# MANAGEMENT REPORT OF FUND PERFORMANCE

**December 31 2024** 

**CHOU BOND FUND** 

CHOU ASSOCIATES MANAGEMENT INC.

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This annual management report of fund performance contains financial highlights but does not contain the complete financial statements of the Fund. You can get a copy of the annual financial statements atyour request, and at no cost, by calling Toll-free: 1-888-357-5070, by writing to us at 110 Sheppard Ave. East, Suite 301, Box 18, Toronto, Ontario M2N 6Y8 or by visiting our website at www.choufunds.com and SEDAR+ at www.sedarplus.ca.

Unitholders may also contact us using one of these methods to request a copy of the Fund's proxy voting policies and procedures, proxy voting disclosure record, or quarterly portfolio disclosure.

This document may contain forward-looking statements relating to anticipated future events, results, circumstances, performance, or expectations that are not historical facts but instead represent our beliefs regarding future events. By their nature, forward-looking statements require us to make assumptions and are subject to inherent risks and uncertainties. There is significant risk that predictions and other forward-looking statements will not prove to be accurate. We caution readers of this document not to place undue reliance onour forward-looking statements as a number of factors could cause actual future results, conditions, actions or events to differ materially from the targets, expectations, estimates or intentions expressed or implied in the forward-looking statements.

Actual results may differ materially from management expectations as projected in such forward-looking statements for a variety of reasons including, but not limited to, market and general economic conditions, interest rates, regulatory and statutory developments, the effects of competition in the geographic and business areas in which the Fund may invest, and the risks detailed from time to time in the Fund's Simplified Prospectus. We caution that the foregoing list of factors is not exhaustive, and that when relying on forward-looking statements to make decisions with respect to investing in the Fund, investors and others should carefully consider these factors, as well as other uncertainties and potential events, and the inherent uncertainty of forward-looking statements. Due to the potential impact of these factors, the family of Chou Funds does not undertake, and specifically disclaims, any intention or obligation to update or revise any forward-looking statements, whether as a result of new information, future events or otherwise, unless required by applicable law.

Chou Associates Management Inc. ("the Manager") manages the overall business of the Fund, including the selection of the securities in the Fund's portfolio and promoting sales of the Fund's units. For the purposes of this document, the terms Chou Associates Management Inc. and "the Manager" are interchangeable. Full contact information for the Manager is located at the end of this report.

# **Management Discussion of Fund Performance**

#### **Investment Objective and Strategies**

Chou Bond Fund's (the "Fund") objective is to provide conservation of principal and income production with capital appreciation as a secondary consideration. The Fund invests primarily in Canadian and U.S. fixed income instruments considered by Chou Associates Management Inc. (the "Manager") to be undervalued. These bonds include, but are not limited to, Government of Canada, provincial, municipal and corporate issues, including convertibles and high yield bonds. Investments may be made in bonds outside of Canada and the U.S. The Fund may also use derivatives such as, but not limited to, futures, options, swaps and forward contracts to gain exposure to securities and asset classes consistent with the objectives of the Fund, and to hedge portfolio exposure against losses from foreign currency and domestic currency exposure and changes in securities prices.

#### Risk

The risks of investing in the Fund are disclosed in the Fund's most recently filed Simplified Prospectus which can be found on the Fund's website at <u>www.choufunds.com</u> and SEDAR+ at <u>www.sedarplus.ca</u>.

During the year ended December 31, 2024, there were no material changes that affected the Fund's overall level of risk.

#### Market Review

In 2024, the Bloomberg Barclays U.S. Corporate High Yield index delivered a positive return of 8.2% in US dollars. Lower rated issuers, particularly CCC rated, contributed to this strong performance. U.S. high-yield bond issuance was up significantly from \$183.6 billion in 2023 to US\$302 billion.

The U.S. Federal Open Market Committee held eight scheduled meetings in 2024. Between September and December 2024, the Committee cut the benchmark federal funds rate by a full percentage point to a range of 4.25% to 4.50%.

#### **Results of Operations**

For the year ended December 31, 2024, the Fund increased by 18.2% for Series A units and 18.4% for Series F units after fees and expenses, while Barclays Capital U.S. Corporate High Yield Index increased 18.0% in Canadian dollars. In U.S. dollars, the Fund increased 9.0% for Series A units and 9.1% for Series F units, while Barclays Capital U.S. Corporate High Yield Index increased 8.2%.

The major advancers in 2024 were the fixed income holdings of Bausch Health Companies, 14.000%, October 15, 2030; Bausch Health Companies, 11.000%, September 30, 2028; Avation Capital SA, 8.250%, October 31, 2026 and the equity holding of EXCO Resources Inc.

The decliners in the year were the fixed income holdings of MBIA Global Funding LLC, Zero Coupon, due December 15, 2031 and B Riley Financial Inc., Preferred, 5.250%, due August 31, 2028.

The Canadian currency depreciated against the US dollar, which also positively affected the Fund.

#### **Portfolio Update**

During the year, the Fund sold of its holding in Lumen Technologies Inc. 4.000%, due February 15, 2027.

The Fund reduced its holding in B Riley Financial Inc., Preferred, 5.250%, due August 31, 2028.

The Fund had no covered call options in its portfolio as at December 31, 2024.

In 2024, the Fund received \$12,062 in income from its securities lending program.

The Fund did not enter into any foreign currency contracts in 2024.

The Fund's net redemptions in 2024 were approximately \$697,351 for Series A units and the Fund's net subscriptions were approximately \$3,241,507 for Series F units. Included in net redemptions/net subscriptions are subscriptions, redemptions and transfers in/out. Out of the net subscriptions for Series F units, \$363,556 was switched from Series A units following the OEO trailer ban. The Fund's average month-end cash and cash equivalent position for the year was 53.4% of the Fund's net assets.

#### **Recent Developments**

The resilience of the U.S. economy heightens attention on the Federal Reserve's response to inflationary pressures. China's economic slowdown and ongoing geopolitical unrest also affect the global trade and energy prices. Meanwhile, advancements in AI and technology continue to spur market sentiment despite prevailing economic uncertainty. As a result, we anticipate some impacts on the portfolio performance of the Fund in the near term.

#### **Related Party Transactions**

The Manager manages the overall business of the Fund, including selection of the securities in the Fund's portfolio, and promoting the sale of the Fund's units.

The Manager is also the trustee of the Fund. Investors receive units of a trust when they invest in the Fund. The Manager, as trustee, holds the actual title to the property in the Fund, the cash and portfolio securities, on behalf of the Fund's investors.

The Manager, its officers and directors invest in units of the Fund from time to time in the normal course of business. As of December 31, 2024, the Manager, its officers and directors do not hold any units of the Fund. All transactions with the Manager are carried out at the Fund's net asset value as at the transaction date.

During the year ended December 31, 2024, there were no transactions with related parties except in the capacities and instances set out above.

#### **Financial Highlights**

The following tables show selected key financial information about the Fund and are intended to help you understand the Fund's financial performance for the year ended December 31, 2024, and for each of the past five years ended December 31.

#### The Fund's Net Assets per Unit<sup>1</sup> - Series A Units

	2024	 2023	 2022	 2021	 2020	 2019
Net Assets, beginning of year	\$ 8.66	\$ 9.33	\$ 8.79	\$ 6.53	\$ 5.91	\$ 9.01
Increase (decrease) from operations:						
Total revenue	\$ 0.65	\$ 0.65	\$ 0.37	\$ 0.47	\$ 0.41	\$ 1.08
Total expenses	\$ (0.16)	\$ (0.16)	\$ (0.17)	\$ (0.11)	\$ (0.10)	\$ (0.12)
Realized gains (losses) for the year	\$ 0.20	\$ (0.09)	\$ 0.03	\$ (2.35)	\$ (1.29)	\$ 1.26
Unrealized gains (losses) for the year	\$ 0.87	\$ (0.57)	\$ 0.38	\$ 4.69	\$ 2.47	\$ (4.54)
Total increase (decrease) from operations <sup>2</sup>	\$ 1.56	\$ (0.17)	\$ 0.61	\$ 2.70	\$ 1.49	\$ (2.32)
Distributions:						
From income (excluding dividends)	\$ 0.40	\$ 0.50	\$ 0.17	\$ 0.43	\$ 0.85	\$ 0.84
From dividends	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
From capital gains	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Return of capital	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Total Distributions <sup>3</sup>	\$ 0.40	\$ 0.50	\$ 0.17	\$ 0.43	\$ 0.85	\$ 0.84
Net Assets, end of year	\$ 9.83	\$ 8.66	\$ 9.33	\$ 8.79	\$ 6.53	\$ 5.91
Net Assets, end of year (USD)	\$ 6.84	\$ 6.53	\$ 6.89	\$ 6.95	\$ 5.13	\$ 4.55

#### **Ratios and Supplemental Data - Series A Units**

	 2024	 2023	 2022		2021		2020		2019
Total Net Asset Value (000s) <sup>4</sup>	\$ 4,989	\$ 4,897	\$ 5,648	\$	9,235	\$	7,224	\$	7,713
Number of Redeemable Units Outstanding	507,644	565,643	605,477	1,	050,115	1,	105,932	1,	305,522
Management Expense Ratio <sup>5</sup>	1.78%	1.76%	1.78%		1.37%		1.42%		1.60%
Management Expense Ratio before waivers									
or absorption <sup>5</sup>	1.78%	1.76%	1.78%		1.37%		1.42%		1.60%
Trading Expense Ratio <sup>6</sup>	0.00%	0.00%	0.04%		0.00%		0.00%		0.05%
Portfolio Turnover Rate <sup>7</sup>	0.00%	0.00%	78.25%		44.47%		54.84%		11.84%
Net Asset Value per Unit	\$ 9.83	\$ 8.66	\$ 9.33	\$	8.79	\$	6.53	\$	5.91

	 2024	 2023	 2022	 2021	 2020	 2019
Net Assets, beginning of year	\$ 8.84	\$ 9.52	\$ 9.06	\$ 6.71	\$ 6.06	\$ 9.17
Increase (decrease) from operations:						
Total revenue	\$ 0.65	\$ 0.67	\$ 0.41	\$ 0.49	\$ 0.45	\$ 1.32
Total expenses	\$ (0.15)	\$ (0.15)	\$ (0.16)	\$ (0.10)	\$ (0.09)	\$ (0.11)
Realized gains (losses) for the year	\$ 0.28	\$ (0.09)	\$ (0.16)	\$ (2.52)	\$ (0.91)	\$ 0.98
Unrealized gains (losses) for the year	\$ 0.92	\$ (0.58)	\$ 0.77	\$ 5.00	\$ 2.22	\$ (4.34)
Total increase (decrease) from operations <sup>2</sup>	\$ 1.70	\$ (0.15)	\$ 0.86	\$ 2.87	\$ 1.67	\$ (2.15)
Distributions:						
From income (excluding dividends)	\$ 0.46	\$ 0.52	\$ 0.26	\$ 0.44	\$ 0.91	\$ 0.82
From dividends	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
From capital gains	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Return of capital	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Total Distributions <sup>3</sup>	\$ 0.46	\$ 0.52	\$ 0.26	\$ 0.44	\$ 0.91	\$ 0.82
Net Assets, end of year	\$ 10.01	\$ 8.84	\$ 9.52	\$ 9.06	\$ 6.71	\$ 6.06
Net Assets, end of year (USD)	\$ 6.96	\$ 6.67	\$ 7.03	\$ 7.16	\$ 5.27	\$ 4.67

#### The Fund's Net Assets per Unit<sup>1</sup> - Series F Units

#### **Ratios and Supplemental Data - Series F Units**

		2024	 2023	 2022	 2021	 2020	 2019
Total Net Asset Value (000s) <sup>4</sup>	\$	10,210	\$ 5,984	\$ 5,544	\$ 1,229	\$ 1,408	\$ 2,094
Number of Redeemable Units Outstanding	1,(	020,102	640,839	582,040	135,676	209,838	345,626
Management Expense Ratio <sup>5</sup>		1.60%	1.59%	1.66%	1.18%	1.25%	1.40%
Management Expense Ratio before waivers							
or absorption <sup>5</sup>		1.60%	1.59%	1.66%	1.18%	1.25%	1.40%
Trading Expense Ratio <sup>6</sup>		0.00%	0.00%	0.04%	0.00%	0.00%	0.05%
Portfolio Turnover Rate <sup>7</sup>		0.00%	0.00%	78.25%	44.47%	54.84%	11.84%
Net Asset Value per Unit	\$	10.01	\$ 8.84	\$ 9.52	\$ 9.06	\$ 6.71	\$ 6.06

<sup>(1)</sup> This information is derived from the Fund's audited annual.

<sup>(2)</sup> Net assets and distributions are based on the actual number of redeemable units outstanding at the relevant time. The increase/decrease from operations is based on the weighted average number of redeemable units outstanding over the financial year.

<sup>(3)</sup> Distributions were reinvested in additional units of the Fund or paid in cash upon request.

<sup>(4)</sup> This information is provided as at the year end shown and is rounded to the nearest thousand.

<sup>(5)</sup> Management expense ratio ("MER") is based on total expenses (excluding commissions and other portfolio transaction costs) for the stated year and is expressed as an annualized percentage of weekly average net asset value during the year. The Manager may, at its discretion, waive or absorb certain operating expenses. MER includes the waiver or absorption by the Manager of certain operating expenses, while the MER before absorption shows the MER prior to operating expenses being waived or absorbed by the Manager.

<sup>(6)</sup> The trading expense ratio represents total commissions and other portfolio transaction costs expressed as an annualized percentage of weekly average net asset value during the year.

<sup>(7)</sup> The Fund's portfolio turnover rate indicates how actively the Fund's portfolio adviser manages its portfolio investments. A portfolio turnover rate of 100% is equivalent to the Fund buying and selling all of the securities in its portfolio once in the course of the financial year. The higher a fund's portfolio turnover rate in a year, the greater the trading costs payable by the fund in the year, and the greater the chance of an investor receiving taxable capital gains in the year. There is not necessarily a relationship between a high turnover rate and the performance of a fund.

#### **Management Fees**

The Manager manages the Fund. The Manager is entitled to an investment management fee calculated daily as a percentage of the market value of the net assets equal to 1.15% per annum for Series A units and 1.0% per annum for Series F units, payable monthly. The Manager pays 15 basis points per year trailer fees to dealers out of management fees for Series A units. There is no trailer fee paid out for Series F units.

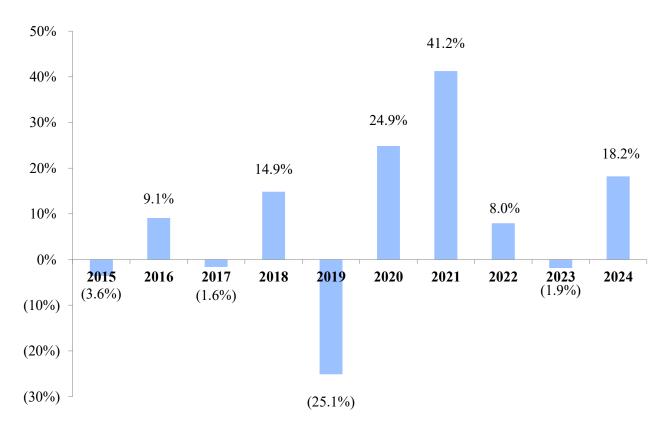
#### **Past Performance**

#### General

The following charts and tables show the Fund's past performance. Rates of return are historical total returns that include changes in unit prices and assume the reinvestment of all distributions. These returns do not take into account any sales charges, redemption fees, other optional expenses or income taxes that the Fund's investors have to pay and which could reduce these returns. The Fund's past performance does not necessarily indicate its future performance.

#### Year-by-Year Returns

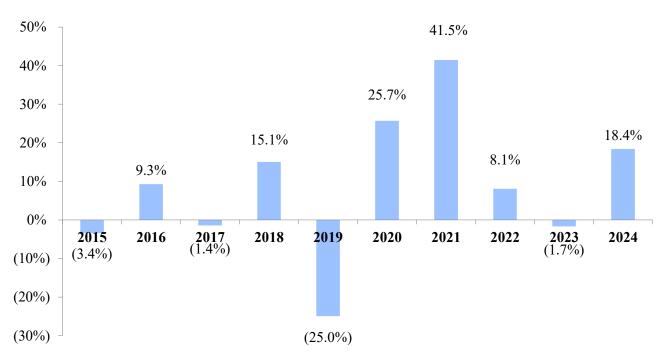
The following bar charts show the annual performance for each of the Series A and Series F units of the Fund for each of the years shown. Each chart shows, in percentage terms, how an investment on January 1 would have increased or decreased by December 31 for each of the years, and how the performance of the Fund varied from year to year.



#### Series A

# **CHOU BOND FUND**





#### Annual Compound Returns

The following tables<sup>(1)</sup> show the annual compound total return for each of the Series A and Series F units of the Fund. The tables outline the Fund's past performance for the one-, three-, five-, ten-, and fifteen-year periods ended on December 31, 2024. Also shown for the same periods are the respective historical annual compound total returns of the Barclays U.S. Corporate High Yield Index (the "Index"). The Index is a broad-based benchmark that measures the non-investment grade, fixed-rate, corporate bond market. It includes \$U.S.-denominated securities publicly issued by U.S. and non-U.S. industrial, utility and financial issuers that meet specified maturity, liquidity, and quality requirements. The Index is calculated without the deduction of management fees and fund expenses, whereas the performance of the Fund is calculated after deducting such fees and expenses.

#### Series A

December 31, 2024	Past Year	Past 3 Years	Past 5 Years	Past 10 Years	Past 15 Years
Chou Bond Fund	18.19%	7.79%	17.17%	7.00%	8.21%
Barclays U.S. Corp. High Yield Index (\$CAN)	18.01%	7.46%	6.39%	7.46%	8.70%

#### Series F

December 31, 2024	Past Year	Past 3 Years	Past 5 Years	Past 10 Years	Past 15 Years
Chou Bond Fund	18.38%	7.94%	17.47%	7.22%	8.42%
Barclays U.S. Corp. High Yield Index (\$CAN)	18.01%	7.46%	6.39%	7.46%	8.70%

<sup>(1)</sup>Tables assume the reinvestment of all distributions.

# **Summary of Investment Portfolio**

The following tables provide a summary of the Fund's portfolio as at December 31, 2024.

Geographic Distribution	% of Fund's Net Assets
United States	20.9%
Luxembourg	7.2%
Canada	5.2%
Net Cash Equivalents	66.7%
Total Portfolio	100.0%
Total Issuers	<u>% of Fund's Net Assets</u>
(excluding cash equivalents)	
Equities	
B Riley Financial Inc, Preferred	4.0%
EXCO Resources Inc.	0.3%
Total Equities - Long	4.3%
Fixed Income	
World Acceptance Corporation, 7.000%, November 1, 2026	9.5%
Avation Capital SA, 8.250%, October 31, 2026, Callable	7.2%
MBIA Global Funding LLC, Zero Coupon, December 15, 2031	7.1%
Bausch Health Companies Inc., 11.000%, September 30, 2028	2.9%
1375209 BC Limited, 9.000%, January 30, 2028, Callable	1.7%
Bausch Health Companies Inc., 14.000%, October 15, 2030, Callable	0.6%
Fortress Global Enterprises Inc., 9.750%, December 31, 2025, Convertible	
Bonds, Callable	0.0%
Total Fixed Income	29.0%
Total Holdings	33.3%

The summary of the Fund's investment portfolio may change due to ongoing portfolio transactions of the Fund. The next quarterly update as at March 31, 2025 will be in the Quarterly Portfolio Disclosure and will be posted on our website www.choufunds.com on or before May 31, 2025.

#### **Chou Associates Management Inc.**

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# **Recordkeeping and Custodian**

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### Auditors

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