



# Your **COMPAS** Impact Report

Fiscal Year 2021



*COMPAS delivers creative experiences  
that unleash the potential within all of us.*

# 2021 Reflections– You made the magic possible

As you will read throughout these pages, COMPAS rose to the challenge this fiscal year. We did not take a hiatus from delivering on our mission of bringing creative experiences to people in our community. Ross Sutter, one of our long-time teaching artists gave us permission to share his observations:

*As I struggled to keep some work going last year, mainly doing digital programs and Zoom workshops, it was always great to watch and learn from all of you at COMPAS. You kept posting so many beautiful artist demos and performances. You, the Schubert Club, and the American Swedish Institute were the main organizations that inspired me in my own work the past year and a half. I have little time for those organizations that decided to take the year off and left their audiences and artists high and dry for a year. COMPAS, the Schubert Club and ASI showed their dedication to their artists and kept doing the best that they could in tough times. I wish you the best as you continue your work.*

COMPAS has more than 130 talented teaching artists and ensembles on our roster. Each one delivers a unique program in their own way. They teach a wide range of visual, literary, musical, and performing art genres, hail from cultures around the world, and bring years of experience building people's artistic skills. In this way, students of all ages have an opportunity to increase their **confidence** in their abilities, experience **joy** in the making, share their voice with others – and of course, make art!

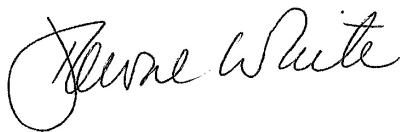
We continued to meet site partners' needs for arts programs and for building hope and joyful experiences that help their students, clients, patrons, or community members. Since 1968, we've brought the arts to people by deploying teaching artists throughout our community. Together people experience the wonder of igniting creativity and sharing the experience with others.

Who are our partners? You! and your support helps fill creativity gaps by allowing us to **connect** with a variety of community organizations. Especially during this difficult and tumultuous time with COVID and racial divide (and unrest). Art helps to express our humanness; it is central to our lives. It provides **healing** to our communities to generate **hope** and possibilities. Our artists are everywhere shedding light on all of our systems.


Where is COMPAS? We're everywhere! We work with schools, libraries, organizations serving youth facing homelessness or adults with a disability, shelters for women and children leaving abusive relationships, pediatric hospitals, drop-in and day programs, parks and recreation departments, recovery programs, and more.

We owe a debt of **gratitude** to our amazing staff, who were furloughed to 75% throughout this year and yet remained passionate about our work. We also benefited from a committed Board of Directors that saw the need for our mission and gave us the green light to continue to operate. And you, our donors, who believed in our mission and hung in there with us and provided financial support, which was energizing to say the very least. You made the magic possible.

We are eternally grateful for your faith and belief in us, Thank You.



**Dawne Brown White**  
Executive Director  
dawne@compas.org



**Yvette Trotman**  
Board President

# The Beginning – The Art of Poetry

What is the statement that is followed by an often asked question at COMPAS – What an amazing organization and how did it all start? This account is excerpted from *The Art of Poetry* – written by Norita Dittberner-Jax; published in 1987.

The work of linking poets, students, and teachers has always been an effort carried by the force of someone's personality. The most important of these personalities have always been the poets, writers, and artists, who go into the classroom and weave magic tapestries right before students' and teachers' eyes. But in the early days, it took a leap of imaginative leadership to form the initial Poets-In-The-School national programs and to set the wheels in motion.

The first leap was in Washington at the National Endowment for the Arts which was created as part of Lyndon B. Johnson's Program for a Great Society. It was decided to invigorate the Literature program by putting poets to work directly with students in the classroom. In 1967, the NEA staff discovered Molly Taylor, the COMPAS founder who had a reputation for grass-roots arts organizing. They provided COMPAS with its first \$10,000 grant that was matched by an anonymous donor.

COMPAS created 2 interwoven strands – The first was a series of Saturday seminars for English teachers in Minneapolis Schools. The complementary strand involved local poets reading their work at the schools of the teachers that attended the seminar. Because of the approval of John B. Davis, Minneapolis Superintendent, COMPAS poets were able to reach students with the power of poetry, at a time where there was national unrest and protests, AND while a new American culture was emerging.

This year, we honor the legacy of **John Caddy and Robert Bly** by sharing a snapshot of their stories. We celebrate their contributions of creating a legacy of artists, writers, and Poets-In-The-School program – which was later included other art forms, and was spread to additional partner sites including libraries, older adult residences, shelters, jails, programs for youth, day programs for adults with persistent mental health challenges, or other disabilities, pediatric hospitals, parks, and recreation department, etc.

**John Caddy**, who helped plan the first year, remembers 1968 as “a heady time. We were paid \$100 per day. Incredible! None of us had ever made that kind of money in poetry.” There was a tremendous sense of excitement and energy as the presence of poets and poetry began to make itself felt in the classroom. In the true spirit of the times something new and original was occurring, something that was born of the long traditions of poetry throughout history, but which was also a part of the present, something alive and powerful.

The demand soared. Students could sense the essential truth and power of poetry and were curious about the people who brought this strange new energy to the room. The impact on teachers was equally significant. Occasionally there was trouble. Some principals (this was 1968!) were appalled at how the poets looked. School administrators were often conservative and suspicious of outsiders. To them, long hair and beards were automatically symbols of rebellion. John Caddy remembered being thrown out of West High School because he wore a beard. In another school, the principal listened in on the intercom, hoping to catch John saying something that he could be disapproving of. Angry letters were exchanged in the Minneapolis Tribune, and school officials insisted that parents read the books they were criticizing. Through it all, John B. Davis stood steadfast behind the program and did not flinch, even when the criticism was sharp. In 1969, Saint Paul Schools jumped into the program, and it continued to take shape.

In 1969, there were still some problems with beards and language, and the poets learned how to thrive within the confines of the school system. In the fall, When Allen Ginsberg, poet of the Beat Generation came to Coffman Union at the University of Minnesota, more than 1500 people, almost all students, showed up to hear him. The counter-culture rallying cry was felt across our Twin Cities and the country.

**Robert Bly** lived in Madison, MN, and traveled to Minneapolis to be part of the first cohort of the Poets-In-The-School program in Minneapolis. This teaching work meshed with his co-founding of American Writers Against the Vietnam War – a publication created in 1966. Bly continued to write, edit, and publish for the next forty years and went on to be the founder of a gathering of poets, storytellers, and mythologists, which still meets annually. Bly is also considered to be the founder of the Men's Movement sparked in 1990 with the publication of his seminal book *Iron John*.

We also honor **Joy Davis**, a kindred spirit of Molly's who through her love of literature, contributed to COMPAS' well-being. She persisted in bringing her love of literature into the community with laughter, energy, and style. Wherever she lived, worked, or worshiped, she shared her knowledge of the written word. Dr. Davis continued to inspire us all, until her passing. She will also be missed.

Our thanks also go out to **Peg Guilfoyle** and **Susan Sands**, longtime supporters of COMPAS, for inspiring this remembrance of our history. We at COMPAS are so fortunate to have the benefit of the lives and talents of these five individuals.

**NOTE:** The COMPAS Poets-In-The Schools program became the Writers and Poets in the School program, which became the Writers and Artists in the School (WAITS) program, and finally today, the COMPAS Creative Classroom Program. It has been admirably led for more than 30 years by Daniel Gabriel, and more recently, Julie Strand. Because of their leadership thousands of students have experienced the power of expressing themselves using the literary arts. And the program has published its annual 42nd Anthology of Student Writing. We owe them, and all the COMPAS teaching artists, a debt of gratitude for sharing themselves and their talents with Minnesotans.

## Covid-19

Thanks a lot Covid-19  
Now I'm staring at a screen  
Distance learning is no fun  
I just want to be done  
Watching Netflix all night long  
Which is clearly all wrong  
Binging, scrolling, and even streaming  
Might leave you feeling like you've been dreaming  
Electronics all sounds great  
Maybe even staying up late  
Until you see you've spent days  
With countless hours in a haze  
Screens or chemicals what was the cause  
Just take a breath and pause  
Lysol, hand sanitizer, and even bleach  
Keep it all within your reach  
Toilet papers running out  
Stop there's no need to shout  
Target will still be open  
At least that's what I'm hoping  
Why are you worrying about this anyway  
When people are dying and won't see another day  
Shouldn't this be more important to you  
Than finding something to wipe your poo  
C'mon guys we've gotta come together  
As if we're birds of a feather  
That stick together  
Just remember you're not alone  
Everyone else is working from home  
One day we'll be back in class  
And this will all pass

*Olivia Anda*, Grade 8  
Anoka Middle School for the Arts  
Teaching Artist, Frank Sentwali

*they'll see how beautiful I am...*



This year marks our 42<sup>nd</sup> Anthology of student writing, *They'll See How Beautiful I Am...*

2020-2021 Selected Works from the COMPAS Creative Classroom Program

# COMPAS Programs: Creative Community

**You inspired** people in communities throughout the state with artist-led creative experiences in libraries, shelters for people experiencing homelessness or domestic violence; social service organizations that serve adults living with physical, intellectual or mental health disabilities; jails; youth organizations; community centers; and beyond.

852  
people

Artful Aging™ programs inspired older adults in residential and community facilities with creative experiences that banish social isolation and build new skills.

Creative Community reached people of all ages!

29,223  
people

893  
people

Access Arts empowered people of all abilities through creating and connecting with each other through the arts.

60%  
of MN  
counties

Due to the access of virtual programming, COMPAS programs reached 52 of Minnesota's 87 counties and 216 of Minnesota's 355 public libraries.

61%  
of MN  
libraries



Teaching Artists BRKFST teaching audience members break dancing at their City of Hastings performance.

# COMPAS Programs: Creative Classroom

**You believe** in quality education for all children and your support of COMPAS' Creative Classroom program makes a significant contribution to improving their experience.



A student very excited about their teaching artist residency



Teaching Artist Malia Araki Burkhardt working with a student on puppetry at Roseville Public Schools



12,855

K-12 students connected with COMPAS Teaching Artists in-person and online.



2,162

Hours students spent igniting their creativity through a residency, workshop or performance.



43,249

Total number of people in all COMPAS programs you inspired with creativity this year.

## You've made the difference!

“One young woman in my classroom has experienced a very difficult pandemic year, dealing with athletic injuries and mental health issues. Writing her spoken word poem and performing it for her peers provided self-reflection, academic and personal growth, and validation from her classmates.”  
– Classroom teacher

“One of the participants has struggled to be home during covid because home is not a positive place. This program gave him a creative outlet and he now "leans" on it as a coping skill.”  
– Classroom teacher

“My favorite moment is when a participant had to go to an appointment but did not want to miss class, so his mom set him up in the car with his phone/zoom and a box of macaroni (homemade shaker) so he could make music with the rest of the group!” – Classroom teacher

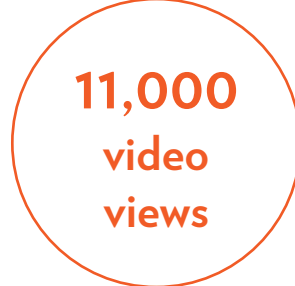
## The Year in Virtual Programming...



5,003  
minutes  
of video  
content



300  
video  
lessons



11,000  
video  
views



1,840  
hours of  
footage  
watched



2,323  
art kits  
created

# COMPAS Teaching Artists

You've brought more than 130 Minnesota-based COMPAS Teaching Artists into classrooms, libraries, community centers, older adult residential centers, and hospitals!



COMPAS Teaching Artists video lessons

**9,500**  
experienced a broadcast of a COMPAS program in a healthcare facility

**3,830**  
hours spent providing creative experiences

**72**  
performances at schools, libraries, older adult residential centers & parks

**59**  
schools hosted a residency

**175**  
weeks of residency programs

**28**  
older adult residencies

**31**  
school districts served

# Financials

## FY 2021 REVENUE:

\$1,293,883

- Foundation & Corporate Support: \$462,988
- Program Service Fees: \$454,437
- Government Grants: \$263,220
- Individual Donations: \$82,510
- Special Events: \$15,945
- In-kind Contribution: \$12,414
- Misc. Revenue: \$2,369

## FY 2021 EXPENSES:

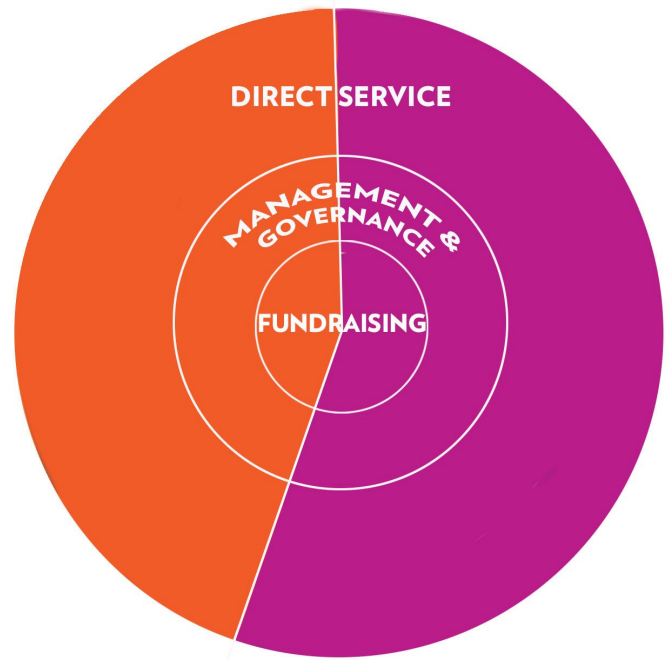
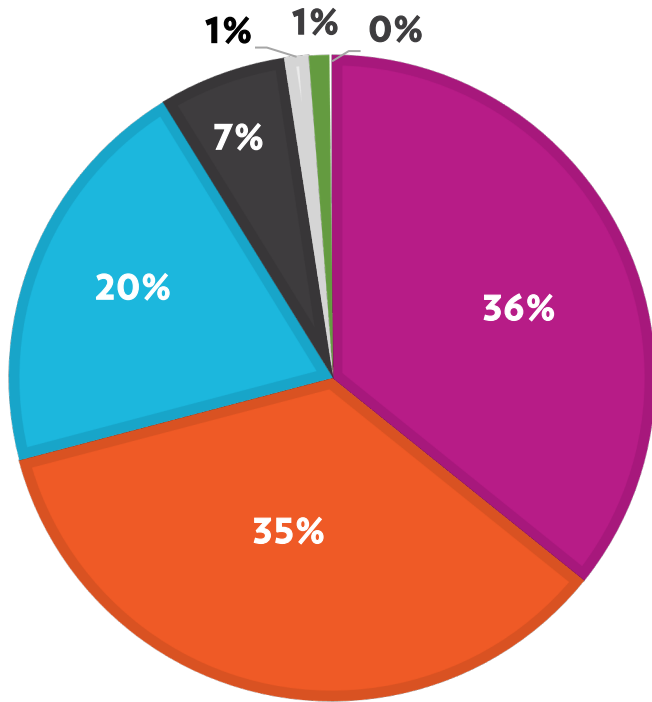
\$974,314

### Direct Service:

- Creative Community \$434,979
- Creative Classroom \$322,857

### Core Mission Support:

- Management & Governance \$148,086
- Fundraising \$68,392



Virtual Reality: Artists Celebrating Creativity during the Pandemic and Beyond show at Fresh Eye Gallery featuring over 25 artists with disabilities.



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3M, *retired*

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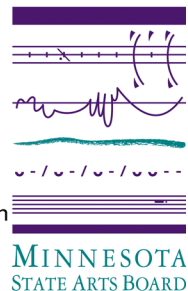
\* Includes matching gifts

\*\* Denotes in-kind gifts

# Government



This activity is made possible by the voters of Minnesota through a grant from the Minnesota State Arts Board, thanks to a legislative appropriation from the arts and cultural heritage fund.



# Thank you!



Mural done with participants from Avivo led by Teaching Artist Katrina Knutson

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*Thank you!*

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