

It has been a whirlwind few months since I joined the Friends of the Kotzschmar Organ as the new Executive Director. It is hard for me to articulate just how exciting it is to be a part of this wonderful organization and to be working with so many people who are just as excited by the pipe organ and the music it produces as I am.

Music has always played a central role in my life. I started taking piano lessons at the ripe age of six and have been singing with various choirs for years. But, I have always been truly fascinated by the organ. I remember sitting in Merrill Auditorium with my parents as a child in utter amazement. I remember feeling the deep bass notes vibrate through me, staring at the shining row of façade pipes above the stage, and hearing so very many different sounds – trumpets and flutes, reeds and strings and something that I couldn't identify that sounded like church (which I now know are those wonderful organ diapason stops). There were loud notes and soft notes, low notes and high notes, and the most amazing thing of all? The organist was using his *feet* to play this instrument! I didn't know then that the Kotzschmar had thousands of pipes behind that beautiful façade. My parents said that the pipes made the music, so there was really only one reasonable explanation for all of these glorious sounds coming from so few visible pipes: it must be magic.

Since joining FOKO, I have learned that my childhood self wasn't all that far off in my belief in the magical qualities of the Kotzschmar. The magic isn't in the inner workings of the organ - thanks to the dedication of the FOKO docents, I have been inside the instrument and have seen the ranks of pipes that make all of those glorious notes. No, the magic is in the dedication of the people who love and believe in this instrument. It is in the commitment of the board members and docents who work tirelessly as ambassadors for the organ and legacy left to the City of Portland by Cyrus Curtis and Hermann Kotzschmar. It is in the talent of organists who travel from up the street and around the world to bring their unique styles to the Kotzschmar bench. It is also in the support of our audiences and donors, whose generosity allows FOKO to carry out our mission to preserve, maintain and promote the Kotzschmar Organ through concerts, tours, educational programs and other activities.

We hope that you will be part of the magic by joining us for concerts and by supporting the efforts of all of those who work to promote and preserve the Kotzschmar Organ. Together, we can make magic for our current audiences and for the generations to come.

With warm regards,

Brooke Hubner