

Theater By Women

Renaissance

THEATERWORKS

For Everyone



2019-2020 ANNUAL REPORT

Celebrating 27 years of artistic
excellence and debt-free operations.

Dedicated to promoting the work of women onstage and off, Renaissance Theaterworks' mission is to **create moving theater that connects with our shared sense of being human**. Since our inception in 1993, we have been committed to gender equity in the performing arts. Today, more than 27 years later, women artists thrive in Milwaukee because of our efforts.

Our 2019-20 season marked 27 years as **Milwaukee's only professional theater company dedicated to promoting the work of women**. Our season included bold and engaging productions of **THE ROOMMATE**, **HAPPY DAYS**, and **ACTUALLY**. **THE ROOMMATE** and **HAPPY DAYS** were performed at the Broadway Theater Center on the Studio Theater stage. Unfortunately, due to COVID-19, we had to cancel all in-person performances of **ACTUALLY** one week before opening. However, in a real "Hail Mary" attempt to preserve the amazing work created by these artists, we were able to professionally record a fully-staged rehearsal performance of **ACTUALLY**. In April, we released the video to stream at home on-demand. Subscribers and single ticket holders were given a code to watch the video for free. Other interested viewers paid to watch the video. In this way, we were able to offset some of our ticket sale losses.

Raise a Glass to Renaissance is our largest annual fundraising event. Once again, we needed to pivot to a virtual event because of COVID-19. Our virtual event took place on June 5, 2020 and was wildly successful surpassing our goal by 15%.

The pandemic caused many changes to our programming but we remain committed to creating and maintaining partnerships with community service organizations. These collaborations included The National New Play Network, American Association of University Women, Aurora Healing & Advocacy Services, the City of Milwaukee's Office of Violence Prevention's Commission on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, The Women's Center in Waukesha, REDgen, PEARLS for Teen Girls, and many more.

Renaissance Theaterworks continues to pursue **gender equity in the arts** through innovative programs like our Br!NK New Play Festival and the Fran Bauer Young Critics Program.

We are so excited to move to our new artistic home at **255 S. Water Street** (also the home of Next Act Theatre.) Once again, COVID-19 has delayed our ability to produce in-person shows safely but we are hopeful that we will be able to create live theater in our new home beginning in the fall of our 2021 season.

As we move toward our bright future, we remain committed to improving opportunities for women to experience the arts, work professionally in theater, and grow artistically. We are proud to be the second oldest theater company in the United States dedicated to gender equity and we thank you for your patronage and support. **We encourage you to find connections between our work and the world around you, and explore new ways to get involved with both.**

On behalf of our Board of Directors and staff, thank you for all that you do to ensure our continued success.

Warmly,



Lisa Rasmussen, Managing Director

2019-2020 SEASON IN REVIEW

JULY 2019: •Announced our move to our new theatrical home at 255 S Water St.

AUGUST 2019: •Produced ALL OF THE EVERYTHING by Alayna Jacqueline at the Samuel French Off Off Broadway Short Play Festival in NYC. Finalist: Final 12 out of 900+ submissions. •Hired Alea McHatten as Education Coordinator for the Fran Bauer Young Critics Project.

SEPTEMBER 2019: •Br!NK New Play Development Workshops. •6th Annual Br!NK New Play Festival at Nō Studios: 'RAIN ON FIRE by Karen Saari and STITCHED WITH A SICKLE AND A HAMMER by Inna Tsyrlin; and including all New Br!NK Briefs: showcasing the exciting new voices of nine Midwestern Women Playwrights. •THE ROOMMATE First Rehearsal. •Hired Lucía Lozano as Marketing Director.

OCTOBER 2019: •Opening Night of THE ROOMMATE's Wisconsin Premiere. •Milwaukee Film Partner: "Raise Hell: The Life and Times of Molly Ivins".

NOVEMBER 2019: •Lucía Lozano starts at Marketing Director. •Presentation at UWM's Osher Lifelong Learning Institute.

DECEMBER 2019: •ALL OF THE EVERYTHING performance at Arc Theater/ St Kate's hotel. •HAPPY DAYS First Rehearsal.

JANUARY 2020: •Blutender Fundraising Event. •HAPPY DAYS Opening Night.

FEBRUARY 2020: •Began Spektrix ticketing system training. •Co-hosted an event with Next Act Theatre at Chef's Table to kick off our new partnership.

MARCH 2020: •Association of American University Women Presentation. •3/3/20: ACTUALLY First Rehearsal. •ACTUALLY Designer Run. •Recorded fully staged run-through rehearsal of ACTUALLY. •Cancelled all in-person performances of ACTUALLY. •COVID-19 Shelter-in-Place begins.

APRIL 2020: •Released video of ACTUALLY on Vimeo free to subscribers and ticket holders. •Available on demand for purchase. •Cancelled in-person "Raise a Glass" fundraising event. •Applied and received PPP loan.

MAY 2020: •Planning begins to create virtual "Raise a Glass" fundraiser. •Spektrix ticketing system launch.

JUNE 2020: •Launched Anti-Racism Statement of Solidarity. •Held our first virtual fundraising event, "Raise a Glass - pajama party edition!" honoring Patti Keating Kahn and Marti Gobel. Exceeded event goal by 15%. •Annual Board of Directors' Meeting.

THEATER WITH A MISSION

Renaissance Theaterworks creates moving theater that connects with our shared sense of being human. We are dedicated to promoting the work of women onstage and off.

2019-2020 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Patti Keating Kahn

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Laura Arnow

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Sofia N. Ascorbe

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Vivian Moller

Jayne Pink

Gretchen Titus

Julie Tolan

Elizabeth Weirick

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ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Suzan Fete

MANAGING DIRECTOR

Lisa Rasmussen

MARKETING & PR DIRECTOR

Lucia Lozano

DEVELOPMENT MANAGER

Dana Dossett

PRODUCTION MANAGER

Bailey Wegner

EDUCATION COORDINATOR

Alea McHatten

SPONSORS

SEASON SPONSORS

CAMPAC, UPAF, Wisconsin Arts Board, Herzfeld Foundation, Shubert Foundation, Bert L. & Patricia S. Steigleder Charitable Trust

SHOW SPONSORS

HAPPY DAYS

Jan Serr & John Shannon

Sandra Zingler & Barbara Johnson

ACTUALLY

Laura & Mike Arnow + Sandy & George Dionisopoulos, in celebration of the life of "Yiayia" Christine Dionisopoulos

WINE WEDNESDAY SPONSOR

Baird

BRINK SPONSORS


Bader Philanthropies, Brico Fund, Ralph Evinrude Foundation

FBYCP SPONSORS

Milwaukee Arts Board, Harley-Davidson Foundation, Greater Milwaukee Association of REALTORS Youth Foundation

THE ROOMMATE

By Jen Silverman | Directed by Suzan Fete
OCTOBER 18 - NOVEMBER 10, 2019



“Both Quintero and Gobel bring depth and honesty to their characters, along with what feels, from the audience, like a genuine respect for them. It might be easy in a play about such different women, and a play that relies entirely on those two women, to handle the characters as caricatures, but there’s none of that on this stage. Both women deliver humor, pathos, and a few universal truths, building dimensional, flawed characters that one comes to care about.” ~Milwaukee Journal Sentinel

“Under Suzan Fete’s capable direction, the two characters are a perfect fit for their roles. Gobel and Quintero are at the top of their game, thrusting and parrying like two fencing partners in a duel of words. The result is a definite must-see of the fall theater season.” ~Shepherd Express

“Good directing in plays like this is by nature seamless. We are only conscious later how cleverly the two actors have been moved around and how their best moments have been polished. Technically the production elements are equally invisible and effective.” ~Urban Milwaukee

Photo by Ross E. Zentner.

Featuring Isabel Quintero and Marti Gobel (THE ROOMMATE, 2019)



HAPPY DAYS

By Samuel Beckett | Directed by Marie Kohler
JANUARY 24 - FEBRUARY 16, 2020

“With virtually nonstop monologues throughout the play, Gordon gives a career-defining performance among her many fine acting (and directing) roles over the years. Her Winnie is so real, so three-dimensional we forget her physical entrapment within the mound of earth.”
~Shepherd Express

“Audience members may leave feeling around to see if their own brows, their cheeks, their eyes forced frontwards, their lips forced up to their nose can find as much expression and humanity as Gordon does.” ~Urban Milwaukee

“HAPPY DAYS isn’t an easy play to fit into a theater season – but great kudos go to Renaissance Theaterworks, the astounding Laura Gordon and the inspired Marie Kohler for taking the risk and making the experience unforgettable.” ~OnMilwaukee

ACTUALLY

By Anna Ziegler | Directed by Mary MacDonald Kerr
Streaming on Demand: APRIL 3 - 30, 2020

DUE TO THE PANDEMIC AND THE FACT THAT "ACTUALLY" NEVER BECAME A FINAL PRODUCTION, WE DIDN'T ASK FOR REVIEWS FROM THE PRESS; HOWEVER, THE STREAMING VIDEO OF THE FULLY STAGED REHEARSAL RECEIVED RAVE AUDIENCE REVIEWS.

"Not a minute went by where I wasn't awestruck by an element of the show — the actors' vulnerable performances, the impeccable writing, or the highly nuanced perspective of an issue so many young people like me (I'm a Sophomore in college) face at one point or another. Its portrayal of the most profoundly challenging aspects of a young adult's life was candid and profound. Even without the experience of a live performance, it impacted me deeply." ~Gaby M.

COMMUNITY PARTNERS



Br!NK

NEW PLAY FESTIVAL

6TH ANNUAL | SEPTEMBER 3-8, 2019



DEVELOPING NEW WORK BY WOMEN PLAYWRIGHTS

Renaissance Theaterworks' Br!NK Award is presented annually to Midwestern women playwrights to develop and advance their work. In 2019, the Br!NK Awards went to **'RAIN ON FIRE** by Karen Saari and **STITCHED WITH A SICKLE AND A HAMMER** by Inna Tsyrlin, selected from over 35 submissions. The 2019 Br!NK playwrights spent a week workshoping their play with a director, cast and dramaturg – a team dedicated to researching and considering the play from every angle. The plays were then presented as staged-readings for the public over the **Br!NK New Play Festival**, touring to a variety of Greater Milwaukee area locations, **September 3- 6**, and at **NŌ Studios** for the **Br!NK New Play Festival Weekend, September 7 – 8**. Following each staged-reading, audience members learned more about the writing and workshoping processes from the playwrights involved and asked questions during a structured talkback. Audiences were also encouraged to give constructive feedback of their experience to the playwright.



In addition to developing these two, full-length plays, Br!NK 2019 continued to expand opportunities for women by fully staging a collection of seven ten-minute plays, the **Br!NK Br!efs**, presented as staged-readings at **NŌ Studios** on September 7 and 8 during the **2019 Br!NK New Play Festival**.

Br!NK was supported in part by Bader Philanthropies, Brico Fund, and Ralph Evinrude Foundation



THE FUTURE IS FEMALE: CULTIVATING THE NEXT GENERATION OF THEATER CRITICS

The Fran Bauer Young Critic's Project is Renaissance Theaterworks' newest art education program. Named after our beloved Board member and journalist Fran Bauer, FBYCP was created to inspire the next generation of theater critics.

FBYCP encourages young womxn and femmes to use their voice in creative and powerful ways. The project is designed to introduce aspiring thespians to the metier and nuances of theater while creating space for self expression and inward love, fostering healthy relationships, and dignity in community through the art of critique.

This year, workshops were held virtually in light of COVID-19. Students were able to see our shows during the workshops, explore their unique voices as womxn and writers through creative discussions and activities, and build authentic relationships with one another while socially distancing. We hope that this project will inspire a new and more diverse group of theater critics.

We are proud to partner with Ex Fabula and PEARLS for Teen Girls.



RENAISSANCE THEATERWORKS' EDUCATION PROGRAM

The Fran Bauer Young Critics Project is supported by: Milwaukee Arts Board, the Harley-Davidson Foundation, and the Greater Milwaukee Association of REALTORS Youth Foundation

2019/20 AT A GLANCE



RTW's 2019-20 "Season of Transformation" got off to a great start! Our 6th Annual Br!nk New Play Festival was a smashing success and employed more than 50 artists.

Our first two offerings, THE ROOMMATE and HAPPY DAYS, were artistic and critical triumphs. In March 2020, COVID-19 forced us (and all performing arts organizations) to close our doors and shelter in place. Fortunately, one week before the opening of ACTUALLY, we were able to record a fully staged rehearsal. In April, we released the video to stream on-demand.

AFFORDABLE THEATER

Renaissance Theaterworks served close to 3,500 patrons, offering student, senior, group, pay what you can, and artist discounts as part of our commitment to accessible theater.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Throughout the season, we partnered with community groups to create awareness of the arts, benefit our community, and provide education opportunities. Our partnerships included The National New Play Network, Ronald Reagan High School, PEARLS for Teen Girls, Aurora Healing & Advocacy Services, the City of Milwaukee's Office of Violence Prevention's Commission on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, The Women's Center in Waukesha, REDgen, and many more.

OUTREACH & ENGAGEMENT

Our artistic staff brought informative and engaging presentations to groups around the Greater Milwaukee Area, including Osher Lifelong Learners, the Woman's Club, UPAF Workplace Giving Campaigns, and more. The 2019 Br!NK New Play Festival performed toured readings of new works by Midwestern women playwrights to NO Studios, UW-Whitewater, UW-Parkside, Woodland Pattern Bookstore, and Arts @ Large, bringing the arts into the community!

RAISE A GLASS TO

Renaissance

Virtual edition

HONOREES

OUTSTANDING
SUPPORTER



PATTI KEATING KAHN

Board Vice President
Board member since 2010

OUTSTANDING
ARTIST



MARTI GOBEL

Actor, Director,
Teaching Artist

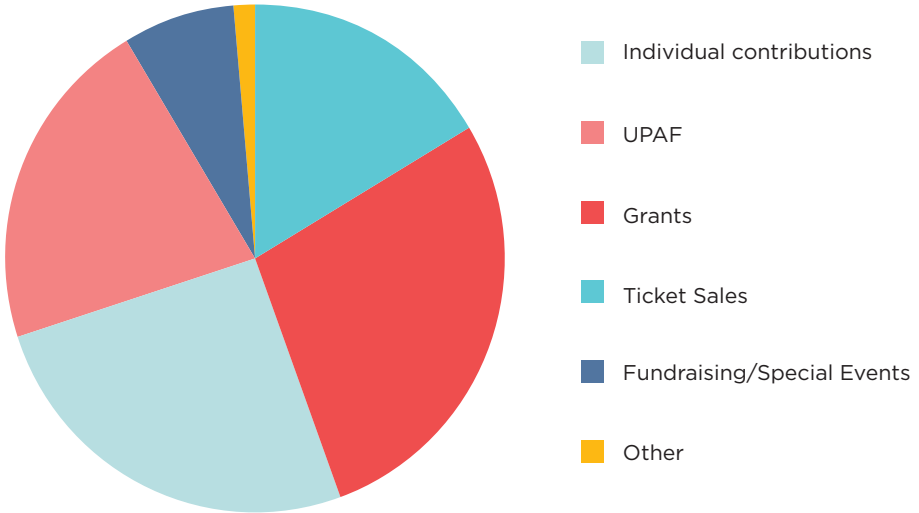
Our “Raise a Glass to Renaissance” fundraising event took place virtually June 4-5, 2020. We honored two incredible women who have made a lasting impact on our organization, onstage and off.

On Thursday, June 4, at noon, bidding opened on our tantalizing silent auction. At our live event, guests enjoyed fun, behind-the-scenes peeks into our work, and beautiful tribute videos honoring our strong past and bright future, as well as our honorees. The event culminated with a live toast and celebration.

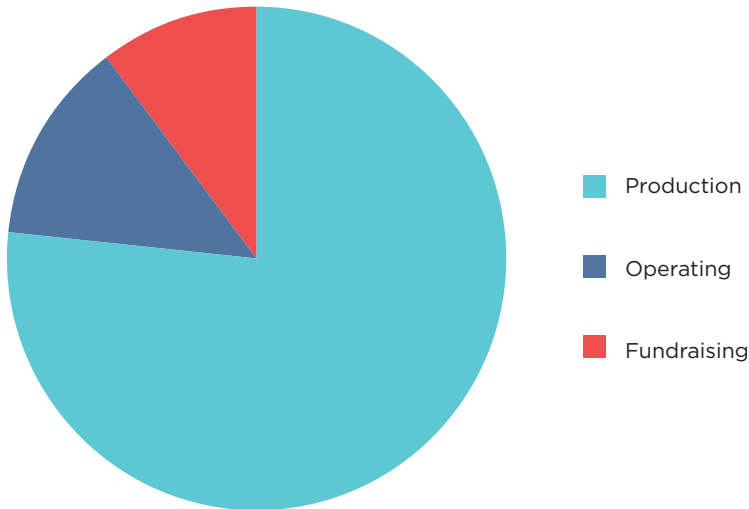
We also had a successful live appeal. We thank the Committee and all those who volunteered and donated.

FINANCIAL REPORT

REVENUE AND SUPPORT



EXPENSES



Over 75% of our total expenses go directly to the work seen onstage.

Diverse revenue sources ensure the financial stability of Renaissance Theaterworks. We continue to grow our earned income, and every year of our existence has been **debt-free**. We are grateful for the continued and expanding support we receive year over year that allows us to remain one of Milwaukee’s most critically acclaimed professional theaters.

2019-2020 STATEMENT OF ACTIVITY

| REVENUE & SUPPORT | 2019/20 | 2018/19 |
|---------------------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Ticket sales | \$111,262 | \$141,461 |
| Grants | \$188,243 | \$153,343 |
| Individual Contributions | \$170,502 | \$322,351 |
| UPAF | \$142,902 | \$160,890 |
| Fundraising/Special Events | \$49,185 | \$50,885 |
| Other | \$8,429 | \$1,347 |
| Total Revenue | \$746,997 | \$830,277 |
| EXPENSES | | |
| Production | \$487,483 | \$506,394 |
| Operating | \$81,310 | \$90,091 |
| Fundraising | \$64,999 | \$53,855 |
| Total Expenses | \$633,792 | \$650,340 |
| Change in Net Operating Assets | \$113,205 | \$179,937 |
| NET ASSETS IN RESERVE FUND | | |
| Beginning of Year | \$313,306 | \$236,686 |
| End of Year | \$453,354 | \$416,623 |

SUPPORTERS

Renaissance Theaterworks is proud of its tradition of debt-free operation. Our 2019-2020 annual operating budget of **\$670,559** is primarily generated through ticket sales, individual donations, special events, and philanthropic support. Renaissance Theaterworks gratefully acknowledges the following individuals and organizations for their generous annual support.

\$50,000 & above

The Estate of Ruth "Bettie" Zillman
UPAF: United Performing Arts Fund

\$10,000 - \$49,999

ANONYMOUS (2)
Laura & Mike Arnow
Bader Philanthropies, Inc.
Brico Fund, LLC
The Chicago Community Trust
Jean & John DiMotto
George & Sandy Dionisopoulos
John Fischer
Sue & Tim Frautschi
Greater Milwaukee Foundation
William and Alicia Schoeneich Arts and Culture Fund
The Herzfeld Foundation
Jan Serr & John Shannon
The Shubert Foundation, Inc
Bert L. & Patricia S. Steigleder Charitable Trust

\$5,000 - \$9,999

ANONYMOUS (2)
CAMPAC
The Chicago Community Trust
City of Milwaukee Arts Board
Ralph Evinrude Foundation
Suzan & Jeff Fete
Harley-Davidson Foundation
Judith A. Keyes Family Fund
Herb Kohl Philanthropies
Jane Bradley Pettit Foundation

Jon Michael Reavis
Robert W. Baird & Co.
Wisconsin Arts Board
Sandra Zingler & Barbara Johnson

\$1,000 - \$4,999

ANONYMOUS
Brenda Andrews & James Cauley
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Lynde Uihlein
Susan Vetrovsky & Michael Goldstone, MD
Kim Wynn
Judy Zwirlein

\$500 - \$999

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Lynne & Neal Miller
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Jane O'Connell
Lois & Richard Pauls
Pfister Hotel
Karen Plunkett
Susan & Michael Schall
Patricia Van Alyea
Catherine Washabaugh
Larry & Adrienne Waters

\$200 - \$499

ANONYMOUS (5)
Actors Equity Association
George Affeldt
Terri & Jim Alioto
American Association of
University Women
Sofia Ascorbe
Nancy Balcer
Jackie Boynton
Theresa Brannan & Brian
Bauman
Elisabeth Townsend Bridge &
Flint Bridge
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Leon Travanti
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Fund
Susan Winecki

*This list represents gifts
received between July 1,
2019 and June 30, 2020.
For a complete list, please
go to www.r-t-w.com/
give/current-donors*

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THANK
YOU!

WE TRULY CHERISH OUR
GENEROUS SUPPORTERS
WHO MAKE "THEATER
BY WOMEN, FOR
EVERYONE" POSSIBLE
YEAR AFTER YEAR.

> > > > >



Theater By Women

Renaissance

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