

SEASON  
24 / 25  
IMPACT REPORT



2024 - 2025 SEASON

# THE FAMILY OF THINGS

## WILD GEESE

by Mary Oliver

You do not have to be good.

You do not have to walk on your knees  
for a hundred miles through the desert repenting.  
You only have to let the soft animal of your body  
love what it loves.

Tell me about despair, yours, and I will tell you mine.  
Meanwhile the world goes on.

Meanwhile the sun and the clear pebbles of the rain  
are moving across the landscapes,  
over the prairies and the deep trees,  
the mountains and the rivers.

Meanwhile the wild geese, high in the clean blue air,  
are heading home again.

Whoever you are, no matter how lonely,  
the world offers itself to your imagination,  
calls to you like the wild geese, harsh and exciting -  
over and over announcing your place

in **the family of things.**

Dear Friends,

Meanwhile, the world goes on.

At ArtsWest, we gather in that “meanwhile” - currently, a time marked by disconnection, uncertainty, and constant change - and we choose presence. We choose to sit together in the dark. We choose to listen. We choose to be moved.

This impact report tells the story of a year in which ArtsWest continued its mission to create theater that is intimate, daring, and deeply human. It is a record of numbers and milestones, yes, but more importantly it is a reflection of people: artists taking creative risks, audiences showing up with curiosity and openness, volunteers offering care and time, and a community choosing connection over isolation.

Research confirms what we feel in our bodies: engagement with the arts improves mental health, deepens empathy, and strengthens communities. But the truest measure of our impact happens in the shared breath before a moment lands, in the collective laughter, in the conversations that spill out into the gallery and beyond our doors.

This year we welcomed nearly 11,000 patrons, employed 76 artists, and presented five productions that stretched the boundaries of what theater can be - pairing storytelling with music, fencing, sci-fi, horror, and immersive design. We also looked inward, developing our first three-year strategic plan since COVID, grounded in a simple but profound commitment: taking exceptional care of our audience, our company, each other, and the future.

Like the wild geese Mary Oliver writes about, ArtsWest calls people home—not to a place of perfection, but to a place of belonging. Whoever you are, no matter how lonely, the world of live theater offers itself to your imagination.

Thank you for being part of this family of things.

Sincerely,



Mathew Wright  
Producing Artistic Director



## ARTSWEST MISSION

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ArtsWest produces artistic events that provoke conversation, incite the imagination and use live theater as a powerful agent of change.

## LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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ArtsWest acknowledges that we are on the unceded ancestral lands of the Coast Salish people, the Duwamish People past and present. With gratitude, we honor the land itself and the Duwamish Tribe. This acknowledgement does not take the place of authentic relationships with indigenous communities and serves just a first step in honoring the people and the land that we are on.

## PERMISSION TO BE PRESENT

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*Permission To Be Present* is an invitation to our audiences to be active participants in the art we create at ArtsWest.

**You are about to experience a live performance.** Take a deep breath, look around, and remember: This performance. This unique gathering. The energy created in this room will only happen once. Ever.

**We invite you, your full authentic self, to share space with us.**

**Your identity contains multitudes and is fluid, intersectional, and of vital importance.** Thank you for being here.

**Reacting and responding is a welcome collaboration with the performance.**

**It is only natural to react and respond;** to share a laugh, a cheer, a 'mhm', a sigh as long as it is not distracting or thwarting the action on stage. You, the audience, are a crucial component of what is happening tonight.

**By joining us, you are automatically a member of our community.**

**The event is not just what is happening on stage;** it is a collective experience. Welcome those around you. Share, respect, assist, greet, protect, give space to and engage with those around you.

**If you've found yourself here, now you're one of us. Welcome.**

Inspired by Dominique Morriseau's Rules of Engagement.

# WHY ARTSWEST?

At ArtsWest, we believe theater builds empathy and community.

The productions we select for our season focus on elevating the human experience to change hearts, shift perspectives, and allow audience members to witness parts of their own story on stage.



The performing arts increases perspective-taking which is vital to executive function.



Research indicates that people engaged in the arts have lower mental distress, better mental functioning, and improved quality of life.



73% of arts attendees believe the arts help them understand other cultures better.



71% of arts attendees feel the arts give them pleasure to experience and participate in.



86% of arts attendees report that arts and culture are important to their community's quality of life and livability.



One or more art experiences a month can extend your life by ten years.

Source: *Your Brain on Art* and AEP6

**During our 2024-2025 Season, we began sending Audience Surveys to patrons after each production. Discover in their own words why they keep returning to ArtsWest.**

"Thank you for a wonderful season of thought provoking plays. Please keep choosing these cutting edge scripts. Fantastic!"

"We have really enjoyed the play selection in the past two years. Kudos to the director and performers for an excellent night of theatre. We are so glad we live close by."

"I enjoy being a subscriber and am always blown away by subjects explored and the talented people who produce, direct and act in your productions!"

In response to ATHENA, "Another lovely ArtsWest production. This play is an unusual vehicle for transmitting the subject matter, but it totally works! "

In response to SNOWED IN (AGAIN), "The level of talent in the cast was exceptional. The writing and music were off the charts. I've been to a few shows at ArtsWest, which have always been impressive, but it was unexpected to experience that level of performance from the cast."

In response to THE EFFECT, "This production struck my core. The portrayal of a depressed episode by the psychiatrist was so REAL. And the love between the two main characters brought some light to my cynical heart. I got lost in the production. It was beautiful."

# ARTSWEST'S IMPACT ACROSS COMMUNITIES



"What feels different about watching theater at ArtsWest is that you're part of it. In a digital age, we're so disconnected from each other and almost the experience of life itself. There's no way to come to ArtsWest and not be involved and intensely present. There's just something that theater touches that nothing else does."

Whitney Moore-Adams,  
Board Member



"Being here, meeting people at the theater. That's community. Just imagine, you're sitting at home alone or let's say with your partner and you're watching a movie. How can that be the same as being with so many other people that are experiencing something wonderful, or maybe something scary, or maybe something thought-provoking, particularly in the time that we are living in right now?"

Elisabeth Hurley,  
Volunteer



"[In live theater] you're never going to get the exact thing that you're trying to represent. That's not the point. We're not trying to recreate through alchemy what exists. We're trying to interpret or do an abstraction or a reference or find the similarities. Theater becomes a tinkering space for understanding human motivation and really play with what's possible."

Alyza DelPan-Monley,  
Associate Director and Choreographer  
for The Effect

## THE ALHADEFF-KONGSGAARD AWARD



Michael Alhadeff and Martha Kongsgaard's outstanding community leadership and advocacy in the arts helped create ArtsWest, a center for the arts in West Seattle for the last 25 years. In their honor, Alhadeff-Kongsgaard Award is presented each year to an ArtsWest community member who has demonstrated extraordinary sustained service to ArtsWest and exemplifies the organization's mission and goals.

At our 2024 Gala, we honored Carole Babes. Carole is a long-time ArtsWest volunteer and subscriber turned house manager and bartender. She is a friendly and welcoming face when you walk in the door and her love for the theater is evident in how she shows up for this organization. She is a thoughtful and reliable employee who goes above and beyond by not only working as a part of the Front of House team, but also dedicating additional time as a volunteer. She is also a dedicated patron and an Early Bird Subscriber who never misses a show. We are so fortunate to have her on our team.



# STRATEGIC PLAN

In the 2023-2024 season, we experienced a 43% audience growth. This increase in audience gave us the ability in the 2024-2025 season to focus internally and turn our eyes toward the future.

For the first time since COVID, we developed a three-year strategic plan. Below is a high level look at our plan called Taking Care.

## GOAL 1 TAKE CARE OF OUR AUDIENCE

### OBJECTIVES

- Learn more about our current audience.
- Identify the areas where we want to grow.
- Deliver increasing value and a high quality product.
- Clearly communicate who we are and what we do.

#### COMPLETED INITIATIVE

In 2024, we implemented post-show surveys that inform and guide future programming decisions.

## GOAL 2 TAKE CARE OF THE COMPANY

### OBJECTIVES

- Refine processes to work more efficiently including projections and planning.
- Engage, grow, and utilize the Board.
- Get data driven decision making throughout the organization.
- Strategically Innovate.
- Manage risk.

#### COMPLETED INITIATIVE

We made a commitment to strengthening our relationships with other theaters through co-productions, sharing resources, and supporting each others work.

## GOAL 3 TAKE CARE OF EACH OTHER

### OBJECTIVES

- Provide education opportunities to Staff to expand knowledge and skills.
- Recruit and hire staff, artists, board, and volunteers that reflect the values of our organization.
- Retain staff, artists, board, and volunteers that reflect the values of our organization.
- Continue to define company culture.
- Continue to evolve our values and goals around Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Accessibility and Anti-Oppressive practices.

#### COMPLETED INITIATIVE

We improved our volunteer program by aligning volunteers with their interests and providing in-depth onboarding.

## GOAL 4 TAKE CARE OF THE FUTURE

### OBJECTIVES

- Effectively manage production costs.
- Directly increase contributed revenue & earned revenue.
- Clarify and operationalize financial systems and controls.
- Eliminate the deficit.

#### COMPLETED INITIATIVE

We clarified and operationalized new financial systems and controls to eliminate our budget deficit including quarterly department projections and monthly cash flow tracking.

## HIGHLIGHTS FROM OUR 2024-2025 SEASON

The season asked us to consider universal questions we all have like "Who am I?" and "Where do I belong?" Finding answers to these questions can seem like an impossible quest, but in 'Wild Geese', Mary Oliver gives us a place to start: You only have to let the soft animal of your body love what it loves. We presented five productions that were theater plus; theater plus something unexpected, something out of the ordinary, something you can't experience anywhere else.

In the 2024-2025 season, we celebrated two incredible milestones. This season marked ArtsWest's 25th anniversary, and Mat's 10th as Artistic Director. In Mat's ten years at ArtsWest, he has programmed and produced over 50 productions and directed 18, including this season's production of *The Effect*.

# 20 SOLD OUT performances

we provided  
**888**  
**DISCOUNTED**  
**TICKETS** 

# 76 ARTISTS employed



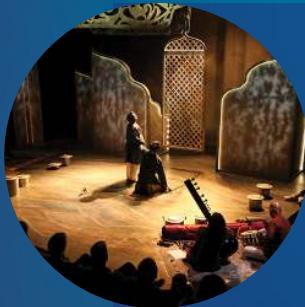
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**10,959  
PATRONS  
came through  
our doors**

# 689 SUBSCRIBERS

# HIGHLIGHTS FROM OUR 2024-2025 SEASON



## **GUARDS AT THE TAJ | September 12 – October 6, 2024**

*Theater plus Live Music and Immersive Seating*

15 prop hands were created by props designer, Jack Bateman-lino, for the play.

"A tender portrayal of friendship! A reminder that beauty is not dead – it does not live in cold marble mausoleums but in the warmth of human relationships and in the depths of our imaginations!" - Meena R.



## **SNOWED IN (AGAIN) | November 21 - December 22, 2024**

*Theater plus Original Holiday Music*

The first ArtsWest show to have an original cast recording.

"Snowed In (Again) is a wonderful reminder that friends are what make the holidays memorable. Talented cast, beautiful set, and some very funny moments. It's a gift-wrapped play!" - Constance S.



## **COVENANT | February 6 - March 2, 2025**

*Theater plus Black Gothic Horror*

ArtsWest presented the West Coast premiere of *Covenant*.

"Horror/thrillers are rarely done in the theater realm, and surely they are rarely done well. Kudos to a gripping thriller" - Patron



## **ATHENA | April 10 - May 4, 2025**

*Theater plus Fencing*

The actors received 14 hours of fencing training from Salle Auriol in preparation for the production.

"The play was superbly acted, staged, and clearly directed. It was engaging, funny, heartwarming, heartbreakin, and everything theatre should be." - Patron



## **THE EFFECT | June 19 - July 13, 2025**

*Theater plus Sci-Fi*

Our crew used 10 gallons of blue paint to create the world of the play.

"One of the best productions I've experienced at ArtsWest. Excellent on every measure – acting, choreography, direction, lighting, script, and more. Riveting." - Patron

# PARTNERSHIPS

We are proud to be in relationship with other arts and nonprofit organizations to expand audiences, share resources, and build relationships. Our partnerships allow us to produce authentically and to invite the communities represented on stage to share in ArtsWest storytelling.

## PARTNERSHIPS



### JET CITY IMPROV

ArtsWest is proud to continue our partnership with Jet City Improv, serving as their West Seattle home. This season Jet City Improv presented five improvised musicals for evenings full of joy and laughter. This season, the average number of patrons per performance increased by 30%.



### PRATIDHWANI

Pratidhwani is a King County non-profit arts organization with a mission to create performing opportunities for artists of South Asian descent. In September 2024, ArtsWest and Pratidhwani co-produced *Guards at the Taj*. In the Indian tradition, the theater offers floor seating as well. For our production audiences had the opportunity to witness the play from a gau takiya, a cushioned floor seat, along with two live musicians. The tradition maximizes audience interaction and eye contact so the performers can receive continuous inspiration and appreciation. "When the audience shares the floor with the performer, the audience in a most subtle way is invited to become a part of the story, to become a part of the character's life," shared Assistant Director Divya Rajan.



"[*Guards at the Taj*] defies the monolithic portrayal of South Asian history by showcasing the multifaceted nature of our experiences. It highlights the deep philosophical and ethical dilemmas faced by individuals, rather than reducing the culture to exoticism or merely a backdrop for grandeur. Additionally, it challenges the stereotype that South Asian art and stories are solely about spirituality or family drama. *Guards at the Taj* delves into complex themes of friendship, duty, and the cost of beauty, showing that South Asian narratives can explore a wide range of human experiences and emotions. The portrayal of the characters as thoughtful, conflicted individuals counters the often one-dimensional representation of South Asians in media. It brings forth the richness of human experiences, emotions, and intellect present in South Asian history and culture."

- Varun Kainth, Actor



### SALLE AURIOL

In order to stage our production of *Athena* with authenticity, we presented the production in collaboration with Salle Auriol. Salle Auriol is a Seattle-based non-profit that promotes Olympic Fencing for all ages, genders, and skill levels. It is the largest fencing club in Seattle. Salle Auriol provided fencing training for the actors before and during the rehearsal process and loaned gear for costumes and props. Two Salle Auriol staff members, Kundry Kaberkern and Sarah Lippai, served on the play's creative team. ArtsWest provided Salle Auriol with discounted tickets for their fencing club and hosted a panel discussion about women in sports.



"*Athena* does a phenomenal job of highlighting the independence and uniqueness of these young girls. They aren't what they were prescribed or labeled to be. Their stories are about who they WANT to be, CHOOSE to be. It is solely about them and their relationship against the extraordinary circumstances of junior fencing. And I think that it's incredibly important always—but specifically right now because of the regressive steps our country is taking in regards to the female identifying and AFAB population—to have shows that highlight the personhood and independence of women and how the only thing we absolutely need is each other." - Allison Renee, Actor

# ENGAGEMENT



## SEASON FIRST LOOK

Season First Look is a preview event of our upcoming season. It is free and open to the public. This engagement event is part TED talk / part live podcast. Each year Mathew Wright hosts this special evening featuring staged readings, musical moments, and conversations with creatives.



## ARTIST RECEPTIONS

We host an Artist Reception for each of our visual artists during the West Seattle Art Walk on the second Thursday of each month from 5:30pm – 7:00pm. Artists have the chance to speak formally about their exhibit and meet approximately 75 community members per reception.

## THE ARTSWEST GALLERY

We proudly support and celebrate Pacific Northwest visual artists by exhibiting their work and creating a space where stimulating, engaging, and thought-provoking work is made accessible to our community. Each production features a visual art exhibit whose themes and identities mirror what we are exploring on stage. Our Call for Art has no entry fee and the local visual artists can sell their work with no fees taken by ArtsWest.



**Jayashree Krishnan**  
*Soaring Song*  
August 22, 2024 – October 11, 2024  
Work sold.



**Nikita Ares**  
*Dancing with Chaos*  
March 14, 2025 – May 18, 2025



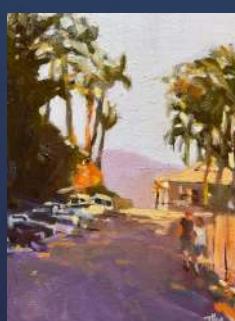
**Enid Smith Becker**  
*Of Time and Place*  
October 13, 2024 – January 9, 2025  
Work sold.



**Laurie Barmore**  
*Whispers from the Unseen*  
May 27, 2025 – July 13, 2025



**Rodney H. King**  
*Started Off in the Park*  
January 10, 2025 – March 16, 2025  
Prints sold.



**Thoa Nguyen**  
*Musings of Color*  
July 14, 2025 – September 9, 2025  
Work sold.

# DONORS

## Thank you to our generous institutional supporters, sponsors, and grantors.

\$10,000+	\$2,500 - \$4,999	\$100 - \$999
4Culture	The Boeing Company	Adobe
ArtsFund		BECU
Nucor Steel Seattle	BNI Westside Professionals	Bechtold Charitable
\$5,000 - \$9,999	GE Aerospace Foundation	Donation Fund
DML Insurance	Microsoft	Homestreet Bank
Nesholm Family Foundation	Prolumina	Liberty Mutual
Seattle Office of Arts & Culture	Tom's Automotive	Starbucks Coffee
The Morgan Fund at Seattle Foundation	Zeeks Pizza White Center	The Coca Cola Company
West Seattle Garden Tour		Volant Partners Inc
		Vertex Pharmaceuticals

## DOORS OPEN FUNDING

In December 2023, King County Council unanimously passed Doors Open legislation to increase funding to the County's arts, heritage, science, and historic preservation non-profit organizations through a 0.1% sales tax. This funding is administered by 4Culture -- the cultural funding agency for King County. In our 2024-2025 season, ArtsWest was awarded three grants from the new Doors Open programs.



### Facilities

#### *Restricted Capital Funding*

In December 2024, ArtsWest was awarded \$104,001 to enhance ADA accessibility for audiences, artists, and staff. This is a multi-year project that increases facility access, replaces old flooring with ADA-compliant floor surfaces, and improves building safety and security.

In the 2024-2025 season, we installed a new security and two-way communication system at our back entrance and replaced 25-year-old flooring in our production spaces, including the dressing rooms, rehearsal hall, and green room.

### Sustained Support

#### *Unrestricted General Operating Support*

In our 2024-2025 season, ArtsWest was awarded \$129,000 in Sustained Support to assist with our day-to-day needs including staff salaries, building maintenance, utilities, and programming.

### Free Public Access

#### *Funding to reduce financial barriers to accessing quality, relevant, cultural experiences*

In the 2024-2025 season, ArtsWest was awarded \$33,308 to support our discounted ticketing program and free engagement events including Season First Look, artist receptions, and post-show talkbacks.

The increased funding from 4Culture through the Doors Open legislation has made an incredible impact on ArtsWest and our ability to better serve our community of patrons, artists, staff, and volunteers. We thank 4Culture, not for their support of not just ArtsWest, but for championing arts and culture in King County.



## THEATER IS FOR EVERYONE

ArtsWest is dedicated to dismantling barriers that hinder access to the arts. We provide ticket discounts for seniors, military, and a \$10 inclusion rate. Our inclusion rate is available to everyone, no-questions-asked. We partner with Teen Tix, arts organizations, and non-profits to provide our community with free or discounted tickets. In the 2024-2025 season, we provided the community with over \$40,000 in discounted programming.



Free & reduced cost programming is supported by 4Culture

"Thank you for offering the Teen Tix 2 for \$10 shows which allowed me to share this wonderful performance with my son" - Patron

"I love that I can attend preview and stay in my budget." - Patron

## THANK YOU

The 2024-2025 season was a huge success because of the generous support from donors like you! You are an integral part of our ArtsWest community. Together, we create live theater experiences that unite our community through storytelling that sparks connection, imagination, and understanding. Last season, 870 donors supported our work with gifts ranging from \$5 - \$150,000! Your gift, no matter the size, makes a significant difference in our ability to create meaningful and memorable live theater.

## WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!



This short 5 question survey helps us know how you like to engage with ArtsWest and ways we can make your experience even better!

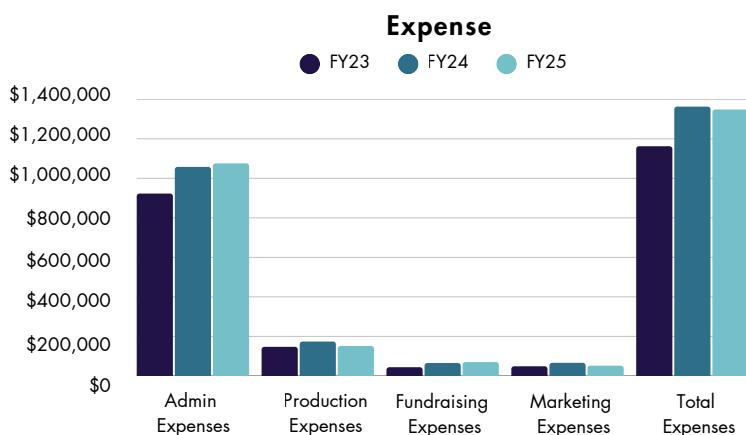
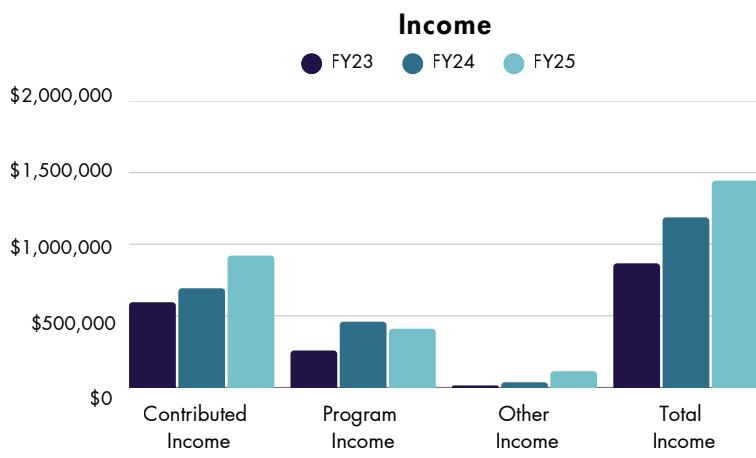
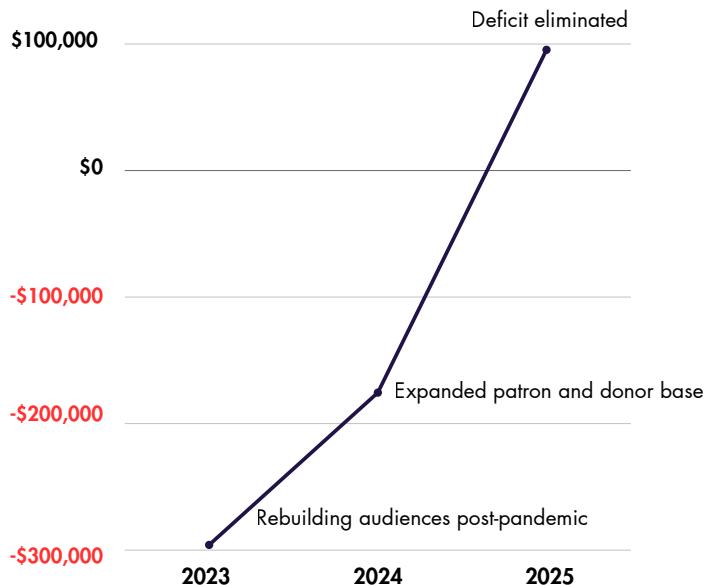
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# FINANCIALS

## A Three-Year Path from Deficit to Stability

Like many theaters, ArtsWest was operating in a deficit budget as we returned to producing post-pandemic. Over the past three seasons, we have focused on rebuilding and expanding audiences, managing production costs, and increasing earned and contributed revenue.

Thanks to the generosity of our community and careful financial management, we eliminated our deficit in the 2024-2025 season and returned to balanced operations. This milestone strengthens our ability to produce meaningful and memorable professional theater in West Seattle.



## Building Financial Strength

ArtsWest's renewed financial stability was driven by a combination of increased audience engagement, growing contributed revenue, and thoughtful management of expenses.

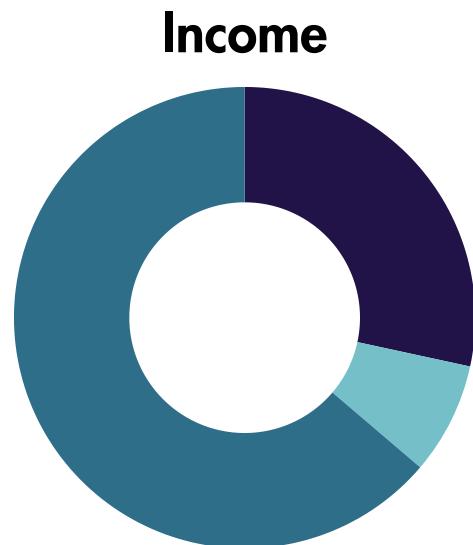
- Audience attendance continued to grow
- Contributed revenue strengthened with community investment
- Production expenses were managed without sacrificing artistic quality

These charts show how revenue and expenses evolved over the past three seasons.

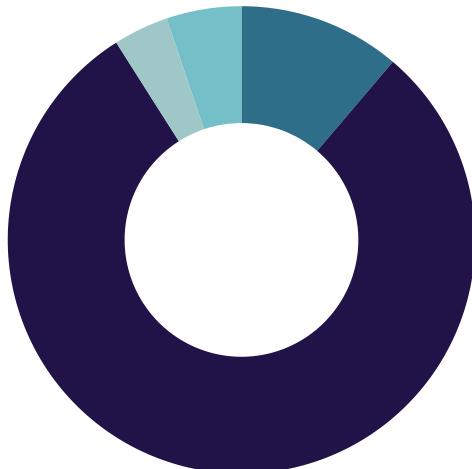
# FINANCIALS

## 2024 - 2025 Financial Snapshot

<span style="background-color: #1a237e; width: 10px; height: 10px; display: inline-block;"></span>	<b>Contributed Income</b>	\$920,598
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<span style="background-color: #1a237e; width: 10px; height: 10px; display: inline-block;"></span>	<b>Other Income</b>	\$113,238
	<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$1,443,801</b>



### Expenses



<span style="background-color: #1a237e; width: 10px; height: 10px; display: inline-block;"></span>	<b>Admin Expenses</b>	\$1,075,794
	Payroll (including production)	\$766,947
	Occupancy	\$160,319
	Admin	\$141,049
	Patron Services	\$7,479
<span style="background-color: #1a237e; width: 10px; height: 10px; display: inline-block;"></span>	<b>Production Expenses</b>	\$151,221
<span style="background-color: #1a237e; width: 10px; height: 10px; display: inline-block;"></span>	<b>Fundraising Expenses</b>	\$69,888
<span style="background-color: #1a237e; width: 10px; height: 10px; display: inline-block;"></span>	<b>Marketing Expenses</b>	\$51,486
	<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$1,348,389</b>





## CURRENT STAFF

Mathew Wright  
*Producing Artistic Director*

Kaitlin Chester  
*Development Officer*

Rachel Ewen  
*Patron Services Manager*

Jack Bateman-lino  
*Production Manager*

Andrew Long  
*Technical Director*

Faye Makatza  
*Operations & Finance Manager*

Corinne Park-Buffelen  
*Communications Manager*

Zenaida Smith  
*Artistic Administrator  
& Casting Associate*

## CURRENT BOARD

### EXECUTIVE

Stuart Frank, President  
*Holland America*

Mary Lonien, Vice President  
*Community Member*

Walter Reese, Treasurer  
*Community Member*

David Delgado, Secretary  
*Community Member*

### TRUSTEES

Kyra J. Becker, M.D.  
*Community Member*

Shaye Kawashima  
*Community Member*

Brennan Littleton  
*Community Member*

Whitney Moore-Adams  
*Electric Butter Marketing*

### TRUSTEE EMERITUS

Michael Alhadoff

Shannon Flora

Jim Guenther

Dawn Leverett

Judy Pigott



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