



2020-2021

REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY

DEAR FRIENDS

When we penned the letter for last fiscal year's Report to the Community, all performances were canceled for the foreseeable future, our stages were dark and our offices were quiet with most staff members on furlough or working from home. We knew live performances would return to Playhouse Square; we simply had no idea when.

But there were still students to serve, a construction project to finish, staffing challenges to face and updates to share. So we started working in a different way.

Although the pandemic limited our ability to be together in person, we persisted in our commitment to our not-for-profit mission, finding creative ways to continue serving our community – some of which will remain part of our long-term strategy.

In October 2020, we celebrated (safely) the completion and opening of The Lumen apartment tower which, as of this writing, is 94% leased. This project is an example of our not-for-profit mission and our long-term real estate strategy at work. In part, our mission calls for us to create an exciting destination and drive economic vitality in the region, and The Lumen certainly accomplishes both. Our real estate investment strategy helps to secure the future of our historic theaters and operations through a working endowment.

Our Education Department took a leadership role in working to create agreements with artists that would enable performances for young audiences to be presented virtually, keeping students connected to the arts even when they could not come to the theater in person. The department became its own production company, creating video workshops teachers could use to expand students' understanding of various topics and themes addressed by the shows. This included an entire series on Social Justice featuring *Jabari Dreams of Freedom*,

Rhapsody in Black and *Turning 15 on the Road to Freedom*, among other performances. And, through our partnership with Disney, we were able to share a free, streaming performance of *Newsies* with Cleveland Metropolitan School District grades 6-12.

We are proud to report that more than 90,000 students across the region participated in our virtual arts education programming during the 2020-21 fiscal year, and our work continues with great success.

In our position at the forefront of the performing arts industry with top-notch staff and facilities – not to mention our own hotel and in-house catering team plus world-class healthcare just down the street – Playhouse Square welcomed the cast and creative team of *An Officer and a Gentleman* for a three-week workshop in a “bubble” with strict COVID protocols in October 2020.

And over the summer, we hosted the creative team, cast and crew of *Jersey Boys*, along with a large film crew, for the film capture of the show starring Nick Jonas.

Although we may not have been able to see our beloved audiences in person, we made every effort to keep everyone abreast of the latest news and information about Playhouse Square and the performing arts industry...to the tune of 74 million emails sent and 8000 hours of content uploaded to our Vimeo and YouTube channels.

We are so grateful to the BWY in CLE family of 38,000 season ticket holders and the Broadway in Akron family of 1400 season ticket holders who patiently stood with us during the unprecedented year we experienced, and so happy to be seeing them in the theater again.

Thanks to decades of prudence and long-term planning, Playhouse Square was fortunate to be in a position of strength when the pandemic struck, but still we needed support from our community to emerge from our prolonged closure.

We thank every one of our donors who made a contribution above and beyond their annual donation. We would also like to thank the Playhouse Square Board of Trustees who devoted much of their time and talents to shepherding the organization through the time of crisis.

We are also appreciative of opportunities from the State of Ohio and federal governments that helped us keep operations stable and ready for the day when live performances could return to our stages.

That day would be June 11, 2021.

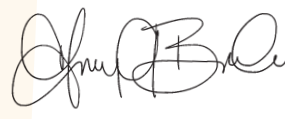
- **Playhouse Square triumphantly reopened with the**
- **first touring show and the first international cast**
- **in the United States – *The Choir of Man*. Audience**
- **members fell in love with the joyful performance,**
- **many returning to the show on multiple occasions,**
- **and we ended up extending the run three times.**

In preparation for our reopening, we invested in new technologies to reduce touch points and decrease our environmental impact. Audiences can now take advantage of mobile ticketing and concession ordering, as well as digital programs.

Our successful return to live performance would not have been possible without our dedicated volunteer RedCoats who eagerly awaited the day they could don their jackets once again.

Everything we accomplished over our 2020-21 fiscal year is a credit to the incredible and resilient Playhouse Square staff who, while navigating whatever challenges the pandemic may have brought to their personal lives, remained dedicated to our audiences, to the artists who perform on our stages, to our not-for-profit mission and to each other.

We invite you to read on for additional highlights.



Amy Brady
Chair



Gina Vernaci
President & CEO

MORE HIGHLIGHTS



Showcased our comeback plans for Sam Brock and THE TODAY SHOW's Al Roker as part of NBC's "Reopening America" series



Connected more than 90,000 students in 18 Ohio counties to streaming performances for schools



Went virtual with Jump Back Ball and other donor events



Launched Buzz Cast video series and Buzz Extra newsletter to keep season ticket holders informed and engaged during 15-month closure



Completed renovations of our main box office and the backstage area of the KeyBank State Theatre

Staged a virtual holiday concert featuring high schools participating in the Dazzle Awards program



Installed new seats in the KeyBank State Theatre



Introduced digital ticketing and contactless payment technology

DAZZLE AWARDS

PRESENTED BY PAT AND JOHN CHAPMAN

Held a virtual celebration of the Dazzle Awards presented by Pat and John Chapman complete with a PNC Red Carpet experience



Hosted an official "Rock the Clock End Zone" for the 2021 NFL Draft that took place in Cleveland



Opened The Lumen apartment tower to residents



Opened THE CHOIR OF MAN the first touring show – featuring the first international cast – in America following the shutdown of the arts industry caused by the pandemic

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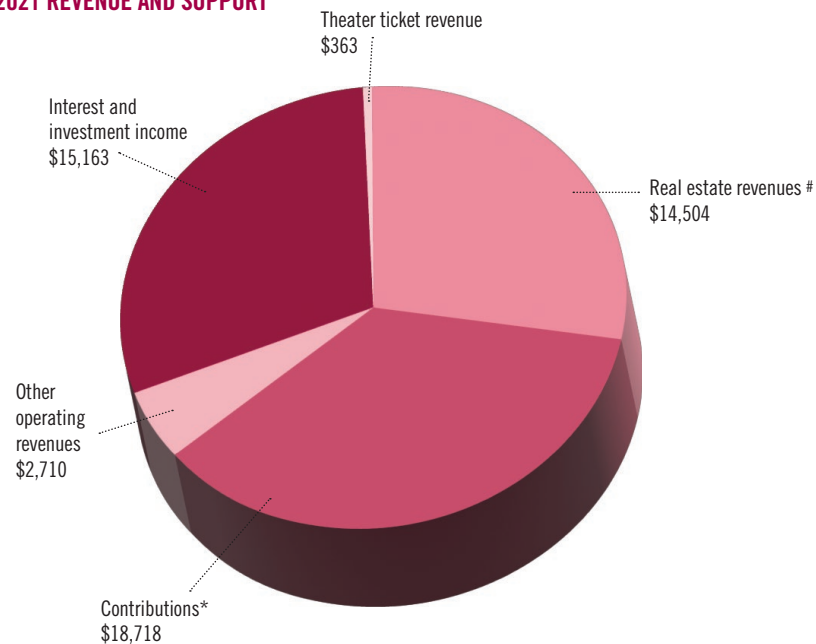


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Revenue and Expenses
For the year ending 6/30/21
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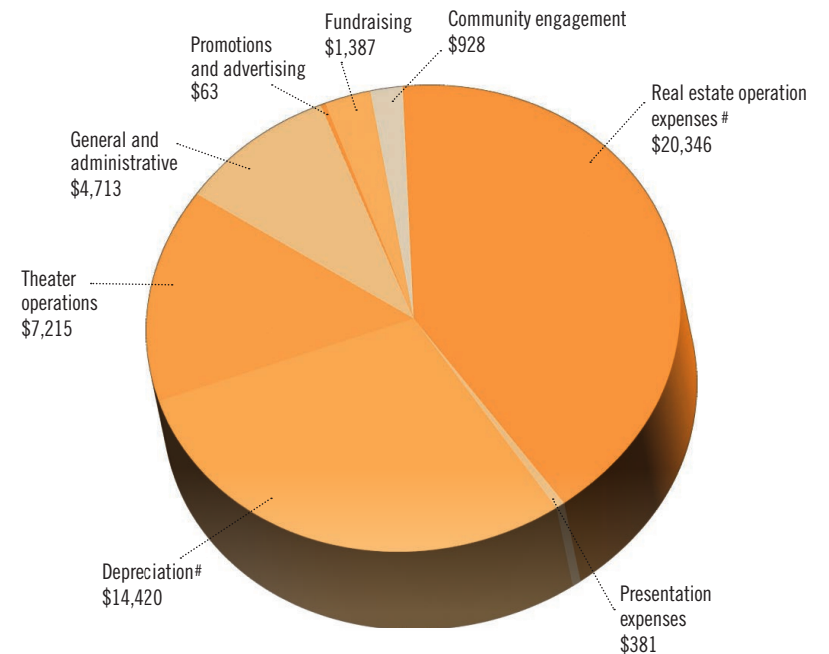
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2021 EXPENSES





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Playhouse Square is a not-for-profit performing arts center whose mission is presenting and producing a wide variety of quality performing arts, advancing arts education and creating a destination that is a superior location for entertainment, business and residential living, thereby strengthening the economic vitality of the region.

