

2021-2022 SEASON HIGHLIGHTS

- Following 18 months of all-virtual productions, Round House returned to live performances with a globe-spanning season—from the Southwest border to Route 66, China to Nigeria and beyond.
- During Fall 2021, as the pandemic continued, Round House offered a range of COVIDconscious options, including socially distanced seating and streaming productions of the first two plays of the season: Quixote Nuevo and The Great Leap.
- After a year of online classes and camps due to COVID precautions, Round House welcomed students back into our classrooms. Student matinee performances, both virtual and live, were well received by young audiences.
- The Teen Performance Company commemorated the 20th Anniversary of the Sarah Metzger Memorial Play with TikTok (a period piece), a commissioned world premiere written by Stefani Kuo.
- Continuing our longstanding commitment to new play development that will help reshape the face of American theatre, Round House launched the inaugural National Capital New Play Festival.
 The month-long event featured two fully staged world premieres on the mainstage, as well as readings of four plays in development.
- FOX 5 DC took a field trip to Round House to learn more about TPC's 20th Anniversary production, the inaugural National Capital New Play Festival, and more! The segments aired across several hours on FOX's live morning show for local and national audiences.

- Our Fourth Wall Bar & Café re-opened and collaborated with local brewing companies to enhance the thematic food and beverage experience for each show of the season, including Black Leaf Vodka, Butterfly Spirits, Green Hat Gin, Tenth Ward Distilling Company, and Windon Distilling Company.
- Round House introduced Community Night events, established for specific cultures to celebrate and enjoy a performance that represents their community on the main stage. We welcomed the Asian American and Pacific Islander community for a performance of *The Great Leap* and the Nigerian community for a performance of *Nollywood Dreams*. Members of both productions stuck around after the show to meet, chat, and celebrate with audience members.
- In our commitment to providing full access to patrons with disabilities, we had our first mainstage Relaxed Performance during the run of Nollywood Dreams. Our Relaxed Performances aim to provide a safe and welcoming environment for individuals with sensory and cognitive disabilities, their families, and friends.
- After a two-year hiatus, Round House held our Broadway in Bethesda Gala—the first in our renovated theatre—welcoming more than 300 sponsors and guests for an incredible performance by Tony Award-winner Kelli O'Hara. The evening raised more than \$325,000 in support of our mission to be a theatre for everyone, making it the most successful Gala in Round House history.







DEAR FRIENDS,

THE 2021-2022 Season was a joyful return to live theatre. After 18 months of uncertainty, confusion, and extended closures, we were thrilled to welcome audiences back to our beautifully renovated theatre for live, in-person performances. While the season was not without its challenges, we will never again take for granted the opportunity to gather together as a community.

THE 2021-2022
SEASON WAS
DESIGNED TO
CELEBRATE ALL
THAT MAKES THE
EXPERIENCE OF LIVE
THEATRE SO SPECIAL.

Right from the start, the 2021-2022 Season was designed to celebrate all that makes the experience of live theatre so special. From expansive sets and stunning lighting to music, costumes, and choreography—and, of course, plays that inspire empathy and demand conversation—Round House's return to the stage enabled us to make the most of our renovated space.

Round House re-opened to the public in September 2021 with the regional premiere of *Quixote Nuevo* by Octavio Solis. This modern take on Cervantes' classic *Don Quixote*, set on the U.S.-Mexico border, was lauded for its talented all-Latinx cast and high production values. The play highlighted the magic and spectacle that define live theatre. In November, Lauren Yee's *The Great Leap* brought together a stellar cast to examine post-Cultural Revolution China through the lens of basketball.

However, the threat of the pandemic continued to loom. In January 2022, we had to postpone the American premiere of Natasha Gordon's West End hit *Nine Night* due to COVID cases within the cast, and non-COVID-related illness cut short the world premiere run of *it's not a trip it's a journey* by Charly Evon Simpson weeks later. But these painful cancellations signaled a way in which we might better support our productions: we began hiring understudies for every production. All local actors, these

understudies are not only the unsung heroes of the theatre industry, but a powerful investment in our own artistic community.

Despite these challenges, we went on to realize a longheld dream: over five weeks in April and May 2022, Round House audiences and theatre professionals from around the country came together to celebrate the inaugural National Capital New Play Festival. The festival featured the world premieres of two remarkable new plays, it's not a trip it's a journey by Charly Evon Simpson and "We declare you a terrorist..." by Tim J. Lord. The festival also gave audiences a glimpse into the new play development process with a series of sold-out readings of four plays in development, including a sneak peek into two shows that received their world premieres during the 2023 festival.

The season ended on a high note with Jocelyn Bioh's charming romantic comedy *Nollywood Dreams*. Declared "a cut above the original off-Broadway version" by *Washington Post* theatre critic Peter Marks, this hilarious and heartwarming story about the power of following your dreams became our best-selling show of the season.

Building on the power of theatre to bring people together, we celebrated re-opening by building relationships with organizations throughout the region. We were honored to partner with local community groups for several of our productions; Latin American Youth Center provided the artwork that lined our second-floor lobby throughout the run of *Quixote Nuevo*, and we welcomed friends from Washington Chinese Youth Club and the 1882 Foundation to our production of *The Great Leap*. We also launched Community Nights, designated evening performances that offer the opportunity to celebrate the local community and include a post-show discussion and an opportunity to socialize with the artists after the show.

After a groundbreaking original virtual production in 2021, our Teen Performance Company also returned to an in-person format during the 2021-2022 Season, just in time to commemorate 20 incredible years. We're proud to be expanding the canon of theatre for and about teens by commissioning plays by talented playwrights that

encourage young artists to tell their stories by producing a world premiere on the Round House stage.

After so many months of uncertainty about what the future might hold for Round House and our industry, the 2021-2022 Season was a wonderful return to somewhat "normal." While we utilized the Round House stage while the theatre was closed to film our reimagined 2020-2021 Season, that experience had lacked one crucial ingredient: you.

YOUR JOY AND LAUGHTER,
YOUR TEARS AND COMPASSION,
AND YOUR UNWAVERING
COMMITMENT TO ROUND HOUSE
MADE THE 2021-2022 SEASON
UNFORGETTABLE.

This season, your energy was palpable. Your joy and laughter, your tears and compassion, and your unwavering commitment to Round House made the 2021-2022 Season unforgettable. Together, we shared in the excitement of live theatre—from conversations at the Fourth Wall Bar and Café to the visceral experience of shared emotions throughout the audience.

Together, we ushered in a new era for Round House, celebrating the launch of the National Capital New Play Festival and renewed community partnerships. Together, we will continue to build a stronger Round House by delivering on our mission to be a Theatre for Everyone.

Thank you for coming back to the theatre, for investing in our work, and for standing by us through it all.





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.





"TERRIFIC ACTING FROM THE ALL LATING ST. W

-THE WASHINGTON POST

THE 2021-2022 SEASON BEGAN WITH THE REGIONAL PREMIERE OF

Quixote Nuevo, an inspired reimagining of Miguel Cervantes' beloved knight Don Quixote as a brilliant, bilingual professor whose fantasies take center stage in a Texas border town. Set to the spirited sounds of Tejano music, the vibrant production was a poignant yet joyful return to live performances, though the production was also available as a digital stream for those not yet ready or able to attend in person.

With the return to in-person and streaming performances came opportunities to partner with local nonprofits and community-serving organizations in person again. In the theatre, Round House exhibited artwork by students at LATIN AMERICAN YOUTH CENTER (LAYC) exploring their own identities and experiences as immigrant, BIPOC, and Latiné youth in America and welcomed LAYC staff, volunteers, and students to watch the play and see their art. Online, UCSD professor and dramaturg Julie Burelle led virtual panels exploring the states and stories of life along the border with playwright Octavio Solis and experts from throughout the country.



Quixote Nuevo was sponsored by Doug and Lorraine Bibby.

"A WINNING CAST AND VIBRANT PRODUCTION"

-MD THEATRE GUIDE





"A GRIPPING PRODUCTION" WITH AN "EXCELLENT CAST"

-THE WASHINGTON POST

ROUND HOUSE CONTINUED ITS SEASON WITH THE REGIONAL

premiere of Lauren Yee's *The Great Leap*, a socio-political fable that explores different approaches to basketball and life. Set in 1989, this play follows the members of the University of San Francisco basketball team as they head to China for a "friendship" game and have the opportunity to reconcile their own converging histories. Inspired by her father's short-lived basketball career, *The Great Leap* showcases Yee's signature technique of colliding the personal with the historical, reminding audiences that even the best stories, even if they aren't real, can still be true. Under the brilliant direction of Jennifer Chang, *The Great Leap* provided audiences with a momentous theatrical experience, whether they streamed it from the comfort of their homes or watched a live performance.

The Great Leap also presented multiple opportunities to engage with outstanding local organizations, including a cross-generational conversation with Asian hoopsters from WASHINGTON CHINESE YOUTH CLUB (CYC), menu items at the Fourth Wall and Opening Night from Q BY PETER CHANG, and a photo exhibit of historic CYC basketball games in partnership with CYC and the 1882 FOUNDATION. Round House also hosted its first Community Night, a special performance celebrating Asian-American representation and stories with free community tickets and a special post-show reception to meet the actors. Among the attendees were Maryland Senator Susan Lee, Delegate Lily Qi, and representatives, constituents, and family members from ASIAN AMERICAN LEAD, CYC, and the 1882 FOUNDATION. AAPI Community Night was sponsored by the David and Mikel Blair Family Foundation.



The Great Leap was sponsored by Linda Ravdin and Don Shapero.





TIKTOK PROVIDES "INSIGHT FOR INTERGENERATIONAL AUDIENCES TO UNDERSTAND THE CONTEMPORARY CHALLENGES FACED BY GEN-ZERS."

-DISTRICT FRAY

AFTER GOING VIRTUAL IN 2021, THE SARAH METZGER

Memorial Play—directed, designed, and performed by Round House's Teen Performance Company—returned to the Round House stage just in time for its 20th anniversary.

Twenty students representing 10 area high schools comprised the 2021-2022 company, which presented the world premiere of Stefani Kuo's *TikTok* (a period piece), an exploration of the lives of eight teenage social media influencers working together in a collaborative and chaotic "Vibe Villa" as they manage fame, friendships, and finances. The struggles of these teenagers illustrated the universal desire to present the most well-curated versions of ourselves to the world, while cautioning that life isn't as effortless as it may appear on our screens.

The production and the 20th anniversary of the Sarah Play received great press coverage, including by *District Fray* and *WTOP*, as well as a live-from-Round House broadcast on FOX 5's morning show.

"I AM PERPETUALLY GRATEFUL TO ROUND HOUSE FOR GIVING TEENS THE OPPORTUNITY TO CREATE SOMETHING OF THIS CALIBER, AND FOR GENTLY NUDGING US ALL IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION."

- SONORA COHEN-RIDER, DIRECTOR OF TIKTOK (A PERIOD PIECE)



NATIONAL CAPITAL NEW PLAY FESTIVAL

INAUGURAL YEAR

"This inaugural festival of original work in repertory propels Round House Theatre into the admirable ranks of companies pumping extra resources into new drama."

- Peter Marks, The Washington Post

hile the Washington, DC metro region is host to a tremendous number of new plays, with several robust commissioning programs and more than a dozen world premieres each season, there has never

been a large-scale festival that cements the region as a home for new plays. After a decade of planning, Round House changed that with the inaugural National Capital New Play Festival in the spring of 2022.

The Festival was headlined by two world premiere productions; in addition, audiences and theatre professionals from around the country enjoyed readings of four brandnew, in-development plays, some of which were being read aloud for the very first time. Robust and engaging panel discussions pulled the curtain aside and helped audiences better understand the rich new play process and ecosystem. Altogether, the first National Capital New Play Festival was a thrilling celebration of playwrights and playwriting.

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The National Capital New Play Festival Developmental Reading Series was sponsored by Clare Evans, with additional support from The RPM Fund. Additional support for the National Capital New Play Festival was provided by The Morgan Fund at Seattle Foundation.



"WE DECLARE YOU A TERRORIST..."

BY TIM J. LORD
DIRECTED BY RYAN RILETTE & JARED ME77OCCHI

n the third day of rehearsal for Tim J. Lord's "We declare you a terrorist...", Russia invaded Ukraine. The play centers on the 2002 Moscow theatre hostage crisis and the Chechen War, in which Vladimir Putin established many of the strategies that he has since used in Ukraine. While every theatre artist and theatre-goer wants the art to have high stakes and real-world relevance, this sudden connection to daily headlines and ongoing violent conflict was more than anybody had expected. However, Lord and co-directors Artistic Director Ryan Rilette and Jared Mezzocchi chose to stay the course, keeping the play's focus on the historical events, allowing audiences—as the best theatre always allows them—to draw their own connections and reflect on and discuss the contemporary resonances after the play.

"We declare you a terrorist..." was a perfect transition from COVID-era virtual theatre to in-person performances. Rilette and Mezzochi incorporated live video into the production, with two characters performing live on camera from backstage, then being projected onto the back wall opposite the main character, while he performed live on stage. This "mediaturgy" made palpable the main character's PTSD, helping the audience better understand how traumatic events never truly fade away.

"We declare you a terrorist..." was a recipient of an Edgerton Foundation New Play Award and was sponsored by Bonnie & Alan Hammerschlag and David & Sherry Smith with additional support from The Apothetae and Lark Playwriting Fellowship program.



IT'S NOT A TRIP IT'S A JOURNEY

BY CHARLY EVON SIMPSON DIRECTED BY NICOLE A. WATSON

harly Evon Simpson's *it's not a trip it's a journey* took audiences on a road trip across the United States. With its meditations on gun violence and the relationship between Blackness, femininity, and Americanness, Simpson's play shared in some of the relevance and timeliness of Lord's piece: while not as momentous as the beginnings of a war, *it's not a trip it's a journey*'s themes are evergreen and constantly in our headlines.

Despite exploring highly relevant themes, the play was not a reprisal of trauma or an effort to educate its audience of the hardships facing its characters. Instead, director and former Round House Associate Artistic Director Nicole A. Watson and the cast created a refuge for Black women on stage, demonstrating how—despite all the obstacles and

hardships—friendships and chosen family can bring people through their darkest times.

Due to health issues in the cast, the run of *it's not a trip it's a journey* was heart-breakingly cut short, and Round House was unable to share it with as many people as we would have liked. However, the play has already received another production, and Round House is grateful to have helped bring Simpson's vision to life.

it's not a trip it's a journey was sponsored by Mitch & Heidi Dupler and Judy & Leo Zickler and supported in part by the National Endowment for the Arts. it's not a trip it's a journey was produced at Round House Theatre as part of a National New Play Network Rolling World Premiere. Other Partner Theaters are Good Company Theatre (Utah), and Know Theatre of Cincinnati (Ohio). For more information, please visit nnpn.org.

DEVELOPMENTAL READINGS

he Festival is intended to be a celebration of the entirety of the new play process. It can take a very long time and a tremendous amount of work to make a play ready for production. In recognition of that, Round House also hosted four developmental workshops, allowing playwrights to spend a week fine-tuning their scripts with a team of collaborators before hearing it in front of an audience and gaining valuable feedback. Round House audiences heard (and helped to shape) these exciting new projects:



Jennifer Who Is Leaving by Morgan Gould: Like any good satire, this riotously funny reading made audiences laugh while simultaneously forcing them to confront the inequalities in society (and perhaps in their own homes) around the caretaking work women do. The play premiered in the 2023 Festival.



Adia & Clora Snatch Joy by Mfoniso Udofia and music by Nehemiah Luckett: A beautiful and powerful play with music, Adia & Clora showed audiences the lifelong love story between two women, and the chorus of ancestral spirits that helped bring them together. The post-reading discussions for this piece were a highlight of the entire Festival, with audience members eager to share their emotional responses.



On the Far End by Mary Kathryn Nagle: A Round House Equal Play Commission, this one-woman play shared the true life story of Muscogee activist Jean Chaudhuri and the history of broken promises between the United States and our sovereign tribal neighbors. The play premiered in the 2023 Festival.



Madre de Dios by Marvin González De León: This genre-spanning bilingual play wowed audiences with its imaginative blend of horror and climate change and science fiction and religion, but its core story of a family wrestling with the things it refuses to discuss was something that spoke simply and beautifully to everyone in the room.





II HOORAY

FOR 'NOLLYWOOD'!"

"IS A PLEASURE"

WITH "A FIRST-RATE CAST."

-THE WASHINGTON POST

THE SEASON ENDED ON A JOYFUL NOTE WITH JOCELYN

BIOH'S *Nollywood Dreams*, the story of young woman in 1990s Nigeria who dreams of stardom. Importantly, the addition of understudies to the cast—a precaution to prevent further disruption after COVID forced the postponement of *Nine Night* earlier in the season—paid off. Despite illness hitting the cast just before opening, *Nollywood* opened as scheduled. Critics and audiences alike fell in love with the sparkling cast of the hilarious romantic comedy, leading to the biggest post-pandemic audiences yet and earning the show four Helen Hayes Award nominations, including Outstanding Ensemble in a Play and Outstanding Production of a Play.

The celebratory excitement of *Nollywood* continued with local partnerships with KANKOURAN WEST AFRICAN DANCE COMPANY and the NIGERIAN CENTER, who hosted two meet-and-greets at Round House for a night of networking, performance, and culture. Members of the Nigerian, West African, and African diaspora communities were also invited to celebrate African culture at Nigerian Community Night, which ended up being one of the best-attended performances of the season. The audience included a large community group from NIGERIANS IN THE DIASPORA ORGANIZATION'S DC Chapter, an alumni group from Spelman College, and family and friends of the cast who traveled from as far as Ghana to enjoy the night, which was capped off by a reception featuring free drinks by BLACKLEAF VODKA.

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Nollywood Dreams was sponsored by Michael Beriss and Jean Carlson, Jay and Robin Hammer, Patti and Jerry Sowalsky, and the RPM Fund.



ound 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.

SUMMER CAMP

In the summer of 2021, Round House Education was excited to welcome nearly 300 students back into our buildings for in-person, socially distanced summer camps.

DESTINATIONS (students in grades 1-3) returned to the Education Center. We challenged ourselves to adjust activities, games, and the structure of the day in order to keep our youngest campers safe and socially distanced. With a little ingenuity, students enjoyed all the fun of acting, movement, design, and exploring different ways of telling stories through theatre. We visited locations in our imaginations including Jurassic Park, Troll Village, and Superhero City! In lieu of joining us in person at the end of the week, Round House Education shared photos and a video with families each session.

playmakers (grades 4-6) allowed students to explore the joys and challenges of working as an ensemble to write, design, and rehearse an original production as well as participate in workshops in acting, movement, and design. We offered some sessions of Playmakers in person, and created original films to share with family and friends on themes such as Art Around the World, which turned Round House into a museum full of student-made art. In addition, some of the first audiences to come back to the theatre in-person were families joining us for sharings by our Playmaker and Teen Institute students in Bethesda.

Our **TEEN INSTITUTE** offered sessions on improvisation, scene study, and filmmaking. This program continued to provide 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 director/playwright Aaron Posner, comedian Kevin Corbett, and actor/filmmaker Maboud Ebrahimzadeh, who led teens through writing, creating, and editing their own films over the course of two weeks.



CLASSES AND DAYS OFF!

More than 130 students in grades K-8 came back to the Education Center for our **CLASSES FOR YOUTH**. We had a great time with our youngest students in Dramatots (pre-K) and Creative Drama (K-2) who explored Animal Tales, Superheroes, and Quirky Creatures. We also offered classes such as Magical Myths and Funky Fairytales for elementary age students, as well as a very successful Improvisation class for middle school students, taught by Kevin Corbett.

Round House Education also continued their successful collaboration with Tooth and Claw Combat Arts and Casey Kaleba, resuming adult classes and certifying adult students in subjects such as Broadsword and Sword and Shield.

In the spring, our **OLDER ADULT STUDENTS** took a Playmaking class with playwright and teaching artist Diana Metzger. They were inspired by a project from the Actors Theatre of Louisville, who commissioned a diverse selection of playwrights to respond to a single photo. Our students chose their own photo and ultimately did readings of six plays created by the class.

We also hosted our first in-person **DAYS OFF!** in two years during the Montgomery County Public Schools spring break, welcoming 75 students back into the building. Our **DAYS OFF** programs featured a different story every day and introduced students to everything from Cuban drumming to scat singing, with some superheroes and talking ants thrown in along the way!



"Reece reported to us about another wonderful day. It's obvious that you've created such a welcoming space, where kids feel safe to express their creativity and curiosity. He has learned so much, not only about theatre, but about new experiences."

- Tracye D., parent

"Today Micah reported that today "was almost too perfect" (in a dramatic voice), and I can tell he's having tons of fun. I know the staff are working so hard to make things run smoothly and make sure the kids have a great experience." - Sage H., parent

"Addie has had a great time, and I've been so impressed with everything she has told us about. You all are running a special place and we recommend it to our parent friends all the time. Thank you!" - Mike J., parent



PERFORMANCE COMPANIES

In the fall, our **YOUNG ARTIST PERFORMANCE COMPANY** for grades 4-8 worked with Director of Education Danisha Crosby and teaching artist EmmaLou Joy. Their culminating performance of *Superheroes: With Great Power Comes Ordinary Responsibility* by Ian McWethy was enjoyed by the first audience welcomed back to the Education Center.

Our Older Adult students continued virtually in the fall with a production of *Help Desk* by Don Zolidis, working with Danisha Crosby and Brandon McCoy.

After a year of working virtually, the **ROUNDLINGS**, our new teen improvisation and stand-up company, was back in person in the fall of 2021 and began expanding their comedic

repertoire to include writing song parodies, musical improv, and long form improvised plays. The ensemble met weekly to focus on creating stand-up and sketch comedy while also sharpening their improvisation skills working with Kevin Corbett.

After a sharing at the Education Center in December 2021, the **ROUNDLINGS** had a successful Bethesda debut in May 2022 featuring live performance and video shorts by Bethesda-Chevy Chase High School student Benjamin Pallansch.



STUDENT MATINEES

With the return to in-person mainstage performances in Fall 2021, Round House was pleased to welcome young audiences back through our free Student Matinee program, which offers free daytime performances of Round House productions for school groups. We also continued to offer virtual Student Matinees, which allowed students who couldn't attend in person to continue to benefit from Round House's artistic offerings. Approximately 1,500 students representing 14 schools attended Student Matinees for *Quixote Nuevo*, *The Great Leap*, and the Teen Performance Company's *TikTok* (a period piece) either in-person or virtually.

Participating school districts included MCPS, PGCPS, and some as far away as California. Students attending in-person matinees benefited from an interactive post-show discussion with artists, offering them the opportunity to engage directly and learn more about what goes in to creating professional theatre productions.

For a more in-depth experience around the virtual offerings, Round House artists and staff offered interactive virtual conversations. Round House Associate Artist for Literary and New Plays Naysan Mojgani and fight choreographer Casey Kaleba held a conversation offering insight into the dramatization of *Quixote Nuevo*.

"I am forever indebted to you for serving the needs of all students. Students spoke of [*The Great Leap*] for days afterward to anyone who would listen. Many staff members commented on the sheer excitement and delight of students upon their return to RHS."

- Martin McCarrick, Teacher, Rockville High School

FREE PLAY

Our FREE PLAY program provided free tickets for over 2,600 teen and college students during the 2021-2022 Season. These students represented 380 colleges and 243 middle and high schools. *The Great Leap* and *TikTok* (a period piece) were particularly successful, with more than 600 students attending one of those two productions in person. Our Teen Nights returned, with a particularly successful one for *The Great Leap*. Teen audience members enjoyed a pre-show discussion and pizza with Artistic Director Ryan Rilette and director Jennifer Chang, the performance, and a post-show ice cream social with cast members.





RESIDENCIES & AFTERSCHOOL CLASSES

With schools re-opened, Round House Education returned to **AFTERSCHOOL RESIDENCIES**, serving 150 students at a number of MCPS elementary schools including East Silver Spring, Kensington Parkwood, Rock Creek Forest, Rosemary Hills, Somerset, Westbrook, and Woodlin, as well as Barrie School.

We also produced three **PRODUCTION RESIDENCIES**. The entire fifth grade class of 45 students at Westbrook Elementary participated in *The Universe and Other Stuff (A Brief and Inaccurate History of Everything)* by Stephen Murray. The show was performed for family and friends in June, just before the fifth grade graduated.

Nearly 100 students in grades 6 through 8 participated in our Production Residencies at two Montgomery County middle schools. Students performed and designed 30 Reasons Not To Be in a Play by Alan Haehnel at Westland Middle School under Round House teaching artists Danielle Scott and Emily Lettau. At Cabin John Middle School, students designed and performed in The Trial of the Wicked Witch: The Musical by Craig Sodaro and Stephen Murray, led by teaching artist Elle Sullivan and Danisha Crosby.



All three shows were met with enthusiastic reactions from audiences who were excited to see their students back on stage.

"I want to thank you again so much for creating such a wonderful musical experience for Westbrook's 5th graders!! I have spoken to so many parents in the past few days who expressed their thanks and enthusiasm with the musical and everything you and Elle and Mercedes have done these past months to get the kids ready for their big day. It was a great experience for the kids. Thank you again so very much!" - Sacha L., Westbrook PTA



APPRENTICES AND INTERNS

Fall of 2021 marked the return of our apprentice program with apprenticeships offered in the Artistic, Education, and Production departments. As part of our mission to be a theatre for everyone, Round House is committed to training the next generation of theatre administrators and practitioners. Our apprentice program provides early career professionals the chance to spend the season in a department to gain handson experience with the theatre's daily operations, learning alongside an accomplished company of artists, teachers, and administrators.

During the virtual 2020-2021 Season, Round House paused the apprentice program and re-evaluated how to make it a stronger program for professionals entering the field. Across the industry, early career training programs like internships and apprenticeships offer minimal stipends, which is a barrier for people who do not have additional financial support. Beginning in the 2021-2022 Season, our cohort of apprentices received an hourly salary for their 25–40-hour workweek.

In addition to making the program more accessible, we expanded the educational component of our apprenticeships.

Under the management of Education Program Manager Kathleen Mason, apprentices learn as a cohort about careers in arts management in addition to their individual responsibilities. They gain additional insight into workings of a professional regional theatre through regularly scheduled seminars led by guest speakers and members of the theatre's senior staff.

While social distancing during the summer meant we couldn't host our normal numbers of teen educators and interns, we hosted four high school interns during the course of the season.

A NEW NORMAL

The season wrapped up for education in June with a return to a less restrictive summer camp, hosted across three Round House spaces: our Education Center and rehearsal room in Silver Spring and our theatre in Bethesda.

EQUITY, DIVERSITY, INCLUSION, AND ACCESS AT ROUND HOUSE A Progress Report | August 2022 Last year, after several listening sessions with Racial Equity Plan, with the help of consultant full-time staff, part-time staff, and artists, as Michael Bobbitt. This plan will organize antiracist action steps for our Board, Operations, well as a careful review and assessment of our practices led by the Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Programming into immediate and long-

Last year, after several listening sessions with full-time staff, part-time staff, and artists, as well as a careful review and assessment of our practices led by the Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (EDIA) Staff Workgroup and our executive leadership, Round House published a document outlining our prior commitments to anti-racism, as well as a new set of programs and policies aimed at making Round House a theatre for everyone.

As part of our commitment to auditing our progress on at least an annual basis, an update on our EDIA work is published each year in Round House's Annual Report. In concert with strategic planning efforts, we have also committed to creating a formal

Racial Equity Plan, with the help of consultant Michael Bobbitt. This plan will organize antiracist action steps for our Board, Operations, and Programming into immediate and long-term goals with clear tactics and regular accountability monitoring. Work has also begun on creating a formal plan for accessibility efforts at Round House.

Regular and ongoing discussions and efforts have continued among our full staff and Board, and there are a number of high-level updates since the publishing of Round House's FY21 Annual Report that we would like to highlight again or share now for the first time.

UPDATES

ORGANIZATIONAL FRAMEWORK AND PROCESS

- We have established a permanent full-time staff position of Director of EDIA and Community Partnerships
- To maintain our values-based commitment to employee compensation, Round House's FY23 budget included a 5% cost of living increase and an increase to our minimum full-time staff salary. The minimum salary was raised to be higher than the living wage for Montgomery County based on the MIT Living Wage Calculator at the time of budget approval.
- Round House has also increased compensation for overhire production crew and part-time front of house employees.
- Round House now requires anti-racism orientation for all staff (full-time and part-time), Board members, artists, and technicians. This orientation has been developed in consultation with Michael Bobbitt, and includes an in-depth, self-paced engagement and reflection on anti-racism, implicit bias, and bystander intervention for staff and Board.

PROGRAMMING AND PRODUCTION

• Beginning in Spring 2021, we eliminated needlessly long workdays such as "10 out of 12" technical rehearsals and piloted a five-day work week for rehearsals of all productions. These changes will remain our baseline in the coming years.

- 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 public events. We provide artists multiple methods to safely report any racist and other unacceptable behavior throughout their time at Round House.
- We piloted an anti-racism orientation for actors, directors, and stage management staff as part of the first week of rehearsal for *Nollywood Dreams*. This orientation has been developed in consultation with Michael Bobbitt, and includes an in-depth, self-paced engagement and reflection on anti-racism, historical racism in American Theatre, microaggressions, and bystander intervention.
- 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.

BOARD DEVELOPMENT

- To reduce barriers to Board service and decouple governance from financial contributions, Round House has removed the minimum "give/get" contribution for Board members. Instead, all board members are asked to make a charitable contribution that is "personally significant."
- The Board included EDIA as an essential and significant component of the recently approved strategic plan.

EXPECTATIONS AND ACCOUNTABILITY

- 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" (see page 33) can now be found online and in every show program.
- In November 2020, front of house staff, full-time staff, and several Board members took Bystander Intervention and Conflict De-escalation Workshop led by Right to Be (formerly Hollaback!).
- All Round House volunteer ushers are now required to participate in anti-bias and inclusivity training, which is being offered in coordination with several DC theatres and Theatre Washington.

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 unceded land cared for by native tribes including the Piscataway peoples. We pay our respects to the Piscataway community and their elders both past and present, as well as future generations.



RoundHouseTheatre.org/About/Our-Land-Acknowledgement.



THEATRE FOR EVERYONE

HOUSE RULES

At Round House, "Theatre for Everyone" isn't just a statement. It's our mission and an organizational value. It means that everyone—patrons, artists, staff, students, trustees, and volunteers—is invited to fully participate and deserves to be treated with respect. This is our promise to you...and we ask you to help us uphold these values and expectations in all of your interactions with Round House.

We believe that...

- All are welcome here, and each person is empowered and encouraged to fully engage with our work.
- Everyone is a human being, equally deserving of respect.
- Theatre is an "empathy gym," and building that muscle is what each of us is here to do.
- Anti-racism—the intentional and conscious effort to combat racial prejudice and systemic and structural racism—is an ongoing and active practice, and we must all stand against oppression and marginalization of all kinds.
- Discomfort is often productive, but cruelty never is.

We invite you to...

- Assume positive intent and expect the same assumption in return.
- Enjoy our art with your whole self—laugh, clap, cry, have reactions!—and embrace your fellow audience members' reactions in turn. Remember that your experience is shared with the rest of the audience.
- Make a deliberate effort to confront your own biases, and partner with us to help make Round House a welcoming space for everyone. We're all learning!
- Help us create a positive community and a culture of collaboration.

We will not tolerate...

- Insulting or discriminatory speech towards anyone.
- Unwanted invasion of another person's physical space.
- Abusive or harassing behavior.
- Ignoring or talking over staff who are trying to assist you.
- Creating a hostile environment for fellow audience members, students, artists, or staff.
- Disrespect of or damage to our theatre or other facilities.

WE ARE GLAD YOU'RE HERE! Thank you for being a part of the Round House community as we work together to truly be a Theatre For Everyone.

If you witness or experience behavior that violates the values and expectations outlined above, please alert our staff. Round House will take action to protect our community, with consequences up to and including removal from Round House activities.



DONOR EVENTS

Round House was thrilled to return to in-person events during the 2021-2022 Season, while offering hybrid event opportunities for those not yet comfortable returning to the theatre. Round House donors enjoy an array of benefits including the opportunity to go behind-thescenes of the artistic process, meet our artists, and enhance their Round House experience. Learn more at RoundHouseTheatre.org/InnerCircle.



Our most popular donor benefit, Inside Looks offer supporters at the Inner Circle level and above a preview of each play in the season. Led by Artistic Director Ryan Rilette, attendees gain a deeper understanding of Round House productions through conversations with playwrights, directors, actors, and members of the creative teams. During the 2021-2022 Season, all of our Inside Looks were offered in-person with an online streaming option, increasing access for all.



OPENING NIGHTS

Round House was also delighted to return to in-person Opening Nights, offering Leadership Circle donors and artists the opportunity to celebrate each production and enjoy the excitement of opening a new show. With pre-show dinners in our Event Room, VIP receptions in the lobby, and post-show dessert receptions, there's no shortage of festive fun on these special evenings.

BACKSTAGE TOURS AND TECHNICAL REHEARSAL

Offering special behind-the-scenes opportunities for donors, Backstage Tours and Technical Rehearsals provide insight into the many details that go into producing a show at Round House. A highlight for the 2021-2022 Season was a Backstage Tour led by Production Manager Jesse Aasheim that revealed how Round House staff and crew members changed over the sets for the two world premiere plays of the inaugural National Capital New Play Festival, it's not a trip it's a journey and "We declare you a terrorist...". The creativity and skill of the production and stage management teams was on full display as we learned how it took 45 minutes or less to transform the stage from one show to another, all through the magic of theatre. Donors also had the chance to observe a Technical Rehearsal for *The Great Leap*, viewing the many elements of bringing a show to life, including lighting, sound, actor blocking, navigating a rotating stage floor, and so much more.



BUSINESS COUNCIL

WENDY FELDMAN BLOCK, JAY HAMMER, KATHLEEN MATTHEWS Co-Chairs

The 2021-2022 Season welcomed the relaunch of Round House Theatre's Business Council upon our return to in-person performances. A sponsorship opportunity for businesses to expand their reach and partner with a cultural gem of Bethesda, the Business Council brings together companies of all sizes in support of Round House and cultivates partnerships between the arts, local businesses, and the community. Business Council members enjoy a variety of benefits, including:

- VISIBILITY on the Round House website, in Round House spaces including the theatre and Education Center, in show programs, and throughout internal and external publications
- ACCESS through discounted or complimentary performances tickets and VIP receptions
- IMPACT positively affecting the community by supporting Round House's extensive artistic and educational programs
- **ENTERTAINMENT** use of Round House event or meeting space

Round House thanks the members of our 2021-2022 Business Council

LEADERSHIP MEMBER



MEMBERS











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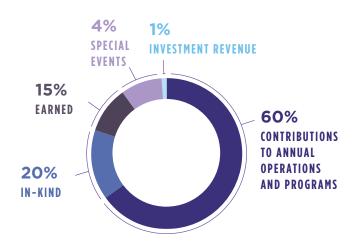
Business Council members as of June 30, 2022



FISCAL YEAR 2022 (JUL 1, 2021 - JUN 30, 2022)

REVENUE AND SUPPORT

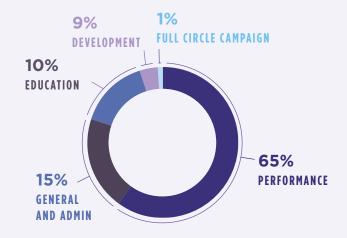
Earned Revenue (tickets, tuition, concessions, rental)	\$ 839,489
Grants and Contributions	\$ 3,347,776
Special Events	\$ 228,423
In-kind	\$ 1,130,966
Investment Revenue	\$ -75,837
TOTAL	\$ 5,470,817
Full Circle Campaign funds released for fixed assets	\$ 262,560



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

TOTAL	\$ 7,804,363
Full Circle Campaign	\$ 103,843
Development	\$ 717,873
General and Admin	\$ 1,156,990
Education	\$ 791,303
Performance	\$ 5,034,354



Our artistic and educational programming accounts for 75 percent of our total expenses.

-\$725,990

UNRESTRICTED CHANGE IN NET ASSETS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2021

2021-2022 BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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Plays: Naysan Mojgani*

Associate Artist-Casting &

Production: Sarah Coonev

Artistic Apprentice:

Ashley Mapley-Brittle

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Mason Catharini

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Sara Patterson

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Assistant Technical Director:

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Master Electrician/Audio

Supervisor: Chris Hall

Costume Shop Manager:

Taylor S. Payne

Scenic Charge:

Jenny Cockerham

Lead Carpenter: Shaun Bartlow

Resident Stage Manager:

Che Wernsman

SM Apprentice:

llana Simon-Rusinowitz

*Member of the Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Accessibility Staff

Workgroup

DONOR SUPPORT

(as of June 30, 2022)

We gratefully acknowledge the following donors who support the work of our 2021-2022 Season through Annual Fund and Gala contributions. These tax-deductible gifts help Round House continue to be a theatre for everyone and enrich our community through bold, outstanding theatrical and educational experiences that inspire empathy and demand conversation.

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\$100.000+

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Round House Theatre is supported in part by funding from the Montgomery County government, the Arts and Humanities Council of Montgomery County, and the Maryland State Arts Council.



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COVER: Photo of Ernaisja Curry (Ayamma Okafor) and Renea Brown (Dede Okafor) in Nollywood Dreams by

SEASON HIGHLIGHTS: Photo of Cristina Pitter (Frankie) in it's not a trip it's a journey by Margot Schulman Photography; photo of Eric Hissom (Saul) in *The Great Leap* by Margot Schulman Photography; photo of Summer Camp 2022; photo of Renea Brown (Dede Okafor) in Nollywood Dreams by Margot Schulman Photography.

LEADERSHIP: Photo of Artistic Director Ryan Rilette and Managing Director Ed Zakreski.

MISSION AND VALUES: Photo of Round House Education production residency at Westbrook Elementary School; photo of Yao Dogbe (Gbenga Ezie), Ernaisja Curry (Ayamma Okafor), Renea Brown (Dede Okafor), and Joel Ashur (Wale Owusu) in Nollywood Dreams by Margot Schulman Photography. QUIXOTE NUEVO: Photo of Herbert Siguenza

(Don Quixote) and cast of Quixote Nevo by Margot Schulman Photography

THE GREAT LEAP: Photo of Grant Chang (Wen Chang) in The Great Leap by Margot Schulman Photography. TIK TOK (A PERIOD PIECE): Photos of the cast of Tik Tok (A Period Piece) by Danisha Crosby.

"WE DECLARE YOU A TERRORIST ...": Photo of Cody Nickell (The Writer) and Bekah Zornosa (Masha) in "We declare you a terrorist..." by Margot Schulman Photography.

IT'S NOT A TRIP IT'S A JOURNEY: Photo of Erin

Busia (Rain), and Cristina Pitter (Frankie) in it's not a trip it's a journey by Margot Schulman Photography...

DEVELOPMENTAL READINGS: Photo of Kimberly Gilbert and Nancy Robinette in the reading of Jennifer Who Is Leaving; photo of DeLanna Studi in the reading of On the Far End by Rachael Albert; photo of the cast and creative team of Adia & Clora Snatch Joy; photo of playwright Marvin González De León and the cast of Madre de Dios.

NOLLYWOOD DREAMS: Photo of Yao Dogbe (Gbenga Ezie) and Jacqueline Youm (Adenikeh) in Nollywood Dreams by Margot Schulman Photography.

EDUCATION: Photo of Round House Summer Camp students; photo of on-site classes; photo of Round House Older Active Adult class; photo of Young Artist Performance Company video shoot; photo of talkback at Student Matinee of Quixote Nuevo; Roundlings founder and teacher Kevin Corbett with members of the Roundlings; photo of Trial of the Wicked Witch at Cabin John Middle School; photos of 30 Reasons Not to Be In a Play at Westland Middle School. All photos

DONOR EVENTS: Photo of cast of it's not a trip it's a journey and "We declare you a terrorist..." by Kent Kondo; photo of Don Shapero, Trustee Dan Kaplan, Trustee Linda Ravdin, and Managing Director Ed Zakreski by Kent Kondo; photo of Dadi Akhavan, Trustee Jay Hammer, Nollywood Dreams actor Yao Dogbe, and Farinaz Akhavan by Cameron Whitman Photography; photo of Production Manager Jesse Aasheim leading Round House board members on a tour of the Round House scene shop by Amy Benson.

BROADWAY IN BETHESDA GALA: Photo of Kelli O'Hara; photo of Maryland Congressman Jamie Raskin and Gala Co-Chair Nina Weisbroth; photo of gala audience during the live auction. All photos by

FINANCIALS: Photo of Jacqueline Youm (Adenikeh) in Nollywood Dreams by Margot Schulman Photography.

2021-2022 BOARD OF TRUSTEES: Photo of Randy Nguyen Ta (Manford) in The Great Leap by Margot Schulman Photography.

DONOR SUPPORT: Photo of Cody Nickell (The Writer) and Elliott Bales (The FSB Officer) in "We declare you a terrorist..."; photo of Ernie González, Jr. (Sancho Panza/Manny Diaz) and Herbert Siguenza (Don Quixote/Jose Quijano) in Quixote Nuevo; photo of Dezi Bing (Willie), Erin Margaret Pettigrew (June), Cristina Pitter (Frankie), and Afua Busia (Rain) in it's not a trip it's a journey. All photos by Margot





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