

Excellence in the Arts : Entry # 141

Is your organization a 501(c)3 nonprofit?

Yes

According to your 501(c)3 letter, in what town is your official office located?

Hartford

Where will your project be performed or exhibited?

Hartford

Will this activity occur after August 1, 2023?

Yes

Are you a recent grantee?

Yes

Enter your Report Code

749792-Roberts2020

Organization Name

TheaterWorks Hartford

Organization's IRS Tax ID #

061172413

Principal Contact Name

Dina Silva

Title

Director of Development

Email

dina@twhartford.org

Phone

(860) 986-7457

Address

233 Pearl Street
Hartford, Connecticut 06103
United States
[Map It](#)

Website

<http://www.twhartford.org>

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Amount requested this application

\$25,000.00

What is the organization's mission/vision statement?

TheaterWorks Hartford's mission is to produce high quality contemporary theater that is relevant to our audiences, engages a diverse community, and provides insight into the human experience.

Provide a brief history of your organization and its activities.

Founded in 1985, TheaterWorks Hartford (TWH) was established for the purpose of providing the Metro Hartford region with Off-Broadway style professional theater. The company's artistic quality and record of achievement are embodied in its history of growth and accomplishment. TWH's success is further attributable to the specific, clearly defined vision that has shaped the organization, as well as an overall dedication to the highest achievable standards of artistic excellence. With the onset of the pandemic and a season of virtual programming, TWH created the WORKshop productions - a series of developmental projects by BIPOC artists that further solidified our commitment to new, diverse voices and expanded our reach and impact considerably. This season we are continuing to present WORKshop projects while we also return to live, in person productions.

Since its inception, TheaterWorks has produced a unique repertory reflecting the company's commitment to addressing a broad variety of issues with relevance for the community that it serves. Guided by a persuasive sense of artistic mission and strong professional management, TheaterWorks has, to-date, produced over 150 major plays, and currently presents 225 performances each season. TheaterWorks has also had their hand in developing new works, including sending shows to Broadway, off-Broadway and to other regional theaters around the country. Pre-pandemic, the company had an audience base of more than 5,000 subscribers and total individual attendances of approximately 36,000. This past year, we had 2,800 members and 36,295 individual attendances virtually and in person.

Describe the demographics of your audience/people served by your activities.

Our audience is made up of subscribers/members, single ticket buyers, and folk that receive tickets through our Education and Outreach Programs. Of our audience of 36,000, 91% live in the Greater Hartford region, 6% live in Connecticut, and 3% come from out of state. Ethnic composition is 72% white; 10% African-American; 12% Latino; 6% Asian. Median age is 48; gender composition is 66% female, 34% male. Producing virtually enabled us to reach audiences in 49 states, as well as abroad.

Describe your organization's governance.

Despite its small size (18), the Board is effective and committed. It is comprised of a diverse group of civic-minded individuals that care about the theater and the community. All Board members support the theater financially, with in-kind services and as subscribers. Current average tenure for board members is 8 years; average meeting attendance is 85%. Board committees include an Executive, Finance, Governance, Development, Marketing and Facilities. Ad hoc committees are formed as needed.

Describe the diversity of your board.

TheaterWorks is committed to DEI work and is working to be a model antiracist organization. The company prides itself on the diversity of its board across all demographics: race, ethnicity, gender, age, sexual orientation and socioeconomic status. Of the 18 members, 2 are Asian, 2 are African American and 1 is Latina (28% BIPOC), with 8 (44%) females. In the past year, we have added a number of BIPOC staff members increasing our percentage of BIPOC staff to 25% from 10% a couple of years ago.

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What percentage of your board makes personal financial contributions to your organization?

95% of the board makes cash donations each year. The one board member who doesn't contribute cash provides in-kind graphic design services, which are valued at more than \$25,000 annually.

Project Name

Zoey's Perfect Wedding

Project Description

TheaterWorks requests funding from The Roberts Foundation to support the production of ZOEY'S PERFECT WEDDING, by Matthew López and directed by Rob Ruggiero. An east coast premiere, the show is scheduled to run live in the theater from May 3 - June 5, 2022. An archival recording of the production will be available for virtual streaming.

The Story

Saying "I do" was the easy part. From the Tony-winning playwright, ZOEY'S PERFECT WEDDING is a hilarious commentary on commitment and it is every bride's worst nightmare. Disaster after disaster follow her down the aisle, from brutally honest boozy speeches to a totally incompetent wedding planner and friends too preoccupied to help with the wreckage around them. A wildly funny play about love, relationship, expectations, and the courage it takes to find what truly makes us happy.

Total estimated project budget

\$199,232.00

Project start/opening

04/04/2022

Project end/closing

06/05/2022

Project venue

TheaterWorks Hartford

Project town

Hartford

Admission fees, attendance, and activity details

TWH is offering both subscriptions and memberships, as well as single ticket sales. Our goals for the season are 3,000 and 1,000, respectfully. Subscription range from \$190 to \$255. There is a \$750 Pay it Forward Subscription that covers the costs of free tickets to students and libraries. A membership is \$95. Single tickets range from \$35 to \$70 and single streams are \$9.

The production is scheduled to run nearly 5 weeks potentially reaching 6,000 in-person viewers and many more streaming.

How do you intend to promote/market this project?

TheaterWorks has a solid track record of garnering publicity and critical reviews in all local outlets and national trade publications. Our season brochure is mailed to 14,000. For each production, TheaterWorks mails 14,000 postcards, distributes

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200 posters and 6,000 playbills. TheaterWorks eblasts 12,500 patrons 5x each during the run for a total of 75,000 impressions. Sponsors are prominently acknowledged on all marketing material.

How is your organization going to use Roberts funding?

Robert's funding will be used to cover actors and designers fees and lodging.

How will Roberts support be recognized?

The Roberts Foundation's logo will be prominently displayed on all printed marketing material, on the eblasts, on signage at the performance venue, on the theater's website and on the stream. The Foundation's support will also be acknowledge in the curtain speech before each performance.

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What is your organization's definition of artistic excellence?

TheaterWorks guiding directive is to deliver a consistently exceptional and cohesive artistic product. This directive begins with the theater's leadership in Rob Ruggiero. Rob has a firm grasp of who we are, the work we produce and what our audience expects. Rob has established an exceptionally high standard of perfection, which he achieves by working collaboratively with the industry's most talented playwrights, designers and actors. TheaterWorks is exceptional in that though its professional designation is for a small professional theater (Equity SPT -10), it pays artistic staff at the same Equity rates as larger theaters, such as Hartford Stage (LORT-B). This is an important strategic decision that allows us to hire the best, most talented actors, directors and designers. TheaterWorks' productions consistently uphold this directive by presenting stellar casts and the most accomplished artistic and production teams to audiences from the greater Hartford area.

How does this project align with that definition, and how does it advance your mission?

ZOEY'S PERFECT WEDDING squarely aligns with the company's vision of artistic excellence and its mission to produce high quality, contemporary theater that is relevant to our audiences, engages a diverse community, and provides insight into the human experience. Under Rob's direction the show will have exacting production values, exceptionally talented actors, and strong community connections as it will surely provide new insights and new understandings of the world around us.

How will your audience and the community benefit from this project?

TheaterWorks commitment to the presentation of a diversified repertory has forged a profound relationship with a broad community. This, in turn, enables the theater to advance its unique artistic vision and ensure its ability to make bold artistic choices that have relevance for the entire spectrum of our region's cultural composition.

TheaterWorks believes that excellence in theater combines complex meaning, provides new insights and new understandings of the world around us and is relevant to all. An excellent theatrical experience can help us make sense of our place in the world, ask questions, understand answers and appreciate things we may have never before experienced.

How will this project be evaluated?

Audience make-up and development are quantified through daily reporting procedures. TheaterWorks has a unique house management style and reservation system (we know our patrons by name), which makes it possible for the theater to build its audience, one by one, relationship by relationship.

Specifically, we count house size, seats sold and the number of performances. We also count subscribers, actual attending versus total patron base. Our goal is to fill houses at an average of 70% capacity, which is lower than usual due to lingering

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fears of COVID transmission among patrons.

TheaterWorks conducts post show audience surveys via email. At the end of the run, TheaterWorks will be able to report on what the audiences thought of the production and the theater. Other criteria for gauging success include critical review, single tickets sales including sales to new audience members, meeting outreach and education goals, as well as meeting artistic standards.

Cover letter

- [TheaterWorks-Application-Cover-Letter.pdf](#)

Board list

- [TWH-Board-Contact-List-10.21.pdf](#)

IRS 501(c)3 determination letter

- [TheaterWorks-Federal-Tax-Exempt-Letter-2018.pdf](#)

Financial statement

- [TheaterWorks-FY20-Audit.pdf](#)

Last year operational budget

- [TheaterWorks-FY21-Budget.pdf](#)

Current year operational budget

- [TWH-Budget-FY22-Ordinary-Income.pdf](#)

Balance sheet

- [TheaterWorks-Balance-Sheet.pdf](#)

Project budget

- [Roberts-Foundation-Zoey's-Perfect-Wedding-Budget.pdf](#)

Does your organization produce an annual report?

No

Annual report

- [ZOEYS-PERECT-WEDDING-Report-20222.pdf](#)

Has your organization adopted a strategic plan?

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Yes

Strategic plan

- [TheaterWorks-Strategic-Plan-Final-6.12.15.pdf](#)

Grant Report

- [TheaterWorks-Hartford-Grantee-Reporting-Form-2021.pdf](#)

Have you contacted the Executive Director by email or phone to discuss this proposal?

Yes

Is your cover letter signed by your senior executive? on your letterhead? with your official office address?

Yes