.

**Rita Ueda**  
GENERAL MANAGER  
**musica intima**



Photo: Kids Photo

# Artistic Manager

Although the 2024/25 season was shaped prior to my appointment, I would like to begin by acknowledging the artistic leadership of Jacob Gramit. The season reflects a clear and thoughtful vision, and the breadth of programming speaks to the imagination and care that have long defined **musica intima**. I am grateful for the strong artistic foundation and culture of excellence that I inherit.

I stepped into the role of Artistic Manager in August 2025, having first joined **musica intima** as a singer in 2017. From my earliest days with the ensemble, I have admired the exceptional quality of musicianship and the professionalism that underpin its work. That experience as a performer continues to inform my approach to artistic leadership which is grounded in respect for the singers, the repertoire, and the collaborative process that brings our performances to life.

Since assuming this role, what has struck me most is the ensemble’s depth of listening, not only musically, but collectively. There is a seriousness of intent in rehearsal, a willingness to engage deeply with repertoire, and a shared commitment to artistry that feels both disciplined and generous. That spirit is something I hope to nurture and strengthen in the seasons ahead.

Looking forward, my intention is to continue honouring **musica intima**’s commitment to new music and Canadian voices while also ensuring that the ensemble remains a place of artistic rigour, curiosity, and growth. I believe strongly in fostering shared musical leadership within the ensemble, deepening our engagement with diverse artistic communities, and creating performance experiences that are both musically exacting and emotionally resonant.

As we move into the next season, I look forward to building collaboratively with the ensemble, the General Manager, the Board of Directors, and our broader community. The



Photo: Manto Artworks

foundation laid over many years is remarkable. My hope is to contribute to that legacy with care, clarity, and a sense of possibility.

I am deeply grateful for the opportunity to work with the ensemble members and the organization, and I step into this role with both humility and enthusiasm for what lies ahead.

**Risa Takahashi**  
ARTISTIC MANAGER  
**musica intima**





# The Numbers

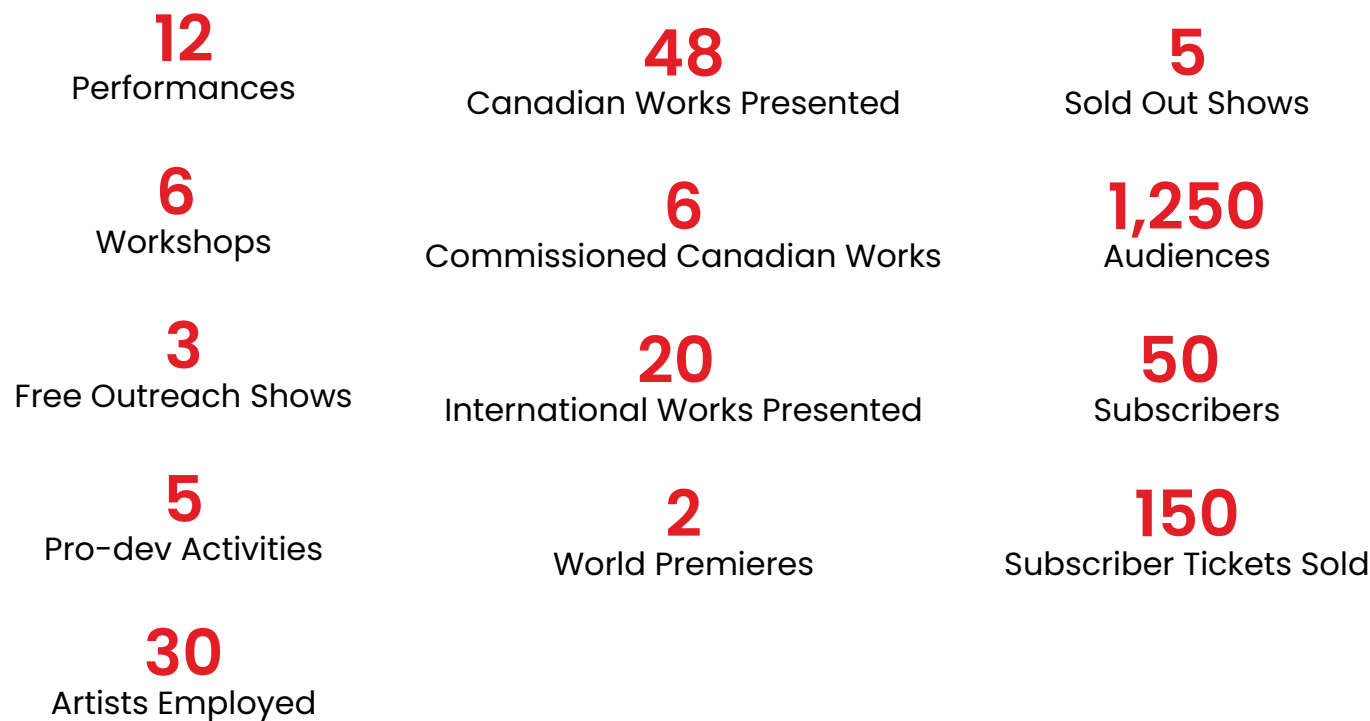


Photo: Wendy D Photography



# Our Donors

## YOUR SUPPORT MAKES OUR WORK POSSIBLE

Thank you for helping make another year of music possible at **musica intima**. Your generosity supports performances, recordings, touring, and community outreach, and helps create meaningful musical experiences for our audiences.

Like most not-for-profit arts organizations, ticket sales cover only part of our costs. Philanthropic support allows us to maintain artistic excellence, support professional musicians, and continue sharing choral music with our communities.

We are deeply grateful for your confidence in our work and for the role you play in sustaining it. Thank you for being part of our story.

|                           |                       |                   |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|
| Chris Aikenhead           | Darby Honeyman Elsie  | Julie Peters      |
| Janet Allwork             | & Audrey Jang Karin   | Manon Poitras     |
| Debra Anderson            | Johnson               | Carman J. Price   |
| Jennifer Balfour          | Lynn Kagan            | Kelly Rayter      |
| Caitlin Beaupré           | Margo Keenan          | Shane Riczu       |
| Allan & Elizabeth Bell    | Beryl Kirk            | E. Jane Robertson |
| Jan Berney                | J. Evan Kreider       | Diedre Rogers     |
| Donald Brooks             | Janet Lowcock         | Lisa Slouffman    |
| Darlene Bruce             | Brigid Lumholst-Smith | Troy Topnik       |
| Diana Carter              | Steve Maddock Karen   | Sandra Vestvik    |
| Melissa Clarkson Barbara  | Mang Kennedy          | Olga Volkoff      |
| Constantinescu Cheryl     | Melanie Marchand      | Stefan von Dehn   |
| Cooper                    | Liz & Andrew Massil   | Jon Washburn      |
| Stephen Douglas Andrea    | Robert Mayhew         | Lynn Warburton    |
| Dropko                    | Luke McAndless-Davis  | Lynn Woodruff     |
| Joanna Dundas Charles     | Caitlin MacRae        |                   |
| and Lucile Flavelle Allen | Hugh McCreddie        | Anonymous         |
| Fowlis                    | Coral McFadden        |                   |
| Patricia French           | Dan McFaull           |                   |
| Russ & Star Fuoco         | Elizabeth McLenehan   |                   |
| John Gordon               | Laura Munn            |                   |
| Christer Hallberg         | Brenda L. Naylor      |                   |
| Don Harder                | Sumiko Nishizawa      |                   |
| Derek & Olive M. Healy    | David Pay             |                   |
| Martha Lou Henley         | Brian Laberge         |                   |



# Sponsors

WITH SPECIAL THANKS AND GRATITUDE



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Anako Foundation



Martha Lou Henley  
Charitable Trust



Charles and Lucile Flavelle Family Fund

Elsie & Audrey Jang Fund

Evan and Janice Kreider Family Foundation



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du Canada



Photo: Wendy D Photography



# musica intima

VOCAL ENSEMBLE



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