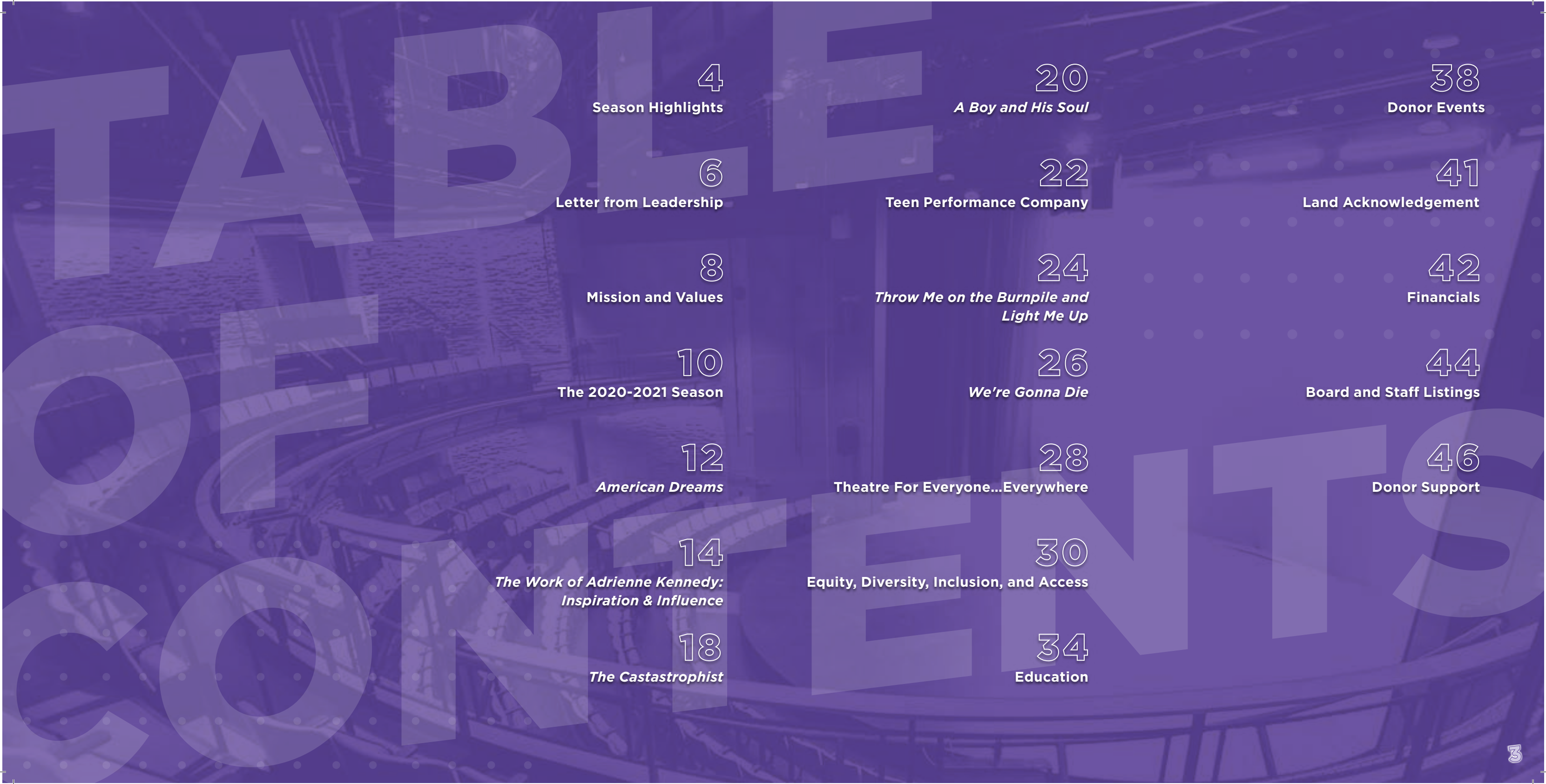




ANNUAL REPORT
FISCAL 2021

**ROUND HOUSE
RESILIENCE**
A REIMAGINED SEASON



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2020-2021 SEASON HIGHLIGHTS

- Against the backdrop of a global pandemic and with much of the staff working remotely, Round House presented an **ENTIRE SEASON OF VIRTUAL THEATRE**, including seven plays filmed on the Round House stage.
- Throughout the entire season, our **TIGHT HEALTH PROTOCOLS AND FOCUS ON KEEPING OUR COMMUNITY SAFE RESULTED IN ZERO COVID-RELATED PRODUCTION INTERRUPTIONS**, and no artists or staff contracting COVID. Nearly 1,000 COVID tests were administered to cast, crew, and staff during the 2020-2021 Virtual Season.
- **TWO OF OUR VIRTUAL PRODUCTIONS WERE NOMINATED FOR DRAMA LEAGUE AWARDS.** Our four-play festival, *The Work of Adrienne Kennedy: Inspiration & Influence*, was nominated in the category of Outstanding Digital Theater, Collection or Festival and our co-production of *American Dreams* was nominated in the category of Outstanding Interactive Theater.
- Round House and Marin Theatre Company's co-production of *The Catastrophist* was **PRESENTED BY 10 PARTNER THEATRES ACROSS THE COUNTRY.**
- Our virtual productions received **UNPRECEDENTED NATIONAL PRESS ATTENTION**, including coverage by *The New York Times*, *The New Yorker*, *PBS News Hour*, *The Economist*, and more.
- The Teen Performance Company **CREATED THE 19TH ANNUAL SARAH METZGER MEMORIAL PLAY FROM SCRATCH**, writing and producing the entire virtual production remotely.
- Round House **DISTRIBUTED MORE THAN 4,000 FREE TICKETS FOR OUR VIRTUAL PRODUCTIONS TO STUDENTS AND LOCAL NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS** through our acclaimed Free Play and On The House community access ticket programs.
- Round House **ENGAGED 5,411 STUDENTS OF ALL AGES WITH VIRTUAL CLASSES AND CAMPS** that explored every aspect of theatre and provided students with much-needed interaction and connection during a year of remote schooling and isolation.
- Through the generosity of so many, the Round House Resilience Fund **RAISED MORE THAN \$800,000** to help keep Round House financially stable and minimize the financial impact of our continued closure to live audiences.
- Consistent with our **COMMITMENT TO EQUITY** in the stories we tell, five of our six featured playwrights during the 2020-2021 Season were women, and four of the six were people of color.





DEAR FRIENDS OF ROUND HOUSE,

THE 2020-2021 Season will forever be remembered as one of the most remarkable in Round House history. Days after we announced the originally planned 2020-2021 Season in March 2020, the world shuttered to a halt due to a deadly global pandemic. We closed our newly renovated theatre, unsure when we'd be able to gather there again.

“ROUND HOUSE
IS TRYING TO
RESPOND TO THIS
DESTABILIZING
MOMENT WITH
IMMEDIACY AND
ARTISTRY.”

—THE NEW YORK TIMES

In the face of this existential crisis for the theatre industry, **we at Round House instantly pivoted to provide virtual programming to not only keep making art but to stay connected with all of you.** Created in real time, these programs quickly began to reflect the changing world around us, evidence of the vital role that the arts play in creating experiences that inspire empathy and demand conversation. Our web series *Homebound* was praised by *The New York Times* for its creative approach to virtual content: “Round House is trying to respond to this destabilizing moment with immediacy and artistry, using the tools it has to maintain a connection with its audience.”

And in turn, **your incredible support of this artistic innovation inspired us.**

You engaged with our virtual programming in all its forms and contributed to the Round House Resilience Fund to help us continue to create inventive theatrical content. When we realized we would not be able to re-open the theatre for the 2020-2021 Season, we reimagined the season to be entirely virtual, while continuing to highlight voices that have historically been under-represented by the theatre field.

Our virtual season kicked off with *American Dreams*, a playful, participatory exploration of American values, earning a nomination for the 87th annual Drama League Awards in the category of Outstanding Interactive Theater. Next, Round House produced *The Work of Adrienne Kennedy: Inspiration & Influence*, a four-play reading series celebrating the work of one of the country's most influential, yet underproduced playwrights. Produced in partnership with the McCarter Theatre Center, the festival reached more than 10,000 people and was also nominated for the Drama League Awards in the category of Outstanding Digital Theater, Collection, or Festival.

The world premiere of *The Catastrophist* by Lauren M. Gunderson, a co-production with Marin Theatre Company, explored how closely art can reflect real life: the play follows the life and career of Dr. Nathan Wolfe, one of the world's leading virologists, who has long been warning the world about the need to prepare for coming pandemics.

Though we had to remain closed to the public, it was wonderful to return to the Round House stage to film our three spring productions: Colman Domingo's *A Boy and His Soul*, Lucy Alibar's *Throw Me on the Burnpile and Light Me Up*, and Young Jean Lee's *We're Gonna Die*. These full-scale, small-cast shows maximized the outstanding production quality that our renovated space has to offer, while serving as an assurance that the theatre would be waiting to welcome all of us back as soon as it was safe to do so.

The shutdown also afforded us an opportune moment in which to reflect on and reassess our progress toward our goals related to equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility. In addition to having dedicated board and staff groups working to this purpose, we created a new staff position to manage these initiatives and have posted our progress on our website and in this report to keep us working toward being better.

Through it all, we remained steadfast in our commitment to be a Theatre For Everyone. Our community access ticket programs, Free Play and On The House, offered complimentary access to our virtual season for students ages 13 through college and local nonprofit groups. Virtual programming enabled us to reach a record number of students through our Student Matinee program, and we used the hiatus from our apprenticeship program to make the program more equitable for early career professionals.

THE CHALLENGES BROUGHT ON
BY THE PANDEMIC HAVE MADE
US MORE CREATIVE AS ARTISTS,
MORE CONSCIENTIOUS AS AN
ORGANIZATION, AND MORE
GRATEFUL THAN EVER FOR THE
GIFT OF LIVE THEATRE.

While we were honored to bring Round House to your house during the closure, we have all sorely missed the energy that live audiences bring to every performance, your thoughtful conversations, and the caring community you create. The challenges brought on by the pandemic have made us more creative as artists, more conscientious as an organization, and more grateful than ever for the gift of live theatre.

We cannot thank you enough for your support over the past 18 months, and we can't wait to share all of the exciting new developments to come in the brighter days ahead.

RYAN RILETTE
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

ED ZAKRESKI
MANAGING DIRECTOR

MISSION AND VALUES



OUR MISSION

Round House is a theatre for everyone. We enrich our community through bold, outstanding theatrical and educational experiences that inspire empathy and demand conversation.



OUR VALUES

THEATRE FOR EVERYONE

We are a theatre of and for our community, committed to Equity, Diversity, Inclusivity, and Accessibility. We believe that engaging in the arts is essential to the human experience and that arts education should be available to all. Therefore, we intentionally and rigorously work to break down barriers to attending, learning, and creating theatre—including those based in race, gender, sexuality, ability, and economics. We amplify voices that have been historically under-represented and under-resourced by the theatre field and strive to incorporate anti-racist and anti-sexist practices across all aspects of our work.

ARTISTIC AMBITION

We hold ourselves to the highest professional standards in all our work. We aim to be an important voice in the theatrical world by creating art locally that has an impact globally.



COMMUNITY

We believe that we enhance our communities through our collaborative artistry both on stage and in the classroom. We invest locally—in both talent and products. We create civic dialogues with art at the center and endeavor to be the artistic home for our community. We consider our communities to encompass Bethesda, Silver Spring, Montgomery County, Maryland, the Washington theatrical community, and the broader Washington metropolitan area.

EMPATHY

We believe that fostering empathy creates stronger communities and that communities thrive when they represent a wide and diverse set of stories and viewpoints that reflect the breadth of human experience. We challenge audiences and theatre-makers to awaken their empathy through artistic risk on the stage and in the classroom.

INTEGRITY

We believe in treating everyone with respect—staff, artists, students, trustees, and patrons. We endeavor to create a supportive culture that allows our teams to do their best work with an appropriate work/life balance. We are transparent about achieving our mission-based artistic and education initiatives and are committed to doing so in a financially responsible manner.



Against the backdrop of a global pandemic, a contentious election season, and a national racial reckoning, the Round House Theatre staff and artistic teams navigated a constantly evolving viral landscape while continuing to produce theatre in a virtual world. Following the success of *Homebound*—shot in the earliest weeks of the pandemic almost entirely on cellphones and in the actors’ homes—the first productions of our “COVID season” were produced during the height of the pandemic using strict safety protocols, regular testing, and limited personnel.

Leila Buck’s *AMERICAN DREAMS*, a co-production with New York’s Working Theatre and others, was broadcast live from the actors’ homes and featured interactive participation from audience members in their own living rooms. (See pages 12-13.)

As with *Homebound*, each of the four plays in *THE WORK OF ADRIENNE KENNEDY: INSPIRATION & INFLUENCE* was rehearsed and filmed in only a week and was shot at Round House, using only minimal staging, limited costumes (mostly from the actors’ own closets), with actors holding scripts. (See pages 14-17.)

The world premiere of Lauren M. Gunderson’s *THE CATASTROPHIST*, a co-production with Marin Theatre Company, was filmed on a bare stage in California. (See pages 18-19.)

Meanwhile, the Teen Performance Company created its own one-of-a-kind virtual theatrical event, *HINDSIGHT IS...*, written, designed, and performed entirely by the students in their own homes—and having never met in person. (See pages 22-23.)

With each production, we learned a bit more and stretched our artistic wings further.

By Spring 2021, Round House had moved into a new phase of pandemic theatre-making. The three spring productions featured a return to the Round House stage

for the first fully staged productions since March 2020. And while vaccines began to be more widely available, all three spring shows continued to be produced with strict COVID protocols to keep our artists and staff healthy.

Beginning with Colman Domingo’s *A BOY AND HIS SOUL* (pages 20-21) and continuing with Lucy Alibar’s *THROW ME ON THE BURNPILE AND LIGHT ME UP* (pages 24-25)—both one-person plays—complete sets, costumes, and theatre magic were in use. And while the shows were filmed, they were fully rehearsed, staged, and performed straight through, just like in a live theatre performance.

By our final show of the season, Young Jean Lee’s *WE’RE GONNA DIE*, low case numbers and high vaccination uptake allowed us to invite a small number of tested and masked audiences back to the theatre for the filming of the five-person production. (See pages 26-27.)

Through the season, Round House sustained its commitment to creating art while prioritizing the health and safety of our audiences, artists, and staff, all the while connecting with not only our local community but with theatre lovers across America and the world. (See pages 28-29.)

Round House Theatre’s 2020-2021 Reimagined Virtual Season was sponsored by Mitch & Heidi Dupler, Linda Ravdin & Don Shapero, and The Zickler Family.



OCT 5 - OCT 11, 2020

AMERICAN DREAMS

CREATED BY LEILA BUCK AND TAMILLA WOODARD

WRITTEN BY LEILA BUCK

DIRECTED BY TAMILLA WOODARD

CO-PRODUCED WITH WORKING THEATER AND OTHER NATIONAL PARTNERS

“

“THE VARIED FORMAT IS
BRACING,
AS IS THE
INTERACTIVITY.”

—THE WASHINGTON POST

”

“

“THIS
INTERACTIVE SATIRE
IMAGINES THAT THREE
CANDIDATES VIE FOR
AMERICAN CITIZENSHIP
IN A FLASHY GAME SHOW...
PART QUIZ, PART
POPULARITY CONTEST.

—THE NEW YORK TIMES

”

“THE ADAPTATIONS TO THE PANDEMIC
ARE EXCELLENT—
THE SHOW LEANED INTO THE ZOOM FORMAT,
AND IT WORKED.”

—BROADWAY WORLD

OUR VIRTUAL 2020-2021 SEASON LAUNCHED WITH

American Dreams, a playful, participatory exploration of American values with real-time audience interaction, voting, Q&As, and more. Using Zoom, *American Dreams* transported audiences from their homes into the studio audience environment of a government-run game show where contestants competed for the ultimate prize: instant citizenship to the United States. Presented in the weeks leading up to the 2020 presidential election, the production fit perfectly with our mission to demand conversation, asking our online audience members to reflect on what it means to be an American citizen. *The Washington Post* described the virtual production as “a vigorous live-streamed interactive play that ponders and satirizes America’s naturalization policies.” The production also allowed us to partner with six theatres around the country to join forces and foster collaboration during a time of crisis.

Along with the shift to virtual productions came the opportunity for virtual discussions and events to continue the conversation with experts and advocates all over the country, streamed live and also archived for future viewing. Round House hosted an online town hall exploring the immigrant experience, moderated by retired ABC-7 News Anchor **KATHLEEN MATTHEWS** and featuring *American Dreams* co-creator **LEILA BUCK** and several local experts, including lawyer and Round House commissioned playwright **MARY KATHRYN NAGLE** and a local resident who worked with CAIR Coalition to gain asylum, among others.

American Dreams was created and developed by Leila Buck and Tamilla Woodard with Jens Rasmussen in collaboration with Osh Ghanimah, Imran Sheikh, and the company. Working Theater was the lead producer for the virtual production of American Dreams in partnership with Round House Theatre, Salt Lake Acting Company, HartBeat Ensemble, The Bushnell Center for the Performing Arts, University of Connecticut, and Marin Theatre Company, co-commissioned by Arizona State University and Texas Performing Arts, with support from the JKW Foundation.

NOV 14, 2020 - APR 30, 2021

THE WORK OF ADRIENNE KENNEDY: INSPIRATION & INFLUENCE

HE BROUGHT HER
HEART
BACK IN A BOX

OHIO STATE
MURDERS

SLEEP DEPRIVATION
CHAMBER

ETTA AND ELLA
ON THE UPPER
WEST SIDE

KENNEDY'S WORK IS UNUSUALLY
WELL SUITED TO FILMIC TREATMENT...
[SHE] IS ONE OF OUR
GREATEST AND LEAST DEFINABLE
LIVING PLAYWRIGHTS,
RESTLESSLY INVENTIVE
AND RUTHLESSLY UNSHY
ABOUT THE PRESSURES EXERTED
BY HISTORY UPON OUR LIVES.

—THE NEW YORKER

AN OUTSTANDING ONLINE FESTIVAL OF PLAYS
BY THE 89-YEAR-OLD KENNEDY,
A GREAT, ETERNALLY UNDERSUNG
AMERICAN DRAMATIST...
A THEATRE ARTIST OF UNIQUE
STAGEWORTHY IMAGINATION,
WHO HAS EARNED THIS PLATFORM.

—THE WASHINGTON POST

**“IT IS AN INDICTMENT OF OUR THEATRE
THAT A PLAYWRIGHT WHO HAS
INSPIRED ARTISTS ACROSS GENERATIONS
IS SO LITTLE KNOWN TO THE AVERAGE THEATERGOER...
ROUND HOUSE THEATRE HAS
ANSWERED THE CALL WITH...
A WELCOME OPPORTUNITY TO EXPERIENCE
KENNEDY'S DRAMATIC RESPLENDENCE
BEYOND THE PAGE”**

—LOS ANGELES TIMES

ON THE SINGULAR STYLE, OUTSIZED RESONANCE,
and enduring legacy of playwright Adrienne Kennedy, Maya Phillips of *The New York Times* writes, “Her otherworldly work deserves its own volume. Yet Kennedy, now 89, is often shelved among the ranks of the ‘celebrated’ and the ‘influential’ who are rarely produced.” Kennedy’s poetic conversations on race and power—just as necessary in the 2020s as they were in the 1960s—were re-introduced to audiences all over the world with *The Work of Adrienne Kennedy: Inspiration & Influence*. Produced in association with McCarter Theatre Center, the festival highlighted the award-winning playwright’s astonishing body of work with in-depth panel discussions and four of Kennedy’s plays, produced as virtual theatrical experiences.

≡ The Work of Adrienne Kennedy: Inspiration & Influence was sponsored by The RPM Fund.



HE BROUGHT HER HEART BACK IN A BOX

BY **ADRIENNE KENNEDY**
DIRECTED BY
NICOLE A. WATSON

THE FESTIVAL KICKED OFF WITH MOVING PERFORMANCES and a timeless meditation on race and brutality in Kennedy's brief but expansive memory play, *He Brought Her Heart Back in a Box*. Written in 2018, Adrienne Kennedy's newest work is a hypnotic and heartbreaking story about a young interracial couple exchanging letters in 1940s Georgia and New York. Directed by newly appointed McCarter Associate Artistic Director Nicole A. Watson, who most recently served as Associate Artistic Director at Round House, the production used "slick digital elements and simple, forthright acting to evoke a world both bygone and familiar" (*Broad Street Review*).

≡ *He Brought Her Heart Back in a Box* was sponsored by Jay and Robin Hammer.



OHIO STATE MURDERS

BY **ADRIENNE KENNEDY**
DIRECTED BY
VALERIE CURTIS-NEWTON

THE FESTIVAL CONTINUED WITH OHIO STATE MURDERS, a poignant exploration of lost innocence and American racism. The Lucille Lortel Award-winning one act allows Suzanne Alexander, a recurring figure in Kennedy's plays who often acts as an alter ego for herself, to tell her own story of her time at Ohio State University in the 1950s—a time filled with startling exploitation, pain, and betrayal. "This is a play that rumbles ominously at first, like a far-off tornado, then inches ever closer, a funnel of stunning revelation that threatens to sweep you away" (*The Washington Post*).

≡ *Sleep Deprivation Chamber* was sponsored by Elaine Kotell Binder and Richard Binder.



SLEEP DEPRIVATION CHAMBER

BY **ADAM P. KENNEDY** AND
ADRIENNE KENNEDY
DIRECTED BY
RAYMOND O. CALDWELL

WRITTEN BY ADRIENNE KENNEDY AND HER SON, Adam P. Kennedy, *Sleep Deprivation Chamber* is a semi-autobiographical account of the family's harrowing experience of police brutality, following Black college student Teddy Alexander through the waking nightmare of being beaten by officers in the driveway of his family's Arlington home and then standing trial when the officer accuses him of assault. This is a story that is "unfortunately always 'timely,'" writes Soraya Nadia McDonald of *The Undefeated*. "*Sleep Deprivation Chamber* reopens wounds with tragic elegance, casting anti-Black violence as an epidemic that brings Teddy's scream through our speakers."

≡ *Ohio State Murders* was sponsored by Bruce and Ann Lane.



ETTA AND ELLA ON THE UPPER WEST SIDE

BY **ADRIENNE KENNEDY**
DIRECTED BY
TIMOTHY DOUGLAS

AN "UTTERLY UNIQUE" (THE WASHINGTON POST) world premiere concluded the festival. Adapted from a narrative work originally written in 1999, *Etta and Ella on the Upper West Side* was brought to theatrical life for the very first time as "a richly experimental world of time-bending narratives, soul-searching dreams, and vivid nightmares wrapped in astonishing eloquence" (*DC Metro Theater Arts*). Mixing monologue, voiceover, and prose, the story of sisters and bitter literary rivals Etta and Ella Harrison is a kaleidoscopic thriller worth watching more than once to fully unravel its tragic mysteries.

≡ *Etta and Ella on the Upper West Side* was sponsored by Susan Gilbert and Ron Schechter.

In addition to the virtual productions, Round House and McCarter also presented four in-depth discussions to further engage audiences. First, *Influence & Imagination* gathered a panel of contemporary playwrights whose work was influenced by Adrienne Kennedy. Next, *Acting Adrienne Kennedy* convened a panel of actors who have previously performed in

Adrienne Kennedy's plays. *Critical Reflections* examined the critical and academic response to Adrienne Kennedy's work, and finally, *The Black Avant-Garde* explored the history, evolution, and impact of avant-garde and experimental works by Black artists.

JAN 26 - JUL 25, 2021

THE CATASTROPHIST

BY LAUREN M. GUNDERSON

“

“A PLAY THAT IS
FITTING
FOR THIS
UNPRECEDENTED TIME.”

—BROADWAY WORLD

”

“

“DEEPLY AFFECTING...
SENSORIAL...WARMLY COMICAL.
READYMADE
FOR THIS
HISTORICAL MOMENT.”

—SAN FRANCISCO EXAMINER

”

The virtual theatre environment offered special opportunities for partnership with our peers. Ten additional theatre companies nationwide presented Round House and Marin Theatre Company's production of *The Catastrophist* to their own audiences:

Central Square Theatre (Cambridge, MA); **Cincinnati Playhouse** (Cincinnati, OH); **City Theatre** (Pittsburgh, PA); **Jungle Theater** (Minneapolis, MN); **Northlight Theatre** (Chicago, IL); **People's Light** (Malvern, PA); **San Diego Rep** (San Diego, CA); **Theatrical Outfit** (Atlanta, GA); **Trinity Rep** (Providence, RI); **Virginia Stage** (Norfolk, VA)

“A SUBTLE BLEND OF FILM AND LIVE THEATRE....

THE CATASTROPHIST SHEDS COMPASSIONATE LIGHT
ON THE ALL-TOO-HUMAN TENDENCY TO IGNORE
CATASTROPHE UNTIL IT IS TOO LATE.

THERE'S NO RISK, AND PLENTY OF REWARD,
IN WATCHING THIS ESSENTIAL LESSON.

—THE ECONOMIST

OUR SEASON CONTINUED IN JANUARY 2021 WITH THE

world premiere of *The Catastrophist*. Playwright Lauren M. Gunderson, known for previous Round House productions *The Book of Will* and *Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley*, returned to Round House with a timely story only she could unveil. Based on the life and work of her own husband, virologist Dr. Nathan Wolfe, *The Catastrophist* presented a deep dive into the profundities of scientific exploration and the harrowing realities of facing your own mortality. Co-produced with Marin Theatre Company and directed by Jasson Minadakis, *The Catastrophist* made its digital world premiere as a one-of-a-kind theatrical experience during the COVID-19 pandemic and was praised by *The Washington Post* for having “the urgency of a news alert from Anthony S. Fauci.” The deeply personal production both highlighted Dr. Nathan Wolfe's extraordinary work and celebrated the scientific community as the world was responding to the pandemic.

In partnership with the **ASPEN INSTITUTE**, Round House presented two unique online events that explored the intersections of science and storytelling. The first gathered a panel of pandemic experts in dialogue about how they found their passion for science, including Founder and Chairman of Global Viral (and inspiration for *The Catastrophist*) **DR. NATHAN WOLFE**, along with experts from Boston Medical, Johns Hopkins University Mount Sinai, and Metabiota.

The second event featured a panel of formidable writers and storytellers of science discussing the power, purpose, and necessity of telling the stories of science and scientists, including playwright **LAUREN M. GUNDERSON**, NPR Science Desk correspondent **JOE PALCA**, and Emmy-nominated astronomer and visual artist **JOSÉ FRANCISCO SALGADO**, and others.

≡ *The Catastrophist was sponsored by Bonnie and Alan Hammerschlag.*

MAR 22 - APR 18, 2021

A BOY AND HIS SOUL

BY COLMAN DOMINGO

DIRECTED BY CRAIG WALLACE

“

“A BEAUTIFUL PIECE OF ART
CELEBRATING
BLACK JOY,
GENUINE LOVE, AND SOUL MUSIC
WITH AN
OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE
BY RO BODDIE.”

—DC METRO THEATER ARTS

”

“

“A GRACEFUL,
NOSTALGIC SHOW...
WITH A SOUNDTRACK
THAT SHOWERS THE THEATRE
WITH LOVE.”

—MD THEATRE GUIDE

”

“AN AFFECTIONATE AND
AURALLY ATMOSPHERIC
ONE-MAN MEMORY PLAY...FEATURING
A WINNING PERFORMANCE BY RO BODDIE.”

—THE WASHINGTON POST

WE KICKED OFF OUR SPRING 2021 SLATE OF virtual solo shows with Colman Domingo's *A Boy and His Soul*, directed by Round House Resident Artist Craig Wallace. Even without an in-person audience, Ro Boddie brought this intimate story of Domingo's life and family to our stage beautifully. Unlike our earlier pandemic offerings, *A Boy and His Soul* and the following shows were all rehearsed, designed, and performed as full theatrical productions; our video team, led by Director of Photography Maboud Ebrahimzadeh and Sound Designer Matthew Nielson, captured the music and performance from a variety of angles and placed our at-home virtual audience right into the familiar space of our theatre.

To further explore the personal and societal significance of Black music and how it has shaped our history and our communities, Round House hosted a virtual roundtable discussion with *A Boy and His Soul* director **CRAIG WALLACE** and a panel of artists, educators, and advocates, including host of *The Quiet Storm* on WHUR **JOHN MONDS**, award-winning director and playwright **PSALMAYENE 24**, and others.



THE TEEN PERFORMANCE COMPANY

is Round House’s pre-professional program for the next generation of theatre artists. Most years, that means that a select group of teens take master classes and attend Round House events in the fall, and then direct, design, stage manage, and act in the Sarah Metzger Memorial Play on the Round House stage in the spring.

Inspired by the success of Round Houses virtual productions and Education programs, we decided that the Teen Performance Company and the 19th Annual Sarah Metzger Memorial play would still proceed, despite the challenges of operating in a virtual environment due to the pandemic. The process would just look a little different than in previous years.

Ten new company members were invited to join nine returning members to form the 2020-2021 Company. The 19 students represented 12 schools in the DC metropolitan area and one returning company member who joined virtually each week from Canada.

In the fall of 2020, the 19 extraordinary high school students and their two mentors, spread over four states and two countries, began creating an ensemble—despite not being able to meet in person. They took master classes, learning from artists who had also been exploring this new format of virtual theatre, including Aaron Posner, Craig Wallace, Matt Nielson, Maboud Ebrahimzadeh, Ryan Rilette, and Lauren M. Gunderson. The theatre professionals met with the students over Zoom and talked both about their work prior to March 2020 and how they were applying their skills to creating theatre during the pandemic.

The company decided as an ensemble that they did not just want to adapt an existing play to Zoom. They wanted to explore this new virtual art form and create their own script and production.

So, inspired by the events and circumstances of 2020, the TPC members were not just actors, directors, and designers—they became playwrights and devisors. They worked with

their mentors, Lead Teaching Artist and playwright Brandon McCoy and Director of Education Danisha Crosby, to develop an original script that captured the year of 2020. Working in small groups, the company created unique pieces that imaginatively portrayed their experiences during this most unusual year, from light-hearted takes on attending school via Zoom to more serious reflections about social unrest in America. They met, talked, wrote, revisited, and rewrote their pieces—all online. As a company, they participated in free writing experiments that Brandon McCoy used to create reflective pieces in which the students shared their thoughts directly with their audience.

Then they filmed—and filmed—and edited and filmed some more! Student directors guided each piece via Zoom and actors struggled through lighting issues, phone data maxing out, and cats interrupting takes. Some students composed music, and others did extensive editing and special effects work. Through it all, it became clear that these 19 students were universally committed to sharing their stories. Ultimately, they created a uniquely personal theatrical reflection about what 2020 meant for them.

In the spring of 2021, our Teen Performance Company released their digital production of *Hindsight Is...*

Director of Education Danisha Crosby reflected that, while it was exciting to see the work the students created, “What I was most proud of is that we have formed a real ensemble this year, despite the challenge of the company having never once met in person. The students were so engaged with each other, and I know that we have captured much of what was great about the program, despite the challenges of this year.”

The 2020-2021 Teen Performance Company included two seniors who have been with the company for all four years of high school: Alyssa Taylor and Anna Brosowsky. The rest of the company included: Alice Hockstader (2nd year/Senior), Benjamin Pallansch (1st year), Elia Mimikakis (1st year), Darren Jenkins-Johnston (1st year), Fiona Smith (1st year), Graciela Luna (2nd year/Senior), Hank Harris (2nd year/Senior), Jay Israel (2nd year), Jules Gross (1st year),

Luke Memmo (1st year), Nate Mitchell (3rd year/Senior), Sage Cohen-Rider (1st year), Sara Torres (1st year), Shaelyn Edwards Eck (3rd year), Sonora Cohen-Rider (1st year), Xander Toti (2nd year/Senior), and Xavier Monroe (2nd year/Senior).

“[TPC] taught me that the best parts of theatre aren’t always the parts we’re used to (like standing on a stage or working in a tech booth), but the people you work with and what you can create from your own experiences.”

—Jules Gross

“TPC has been the most impactful experience of my high school career. It gave me the outlet to not only learn and grow as an artist and a leader but also as a community member and a person, and for that I am forever grateful.”

—Anna Brosowsky

“The Teen Performance Company has been an opportunity to explore theatre at a pre-professional level, with a thorough education on all various aspects of theatre. It has been an exciting challenge that expanded my knowledge of what theatre is and how it works.”

—Graciela Luna

MAY 5 - MAY 30, 2021

THROW ME ON THE BURNPILE AND LIGHT ME UP

BY LUCY ALIBAR

DIRECTED BY RYAN RILETTE

“MAGICAL
AND MOVING
PORTRAIT OF THE SOUTH.”

—DC METRO THEATER ARTS

“HYLTON IS SUPERB...
SHE GATHERS US
AROUND HER CAMPFIRE...AND
DRAWS US INTO HER TALE.

—MD THEATRE GUIDE

“[BETH HYLTON] IS A
TOUR-DE-FORCE
THROUGHOUT.... ALIBAR CREATES
A WHOLE WORLD WITH HER WORDS,
AND HYLTON DELIVERS IT.”

—BROADWAY WORLD

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR RYAN RILETTE DIRECTED Beth Hylton in *Throw Me On the Burnpile and Light Me Up*, by Lucy Alibar. Loosely based on the playwright's own life, the play captured the feeling of sitting outside with a few friends (and a few beers), hanging out and swapping stories. Beth demonstrated that a gifted performer and storyteller, whether talking to an in-person audience or streaming into people's homes through a camera, can transport us, make us laugh, make us cry, and make us reflect on the uncomfortable truths of our communities and our lives.

In *Burnpile*, the main character's father works as an attorney representing death row inmates. To gain some real-world perspective on capital defense, Round House hosted an intimate online conversation with former **GOVERNOR OF MARYLAND MARTIN O'MALLEY**, who commuted the sentences of the last death row inmates in the state in 2015, and representatives from the Death Penalty Information Center.

Throw Me on the Burnpile and Light Me Up was sponsored by Nan Beckley and Patti & Jerry Sowalsky.

JUN 4 - JUL 11, 2021

WE'RE GONNA DIE

BY YOUNG JEAN LEE

DIRECTED AND CHOREOGRAPHED BY PAIGE HERNANDEZ

“

“WEIRD AND FUNNY
AND GOOFILY
JUBILANT.”

—WASHINGTON CITY PAPER

”

“

“AN ANTHEM
TO LIVING.”

—MD THEATRE GUIDE

”

“A SNEAKILY
DARING MASH-UP
OF STORYTELLING
AND ROCK CONCERT.”

—THE WASHINGTON POST

IN OUR FINAL SHOW OF THE 2020-2021 SEASON, Regina Aquino was joined onstage in Young Jean Lee's *We're Gonna Die* by the band, The Chance Club, under the direction and choreography of Paige Hernandez. This rumination on the tragedies and sufferings of life, both the everyday and the momentous, did exactly what good theatre always does: bring people together to celebrate our shared triumphs and get through our shared tragedies. The Chance Club took Lee's original music and passed it through the lens of the DC music scene—picking up the sounds of punk and go-go—reminding us all that the hardships of our current moment will eventually pass. As testament to that fact, *We're Gonna Die* was able to have the largest in-person audiences of the mini-season, with about 20 people singing along (through their masks) to the finale in the theatre.

To celebrate the show's themes of pushing through and finding joy, Round House hosted an online discussion for *We're Gonna Die* star **REGINA AQUINO** and other luminaries of the Asian American Pacific Islander community to share their stories of finding solace and success amid the pandemic and other challenges. Among others, panelists included *New York Times* reporter **APOORVA MANDAVILLI**, and entrepreneur and co-founder of Chefs Stopping AAPI Hate **TIM MA**.

/// We're Gonna Die was sponsored by Doug and Lorraine Bibby and by the National Endowment for the Arts.

THEATRE FOR EVERYONE...EVERYWHERE

Though most of us remained cloistered at home during much of the 2020-2021 Season, the production of digital theatre offered a silver lining: the rare opportunity to share our work well beyond our local community.

Theatre-lovers and the press took notice. Media outlets across the country spread the word, and our virtual productions reached viewers across America and in at least 26 other countries.

STUDENTS FROM
57 UNIVERSITIES
ACROSS 18 STATES, DC,
AND THE UNITED KINGDOM
ATTENDED PERFORMANCES VIA THE
FREE PLAY
STUDENT TICKET PROGRAM

STUDENTS FROM
**36 MIDDLE- AND
HIGH-SCHOOLS**
ACROSS 5 STATES,
DC, AND INDIA
ATTENDED PERFORMANCES VIA THE
FREE PLAY
STUDENT TICKET PROGRAM

3,095
MIDDLE- AND HIGH-
SCHOOL STUDENTS
(NEARLY **3X** AS MANY AS USUAL)
ATTENDED VIRTUAL
STUDENT MATINEE
PERFORMANCES

Round House's 2020-2021 productions were viewed virtually in **26 COUNTRIES**, as well as Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands.



PRAISE
for the **2020-2021 SEASON**



EQUITY, DIVERSITY, INCLUSION, AND ACCESS AT ROUND HOUSE

Round House is a theatre for everyone— a theatre of and for our community, committed to Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (EDIA). Led by our Staff and Board EDIA Workgroups, Round House published our first official Commitment to Anti-Racism in 2020. As we noted at that time, the work of anti-racism must be active and ongoing, and our commitments continually updated.

In July of 2020, a collective of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) theatremakers issued a set of demands following the We See You, White American Theater (WSYWAT) testimonial letter addressing the pervasiveness of anti-Blackness and racism in American theatre. Round House's EDIA Staff Workgroup and executive leadership undertook an item-by-item review and discussion of the WSYWAT demands to thoughtfully assess our current practices, recognize where we have failed, and decide what changes needed to be made. This process also included holding listening

sessions with our full-time staff, part-time staff, Round House artists, and members of the Black Artist Coalition to learn more about their experiences directly. All participants were compensated for their time.

Based on the feedback shared in these conversations and our assessment of the WSYWAT demands, Round House added several new and significant commitments to our initial list. In January of 2021, a Progress Report was published reflecting the most current set of programs and policies aimed at furthering our anti-racist goals—some already in place, some currently in progress, and some soon to be implemented. Highlights and updates from that Commitment to Anti-Racism are featured here to outline our prior commitments and progress thus far.

All future annual reports will continue to review and detail Round House's progress on EDIA initiatives.

ORGANIZATIONAL FRAMEWORK AND PROCESS

Round House Theatre is committed to breaking down racial barriers through our promotion of dialogue and understanding, building bridges within our communities, and engendering empathy in our audiences. We recognize that the values of Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Accessibility must be a fundamental part of every aspect of our work, starting at the administrative and organizational level.

NEW COMMITMENTS AND PROGRESS

- We are building systems to ensure that **all staff** (including part-time staff and volunteer ushers) **and board receive ongoing anti-racism, anti-bias, anti-oppression, and bystander intervention training.**
- We invested in the training of **EDIA Staff Workgroup members to become EDIA facilitators** equipped to lead continued conversations, training, and onboardings.
- We have established a **permanent line item in our annual organizational budget dedicated to EDIA training and initiatives.**
- In Fall 2020, we began **publishing salary ranges** in all job postings. We continue to review all hiring practices through an EDIA lens by **changing the qualifications and requirements in job descriptions** to remove unnecessary and discriminatory barriers to entry, actively working to **diversify our recruitment channels**, and **cultivating an inclusive organizational culture.**

PROGRAMMING AND PRODUCTION

Round House is invested in diversifying the voices that are amplified through live theatre. Launched in 2017, our **Equal Play commissioning program** is commissioning and developing **30 new plays written exclusively by female-identifying playwrights** and **BIPOC playwrights** to create a new body of work that will help reshape the face of American theatre. Additionally, beginning with the 2019-2020 Season, we committed to **staffing our shows with at least 50% BIPOC** artists (actors, stage managers, designers, directors, and crew) in an effort to address inequities in our field, to enrich our storytelling by better reflecting the diversity within our community and our country, and to hold ourselves accountable. In 2018, we implemented **Fair Play, a non-negotiable, equitable pay scale for all contracted artists.**

BOARD DEVELOPMENT

Round House **proactively and intentionally recruits BIPOC members** to our Board of Trustees, and we are committed to furthering our efforts to increase BIPOC Board membership to accurately reflect and represent the diversity of Montgomery County and the DC metropolitan area. **Artists are represented by two Artist Trustees on the Round House Board**, which has been a part of Round House's bylaws for 15 years.

We believe that engaging in the arts is essential to the human experience and actively work to break down barriers to attending, learning, and creating theatre. We offer **affordable ticket options**, including a range of standard and discounted tickets. Our **community ticket access programs** Free Play and On the House, respectively, provide free tickets to all Round House productions to students age 13 through college and to the staff, volunteers, and constituents of community serving nonprofit organizations in the DC metropolitan area.

NEW COMMITMENTS AND PROGRESS

- Beginning in Spring 2021, we **eliminated needlessly long workdays such as “10 out of 12” technical rehearsals** and **introduced a five-day work week** for rehearsals of all productions.
- We created new **Associate Artist** positions as a part of our efforts to **decentralize power and include more voices in artistic decisions**.
- **EDIA policies and resources are now offered to all guest artists** at first rehearsal, and artists are proactively supported by staff who are trained to disrupt harmful interactions during donor and patron events. We provide artists clear mechanisms to safely report any racist and other unacceptable behavior throughout their time at Round House.
- We introduced **an anonymous artist feedback survey after every production** to ensure that the artists we collaborate with feel heard and valued. Round House is committed to creating a safe, equitable, and inclusive working environment, and direct feedback on experience working with us helps to strengthen that commitment.

NEW COMMITMENTS AND PROGRESS

- As of January 2021, the Round House bylaws were amended to establish the Board EDIA Workgroup as a **permanent standing committee**, elevating it to the same priority level as Development, Finance, Governance, and Nominating.
- The Board has established a task force to explore the **decoupling of governance and financial contributions**, in order to reduce barriers to Board service.
- The Board has established a **Code of Conduct** to ensure that the Trustees are held to the same standards of behavior as staff and artists.
- The Board has committed to **EDIA being an essential and significant component of the upcoming strategic plan**.

EXPECTATIONS AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Round House is a “people first” organization committed to fostering a safe, supportive, and equitable environment for our staff, artists, and patrons. We have reviewed and expanded our **Code of Conduct for Staff and Artists** and ensured its broad distribution to full-time, part-time, and contracted employees. We will **apply an anti-racism lens to all major organizational decisions and all current policies and procedures**, recognizing that if a policy is not anti-racist, it is inherently racist.

NEW COMMITMENTS AND PROGRESS

- We have **implemented the EthicsPoint Incident Management Reporting System** to allow artists and staff to confidentially report incidents of harassment or bias.
- We are participating in workforce demographics studies and taking other steps to **develop a self-identification system** for staff, board, and artists. While it is crucial to hold ourselves accountable to representation commitments we have made internally and to our individual and institutional supporters, we want to make sure that the data we are collecting is accurate and free of assumptions.
- As a theatre, we recognize that many of the people we work with are part-time staff, guest artists, and teaching artists, and we committed to creating **community rules and guidelines for donors and patrons** that will **protect all Round House guests and employees**. Our "House Rules" can now be found in every show program at Round House, and published online at RoundHouseTheatre.org/House-Rules

EDUCATION

Round House Theatre Education inspires creativity, exercises imaginations, and promotes artistic risk-taking, while developing critical thinking, cooperation, and confidence. We believe every student is an artist and spent our year encouraging students to explore unique and exciting ways to tell stories through theatre.



IT STARTED WITH A SUCCESSFUL VIRTUAL SUMMER IN 2020

Round House Theatre Education completed 11 weeks of virtual summer camp in 2020. More than 450 students joined our teaching artists via Zoom, designing costumes for sunbathing lemurs, filming dragon flyovers, exploring playwriting, and much more. We prioritized giving students not only a place to develop their creativity and confidence, but also a space to engage with fellow students and adults. Our camp programs were offered 100% live over Zoom in small groups, which allowed teachers to really interact with individual students. Round House Education also shipped boxes full of carefully curated supplies to ensure all our young artists had the materials they needed to participate and create.

Teaching artists primarily led summer camp from the Round House Education Center in order to provide the best

experience for our students and teachers. Every classroom was set up as a mini studio with web cameras, TVs, and computers. Education staff followed all safety protocols to protect our teaching artists and staff, while working to create a true summer camp atmosphere.

Destinations, Playmakers, and Teen Institute continued to meet their essential goal of letting students continue to experience the sheer joy of creating theatre, even while in their own homes.

Our **DESTINATIONS** camp, a comprehensive theatre arts program fueled by the imagination of our students, served students in grades K-3 for a four-hour day of virtual camp. As in previous years, we traveled to a different destination each day, from outer space to a dragon's keep! Budding young theatre artists participated daily in acting, design, movement, and playmaking. Boxes of materials and activities were shipped to students' homes, providing everything they needed to participate in camp, as well as projects they could do on their own. At the end of each week, we welcomed family and friends into our Zoom rooms to share favorite games and a story we acted out together—often with our grown-ups joining in on the fun!

Students in grades 4-6 participated in **PLAYMAKERS** and created short films inspired by everything from myths and legends to *Star Wars*. Our Playmakers program allowed students to explore the joys and challenges of working as an ensemble to write, design, and rehearse an original production. During each session, students had workshops in acting, movement, and design. They worked together with their teaching artists to write an original script, which was then filmed via Zoom and edited by our teaching artists and education staff. As with our younger students, boxes were mailed to families, prepped with

all the materials a student would need to create props, sets, and costumes of their own design and creation.

TEEN INSTITUTE, for grades 6-12, provided a unique opportunity for students to build theatrical skills and interact with professionals in the field while developing their own artistic voices. Students worked with established teaching artists, including Brandon McCoy, Ian Anthony Coleman, Craig Wallace, Caleen Sinnette Jennings, Eleanor Holdridge, and Tim J. Lord. Each session focused on a different area of expertise—from improvisation to playwriting to musical theatre. Some sessions culminated in a live showcase for family over Zoom, while others created movies filmed via Zoom.

Education staff led 17 teaching artists, four interns, and guest artists through unfamiliar territory during the summer of 2020, but continued to serve students of all ages. Director of Education Danisha Crosby notes, "The biggest marker of success was the number of students who reluctantly tried one week, only to sign up for another before the first week was even done! At that point, I knew we were reaching students effectively and giving them an artistic voice and social outlet."

"I'm so grateful for you taking things online and helping the kids (and parents) maintain some normalcy." —Athena J.

"Thank you so much for another wonderful session. We can't express how much it means to our family to have this creative safe space right now. All the folks we interact with are amazing and true professionals." —Summer S.

Nina had her first camp yesterday and it is the happiest I have seen her in weeks! I don't know how you created the warm magic in your Zoom lesson but it's quite a result, as we've all been doing Zoom and it often falls flat. Many, many thanks for all your effort, warmth, love and professionalism. —Naomi B.

"I think it is great that their Saturday get togethers give them a chance to connect to a community they like and try things out. Refuge, solace, connection—all very perfect."

—Meera F.

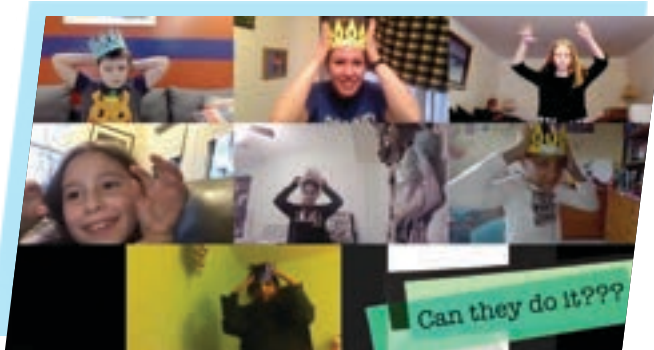


VIRTUAL STUDENT MATINEES

More than 3,000 high school students attended Round House's virtual productions through our **STUDENT MATINEE** program, representing public and private schools from Montgomery County, Prince George's County, DC, Kentucky, and New Jersey! Virtual programming allowed us to reach students who might not otherwise be able to travel to Round House and allowed students who had never interacted with the Round House to enjoy our outstanding virtual programming.

FREE PLAY

High school and college students were able to attend our virtual productions for free via the Free Play program. More than 800 college and high school students requested individual tickets through our Free Play program. 57 different colleges and 40 middle and high schools were represented—from as far away as Hawaii and England! We were particularly successful in reaching out to colleges both locally and across the country to introduce students to prolific yet little-known playwright Adrienne Kennedy through our four-play festival, *The Work of Adrienne Kennedy: Inspiration & Influence*.

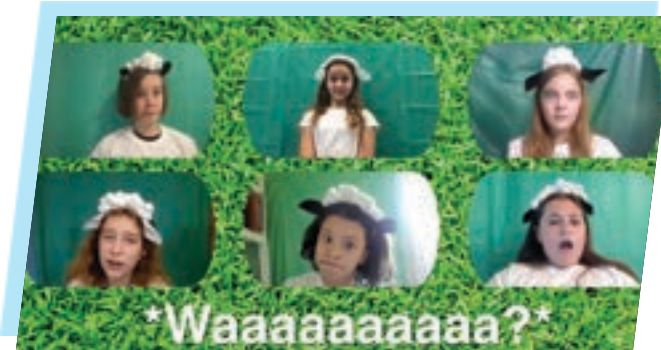


CLASSES AND DAYS OFF!

Round House Education continued to work with students virtually to explore unique ways of telling stories through acting, movement, design, and play creation throughout the year. From classes to performance companies, our faculty engaged students of all ages in the sheer joy of making theatre, even when they could not gather in the same room. We continued to focus on providing students opportunities to work on important skills such as critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and communication and to provide valuable time in our virtual spaces to laugh with friends and interact with our teaching artists.

Round House Education offered an array of virtual classes. More than 300 students from Pre-K through adults gathered with our teaching artists via Zoom to act, design, create, and discuss plays. Among the highlights were Agyeiwaa Asante, a local Ghanaian-American playwright and dramaturg who recently completed her Artistic Apprenticeship at Round House, leading our adult discussion class on the unique pieces created by theatre companies across the country while their stages are shuttered, including *Radio Plays*, the *Play At Home* project, and Round House's own *Homebound*.

We also continued our Days Off! program which keeps young artists engaged in the arts on those non-holidays that MCPS takes off. Over 100 students explored every place from the Amazon to Antarctica, led by the Round House teaching artists. Inspired by our own summer success, we mailed boxes of supplies to students so we could all participate in design activities together.



PERFORMANCE COMPANIES

Our Performance Companies for all ages went virtual, using scripts that were written or adapted specifically for this new medium. The fall session of Young Artist Performance Company (grades 5-8) tackled *Brief Interviews with Internet Cats* by Patrick Greene, a fast-paced series of interviews between hosts and famous internet cats, from Kitty BooBoo to Nelson the Grouchy Cat. Students tried their hands at new skills, such as acting in front of green screens so they could appear to be in the same room virtually. Rehearsals, design, and filming led to giggles and great fun—and while no one actually glued cat ears to their heads, some came close while designing their costumes at home with materials provided by Round House Education! Our winter session of the Young Artist Performance Company tackled *Game of Tiaras* by Don Zolidis. Stage combat specialist Casey Kaleba even dropped in virtually to help the students explore stage combat on Zoom for a *King Lear/Game of Thrones/Disney Princess* mash-up. The Spring Company produced *Goose-Napped* by Flip Kobler and Cindy Marcus and explored a bit of what happens when you mix film-noir and fairytales.

We launched our first **OLDER ADULT VIRTUAL PERFORMANCE COMPANY** in the winter. A group of dedicated adults worked with Lead Teaching Artist Ian Anthony Coleman and Director of Education Danisha Crosby to gain new Zoom tricks and film their production of *Left to Our Own Devices* by Flip Kobler, Cindy Marcus, and Fin Kobler.

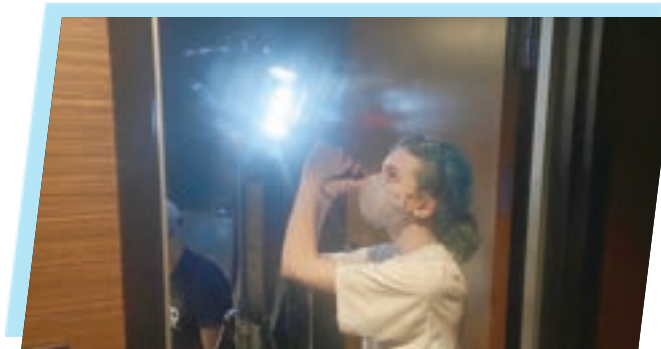
All our shows were filmed via Zoom from bedrooms, living rooms, and sometimes backyards across the area and edited by our Round House Education staff and teaching artists.

The **ROUNDLINGS**, Round House's Teen Improvisation and Stand-up Troupe, focused on honing their skills writing stand-up and explored new ways to utilize Zoom for fun improv games. They hosted their first interactive sharing on Zoom for family and friends in January and a second in the spring.

...AND OTHER ACTIVITIES

Though many schools were unable to host partnership activities due to the unusual nature of the year, Round House Education was able to partner with some schools and other groups through special activities and workshops, including several virtual visits to Massachusetts.

Our fall production residency with Westland Middle School took on *Box* by Lindsay Price, which was recorded on Zoom and edited into a final production that could be shared with the school.



SUMMER CAMP—BACK IN THE BUILDING!

As the summer of 2021 began, Round House Education was thrilled to welcome students back into our buildings in person.

Our popular Destinations program, for students in grades 1-3, returned to the Education Center. Staff and teaching artists had to rethink how to approach activities as well as the structure of our day in order to keep our young campers safe and socially distanced. With a little ingenuity, students enjoyed all the fun of exploring different ways of telling stories through theatre. Rather than invite family and friends to join us in person at the

end of the week, Round House Education shared lots of photos with families, and created a video each week.

Our Playmakers camp (grades 4-6) and our Teen Institute (grades 6-12) were both held at the theatre in Bethesda. Some of the first audiences to come back to the theatre were families joining us for in-person, socially distanced sharings by our older students.

A new camp, filmmaking, was helmed by former Round House Resident Artist Maboud Ebrahimzadeh, who served as Director of Photography for the virtual productions at Round House in spring 2021. He led teens through writing, creating, and editing their own films over the course of two weeks.

It was a great launch into summer for both students and teaching artists, and everyone was thrilled to be back in the building and making theatre!

This week was so wonderful. Usually, I get a sentence or two out of my kids about how their day was. This week, every day they talked the whole way home, excited to share all about what they did at camp, what animal they played, the story they acted out... Gabe even jumped out of bed yesterday to demonstrate the dance steps he learned. They told me not to pick a movie for our normal Friday night family movie night, as we would be watching the film they starred in. :)

Please share our thanks with all the staff that worked with the kids in the Destinations camp this week, it was so wonderful to see them happy and engaged in active, creative, "kid stuff" again after such a very long time. —Tara A.

She really loved the camp, so thank you for making it a great experience for her. It's all the more impressive because she can sometimes retreat to her own shell, and you helped her come out of that shell. —Mike B.

DONOR EVENTS

During the ongoing pandemic, we continued offering donors the opportunity to engage with our artists, leadership, and each other through virtual events and discussions.



INSIDE LOOKS

Our Inside Look production preview series continues to be one of our most popular donor benefits. Round House supporters got a sneak peek at all six of our virtual plays, hearing from Artistic Director Ryan Rilette, playwrights, directors, actors, and members of the creative teams. From reimagining theatre in a digital format to design inspirations for the shows and what it's like to act over Zoom, donors had an opportunity to gain an in-depth understanding of each play in our season and get to know the artists on the screen. An added benefit of virtual Inside Looks was the ability to easily record each event for viewing by those that were unable to attend live.



OPENING NIGHTS

Opening Nights looked a little different this season, though Round House supporters still enjoyed the opportunity to connect over Zoom, collectively experience our virtual productions, and hear from artists in pre- and post-show conversations. For Colman Domingo's *A Boy and His Soul*, we were thrilled to have the playwright himself join us from Los Angeles to share his thoughts on the show!

Opening Night attendees had the option to have a delicious dinner and specialty cocktail delivered to their door from Provisions Catering and make the evening even more celebratory!

In addition to virtual Opening Night celebrations for each of the six shows in the 2020-2021 Season, we also held a virtual watch party and Q&A for *Homebound: Episode 11* and a virtual technical rehearsal for *Throw Me on the Burnpile* and *Light Me Up*.



LONDON TOUR REUNION

Instead of our usual trip across the pond, previous London Tour attendees gathered on Zoom to reminisce and reflect on five wonderful past tours. From 2015-2019, Round House has led a week-long trip, including seeing plays at top theatres across the city, delectable meals, and special tours at museums—all in the company of fellow theatre lovers and Round House patrons.

Because it wouldn't be a London Tour event without Michael Billington, attendees enjoyed a pre-recorded interview with Ryan Rilette and the recently retired, long-time *Guardian* theatre critic. Michael discussed the state of London theatre and how the community there was faring during COVID as well as how he was staying busy without being able to attend the theatre on most nights.

Provisions Catering provided a delightful, boxed afternoon tea service, delivered to attendees' homes to complete the event.



TOWN HALLS

In an effort to keep our community updated on how Round House was doing during the pandemic, Artistic Director Ryan Rilette and Managing Director Ed Zakreski held several Town Halls to update patrons on our programming plans and our efforts to stand up to racism, and to offer the opportunity to ask questions.



CARE PACKAGE

To thank our supporters for sticking with us and so generously supporting the Resilience Fund, donors enjoyed “care packages” that included thank you messages from Round House staff and leadership, Resident Artist Craig Wallace, and our education students, a theatre education challenge from Scenic Charge Jen Cockerham, a Round House magnet and—most importantly—a cute thespian cat video (who also happens to be Jen’s foster kitten)! Our most generous supporters also enjoyed sweet and savory treats from Design Cuisine catering. Visit RoundHouseTheatre.org/CarePackage to revisit these fun videos!

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

In our ongoing efforts to learn more and strengthen our relationships with members of our local community, and to work towards dismantling the harmful effects of white supremacy and colonization, Round House acknowledges that our theatre, administrative offices, education center, and production shop are located on the unceded land of the Piscataway peoples. We acknowledge the Piscataway as the original caretakers of this land. We pay our respects to the Piscataway community and their elders both past and present, as well as future generations.

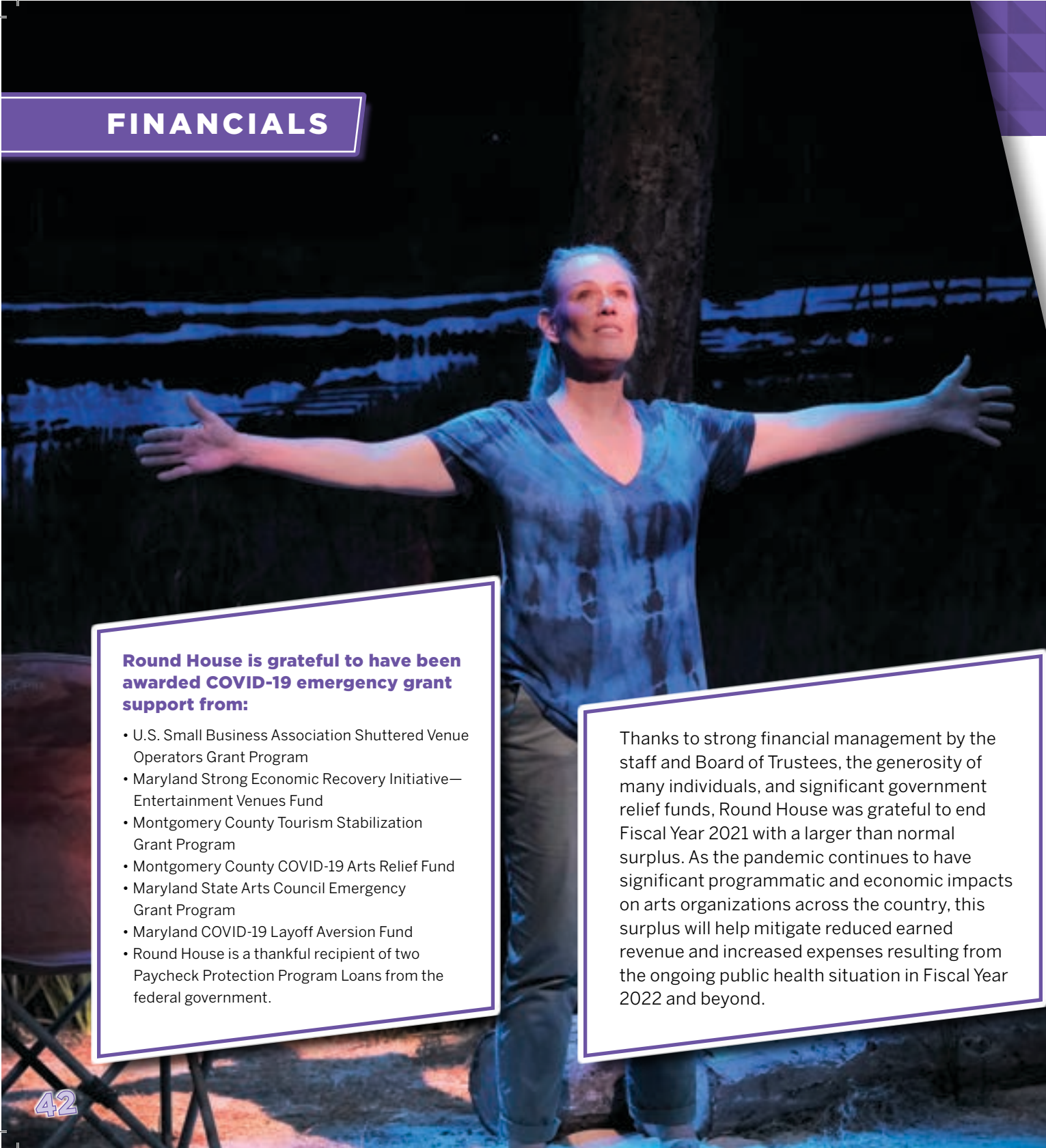
We also acknowledge that, as the world experiences the COVID-19 pandemic, many of us are using the internet and other technologies that are not as readily available or accessible in present day indigenous communities.

We pledge to do the work necessary to build relationships with sovereign tribal nations, to ensure that Round House becomes a more inclusive space, and to never cease ongoing learning.

Learn more about the Piscataway tribe and find indigenous rights organizations to support on a national or global level at RoundHouseTheatre.org/About/Our-Land-Acknowledgement.

WHAT IS A LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT?

A land acknowledgement is a formal statement that recognizes and respects Indigenous peoples as the traditional stewards of a given geographic area. We share ours as part of Round House’s ongoing efforts toward equity and anti-racism.



FINANCIALS

Round House is grateful to have been awarded COVID-19 emergency grant support from:

- U.S. Small Business Association Shuttered Venue Operators Grant Program
- Maryland Strong Economic Recovery Initiative—Entertainment Venues Fund
- Montgomery County Tourism Stabilization Grant Program
- Montgomery County COVID-19 Arts Relief Fund
- Maryland State Arts Council Emergency Grant Program
- Maryland COVID-19 Layoff Aversion Fund
- Round House is a thankful recipient of two Paycheck Protection Program Loans from the federal government.

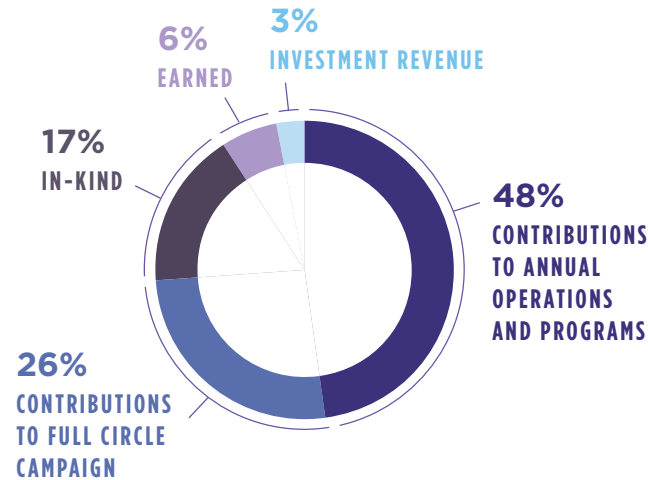
Thanks to strong financial management by the staff and Board of Trustees, the generosity of many individuals, and significant government relief funds, Round House was grateful to end Fiscal Year 2021 with a larger than normal surplus. As the pandemic continues to have significant programmatic and economic impacts on arts organizations across the country, this surplus will help mitigate reduced earned revenue and increased expenses resulting from the ongoing public health situation in Fiscal Year 2022 and beyond.

FISCAL YEAR 2021 (JUL 1, 2020 – JUN 30, 2021)

REVENUE AND SUPPORT

Earned Revenue (tickets, tuition, concessions, rental)	\$	392,002
Grants and Contributions	\$	3,171,572
Full Circle Campaign Contributions	\$	1,763,950
In-kind	\$	1,118,349
Investment Revenue	\$	225,532
TOTAL	\$	6,671,405

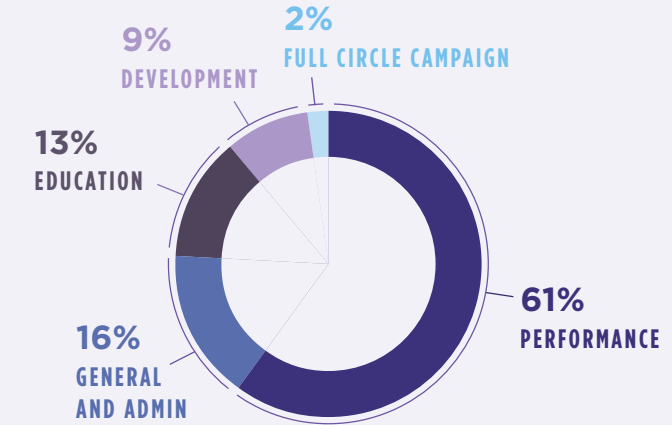
Full Circle Campaign funds released for artistic and education programming	\$	234,985
Full Circle Campaign funds released for renovation	\$	1,528,965



As a non-profit arts organization, Round House raises funds from many sources to supplement earned income from ticket sales, tuition, and concessions. The majority of our support comes from generous contributions by individuals.

EXPENSES

Performance	\$	3,291,818
Education	\$	719,370
General and Admin	\$	856,270
Development	\$	483,126
Full Circle Campaign	\$	140,976
TOTAL	\$	5,491,560



Our artistic and educational programming accounts for 74 percent of our total expenses.

+\$1,429,124

UNRESTRICTED CHANGE IN NET ASSETS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2021

2020-2021 BOARD OF TRUSTEES

OFFICERS

Douglas M. Bibby, **President**
Linda J. Ravdin, **Vice President**
Cathy S. Bernard, **Treasurer**
Amy Selco, **Secretary**

TRUSTEES

Elaine Kotell Binder
Stephanie deSibour
Mitchell S. Dupler
Maboud Ebrahimzadeh**
Laura Forman
Susan Gilbert
Leslie Grizzard
Jay Hammer
Bonnie Hammerschlag
Michael Heintz
Michele Jawando

Daniel Kaplan
Neil Kerwin
Bruce Lane
Marion Ein Lewin
Joy Lewis
Debra Kraft Liberatore
Kathleen Matthews
Paul Mason
Aruna Miller
Ryan Rilette*
Mark Shugoll
David H. Smith
Patti Sowalsky
Ivania Stack**
Michael Steele
Nina Weisbroth
Roger Williams
Ed Zakreski*
Judy Zickler

*Ex-officio

**Artist Representatives

Round House Theatre is deeply grateful to the following 11 individuals who served as dedicated Trustees until their term limitation on June 30, 2021. Please join us in thanking them for their many years of leadership and support.

CATHY BERNARD
MITCH DUPLER
MARION EIN LEWIN
LAURA FORMAN
ANN GILBERT
SUSAN GILBERT

BONNIE HAMMERSCHLAG
BRUCE LANE
PAUL MASON
SALLY PATTERSON
JUDY ZICKLER

(as of June 30, 2021)



STAFF LISTING

(as of June 30, 2021)

LEADERSHIP

Artistic Director: Ryan Rilette
Managing Director: Ed Zakreski

ARTISTIC

Associate Artist—Literary & New Plays:
Naysan Moigani
Artistic Assistant and Interim Casting
Director: Agyeiwaa Asante

PRODUCTION

Production Manager: Jesse Aasheim
Assistant Production Manager/Company
Manager: Sara Patterson
Technical Director: Matt Saxton
Assistant Technical Director: Jose Abraham
Master Electrician/Audio Supervisor:
Chris Hall
Costume Shop Manager: Aubrey Mazzaferri
Scenic Charge: Jenny Cockerham
Master Carpenter: Shaun Bartlow
Seasonal Carpenter: Frank Gauthier
Resident Stage Manager: Che Wernsman

EDUCATION

Director of Education: Danisha Crosby
Education Program Manager: Kathleen Mason
Education Assistant: Patrick Joy
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COVER: Photo of Regina Aquino (Singer) with the Chance Club's Jason Wilson (Bass/Vocals) and Laura Van Duzer (Keyboard/Vocals) in *We're Gonna Die* by Paige Hernandez.

SEASON HIGHLIGHTS: Maya Jackson (Kay) in *He Brought Her Heart Back In A Box*. Photo of Summer Camp 2021. Photo of Regina Aquino (Singer) in *We're Gonna Die* by Paige Hernandez. Photo of Ro Boddie (Jay) in *A Boy and His Soul* by Harold F. Burgess II.

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THE 2020-2021 SEASON: Photo of Maya Jackson (Kay) on the set of *He Brought Her Heart Back in a Box* by Maboud Ebrahimzadeh. Photo of William DeMeritt in *The Catastrophist*. Photo of Michael Sweeney Hammond (Chris) on the set of *He Brought Her Heart Back in a Box* by Maboud Ebrahimzadeh. Photo of filming in progress for *We're Gonna Die* by Paige Hernandez. Maya Jackson (Kay) and Michael Sweeney Hammond (Chris) on the set of *He Brought Her Heart Back In A Box* by Maboud Ebrahimzadeh. Director of Photography Maboud Ebrahimzadeh (left) with *We're Gonna Die* cast members Jason Wilson, Manny Arciniega, Regina Aquino, Matthew Schleigh, and Laura Van Duzer by Paige Hernandez. William DeMeritt in *The Catastrophist*.

AMERICAN DREAMS: Photo of Imran Sheik (Usman), Andrew Aaron Valdez (Alejandro), Ali Andre Ali (Adil), Leila Buck (Sherry), and Jens Rasmussen (Chris) in *American Dreams* by Steve Wagner.

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THE CATASTROPHIST: Photo of William DeMeritt (Nathan) in *The Catastrophist*.

A BOY AND HIS SOUL: Photo of Ro Boddie (Jay) in *A Boy and His Soul* by Harold F. Burgess II.

HINDSIGHT IS...: Photo of the members of the Teen Performance Company in *Hindsight Is....*

THROW ME ON BURNPILE AND LIGHT ME UP: Photo of Beth Hylton (Lamby) in *Throw Me on Burnpile and Light Me Up* by Harold F. Burgess II.

WE'RE GONNA DIE: Regina Aquino (Singer) with the Chance Club's Manny Arciniega (Drums/Vocals), Jason Wilson (Bass/Vocals), Laura Van Duzer (Keyboard/Vocals), and Matthew Schleigh (Guitar/Vocals) in *We're Gonna Die* by Harold F. Burgess II.

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DONOR EVENTS: Screenshot of *A Boy and His Soul* Inside Look. Screenshot of *The Work of Adrienne Kennedy: Inspiration & Influence* Inside Look. Screenshot of *A Boy and His Soul* opening night. Screenshot of the *London Tour Reunion*. Screenshot of the Virtual Town Hall. Screenshot of the kitten video from the donor care package.

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Photo of the exterior at night by Ken Wyner



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