



INTERNATIONAL THEATRE + FRINGE FESTIVAL CLEVELAND

**FOUNDERS**

May 6, 2021

Dale Heinen  
*Co-Director*

Jeffrey Pence  
*Co-Director*

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Dan Moulthrop (President)  
*Chief Executive Officer,  
The City Club of Cleveland*

Gina Abercrombie-  
Winstanley (Secretary)  
*Retired United States  
Ambassador & Keynote  
Speaker*

Joe Cimperman  
*President, Global Cleveland*

Patrick Espinosa  
*Attorney & President, Ohio  
Hispanic Bar Association*

Charlotte Fowler  
*Community Leader*

Audra T. Jones  
*President/CEO, Krystal  
Klear Communications*

Craig Saavedra  
*Tony Award-winning  
Broadway producer &  
co-owner, Starry Night  
Entertainment Group*

Terry Stewart  
*Chairman & CEO,  
El Dorado Festivals &  
Events*

Felton Thomas, Jr.  
*Executive Director,  
Cleveland Public Library*

Amy Viny  
*Civic Activist, Arts Patron*

On behalf of the Board of Directors and BorderLight Festival staff, it is with heavy hearts that we announce the postponement of this year's in-person BorderLight Festival, which was scheduled to take place July 22-24, 2021. This decision was made at a special meeting of the Board on April 30.

This decision is heart wrenching and was not taken lightly. While in many parts of the U.S. COVID-19 news is increasingly positive, there are still concerns that make a summer 2021 event challenging. Discussions with key public health officials have led to several considerations: The current state of vaccination uptake in our region remains low, with many residents still unvaccinated and at high risk of disease; the unpredictability of highly contagious emerging variants, which have been overwhelmingly impacting younger populations; and the effects of prolonged COVID-19 related border closures on the festival's core international programming. All of this created a situation of uncertainty, leading to delays in planning, challenges in finalizing funding, and difficulties in contracting.

We recognize and share the disappointment of the artists, supporters, volunteers, and audiences who were due to participate in or attend the congregate festival. We also share the disappointment of our partners in the larger arts and culture community, for whom the festival has been an opportunity for launching new projects and artistic collaboration.

BorderLight was founded as a vehicle to build cross-cultural understanding, to illuminate the borders that divide us, and to foster reciprocal connections between our city and the global community. While the current conditions will require us to postpone in-person programming longer than any of us had hoped, we are heartened by the improving climate for performing arts, festivals, and travel. We are exploring options to reschedule the in-person festival, with a target of July 2022. We are in communication with our artists and financial supporters to collaboratively fulfill this change of plans. We are also proceeding with our planned 2021 virtual fringe and self-guided audio programming, which will be streamed online and accessible from anywhere on the planet.

Thank you to the stakeholders, key funders, individual donors, and supporters who believe in our mission and have brought us this far. Our efforts towards this year's festival will not be wasted. We look forward to leveraging those resources and the efforts of the last year towards a robust and jubilant return.

Respectfully,

Dale Heinen, co-Director

Jeffrey Pence, co-Director

Dan Moulthrop, Board President