

# ANNUAL REPORT

## 2016-17 SEASON

### THIS SEASON BY THE NUMBERS

Total main stage attendance: **136,360**.

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Number of students and youth reached by all Playhouse programs: 64,076 (a 12% increase from 2015-16).

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Scripps Howard Foundation Class Act! pre- or post-show workshop participation: 12,972 students (a remarkable 89% increase over 2015-16) at 61 schools.

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Number of subscribers: 12,722, the highest of any nonprofit regional theatre in Ohio, Kentucky, or Indiana.

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Attendance at Off the Hill, a series of high-quality outreach performances brought to audiences in their own neighborhoods: 3,843 people (a 20% increase over 2015-16) at 44 community venues .

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The most single and group tickets sold in 17 seasons.

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And ... Our 25th consecutive season with an operating surplus.





## ARTISTICALLY BOLD

Your support allowed us to stage **bold, thought-provoking works** that challenged audience and artist alike. Because Ayad Akhtar's Pulitzer Prize-winning *Disgraced* dealt with sensitive issues including racism, terrorism, and patriotism, the Playhouse, in cooperation with the Islamic Center of Greater Cincinnati and the Bridges of Faith Triologue, held a post-show dialogue after every performance, as well as two Monday night panel discussions. This season also featured a **classic with a contemporary twist**: a stark, modern set design and the use of color-conscious casting in Polly Teale's adaptation of *Jane Eyre*. And we continued to bring you **compelling world premieres by female playwrights**: *Summerland* by Arlitia Jones and *All the Roads Home* by Jen Silverman.



## WILDLY ENTERTAINING

Thanks to you, **audiences delighted in immensely popular shows** on our main stages. *Little Shop of Horrors* brought great music, a campy but touching story, and a giant man-eating plant to the Marx Theatre. Patrons laughed along with the wit and wisdom of America's most popular mother in *Erma Bombeck: At Wit's End*. And in Ken Ludwig's *Baskerville: A Sherlock Holmes Mystery*, five actors played 37 different roles to bring to life this wickedly funny tour-de-force retelling of the classic tale.

# IMMERSIVE EXPERIENCES

The year-long Playhouse Education Partnership (PEP) program brought the magic of live theatre to 1,374 students at three Cincinnati Public Schools – Midway Elementary, Silverton Paideia Academy, and Rothenberg Preparatory Academy – who have little or no access to arts experiences. **These free residencies helped students developed 21st century skills such as goal setting, teamwork, perseverance, creativity, and public speaking**, and helped to set the stage for their future success. Ronald, a first year participant at Midway Elementary, is one such example:



At first, he was resistant to performing in any way. Over the course of the residency, Ronald gradually began to open up to it. After seeing a student matinee of *A Christmas Carol* at the Playhouse, Ronald said, “I’m gonna be on that stage someday!” He auditioned for the school’s spring musical and got a role in the show. In just one year of PEP, Ronald went from a boy who wouldn’t even perform in front of his own class to an excited and engaged young man who willingly performed in front of the whole school. **Thank you for changing the lives of young people like Ronald throughout the Tristate!**

# MOMENTS OF CONNECTION

This year, the Playhouse launched an innovative engagement effort for young professionals (YPs) and recent college graduates, entitled *Off the Grid*. Interactive theatrical experiences at local bars reflected the current interests and activities of YPs, including slam storytelling competitions, lip sync battles, and live action role playing (LARP) sessions of favorite science fiction TV shows like *Dr. Who* and *Star Trek*. This brought **fresh and interactive programming** to young professionals where they socialized already; in its first year, 668 college students and YPs participated in the program. Thank you for helping us create unique and exciting theatrical experiences for all ages!



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# A NOTE FROM BLAKE AND BUZZ



Looking back at the 2016-17 season, we are proud to have brought you a wide variety of theatre that upholds our programmatic vision for the Playhouse: shows that reflect everyone in our community, new work, and productions that kids and adults can enjoy together.

From the powerful *Jitney* to the playful Ken Ludwig's *Baskerville*, to two exciting world premieres, beloved classics like *Jane Eyre*, and uproariously funny musicals like *Little Shop of Horrors*, we have achieved this and more.

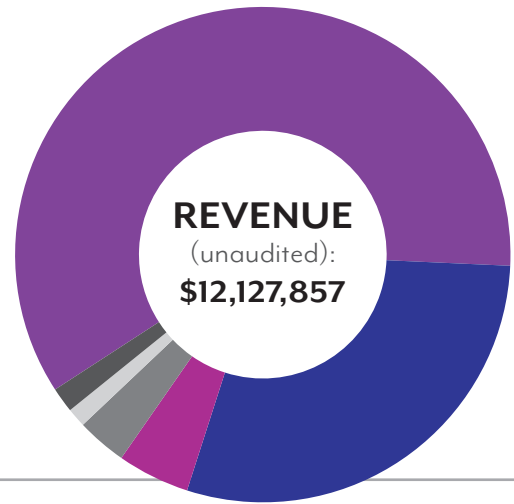
We have also expanded our engagement with young audiences and to neighborhoods across the Tristate region. Our Board of Trustees is hard at work, having approved a capital campaign to bring you even closer to the action through a new, intimate mainstage theatre. And for the 25th year, we ended the season "in the black."

**We couldn't do any of it without you**, our donors, sponsors, local foundations, ArtsWave and its contributors, subscribers, and single ticket buyers. **A heartfelt thank you to each of you for your loyalty and support.**

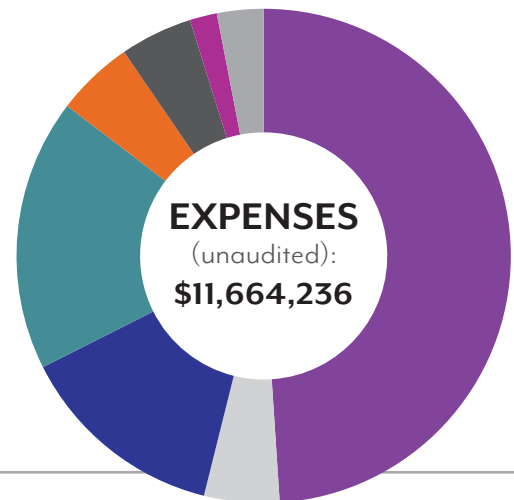
We look forward to seeing you in next season!

**Blake Robison**  
Artistic Director

**Buzz Ward**  
Managing Director



- Ticket Sales **59.9%**
- Contributions & Sponsorships **29.2%**
- Concessions **4.7%**
- Endowment **3.3%**
- Education/Outreach **1.3%**
- Other Earned **1.6%**



- Artistic & Production **49.0%**
- Education/Outreach **4.9%**
- Administrative **13.7%**
- Marketing **17.8%**
- Building & Grounds **5.1%**
- Fundraising **4.7%**
- Concessions **1.8%**
- Capital Investments & Special Projects **3.0%**

THANK YOU TO ALL OF OUR DONORS, INCLUDING:



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