

---

## 150 Profiles: Mitchell Marcus

*As we mark the 150th anniversary of confederation, The Philanthropist is profiling Canadians from across the non-profit sector and putting a face to 150 individuals who work or volunteer in Canada's social sector.*

**Name:** Mitchell Marcus

**Current role in the sector:** Artistic & Managing Director of The Musical Stage Company

**Years working and/or volunteering in the non-profit sector:** 13 years.

### **What was your first job in the sector or a defining moment?**

After working professionally as an actor in the non-profit arts sector throughout my childhood, my first job in arts management was a six-week stint as the Production Coordinator for the It's Always Something Variety Show at Gilda's Club Greater Toronto. I got to be a part of a team that raised over \$500,000 for an important cancer support centre by putting on a show that featured Eric McCormack, Bryan Adams, Kim Cattrall, Eugene Levy and Jann Arden amongst many others. Needless to say, it was a thrilling entry into the non-profit arts management sphere.

### **Describe your desk/workspace.**

The Musical Stage Company operates out of a 250 square foot space in the Cabbagetown neighbourhood of Toronto, split into two rooms that each house four staff members. Philosophically, we try to put as little money into administrative overhead as possible (focusing instead on using our funds to make art) and so our small headquarters are indicative of this philosophy! We use the space very efficiently with large storage units lining the upper walls and smaller desks that maximize the space between work stations. My personal desk is the messiest of the bunch.

### **What are you reading or following that has expanded your understanding of the non-profit sector?**

I took a lot away from Michael Kaiser's book [The Art of the Turnaround](#). In fact, some of the philosophies we used in our large expansion last year came from ideas that resonated with me from his approach. One of the benefits of the insular cacophony of Facebook is that by being friends with so many smart non-profit workers, I am constantly reading journal articles and new studies that pertain to best practices in arts management.

### **What do you think our sector needs to be thinking about?**

In the case of the non-profit arts sector, we should be thinking about how to position our work within the larger non-profit sphere. Many people are still surprised (and sometimes confused) to learn that we are a registered charity, not fundamentally understanding how the performing arts

---

can share a classification with vital causes like health and education. In recent times, funding for the arts has become an economic argument, referencing the economic growth that the arts trigger. But we have to find a way to reinvigorate the appreciation of arts and culture as a core human need which feeds the soul, builds community and enhances lives.

*Do you know someone we should profile as part of this series? Email us at [philanthropistprofiles@gmail.com](mailto:philanthropistprofiles@gmail.com)*