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

In 1961, the not-for-profit professional theatre in America 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 its creation in 1965, the field consists of diverse theatres—located in major metropolitan centers, urban neighborhoods, suburbs and rural communities—estimated to number more than 1,400. 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.

Collectively, these 1,477 theatres (those filing IRS Form 990) play to an annual audience of more than 32 million Americans. An additional 4.5 million people are served by the 2,644 outreach and educational programs offered by the 198 profiled theatres responding to TCG's survey, including touring productions, artists-in-the-schools, teacher training, workshops and lectures in local community centers and libraries, internships for college students, special programs for at-risk children and life-long learning opportunities.

By supporting the nation's finest theatre institutions, the NEA has contributed far beyond the actual monetary value of its grants. The leveraging effect of NEA grants attracts other private and public funding, through matching requirements as well as the symbolic imprimatur an NEA grant represents. 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.

## 2004 Universe of U.S. Not-For-Profit Professional Theatres

*1,477 Theatres*

### Productivity

Attendance	32,100,000
Subscribers	1,800,000
Performances	169,000
Productions	11,000

### Finances

Earnings	\$856,200,000
Contributions	\$714,600,000
Total Income	\$1,570,800,000
Expenses	\$1,464,400,000
Net Surplus	\$106,400,000

### Work Force

Artistic	67,000
Administrative	12,000
Technical	25,000
Total Paid Personnel	104,000

*Theatre Facts 2004*, a study by Theatre Communications Group based on its annual fiscal survey, reported on 1,477 not-for-profit professional theatres including 258 TCG member theatres ranging in size from \$66,000 in annual operating expenses to more than \$45 million. These U.S. not-for-profit theatres employed more than 104,000 theatre workers—actors, directors, playwrights, designers, administrators and technicians—and constituted a more than \$1.46 billion industry, with an even greater economic impact generated by these institutions in their local communities. Over 54% of total expenses were devoted to compensation of personnel. The 1,477 theatres are estimated to have offered 169,000 performances that attracted over 32 million patrons.

NEA funding impacted theatres in many ways. Direct impact came not only in the form of project

grants, but also in the multiplier effect that NEA grants, through their 2-to-1 or 3-to-1 matching funds requirement, have on theatres' ability to leverage funding. Indirectly, NEA funding was felt by theatres as it trickled down in the form of bloc grants to states and, subsequently, as city and county funding. State and local arts agencies together provided theatres with 5.1 percent of their total income.

### Examples of Economic and Community Impact

The People's Light and Theatre Company in Malvern, PA, has received support for an Adaptation Project that will connect great books for young readers with great playwrights, resulting in compelling scripts for their Family Discovery Series. Each playwright will adapt a book that is widely read in schools and highly regarded by teachers, parents and pupils alike. This project has enormous potential to connect with young audiences and develop scripts that will have future productions in theatres around the country. Theatres desperately need to find high quality scripts to help develop future audiences; playwrights desperately need to find venues for their best work. The NEA is helping them to address both of these challenges. The Family Series serves nearly 18,000 young people and the arts education program reaches 35,000 students annually.

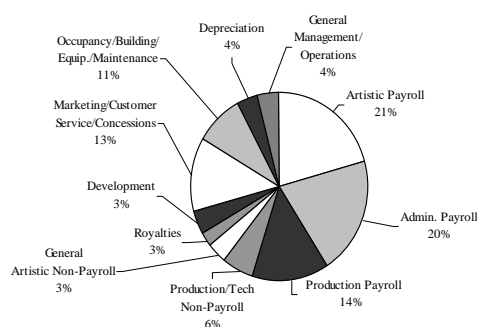
The Alabama Shakespeare Festival (ASF) in Montgomery, AL, received support from the NEA for the Southern Writers' Project (SWP) production of Carlyle Brown's *Pure Confidence* and the 2006 SWP Festival of New Plays. During these events, ASF anticipates reaching over 6,600 audience members, 500 of which are expected to be youth under 18. ASF and the Actors Theatre of Louisville jointly commissioned Carlyle Brown's powerful tale of a slave jockey who races in an

attempt to purchase his freedom. The fourth annual Festival of New Plays is a whirlwind weekend of theatre, readings and panel discussions. Following the same format as years past, the Festival offers an opportunity for the general public and theatre professionals to discuss new scripts and encourage playwrights.

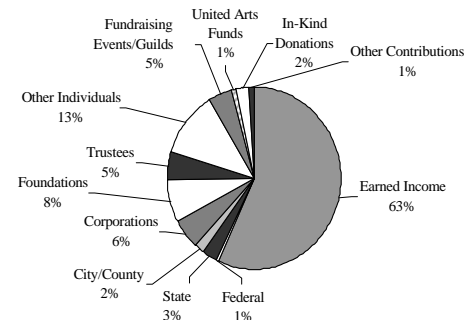
The NEA grant to support Triad Stage's production of *Brother Wolf* marks the first national grant awarded to this young Greensboro, NC theatre company. During the production of *Brother Wolf*, Triad Stage anticipates reaching 6,000 people, of which 1,000 will be students. By creating an Appalachian play about their region, they will attract audiences from neighboring rural counties. They will present four associated learning programs and a post-show Saturday concert series featuring nationally recognized roots musicians.

Through its *Access to Artistic Excellence* program, the NEA funds the educational touring program of the Idaho Shakespeare Festival in Boise, ID, reaching 50,000 schoolchildren in 100 rural and remote locations throughout Idaho and increasingly into neighboring states. Consisting of two components—Idaho Theater for Youth and Shakespeareance, begun in 1980 and 1985, respectively—the programs bring original adaptations of classics such as Tolstoy's *The Three Questions*, the Sacagawea story, *Dreams of a Bird Woman* and the Greek myth of Icarus, *Feather on the Sea*, into elementary schools, as well as exciting versions of *Romeo and Juliet*, *The Taming of the Shrew* and *The Tempest* designed for teenagers. Study guides, workshops and online materials increase the value of these programs, around which many teachers plan coursework, and serve to strengthen the arts in their statewide curriculum.

### BREAKDOWN OF EXPENSES (198 Profiled Theatres)



### BREAKDOWN OF INCOME AS A PERCENT OF EXPENSES\* (198 Profiled Theatres)



\*Percentages total 110% since income exceeded expenses by 10%