



# Not-for-Profit Theatre in America: The Field at a Glance

In 1961, the American theatre field consisted of only 16 theatre companies established specifically for educational and charitable purposes. Today, thanks in large measure to the pivotal role played by the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) since 1965, the not-for-profit theatre field consists of more than 1,759 theatres located in major metropolitan centers, urban neighborhoods, suburbs, and rural communities. Their wide-ranging repertoire includes classics; modern plays and musicals; new plays, adaptations, and translations by American and international writers; plays for culturally-specific and young audiences; and experimental, multimedia, and performance-art works.

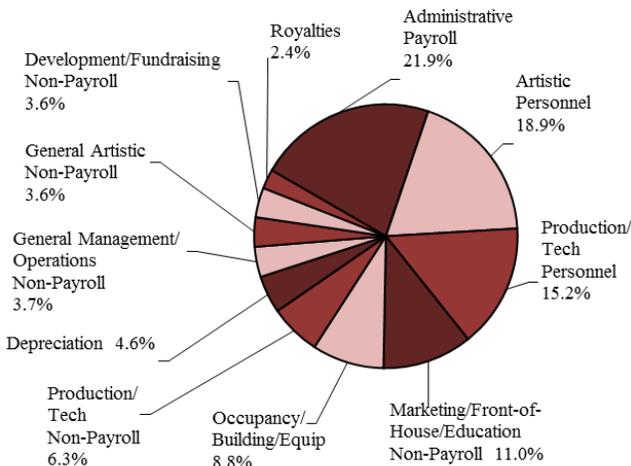
*Theatre Facts 2017*, a study by Theatre Communications Group based on its annual Fiscal Survey, reported that on an estimated Universe of 1,759 professional not-for-profit theatres including 173 Profiled TCG Member Theatres. Combined, these theatres directly contributed nearly \$2.6 billion to the U.S. economy; the real economic impact is even greater when spending by theatres' attendees and employees in their local communities is taken into account. The Universe of theatres employed 147,000 theatre workers, including actors, directors, playwrights, designers, administrators, and technicians. For the 173 of the Universe Theatres—ranging in size from roughly \$180,000 to \$78 million in annual expenses—compensation of personnel represented 56% of total expenses, a reflection of the labor-intensive nature of the art form and the many cultural workers whose livelihoods theatres are preserving.

| <b>Estimated 2017 Universe of U.S. Professional Not-For-Profit Theatres</b> |                 |
|---|-----------------|
| <i>1,759 Theatres</i>   |                 |
| <b><u>Estimated Productivity</u></b>  |                 |
| Attendance  | 44 Million      |
| Subscribers   | 1 Million       |
| Performances  | 155,000         |
| Productions   | 18,000          |
| <b><u>Estimated Finances</u></b>  |                 |
| Total Expenses  | \$2.570 Billion |
| Total Income  | \$2.685 Billion |
| Earned Income   | \$1.475 Billion |
| as a % of Total Income  | 55%             |
| Contributed Income  | \$1.210 Billion |
| as a % of Total Income  | 45%             |
| <b><u>Estimated Work Force</u></b>  |                 |
| Artistic  | 97,000          |
| Administrative  | 17,800          |
| Production/Technical  | 32,200          |
| Total Paid Personnel  | 147,000         |

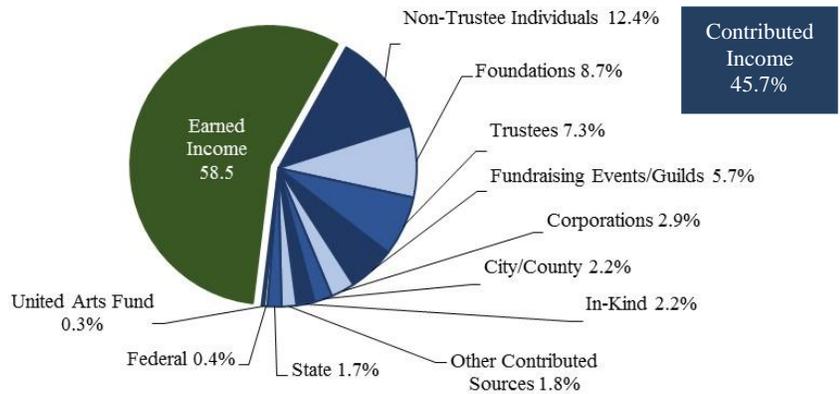
The Universe of not-for-profit theatres offered 155,000 performances that attracted 44 million patrons. The 173 Profiled Theatres also served 2.8 million people through 1,231 education and outreach programs, including touring productions, artists-in-the-schools, teacher training, classes, workshops and lectures in local community centers and libraries, internships for college students, special programs for at-risk children, and life-long learning opportunities.

**FOR THE 173 PROFILED TCG MEMBER THEATRES FROM THEATRE FACTS 2017:**

**BREAKDOWN OF EXPENSES**



**INCOME AS A PERCENTAGE OF EXPENSES WITH CONTRIBUTED INCOME DETAIL\***



\*Percentages total more than 100% because total unrestricted income exceeded total expenses.

## NEA IMPACT

The direct impact of a theatre's receiving funding from the NEA comes not only in the form of project grants, but also in the multiplier effect that these grants, through their 2-to-1 or 3-to-1 matching funds requirement, have on theatres' abilities to leverage and attract other private and public funding.

Indirectly, NEA funding can be leveraged for its symbolic imprimatur and also affects theatres as it trickles down in the form of block grants to states. Forty percent of NEA funding goes to state arts agencies, which is then distributed to organizations like not-for-profit theatres. Of the 173 Profiled TCG Member Theatres, 40% reported funds from both the NEA and their State Arts Agency, while 47% reported funding from only one of the two sources. In total 87% of Profiled Theatres benefited from federal funding.

By supporting many of the nation's finest theatre institutions, the NEA has contributed far beyond the actual monetary value of its grants. Nearly every Pulitzer Prize-winning play since 1976 originated at an NEA-funded theatre, and a network of educational and outreach programs has sprung up across the country as a result of NEA support, ensuring access to all Americans and developing new generations of audiences.

### Examples of Community Impact

**Cleveland Public Theatre** in Ohio has received a \$10,000 ArtWorks grant from the NEA to support the development and premiere of *The Mask of Flight*. The play is inspired by the ways we cover and uncover ourselves. The ensemble will investigate the theme of masking through various examples of veiling – for instance, how we veil racism, how politically correct language can be a veil, how women cover for modesty and religious reasons vs. being forced to veil, how someone may veil their gender identity – and how these situations relate and intersect. *The Mask of Flight* will be a collage of short pieces springing from various works created for Cleveland Public Theatre's annual community events including Station Hope, a celebration of Cleveland's role in the Underground Railroad and an exploration of contemporary social justice issues. Annually, Cleveland Public Theatre engages over 800 children and families in public housing, teens from families defined as low-income, and formerly homeless men in recovery. These participants create original productions that are attended by 4,000 community members.

**Park Square Theatre** in Minnesota has received a \$10,000 Challenge America grant from the NEA to support the production of *The Korean Drama Addict's Guide to Losing Your Virginity* by May Lee-Yang and to support community outreach programming. This world premiere was presented with producing partner Theater Mu. The local audience was engaged by a series of talk-back discussions with the artists after performances and a series of pre-show panel discussions about contemporary Korean and Hmong culture. Themes of fate and cultural clashes were explored in casual workshops intended to provide cultural background information on the context of the play and to discuss how key ideas in the play vary across Asian cultures. Pay As You Are tickets were offered for the entire three week run in order to make the performances as accessible as possible. Park Square Theatre serves over 30,000 students a year through Student Matinees.

**Perseverance Theatre** in Alaska has received a \$15,000 ArtWorks grant from the NEA for the world premiere of *Whale Song*, by Cathy Tagnak Rexford (Iñupiaq). The play explores the love of Iñupiaq people for the bowhead whale, examining myth, gender roles, and the balance of duty to oneself versus duty to others. Featuring a primarily Alaska Native cast, *Whale Song* is part of Perseverance Theatre's 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary season. The theatre will offer Pay-As-You-Can previews and performances, student matinees, and a post-show discussion. Cathy Tagnak Rexford (Iñupiaq) is a member of The Playwright's Circle, a group of 15 playwrights with the goal of developing diverse, new Alaskan plays and representing voices that were previously unheard. Perseverance Theatre serves over 17,000 artists, students, and audiences annually.

**Portland Stage Company** in Maine has received a \$15,000 ArtWorks grant from the NEA to support the world premiere of *Babette's Feast*, conceived and developed by Abbie Killeen, written by Rose Courtney, and adapted from the short story by Isak Dinesen. *Babette's Feast* tells the story of a refugee who transforms a closed religious community by sacrificing all she has in order to throw a lavish dinner party. The three-week run included 3 Pay-What-You-Can performances. Portland Stage also offered student matinees followed by talk back discussions; the theatre serves more than 7,000 students annually through its Student Matinee Program. Portland Stage Literacy and Education departments created *Babette's Feast* Playnotes— an extensive resource guide for students, teachers, and other audience members who wished to delve more deeply into the play. *Babette's Feast* was also a part of the Curtain Call Discussion Series, in which audience members had the opportunity to talk about the production with the performers. Throughout the run of the play, Portland Stage partnered with Wayside Food Program to run a food drive, with the goal of reaching 500 pounds of food.

