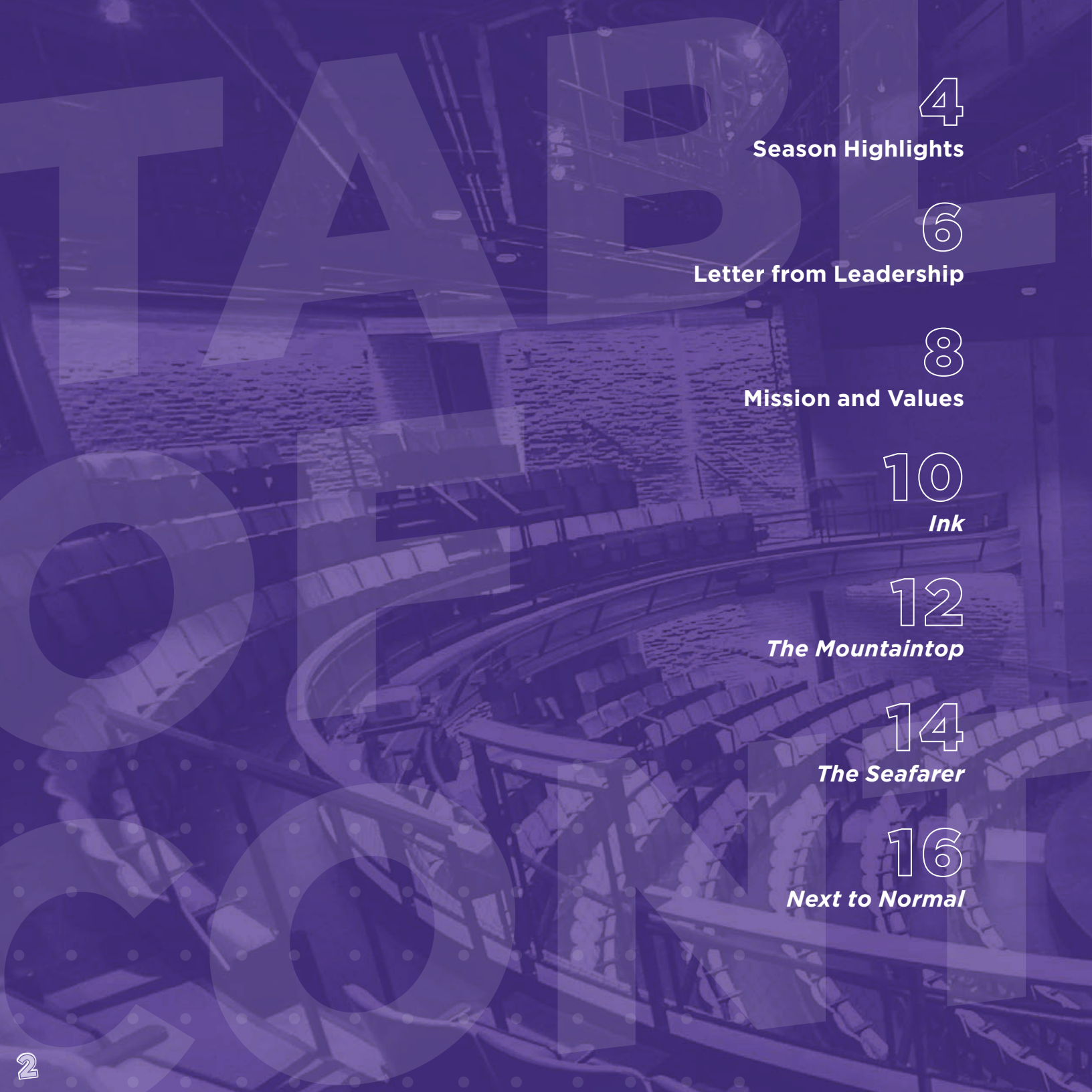


ANNUAL REPORT
FISCAL 2024



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THEATRE**



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2023-2024 SEASON HIGHLIGHTS

- *Next to Normal* became the fourth best-selling production in Round House history, welcoming more than 11,000 audience members across its extended run.
- Former *Washington Post* theatre critic Peter Marks moderated a Journalism Night panel discussion in conjunction with Round House and Olney Theatre Center's co-production of *Ink*. Panelists included David Smith (Washington bureau chief, *The Guardian*), Michael Steele (political analyst, MSNBC), and Jummy Olabanji (co-anchor, NBC Washington).
- Round House partnered with WETA's Well Beings series around our production of *Next to Normal*. Artistic Director Ryan Rilette and lead actor Tracy Lynn Olivera were interviewed on the mental health themes of the play and the importance of promoting mental health-centric content, and the story ran on WETA and WETA.org in spring 2024.
- Round House was honored with 14 Helen Hayes Award nominations for plays from the 2023 calendar year (six for *Fela!*, four for *Ink*, two for *August Wilson's Radio Golf*, and one each for *The Mountaintop* and *The Seafarer*), winning seven, including notable wins for *Fela!* in the categories of Outstanding Production (Musical) and Outstanding Ensemble in a Musical. We were proud to tie for the most Helen Hayes Awards in the Hayes category.
- Our Teen Performance Company presented the 22nd Annual Sarah Metzger Memorial Play, Joe Calarco's *Spring Break*, with teen comedy troupe The Roundlings joining the fun for a Teen Takeover Weekend on our main stage.
- Furthering our commitment to providing full access to patrons with disabilities, we had our third main stage Relaxed Performance during the run of *Next to Normal*. Our Relaxed Performances aim to provide a safe and welcoming environment for individuals with sensory and cognitive disabilities, their families, and friends.
- Inda Craig-Galván's *A Jumping-Off Point* anchored the third year of Round House's National Capital New Play Festival, comprising five weeks of world premieres and readings of new plays in development.
- Round House presented our second Black Out Night, welcoming Black-identifying audience members for a performance of Suzan-Lori Parks's *Topdog/Underdog*.
- Round House Education worked for 25 weeks with second graders at New Hampshire Estates Elementary School through a new partnership with the Montgomery County Public Schools Out of School Time Program, funded by the Nita M. Lowey 21st Century Community Learning Centers Maryland Out-of-School Time Programs for the Future Grant.
- In summer 2023, we welcomed more than 600 students into our buildings for summer camp.
- Round House celebrated our annual *Broadway in Bethesda* Gala featuring Tony Award-winner Brian Stokes Mitchell. The evening raised more than \$311,000 in support of Round House programs.







DEAR FRIENDS OF ROUND HOUSE,

THANK YOU you for being a part of the incredible 2023–2024 Season at Round House! This season was a testament to how much we can achieve together. From large-scale artistic feats achieved through co-productions with partner theatres, to incorporating fresh perspectives in new works, to the relationships that form our warm and welcoming community, Round House is stronger thanks to each and every one of you.

**ROUND HOUSE
IS STRONGER
THANKS TO EACH
AND EVERY ONE
OF YOU.**

The 2023–2024 Season began on a high note with a remarkable production of James Graham's *Ink*, the second in a two-play co-production partnership with our friends at Olney Theatre Center. Fresh off the high-octane energy of *Fela!*, the play's mesmerizing production design, all-star cast, and all-too-relevant story made *Ink* a standout season-opening event. Unfortunately, this momentous production was cut short by a COVID outbreak, a sobering reminder of the continued impact of the pandemic on live performance despite all precautions.

In the fall and winter, our productions of Katori Hall's *The Mountaintop* and Conor McPherson's *The Seafarer* proved that smaller scale shows tell stories that are epic in scope and heart. Small casts stacked with powerful performers and unit sets filled with detail and surprises made for memorable productions that forced us to reckon with perception versus reality and confront the future with courage and a little help from our friends.

We kicked off 2024 with a stunning production of *Next to Normal*, co-produced with Barrington Stage Company. Projections of filmed video, live video feeds from around (and above!) the stage,

and on-stage action interwove to create a real-time visual representation of the dizzying impacts of mental illness and the psychological effects of medication and other treatments. Critics and audiences alike raved about the production, and *Next to Normal* was extended by a week due to popular demand.

The annual National Capital New Play Festival continues to introduce talented new playwrights to eager theatre audiences. The world premiere of Inda Craig-Galván's *A Jumping-Off Point* was a strikingly relevant interrogation of who has the right to tell what stories—particularly in the wake of the recent WGA Writers' Strike. For the third consecutive year, our developmental readings series sold out, revealing a continued appetite to see new works in various stages of development before we hopefully get to feature many of them as world premieres on the Round House stage.

The 2023–2024 Season concluded with a moving and memorable production of *Topdog/Underdog*, the Pulitzer Prize-winning play by Suzan-Lori Parks. We held our second Black Out Night in celebration of this landmark story, and the play was extended due to popular demand.

While our mainstage productions made the most of partnerships both on stage and off, our Education programs continue to grow stronger thanks in part to a growing partnership with Montgomery County Public Schools. Together, we're working to bring additional students to student matinee performances, to bring arts education to schools that wouldn't otherwise have access to it, and to help students benefit from Round House Summer Camps alongside summer learning opportunities.

For the second year, the Teen Takeover Weekend showcased the bright future of American theatre. Our Teen Performance Company took over the Round House stage to produce *Spring Break* by Joe Calarco. The playwright was so impressed by the work of the company that he continues to work with them as he finishes the next play in the series. The Teen Takeover Weekend also featured teen comedy and improv troupe The Roundlings in a performance of their hilarious original show. We can't wait to see what these talented young artists do next.

The 2024 *Broadway in Bethesda* Gala celebrated a fantastic season. A moving performance by Round House artists Sophia Early, Emma Wallach, and the Teen Performance Company set the tone for an inspiring evening before Tony Award-winner Brian Stokes Mitchell brought down the house with a powerful performance followed by not one, but TWO encores. Most importantly, our generous Round House supporters came together in an incredible show of generosity to make this the highest grossing Gala in Round House history.

As you read on, we hope you'll remember the starring role that you played in bringing the 2023–2024 Season to life. Whether buying subscription packages, bringing friends to the theatre, enrolling in classes, making a donation, or offering your thoughts in a reading discussion, you help to shape Round House, making us a theatre that is truly of and for our community. There is so much to look forward to for the future of Round House, and we can't wait to share the journey with you.

**YOU HELP TO
SHAPE ROUND
HOUSE,
MAKING US
A THEATRE
THAT IS
TRULY OF
AND FOR OUR
COMMUNITY.**



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.

AUGUST 30 - SEPTEMBER 24, 2023

INK

BY JAMES GRAHAM

DIRECTED BY JASON LOEWITH

CO-PRODUCED WITH OLNEY THEATRE CENTER

“

STOP

THE PRESSES. THIS ONE'S

A MUST-SEE

—DC THEATER ARTS

”

4 HELEN HAYES AWARD NOMINATIONS (Hayes Category)



OUTSTANDING LEAD PERFORMER IN A PLAY:
CODY NICKELL

OUTSTANDING DIRECTOR OF A PLAY:
JASON LOEWITH

OUTSTANDING CHOREOGRAPHY IN A PLAY:
NIKKI MIRZA

OUTSTANDING SET DESIGN:
TONY CISEK



“ [AN] EXCELLENT PRODUCTION...
EXPERT PERFORMANCES...
THE REAL ARTICLE.”

—THE WASHINGTON POST

ROUND HOUSE THEATRE'S 2023-2024 SEASON

began with James Graham's *Ink*, the second half of our two-show co-production with Olney Theatre Center (following *Fela!* in summer 2023). The West End and Broadway hit, a satirical and suspenseful exploration of the birth of our modern news culture, featured a "top-shelf cast" (*DC Theater Arts*) of local favorites, including Maboud Ebrahimzadeh, Michael Glenn, Cody Nickell, Kate Eastwood Norris, Todd Scofield, Craig Wallace, and more, as well as Artistic Director Ryan Rilette performing in his first Round House production as an actor since *Uncle Vanya* in the 2014-2015 Season.

With a kinetic staging and ripped-from-the-headlines themes, *Ink* was heralded as "veritable popcorn fare" (*The Washington Post*) for media-obsessed Washington audiences.

In that spirit, Round House hosted a Journalism Night, featuring a panel discussion moderated by former *Washington Post* theatre critic Peter Marks and featuring panelists David Smith (Washington bureau chief, *The Guardian*), Michael Steele (political analyst, MSNBC), and Jummy Olabanji (co-anchor, NBC Washington). The journalists spoke to the current state of the journalism industry and took questions from a packed house.

Unfortunately, a widespread outbreak of COVID within the cast and company led to the cancelation of the final week of performances. However, the impact of the production continued to be felt throughout the season, as it was honored with four Helen Hayes Award nominations: Outstanding Lead Performer in a Play (Cody Nickell); Outstanding Director of a Play (Jason Loewith); Outstanding Choreography in a Play (Nikki Mirza); and Outstanding Set Design (Tony Cisek).

||| *Ink* was sponsored by Bonnie and Alan Hammerschlag.

||| The 2023-2024 Season was sponsored by Linda J. Ravdin and Don Shapero.

“
BRILLIANT
STAGING

—THE GEORGETOWNER
”

OCTOBER 11 - NOVEMBER 5, 2023

THE MOUNTAIN TOP

BY KATORI HALL

DIRECTED BY DELICIA TURNER SONNENBERG

“

AN
**AMAZING
PRODUCTION**

—BROADWAY WORLD

”

“

MANDATORY
**VIEWING...
BOTH ACTORS ARE
BRILLIANT**

—DC THEATER ARTS

”

“ETHEREAL AND ABSORBING”

—THE WASHINGTON POST

THE SECOND PLAY OF OUR 2023-2024 SEASON

was *The Mountaintop*, a gripping reimagining of Dr. Martin Luther King’s last night on earth. This production was both hysterically funny and emotionally rich, and served as a poignant reminder that while Dr. King is one of our nation’s greatest heroes, he was also a flawed and nuanced human being—just like the rest of us. Beloved Round House actors Ro Boddie and Renea S. Brown captured audiences’ hearts with their riveting portrayals, and Brown even won a Helen Hayes Award for her hilarious and nuanced portrayal of Camae, the angel sent to usher Dr. King to the afterlife.

During the run of *The Mountaintop*, Round House offered many additional opportunities for audiences—especially younger audiences—to connect to Dr. King’s legacy. An interactive section of the lobby encouraged audiences to reflect on how Dr. King’s most famous speeches related to their own lives, and several packed student matinees inspired middle school and high school students to celebrate the aching human heart at the center of historical moments. We also hosted a student art contest, in which local students could send in artistic responses to what Dr. King’s legacy meant to them. We received a wide variety of submissions and displayed them in the balcony of our lobby.

☰ *The Mountaintop* was sponsored by Jay and Robin Hammer.



HELEN HAYES AWARD
OUTSTANDING LEAD PERFORMER
IN A PLAY (HAYES CATEGORY):
RENEA S. BROWN

DECEMBER 6 - 31, 2023

THE SEAFARER

WRITTEN BY CONOR MCPHERSON

DIRECTED BY RYAN RILETTE



“

[DEPICTS]
FINELY ETCHED
CHARACTERS AND
ACUTE SENSITIVITY
TO BOTH
HUMAN ASPIRATIONS
AND FAILINGS

—DC THEATRE ARTS

”



HELEN HAYES NOMINATION
OUTSTANDING SUPPORTING
PERFORMER IN A PLAY
(HAYES CATEGORY):
MARTY LODGE

“

ENTERTAINING
AND
PROVOCATIVE

—MARYLAND THEATRE GUIDE

”



“AN **EXHILARATING PRODUCTION...**
HILARIOUS AND
SUSPENSEFUL BY TURNS.”

—THE WASHINGTON POST

THE SEAFARER WAS A LATE ADDITION TO OUR season, after we decided to postpone the world premiere of *A Hanukkah Carol* to the 2024-2025 Season. Despite the schedule shuffle, we were very proud to produce this dark holiday fable about redemption and second chances. The evocative design and the nuanced portrayals of five men struggling with their demons—quite literally!—created a memorable and intimate evening at the theatre.

Directed by Ryan Rilette, the production featured the acting talents of Maboud Ebrahimzadeh, Chris Genebach, Michael Glenn, Marcus Kyd, and Marty Lodge in his 46th production at Round House! Lodge’s portrayal of the cantankerous Richard earned him a Helen Hayes nomination. We were also thrilled to welcome Magic and Cards Consultant Ryan Phillips back to Round House after his work on *The Tempest* to teach the actors some sleight-of-hand card tricks to use during the dramatic poker game at the heart of *The Seafarer*.

☰ *The Seafarer* was sponsored by Judy and Leo Zickler.

“
**EXCELLENT
PERFORMANCES**

—BROADWAY WORLD

”

JANUARY 24 - MARCH 3, 2024

NEXT TO NORMAL

BOOK AND LYRICS BY BRIAN YORKEY

MUSIC BY TOM KITT

DIRECTED BY ALAN PAUL

CHOREOGRAPHED BY EAMON FOLEY

CO-PRODUCED WITH

BARRINGTON STAGE COMPANY

“

DAZZLING...
ROCK OPERA
AT ITS FINEST

—DC THEATRE ARTS

”

“

PIERCES THE HEART,
PROVOKES
VITAL CONVERSATION,
AND BRINGS
POWERHOUSE
PERFORMANCES AND
MUSIC TO OUR EARS

—METRO WEEKLY

”



“**A STERLING SHOWCASE...
FOR D.C.-AREA TALENT.**”

—THE WASHINGTON POST

ROUND HOUSE THEATRE CONTINUED OUR electrifying season with the groundbreaking, Tony Award- and Pulitzer Prize-winning rock musical, *Next to Normal*. Co-produced with Barrington Stage Company and directed by Alan Paul, the show captivated theatregoers from all over the DC-area. Performed by a powerhouse cast led by Tracy Lynn Olivera and Kevin Stephen McAllister, *Next to Normal* explored the timely narrative of about the ripple effects of mental illness.

With innovative staging featuring integrated video and multimedia, *Next to Normal* was highly celebrated by theatre audiences and critics, including the *Washington Post*, which celebrated this play’s “mesmerizing projection design” and “impeccable six-person cast.”

Next to Normal presented opportunities to engage in conversation about mental health with local organizations, including WellBeings, a platform created by WETA Washington, DC to address the critical health needs of Americans through impactful digital content. Artistic Director Ryan Rilette and actor Tracy Lynn Olivera shared their perspectives on the production’s themes and how it relates to Round House’s mission of accessibility and inclusivity. The interview was published as an online article and broadcast news segment on WellBeings.org. The timely themes of *Next to Normal* were also amplified in TV segments with NBC Washington, featuring actors Kevin Stephen McAllister and Tracy Lynn Olivera; and on Living Local DMV’s live morning show, where actors Lucas Hinds Babcock and Sophia Early were interviewed and performed a song accompanied by Musical Director Chris Youstra.

With positive feedback from audiences, social media users, and various news outlets, *Next to Normal* performances were extended due to popular demand. This Helen Hayes Awards Recommended production will go down in Round House history as an unforgettable theatrical experience.

≡ *Next to Normal* was sponsored by the McMurphy Family in memory of Patrick.

“**IMMERSIVE
AND SEARING**”

—BROADWAY WORLD

TEEN TAKEOVER WEEKEND!

MARCH 15 - 17, 2024

THE 22ND ANNUAL SARAH METZGER MEMORIAL PLAY

SPRING BREAK

BY JOE CALARCO



&

WAR FOR THE RISE
OF THE DAWN
OF THE KINGDOM
OF THE PLANET
OF THE
ROUNDLINGS



BY THE



THANK YOU, [TO] EVERYONE AT ROUND HOUSE FOR GIVING ANA
A COMMUNITY IN WHICH SHE CAN BE HERSELF, PLAY AND LIVE
AND SHINE AMONG HER AMAZING PEERS. IT'S GIVEN HER A REAL
FOOTHOLD IN THESE TUMULTUOUS YEARS.”

—THE EWACHIW FAMILY

AT ROUND HOUSE, WE CHALLENGE STUDENTS

to develop their skills not just in acting, but in movement, design, and playmaking. Even more importantly, we challenge our students to develop and express their own artistic voices. Our teen companies and Teen Takeover Weekend represent the best of Round House Theatre doing that.

The Round House Theatre Teen Performance Company (TPC) is a pre-professional program for a select group of teen artists. Round House covers the full cost of the program. In the 2023-2024 Season, 23 students representing 13 schools participated in the program. In the fall, TPC members attended Round House productions as well as a series of master classes with professional theatre artists. Their months of rehearsals and workshops culminated in The Sarah Metzger Memorial Play in March, a production of *Spring Break* by Joe Calarco. This heartfelt and entertaining play was directed, designed, stage managed, and performed by the members of the company, who worked closely at every step with experienced professional artists and practitioners as mentors. Members of the Teen Performance Company were featured in a promotional video for *Spring Break*, created for Dramatist Play Service and Broadway Licensing.

The Teen Performance Company performed as part of Teen Takeover Weekend with The Roundlings, our Teen Improv and Stand-Up Company. The Roundlings' performance is the culmination of another endeavor, one which features teen voices not just as actors, but as creators in a truly special way. Working with mentor Kevin Corbett, students performed standup, sketch comedy, and improvisations created by the teens themselves.

“In my experience, it is rare for teenagers to have any control over technical and design elements, and most theater education programs only focus on actors. I joined TPC because I wanted the ability to truly see what goes on backstage and in those production meetings and to really see how theater could fit into my life, outside of acting.”

—Soa Andriamananjara
(teen director), quoted in *DC Theater Arts*

“I do theater because I've found it to be a way to explore and express emotions that I don't necessarily deal with in real life. I've also found that as someone who loves storytelling, theater is a beautiful and interactive way to share a multitude of stories and connect with a wide range of audiences, which I love.”

—Isabelle Jones (teen performer)

APRIL 10 - MAY 5, 2024

A JUMPING-OFF POINT

BY INDA CRAIG-GALVÁN

DIRECTED BY JADE KING CARROLL



“

PROVOCATIVE
AND
TOPICAL

—BROADWAY WORLD

”



“ENGROSSING AND FUNNY...
ENTERTAINMENT THAT SPEAKS TO
URGENT QUESTIONS.”

—THE WASHINGTON POST

THE THIRD ANNUAL NATIONAL CAPITAL NEW PLAY

Festival was anchored by the world premiere of *A Jumping-Off Point*, written by rising star playwright and screenwriter Inda Craig-Galván. This witty and thought-provoking new play examined complicated themes of authorship and authenticity. The questions explored in *A Jumping-Off Point*, such as “who gets to tell what kind of stories” and “when does inspiration cross over into plagiarism” made *A Jumping-Off Point* the latest in a long line of plays staged at Round House that are designed to prompt conversation and encourage empathy.

One of the key goals of the National Capital New Play Festival is to provide playwrights with the opportunity to revise and rewrite their scripts as they are being rehearsed, and *A Jumping-Off Point* evolved through several iterations during the rehearsal process. We were proud to present the very first staging of this play that has already had a subsequent production at the Jungle Theater in Minneapolis. Inda Craig-Galván is one of our commissioned playwrights, and we look forward to working with her again in the future!

||| *A Jumping-Off Point* was sponsored by Nan Beckley and Noreen Marcus & Jay Sushelsky and was supported in part by the National Endowment for the Arts. Additional support for the National Capital New Play Festival is provided by the Morgan Fund at Seattle Foundation.

“
PROVOKE(S)
LIVELY DISCUSSION
”

—MARYLAND THEATRE GUIDE



NATIONAL CAPITAL NEW PLAY FESTIVAL READING SERIES

A

N INTEGRAL PART OF
The National Capital New Play Festival is our series of developmental readings.

Audiences at these readings get a sneak peek at a play's journey to the stage, and playwrights get an opportunity to revise and hone their scripts. Hearing a new play aloud for the first time is exhilarating for both audiences and artists, and we were thrilled by the talent of the 2024 lineup of playwrights who presented their latest work as part of the festival. We were equally thrilled by the success and popularity of this year's developmental readings series: the 2024 readings had the highest audience demand in the Festival's history, with several of the readings selling out almost instantly.





ARAB SPRING by Denmo Ibrahim is a dark comedy about two grown siblings who must make their peace with each other and with their recently deceased, estranged father as they prepare for his funeral.



AGAPE; OR THE CHURCH PLAY by Agyeiwaa Asante follows a group of young women in an international church as they navigate the overlapping pressures of friendship, faith, and adulthood. This new play was both written by a native Marylander and is set in Maryland!



THE PRIME by Dani Stoller is a biting and bloody story of women's rage—and redemption—as a surgeon hits the glass ceiling and must decide what to do about it. We were thrilled to work with Dani Stoller again after she penned *Girlhood*, the 2023 Sarah Metzger Memorial Play for our Teen Performance Company.



THE SORCERER'S APPRENTICE by Dendy and Aaron Posner explores Dendy's own history with magic and our collective fascination with the art—with more than a few jaw-dropping tricks along the way. This new project united Dendy and Aaron Posner after their smash collaboration with Round House's 2022 production of *The Tempest*.

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

MAY 29 - JUNE 30, 2024

TOPDOG/UNDERDOG

BY SUZAN-LORI PARKS

DIRECTED BY JAMIL JUDE

“

**THEATRICAL EXCELLENCE
AT ITS BEST**

—MARYLAND THEATRE GUIDE

”

“

A **RAW** AND
AFFECTING
MASTERPIECE

—BROADWAY WORLD

”

“

SERIOUSLY ENTERTAINING...
SUZAN-LORI PARKS'S PULITZER-WINNING PLAY
MAY NEVER HAVE BEEN MORE
GUT-BUSTING COMEDIC
..... NOR MORE
GUT-PUNCHING TRAGIC.

—DC THEATER ARTS

”



“**CONFIDENT...NIMBLE** AND
ENTRANCING...
HARVEST[S] EVERY NOTE OF HUMOR AND PATHOS FROM
PARKS’S IMMORTAL SCRIPT.”

—THE WASHINGTON POST

ROUND HOUSE CONCLUDED OUR 2023-2024 SEASON

with the Tony Award- and Pulitzer Prize-winning *Topdog/Underdog*, written by Suzan-Lori Parks. This modern American classic, directed by Jamil Jude, explores the lives of two brothers who are bound together by their names, blood, and shared destiny. Named the best American play written in the past 30 years by *The New York Times* and recipient of the 2023 Tony Award for Best Revival of a Play, *Topdog/Underdog* asks whether we can ever really change the cards we’re dealt as the brothers’ tug-of-war for dominance builds to devastating, life-changing consequences.

Performed by a stellar two-hander cast starring Ro Boddie and Yao Dogbe, this season closer magnified Round House’s ongoing mission to champion artists of color and welcome diverse theatregoers into its artistic spaces. The production received favorable reviews from audiences and critics, most notably from *The Washington Post*, which raved that the production was “anchored by nimble and entrancing performances” and “hits with a force of a bullet.” *The Washington Post* also included the production in a follow-up article as one of the “6 D.C.-Area Plays and Musicals You Should See Right Now.”

A memorable community engagement highlight of this production was the Black Out Night performance, presented on the evening of the Juneteenth holiday. This event was amplified in an extensive *Washington City Paper* article, “Why Black Out Nights Matter,” written by Jared Strange, which thoroughly explored the deeper context behind the importance of welcoming all-Black audiences and hosting affinity nights that celebrate other marginalized communities. The story included interviews from Director Jamil Jude, actors Ro Boddie and Yao Dogbe, and Artistic and Dramaturgical Advisor Naysan Mojtani.

To end the season on a positive note, *Topdog/Underdog* performances were extended an extra week due to popular demand, and the play was recognized as a Helen Hayes Awards Recommended production.

≡ *Topdog/Underdog* was sponsored by Mitch & Heidi Dupler and Dan Kaplan & Kay Richman.



EDUCATION

AT Round House Theatre, we believe everyone is an artist and encourage them to explore all aspects of theatre—acting, movement, design, and play creation. Students of all ages and backgrounds can experience the joy of creating and sharing theatre in programs that inspire creativity, exercise imaginations, and promote artistic risk-taking. We challenge our students to develop their own artistic voices and give them a platform to tell their stories on our stage.

SUMMER CAMP

Round House Theatre Education began the fiscal year with a great summer, offering nine weeks of in-person summer camps to over 600 registrants ranging from age four to 18 across three Round House spaces.

Our popular **DESTINATIONS** program (grades K–3) met for week-long sessions at the Round House Education Center. Students used their imaginations to travel to destinations as varied as Wakanda, an enchanted forest, and Jurassic Park.

PLAYMAKERS (grades 4–6) held two different kinds of sessions in both Bethesda and Silver Spring. Our Playmakers On-Stage campers wrote, designed, and rehearsed a live production. Playmakers On-Film offered students the chance to create, write, design, and shoot a film.

The Round House **TEEN INSTITUTE** (grades 6–12) covered a variety of more specialized topics in theatre, including Musical Theatre, Filmmaking, Improvisation, and Stand-Up. Teen Institute focuses on developing the individual voices and artistry of teen theatre makers by bringing teens together with professional artists who are also outstanding teachers.

In addition, our summer programs bring interns and teen educators into our buildings to support our teaching artists and learn about the art of teaching theatre. In the summer of 2023, we were joined by 18 teen educators and seven college interns. We also hosted our first Summer RISE student through a partnership with Montgomery County Public Schools.

"I just wanted to thank all of you so much for the amazing program. My son loved every minute and was so proud of the result. Along the way, I'd ask him: Who wrote the script?; Who stars in the film?; Who directed it?; Who's idea was it? To which Sam would always answer, 'ALL of us!' I just think it's amazing how well you facilitate a group process whereby participants of such a diverse team feel they contributed equally, and that the outcome was truly a collaborative effort...You all are so good at what you do."

—PARENT, PLAYMAKERS ON-FILM

"*Riffing on Shakespeare* was fantastic! Round House camp always 'comes home' with [my child]...but he brought this one home more than any other. In fact, last night he said, 'I'm so into Shakespeare now.' It was such a fun performance with such commitment from everyone."

—PARENT, PLAYMAKERS ON-STAGE



ON-SITE CLASSES AND DAYS OFF!

Weekends brought young students to the education center for various classes, from pre-K students exploring their creativity by learning to use their bodies to portray animals, to middle school students trusting their instincts and finding their voices through improvisation.

Our **YOUNG ARTISTS PERFORMANCE COMPANY** (YAPC), which is designed to introduce students to the rehearsal and performance process, presented *The Day the Internet Died* written by Ian McWethy and Jason Pizzarello.

ADULTS continued to take classes with some of Round House's favorite teaching artists, including stage combat with Casey Kaleba of Tooth and Claw Combat Arts and Kevin Corbett, formerly of the Capitol Steps and now of Capitol Fools.

150 students joined us for our **DAYS OFF!** Program which brought students to the education center when Montgomery County schools were closed.



AFTER-SCHOOL CLASSES AND PRODUCTION RESIDENCIES

Round House teaching artists taught **AFTER-SCHOOL RESIDENCIES** to approximately 344 students in their own schools. During the 2023-2024 Season, we taught 29 classes in 11 schools such as East Silver Spring, Somerset, Rock Creek Forest, and Westbrook Elementary Schools. We were invited to partner with Montgomery County Public Schools to provide 25 weeks of programming to third grade students at New Hampshire Estates.

Our **PRODUCTION RESIDENCY PROGRAM** worked with more than 100 students in two schools to produce shows including *Dreamworks' Madagascar—A Musical Adventure Jr.* at Westland Middle School and Disney's *Finding Nemo Jr.* at Cabin John Middle School.



"I wanted to thank you for all the work you did to create a spectacular show of *Finding Nemo Jr.* at CJMS! Everything was greatly organized and you can tell all the students had a great time... My son loved being Gil and learned so much from the entire process of working with you."

—CABIN JOHN MIDDLE SCHOOL PARENT

"It was a fantastic show, and I am sure the mission is impossible without your guidance... As parents, we appreciate your counsel, effort, and influence on our children's interests."

—CABIN JOHN MIDDLE SCHOOL PARENT

"Thank you so much for an inspiring, fun, and memorable theatre experience. Our daughter was excited every day to attend rehearsal and is now very sad it's all over. As a parent, I appreciated the all-inclusive manner in which you involved everyone (whether they had a big or small role) and the skills that your talented team of professionals imparted on our children. It was a wonderful experience and the performance was super!"

—WESTLAND MIDDLE SCHOOL PARENT





TEEN NIGHTS AND FREE PLAY

Our **TEEN NIGHTS** invite teens to join us for pizza, a pre-show discussion, and a performance of one of our shows. In the 2023-2024 Season, we hosted over 200 teens at these special events. Over 2,000 high school and college students attended Round House productions at regular performances at no cost through our **FREE PLAY** program.

“Such an inspiring performance and discussion! Can't wait to seminar with my students in class tomorrow.”

—DANIELLE FEIST, WASHINGTON LATIN PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL

“I was thrilled to watch all of you with teenagers. You are the only ones who seem able to NOT talk down to the students. Thank you for the remarkable gift of free attendance at any time. Thank you for your commitment to this age group.”

—DIANA SMITH, WASHINGTON LATIN PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL

“[*The Mountaintop*] made me think about the effect Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. had on the modern world and how he influenced other people to continue what he started”

—STUDENT, BETHESDA-CHEVY CHASE HIGH SCHOOL

STUDENT MATINEES

Round House continued its long tradition of offering outstanding theatrical experiences to high school students through our **STUDENT MATINEE PROGRAM** which hosted over 1,000 students from 16 schools at our student matinees.



ENOUGH! PLAYS TO END GUN VIOLENCE READINGS

In November of 2023, members of the Teen Performance Company were invited to perform *No Prospering Weapons* by Justin Cameron Washington at the Enough! Plays to End Gun Violence national kick-off event at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. Our partnership with Enough! continued and Teen Performance Company member Noah Green later performed *Ghost Gun* by Olivia Ridley at the Olney Theatre Center and the D.C. Office of Neighborhood Safety and Engagement event, “Building Resilience: A Trauma-Informed Approach to Healing.”

EQUITY, DIVERSITY, INCLUSION, AND ACCESSIBILITY AT ROUND HOUSE

Round House reaffirmed its commitment to Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Accessibility in the 2023-2024 Season by integrating these values on stage, in our offices, and across all aspects of our organization. As a Theatre for Everyone, we take pride in our behind-the-scenes efforts to make our spaces inclusive for all.

On Juneteenth, we hosted a Black Out Night and welcomed 130 patrons to *Topdog/Underdog* for a fantastic event on an important day.

We collaborated with Accessibility and Inclusion Consultant Diane Nutting to further assess future improvements to Round House's accessibility plan.

Our employee work group has thoroughly revised and updated our current EDIA trainings for full-time staff and artists. These enhanced trainings now include expanded content on neurodivergence, gender identity, people with disabilities, self-care, colorism, and other critical topics.

As a part of the National Capital New Play Festival, Round House proudly presented the world premiere of *A Jumping-Off Point* by Inda Craig-Galván this past April. This production is just one in our most recent season that upholds Round House's commitment to

presenting a season with work by women, trans or nonbinary people, or playwrights of other marginalized gender identities.

Round House gave away 2,158 free and discounted tickets for high school and college students this past season as a part of our Free Play program, opening doors and breaking down barriers for the younger generation to experience the magic of storytelling.

This season alone, we donated an additional 853 tickets to community organizations and partner nonprofits throughout the region through our program On the House. On the House allows us to educate our patrons about the tangible ways they can get involved in our community and take action on the important messages shared in *Next to Normal*, *The Seafarer*, and the other productions in our season.

Have a question or suggestion for improving EDIA at Round House? We want to hear from you! Email EDIA@RoundHouseTheatre.org to connect with a member of our employee work group and help us continue to improve our spaces.

DONOR EVENTS

During the 2023-2024 Season, Round House donors enjoyed an array of opportunities to go behind-the-scenes of the artistic process, meet our talented artists, and discover how the magic of theatre happens. Visit RoundHouseTheatre.org/InnerCircle to learn more about our exciting donor benefits and events.



INSIDE LOOKS

Inside Looks are our most popular donor event. These conversations with playwrights, directors, actors, and creative teams take place early in each show's rehearsal period. Led by Artistic Director Ryan Rilette, Inside Looks offer an opportunity for Round House supporters to gain a deeper understanding of each play and how it is brought to the stage. Donors hear from the cast about how they create their characters, learn the inspirations and research behind the design elements, and gain insight into the director's artistic vision. Each Inside Look concludes with a catered reception in the Round House lobby and the chance to talk with the artists.



OPENING NIGHTS

Round House Opening Nights celebrate the hard work of the cast and creative team and offer Leadership Circle donors the opportunity to experience one of the first public performances along with local theatre critics, elected officials, Round House artists, and other special guests. Leadership Circle donors enjoy a VIP reception in the lobby and post-show dessert receptions, featuring cast and crew members.



BACKSTAGE TOURS AND TECHNICAL REHEARSAL

Technical Rehearsals are a highlight of Round House's behind-the-scenes events. During the 2023-2024 Season, guests were invited to a technical rehearsal of *Next to Normal*, which featured innovative uses of video and projection technology to build on stunning musical performances.

Backstage Tours happen once or twice during the year, showcasing productions that offer unique stage or production design. In spring 2024, guests learned about how Round House used a turntable stage and an efficient backstage plot to make the quick changes in our production of *A Jumping-Off Point* possible.

BROADWAY IN BETHESDA GALA

On May 11, 2024, Round House held its annual *Broadway in Bethesda* Gala featuring Tony Award-winner Brian Stokes Mitchell. New this year was a special performance of Stephen Sondheim's "Our Time," featuring Round House Artists Sophia Early and Emma Wallach with members of the Teen Performance Company (TPC), and spoken remarks from TPC Alumni Noah Green, Lila Rachel Becker (now a professional director based in New York), and EmmaLou Joy (now a Round House Theatre teaching artist). Thanks to generous sponsors and supporters, Round House raised more than \$311,000 in support of Round House artistic and education programs, including our Theatre for Everyone initiative. This initiative allows us to build a sustainable foundation for more than 20 programs that bring a wide range of stories to our stage and classrooms, a broad array of artists and students to our theatre, and a diverse audience into our seats, to create a sustainable theatre of tomorrow. The evening was catered by Susan Gage Caterers with stunning florals by Chevy Chase Florist.



LONDON TOUR

In October 2023, for the second year in a row, Round House Theatre held two simultaneous weeks of our popular annual London Tour. Guests took in almost a dozen productions, including *Death of England: Closing Time*, *As You Like It* at The Globe Theatre, and a new immersive production of *Guys and Dolls*. In addition to tours of The Royal Albert Hall, the Cortauld Gallery, and the Theatre Royal at Drury Lane, guests were treated to discussions of London theatre by critics from *The Guardian* as well as artists involved in *As You Like It* and *Hamnet*. Each week's participants enjoyed a special treat this year—the first week's guests finished their tour with a farewell dinner on a boat, and the second week's guests had a completely private tour of the National Portrait Gallery after it closed for the day. As always, following each performance, Artistic Director Ryan Rilette and Managing Director Ed Zakreski hosted a post-show discussion in a private apartment at our hotel: a highlight of each day and the entire trip.

Linda J. Ravdin, one of our regular travelers, writes, "Samuel Johnson (1709–1784) once said when you're tired of London, you're tired of life. I, for one, will never get tired of London. Don and I have gone on all of the Round House London trips, and we have loved every one of them. There's nothing more fun than going to the theatre with a group of other theatre lovers. And then hanging out after the play, having a little snack and something to drink, and talking about what we just saw. And let's not forget the fantastic food, the history, the culture, and the friendly Brits. Round House has consistently put together a fantastic trip with a great mix of plays and interesting excursions. We can't wait for the next one. Sign us up!"



COMMUNITY AMBASSADORS



Round House's Community Ambassadors program is vital to our community outreach efforts. Formerly known as the Patron Development Committee, its new name better reflects the role that these volunteers play in bringing new people to Round House and deepening our relationship with current patrons, including donors, subscribers, single ticket buyers, and education program participants.

In addition to raising Round House's profile on social media, sharing information about our shows and programs with their personal networks, and thanking donors following our significant fundraising campaigns, our Community Ambassadors support our community outreach events, such as the successful Holiday Bazaar in November 2023. Visitors to the Bazaar were welcomed by our Community Ambassadors, who shared information about the event and about Round House Theatre. Community Ambassadors also helped us to have one of the most popular activity booths at the Bethesda Urban Partnership Winter Wonderland in December

2023, where they worked with Round House Education to staff the children's activity tables and engaged with adults to promote Round House Education programs and the 2023–2024 Season.

We plan to continue these efforts, as well as create new opportunities for our dedicated Community Ambassadors to share their love of Round House throughout the 2024–2025 Season.

—**DEBORAH ROGERS**, CHAIR, COMMUNITY
AMBASSADORS

FINANCIALS

The 2023-2024 Season demonstrated the breadth of challenges and the need for creative solutions that nonprofit theatres and other performing arts organizations still face as we continue to rebuild following the pandemic. Successful productions continued to be cut short by COVID-related cancelations as essential government pandemic relief trickled to an end. Co-productions and other partnerships helped buffer financial risk while enabling us to pursue ambitious new artistic feats, creating some of the most memorable Round House productions to date.

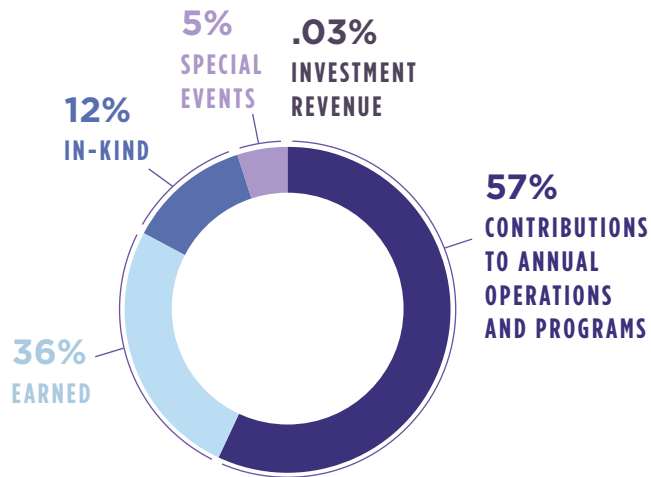
As we slowly began to recover from the most devastating financial impacts, we also started taking steps toward becoming a more streamlined, sustainable organization. An internal Business Model Task Force clarified how to best use both our financial and human resources to achieve our mission to be a theatre for everyone. We made strategic investments to strengthen our financial future, including the purchase of artist housing near our rehearsal space in downtown Silver Spring, made possible by a generous capital grant from the State of Maryland. This marks the first time in our organization's history that Round House has owned a long-term asset that will continue to appreciate in the years to come. As we plan for future seasons, we will continue to incorporate lessons learned from the past few years to strengthen Round House and our community.



FISCAL YEAR 2024 (JUL 1, 2023 - JUN 30, 2024)

REVENUE AND SUPPORT

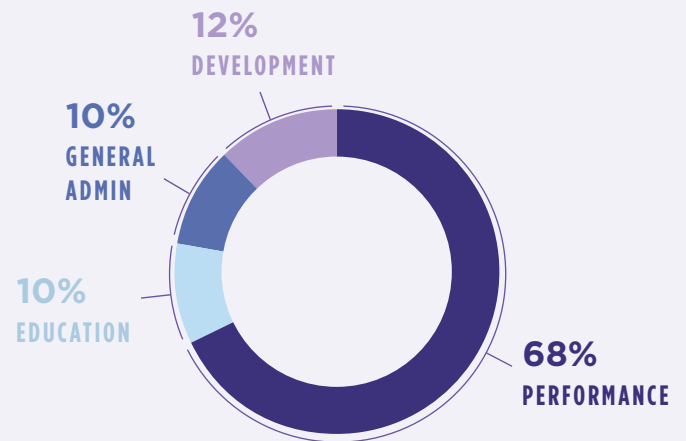
Earned Revenue (tickets, tuition, concessions, rental)	\$	2,430,231
Grants and Contributions	\$	5,412,266
Special Events	\$	505,118
In-kind	\$	1,116,849
Investment Revenue	\$	3,634
TOTAL	\$	9,468,098



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	\$	6,387,350
Education	\$	906,383
General and Admin	\$	889,760
Development	\$	1,152,374
TOTAL	\$	9,335,867



Our artistic and educational programming accounts for 78 percent of our total expenses.

+\$132,231

UNRESTRICTED CHANGE IN NET ASSETS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2024

(as of June 30, 2024)

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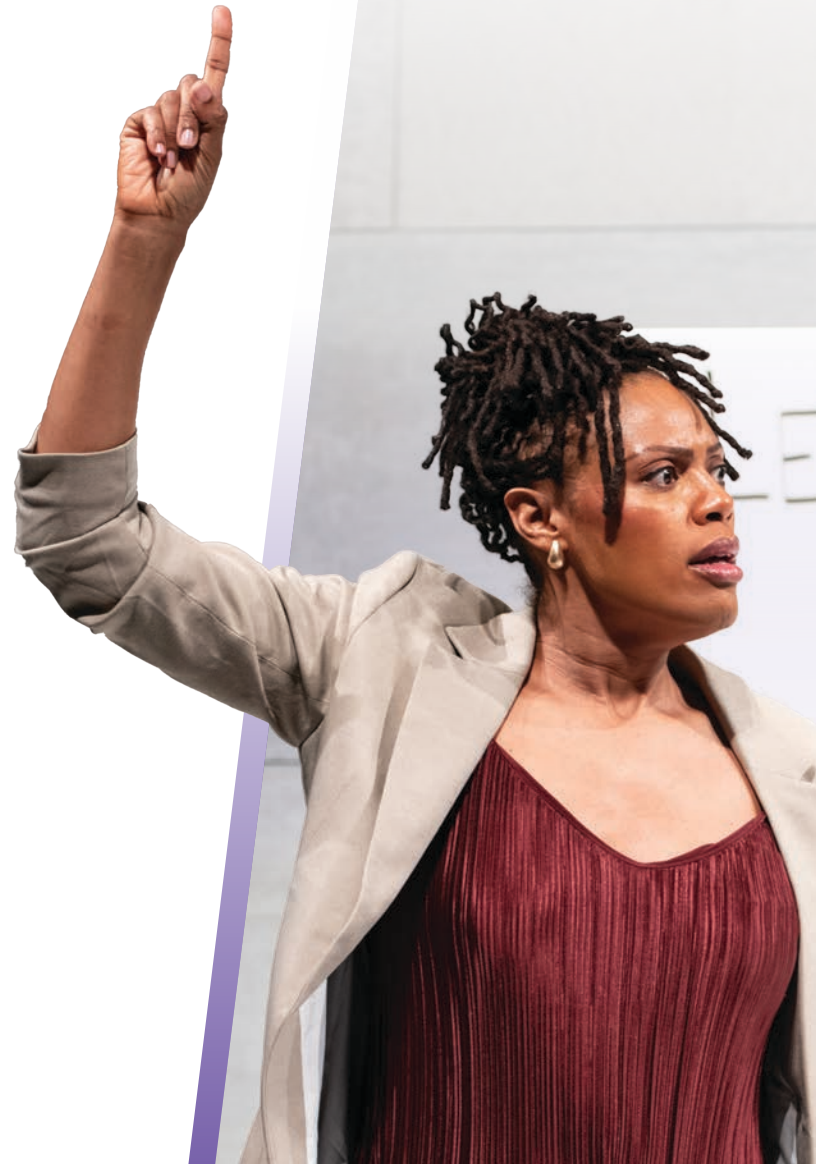
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Ryan Rilette
Managing Director:
Ed Zakreski

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Tim Conley
Associate General Manager:
Carter Rice*
Facilities Manager:
Liz Sena
Executive Assistant & Board
Liaison: Amy Benson

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Associate Artistic Director:
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Casting Director & Associate
Producer: Sarah Cooney

DEVELOPMENT

Director of Development:
Michael Barret Jones
Associate Director
of Development:
Katelyn Maurer
Development Operations
Manager: Patrick Joy
Development Associate:
Natalie Cumming

EDUCATION

Director of Education:
Danisha Crosby
Education Program Manager:
Emily Lettau
Education Apprentice:
Lila Cooper
Education Patrons Services
Manager:
Dillon Mitcham
Lead Teaching Artists
Ian Anthony Coleman
Kelsey Hall

Faculty:

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Madlynn Bard
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Assistant Production
Manager/Company
Manager: Sara Patterson
Technical Director:
Matt Saxton
Assistant Technical Director:
Jose Abraham*
Audio / Visual Supervisor:
Delaney Bray
Costume Shop Manager:
Taylor S. Payne
Scenic Charge:
Jenny Cockerham
Lead Carpenter:
Shaun Bartlow
Staff Carpenter: Colin Maher
Resident Stage Manager:
Che Wernsman

DONOR SUPPORT

(as of June 30, 2024)

We gratefully acknowledge the following donors who support the work of our 2023-2024 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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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.

Artist Housing at Round House Theatre is provided by major contributions from the Melissa Blake Rowny Fund for Artistic Development and the State of Maryland.

PHOTO CREDITS

COVER: Photo of the cast of *Next to Normal* by Margot Schulman Photography.

SEASON HIGHLIGHTS: Photo of Yao Dogbe (Booth) in *Topdog/Underdog* by Margot Schulman Photography; photo of Tracy Lynn Olivera (Diana) in *Next to Normal* by Margot Schulman Photography; photo of Renea S. Brown (Camae) in *The Mountaintop* by Margot Schulman Photography; photo of Summer Camp students.

MISSION AND VALUES: Photo of Renea S. Brown (Camae) and Ro Boddie (Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.) in *The Mountaintop* by Margot Schulman Photography; photo of *Next to Normal* student matinee talkback.

INK: Photo of the cast of *Ink* by Margot Schulman Photography.

THE MOUNTAINTOP: Photo of Renea S. Brown (Camae) and Ro Boddie (Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.) in *The Mountaintop* by Margot Schulman Photography.

THE SEAFARER: Photo of the cast of *The Seafarer* by Margot Schulman Photography.

NEXT TO NORMAL: Photo of the cast of *Next to Normal* by Margot Schulman Photography.

TEEN TAKEOVER WEEKEND: Photo of the cast of *Spring Break* by Danisha Crosby.

A JUMPING-OFF POINT: Photo of Nikkole Salter (Leslie) and Danny Gavigan (Andrew) in *A Jumping-Off Point* by Margot Schulman Photography.

DEVELOPMENTAL READINGS: Photo of the cast of *Agape, or The Church Play*; photo of Dendy, Aaron Posner, and Associate Artistic Director Naysan Moigani in audience talkback; photo of playwright Dani Stoller and Naysan Moigani in audience talkback; photo of Ahmad Kamal and Dina Soltan in reading of *Arab Spring*; photo of Gislaine Hoyah, Toni Avonne, and Awa Sal Secka in reading of *Agape, or The Church Play*; photo of Tessa Klein and Vincent Michael in reading of *The Prime*; photo of Dendy and audience member Oliver Benson in reading of *The Sorcerer's Apprentice*. All photos by Susan Gibson

TOPDOG/UNDERDOG: Photo of Yao Dogbe (Booth) and Ro Boddie (Lincoln) in *Topdog/Underdog* by Margot Schulman Photography.

EDUCATION: All photos of Round House students by Danisha Crosby. Photo of *Next to Normal* student matinee talkback and *No Prospering Weapons* performance by Danisha Crosby.

DONOR EVENTS: Photos of the cast of *Next to Normal* and the cast of *The Mountaintop* at Inside Looks by Kent Kondo; Photo of Ryan Rilette, Jay Hammer, Robin Hammer, Marth Dippell, and Danny Korengold by Cameron Whitman Photography; photo of the *A Jumping-Off Point* backstage tour.

BROADWAY IN BETHESDA GALA: Photo of Brian Stokes Mitchell; photo of Mark & Merrill Shugoll, Brian Stokes Mitchell, Sheryl Rosenthal, and Marty Bell; photo of Sophia Early and Emma Wallach; photo of Congressman Jamie Raskin. All Photos by Cameron Whitman Photography.

LONDON TOUR: Photos of London Tour attendees by Amy Benson.

FINANCIALS: Photo of Yao Dogbe (Booth) in *Topdog/Underdog* by Margot Schulman Photography.

2023-2024 TRUSTEES AND STAFF: Photo of Nikkole Salter (Leslie) in *A Jumping-Off Point* by Margot Schulman Photography.

PHOTO CREDITS: Photo of Cody Nickell (Larry Lamb) and Andrew Rein (Rupert Murdoch) in *Ink* by Margot Schulman Photography.



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