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Cover Image: Oasis by Bob Perkoski Designed by: Yazmin Maldonado

WELCOME

Welcome to the 2022 BorderLight Festival Impact Report. While 2022 was a year of continuing uncertainty due to COVID-19, it was also a year in which performing arts organizations took significant steps towards normalcy.

Having last produced a full festival in downtown Cleveland in 2019, our debut year, BorderLight made the decision to postpone its scheduled biennial festival in 2021 in favor of a summer-long Virtual Festival that featured livestreamed and on demand Fringe acts from around the world. In July of 2022, we returned to our original festival model of presenting inperson theatre in downtown Cleveland, which included a small number of international works plus a substantial domestic Fringe Festival. It was thrilling to be able to return to booking in-person performances and bringing performers here from abroad, despite the challenges of disrupted travel and visa delays.

Over the past few years we have carefully considered, at every stage, how to serve artists and audiences under shifting pandemic conditions. In 2022, the festival required all staff, volunteers and artists to be fully vaccinated. There were a number of 'mask required' shows, and mask-wearing was otherwise encouraged. We also greatly increased the number of free, outdoor performances, from 6 in 2019 to 16 in 2022 (a 166% increase). In fact, the free outdoor work proved to be some of the best attended shows in the festival. COVID-19 continued to have impacts.

A company we invited from Mexico had to cancel all of their performances at Playhouse Square due to the lead performer testing positive for COVID-19 upon arrival in Cleveland. The Omicron spike that occurred in July also likely deterred some visitors from attending this year's festival. Our attendance numbers show a decline from 2019 in line with many other performing arts presenters, including many much more established than BorderLight.

Reduced attendance has been industry-wide phenomenon. An August 2022 New York Times article titled "Live Performance is Back. But Audiences Have Been Slow to Return" discusses the dampened attendance most performing institutions and presenters nationwide have been experiencing in what many had hoped would be a comeback season. Fewer than half as many people saw a Broadway show during the recent season compared to the last full Broadway season pre-pandemic. The reasons cited in the article are that people got used to staying at home during the pandemic, city centers have not seen the anticipated return of office workers, and there are ongoing concerns about catching coronavirus.

Still, there remain many reasons to celebrate. We had robust engagement from artists in our Fringe RFP process, and artists, volunteers and patrons alike reported an overwhelmingly positive festival experience. 94% of participating artists rated the experience as 'Excellent' (63.3%) or 'Good' (30.6%), and of the volunteers, 71% 'had a blast' and 79% plan to volunteer at BorderLight again. Of the plus audience members who 4000 attended the festival, 95% of patrons rated the experience as 'Excellent' (69%) or 'Good' (26%).

Most importantly, during this protracted period of difficulty for the performing arts, BorderLight has endured. The flame remains lit. We could not be more grateful to the artists, volunteers, staff, audience members and supporters whose commitment helped bring the festival to life a second time - including many artists who had originally been scheduled to perform at BorderLight in 2021, only for it to be postponed to 2022.

These artists' resilience and creativity through the past few years is frankly aweinspiring. This collective passion for the festival and its vision for Cleveland makes everything possible. I'm extremely proud of what we've accomplished this year, and we could not have done it without our partners. I'm deeply thankful for key support from the Cleveland Foundation. the George Gund Foundation, the Char and Chuck Fowler Family Foundation, and from all of our partners who have stood by us in these trying and unpredictable times.

BorderLight is fortunate to have a Board whose wise counsel and steady hands have steered us to where we are today. We are also lucky to have talented staff members and production partners who are incredibly committed to creating a festival that is joyful, safe, and successful for all.

We look forward to the year ahead with excitement and anticipation!

> Dale A. Heinen **Executive Director**

OUR MISSION



BorderLight's mission is to present visionary international theatre and build cross-cultural understanding.

OUR VISION



The BorderLight Festival was conceived to bridge cultural and social divides. As theatre presenters, we believe it is in sharing stories and bearing witness that we all build our capacity for empathy and understanding. Our stages are platforms for artists who reflect a range of identities and nationalities. Their performances provide a shared experience that connects us and allows us to reckon with our histories and imagine new futures.





I could gush for WEEKS about how much I love BorderLight. It is the coolest theatre event in Cleveland, and I am so immensely grateful to have been able to participate in it all 3 years. The ENERGY, the **EXCITEMENT**, the COMMUNITY. The chance to see cool, unique art from local, national, and international artists. The chance to meet and connect with those artists at opening and wrap parties and in between! Spilling over throughout the city and filling downtown with art! The immense support and talent from the BorderLight staff. It is truly such a joy to be a part of this process.

FESTIVAL AT A GLANCE

5 Days 8 Venues 19 Stages



\$375,000+

Invested in Local Economy



 \longrightarrow

> \$100,000

Directed to local artists and non-profit organizations

\$13

2,236

Average Ticket Price

Attended Free Shows

\$25,575

Gross Revenue from Ticket Sales



2,031

Attended Ticketed Shows*

\$11,000

Artists' Cut

Participating Artists

205

Number of Countries / Territories Represented

7

Number of States Represented

10



FESTIVAL AT A GLANCE

45 Unique Performances 167 Events

Attendance by Type of Show

2,698

Fringe Shows

2,236

Free Shows

2,031

Ticketed Shows

1,569

International / Overseas Shows

BorderLight in the News

2

Radio/Podcast Interviews 6

T.V. Appearances 31

News Articles

Featured In:

Broadway World
Cleveland.com
Cleveland Jewish News
Cleveland Magazine
Crain's Cleveland
Cool Cleveland

FOX 8 Kickin' It With Kenny Freshwater Cleveland

Ideastream Public Media

The News Herald

Project Muse

SCENE Magazine Spectrum News

The Lakewood Observer

WKYC Channel 3

Worcester Magazine

35

Seasonal Staff Members



32

Active Volunteers



I am so grateful for this festival in Cleveland. It truly adds such an important element to our arts scene. Having access to experiencing work from outside of Cleveland and internationally offers our community so much. I'm so grateful to the entire Borderlight team!

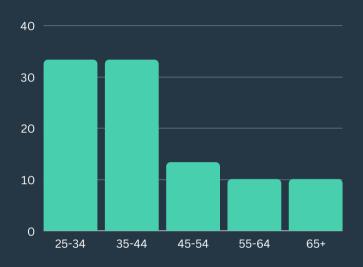
-2022 BorderLight Artist



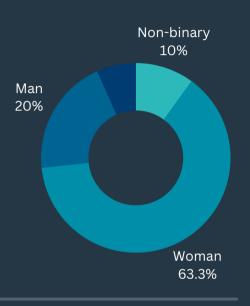
ARTIST DATA

BorderLight featured the work of 205 artists representing 45 shows from around the world including international and national touring companies, and individual artists and companies from the local Cleveland theatre community.

Age of Participating Artists



Artist Gender Identification



Artist Origins



International / Overseas Representation

Germany, Australia, Canada, Israel, Afghanistan, & Puerto Rico

Statewide Representation

New York, South Carolina, Louisiana, California, Illinois, Massachusetts, Maryland, Minnesota, Georgia

Racial/Ethnic Background of Survey Participants

This data represents 28 artists (13.6%) out of a total of 205 participating artists, creating a limited picture of the cohort's self-identified race or ethnicity. Only 28 of the 49 artists who responded to the survey answered this question.

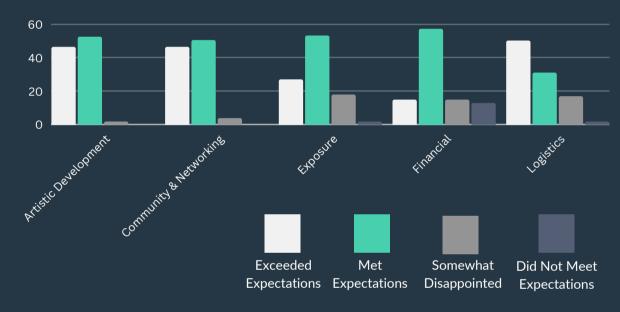
18%

Of Survey Participants Self-Identify as Non-White

Artist Satisfaction Overall



Artist Satisfaction by Category



Artist Awards

\$2,000

Awarded to Artists

The Audience Choice Award

The CAN Journal Visual Theatre Award

The Near West Theatre Emerging Artist Award

The Producer's Choice Award

Love being a part of Borderlight Fringe! It's consistently been my best theater experience as an artist in Cleveland.

-2022 BorderLight Artist

4

Award Categories

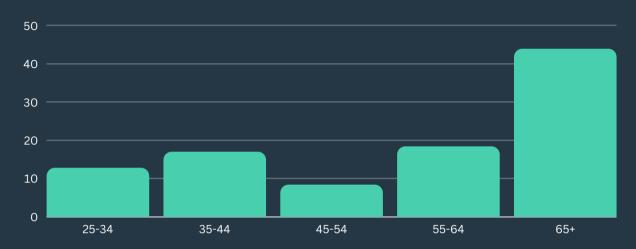




I really loved being able to explore my own city! Of course as a Clevelander I don't take the time to appreciate downtown. So walking around downtown in Public Square and Playhouse Square was really wonderful. It reminded me of how amazing our city is. I also really enjoyed the variety of options in performances. I am so grateful that BorderLight happens in my hometown! It's an amazing event and I plan to sing your praises to everyone!

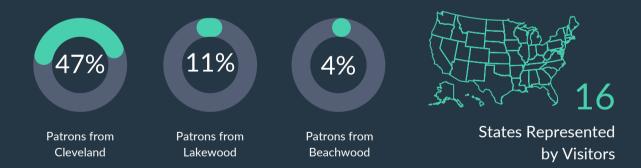
ATTENDEE DATA

Age of Attendees



Attendee Location

BorderLight Festival collected zip code data on every purchase made through the BorderLight online box office (Virtual Box Office) but does not have zip code data for patrons who purchased tickets through Playhouse Square's box office.



Highest Represented Zip Codes

44120 (Cleveland, Shaker Heights), **44118** (Cleveland, East Cleveland, Cleveland Heights, University Heights, Shaker Heights), and **44107** (Lakewood)

Attendees Rated What They Enjoyed Most



Attendees Rated Their Experience



How Much Theatre Do Attendees See in a Year





I enjoyed the wide variety of performances spanning lots of different perspectives and experiences.

-Patron aged 25-35





CREATIVE PARTNERSHIPS

BorderLight worked with multiple partners to present new works of theatre for the festival.



Near West Theatre created a new play with Puerto Rican street theatre duo Poncili Creacion, which had 4 free performances in Playhouse Square.

Cleveland Public Library sponsored 6 free performances of Bees, a children's dance production from the famed Polyglot Theatre of Australia, in the Eastman Reading Garden.



RealTime Interventions, a Pittsburgh theatre company, worked with BorderLight to create Khuraki in Cleveland. Tri-C Hospitality Management Center, Global Cleveland, and USCRI were the Community Partners who made Khuraki possible. Khuraki is a new play supporting refugee entrepreneurship that played at Old Stone Church on Public Square. It included a meal cooked by female Afghan refugees.





CLEVELAND·ISRAEL
ARTS CONNECTION
a program of the Jewish Federation of Cleveland

Oasis, an award-winning production from Israel, was generously supported by Cleveland Israel Arts Connection, a program of the Jewish Federation of Cleveland, and copresented by Interplay Jewish Theatre.





BorderLight commissioned Cleveland's Radio on the Lake Theatre to create Under the Sycamores, a site specific audio journey in Erie St. Cemetery. The piece was created during the pandemic and revived in 2022.

In co-production with multiple international partners, BorderLight presented The Walks, by the German theatre company Rimini Protokoll, an audio journey in the form of an app funded by the Goethe Institute.





Several Cleveland companies presented work at the Fringe, including Dancing Wheels, Ohio City Theatre Project, Pacific Paradise Entertainment, and Playwrights' Local.



SEASONAL STAFF

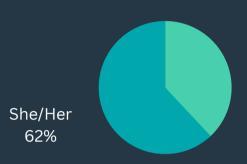
The Festival hires 30+ seasonal staff to fill essential positions, including Venue Managers, House Managers, Ticket Hub Managers, Stage Managers, and Box Office Associates

Seasonal Staff Racial Identification



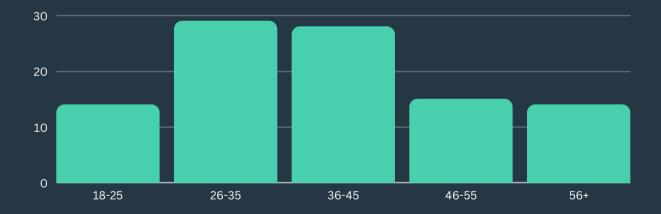
Self-identify as Black, Hispanic, or Non-White

Seasonal Staff Pronouns



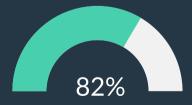
He/Him 38%

Seasonal Staff Age





Of Seasonal Staff Rated Their Experience With BorderLight Highly

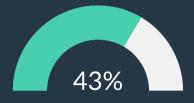


Of Seasonal Staff Are "Very Likely" To Return Again

VOLUNTEERS

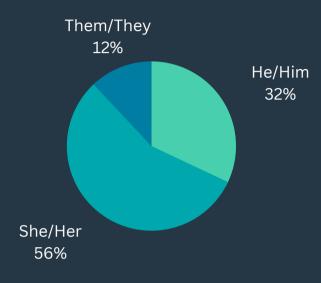
Our team of 32 active volunteers worked 84 individual shifts and donated a total of more than 307 hours of their time. Volunteers served myriad roles, including working as greeters, festival ambassadors, and ushers, and supporting special events.

Volunteer Racial Identification

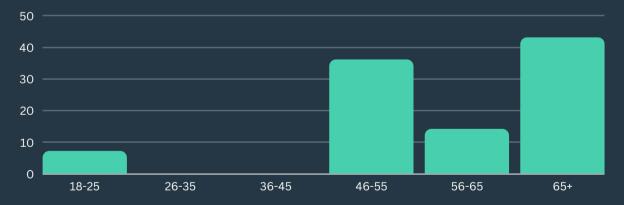


Self-Identify as Black, Hispanic, or Indigenous

Volunteer Pronouns

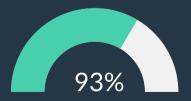


Volunteer Age





Of Volunteers were Satisfied with their Experience



Of Volunteers are Likely to Volunteer again

The day I had was perfect. I thoroughly enjoyed all three shows I saw and loved being downtown on a beautiful summer day.

-Patron aged 55-64, Madison, OH



MARKETING DATA

Our marketing strategy included efforts to reach new and diverse audience members. In the period from January to September 2022, BorderLight experienced consistent growth in website visitors, social media followers, and newsletter subscriptions.

Email Analytics

Facebook Analytics

Instagram Analytics

+268

New **Subscribers**

2,818

Total Subscribers

Emails Sent

3,101

Total Email Recipients

44.65%

Open Rate

+214

Page Likes

1,026

Total

Followers

98

Posts

3,801

Page Views

379,273

Impressions

+468

New Followers

1,641

Total **Followers**

54

Posts

2,915

Profile Views

19,722

Impressions

Google Analytics

74,149

17,516

13,769

Page Views

New & Returning Users

Visits to 2022 Festival Page

SpotLight +

With a multitude of diverse shows, BorderLight provided audience members with performance suggestions based on their interests and curiosities. The data below indicates the number of shows in each category.

6

LGBTQIA +

7

Dance

4

Hispanic Heritage

11

Youth/Family Friendly

11

Female-Focused

Print and Press

22

500

5,000

Press Releases

Postcard Distribution

Program Guides

3

Print Ads

39

Media Appearances

"

It's a great festival, a great event, and something Cleveland should be very proud of as an arts town. I believe it just needs a little time to become more known and popular, especially in light of a two-year shut down and ongoing pandemic concerns. I watched the CIFF grow from similar roots into a major event, but it took many years, so ongoing cultivation will pay off. Thank you for all of the great work and diligence that goes into BorderLight!

-2022 BorderLight Artist

ROOM FOR GROWTH

BorderLight is a work in progress. To this end, we solicit feedback from our stakeholders after every festival by asking audience members, artists, staff, volunteers, and supporters how we can improve. The next festival will start to see the implementation of changes based on this feedback. We've identified the following areas for improvement.

Areas for Improvement

Data reflects audience survey response to the question,

" What could we do better?"

Advertising	37.9%	
Food Trucks	10%	
Festival Footprint	9%	
Ticket Process	9%	
Wayfinding	9%	

Strategic Plan

At the conclusion of our second in-person festival, BorderLight is well positioned to undertake a Strategic Plan to guide the organization's next three years. This work, which commenced in the fall of 2022, will be led by an outside facilitator and be driven by input from staff, partners, and the Board of Directors, along with existing data and knowledge gained from past festivals. The Strategic Plan will conclude by January 31, 2023. The goal of the process is to create an actionable plan that meets these objectives:

- Ensures organizational mission aligns to both Fringe & International festival components
- Formalizes intended festival cadence and programmatic intent
- Outlines critical action plans for 2023 focus and implementation
- Identifies related operational and funding needs for organizational sustainability
- Captures success metrics, known risks and potential barriers to success

OUR COMMITMENTS

BorderLight is committed to building a better future for everyone. We're excited to share the work we're doing as we strive to deepen our commitments.



Access and Inclusion

Inclusion is a core value that drives our work. We aspire to reflect the diversity of our community at every level of the organization, and to serve as a platform for sharing different perspectives on the human experience. Our goals include:

- Committing time and resources to ensure diversity in our board, staff, vendor selection and volunteer corps.
- Diversifying programming and audiences.
- Leveraging the festival to create opportunities for local artists, especially artists
 of color.
- Amplifying voices that have been underrepresented due to systemic inequities and exclusion on the basis of race, nation of origin, gender, gender identity, sexuality, disability, age, education, ethnicity, or economic circumstances.

Initiatives to promote these goals include:

- Locating the festival downtown, where it is easy to access via public transport
- Free programming on outdoor stages
- Outreach to diverse media to expand audience demographic
- Outreach to diverse artists, locally and nationally
- Low cost Fringe Application
- Waived production fees for artists in financial need
- Highlighting voices from diverse communities, e.g. LGBTQ+, Hispanic, refugee, etc. communities
- Appointing a diverse panel to select work for the Fringe. Most fringes use a lottery system, which often results in more homogeneous programming.
- Featuring new work by local writers of color
- Identifying ADA accessible venues in marketing communications



Environmental Sustainability

A large arts event can be a channel for bringing attention to climate change, and a conduit for social change. The very nature of a performing arts festival prioritizes experiences over the acquisition of goods. We have identified ways in which BorderLight can use attitudinal and behavioral cues to convey the value we place on green practices. We have taken the following steps towards sustainability:

- Maintain a largely paperless operation by using cloud networks, email, and scanning.
- Buy second hand office products.
- Telecommute rather than meeting in person the majority of the time.
- Research foreign artists virtually.
- Encourage visitors to take RTA in eblasts, on website, and in Festival Guide.
- Promote information about bike sharing to patrons.
- Market the walkability of the event footprint.
- Proactively consult with our partners on ways to lower the event's environmental footprint.
- Prefer suppliers who have green policies.

Additional steps we will take at the next festival:

- Publicize the event as bottled water free. Offer water stations at the event that encourage refilling bottles (rather than selling plastic); encourage visitors to bring refillable water bottles.
- Encourage recycling and make it easier to do during the event.
- Share the narratives of people who are directly feeling the effects of climate change.
- Encourage those who do drive to rideshare or carpool.



BorderLight seeks to be a festival that is welcoming to artists, who are the foundation and lifeblood of this work. We serve artists in the following ways:

- Provide free housing for out of town artists.
- Provide travel stipends for out of town artists in financial need.
- Provide participating artists with Artist Passes giving free access to Fringe shows and heavily discounted tickets to international work.
- Redirect 70% of Fringe ticket revenue back to artists. (The average payout in 2022 was \$423.)
- Pay \$2000 directly to artists through four Fringe Awards.
- Maintain a balance of 50% local artists in the Fringe Festival.
- Host free festival parties, with complimentary food and drink, where artists can build community and network.
- Provide marketing training and resources to Fringe artists.
- Hire an Artist Liaison to help international artists execute their work, navigate an unknown city, and make the most out of their visit to Cleveland.



BorderLight is committed to creating a safe experience for artists, vendors, and guests. The following precautions were taken during our 2022 festival year to promote everyone's health and safety:

Vaccination Protocols

Vaccinations and boosters were strongly recommended but not required for BorderLight 2022 patrons.

The BorderLight Festival required all staff, volunteers, artists, and technicians to be fully vaccinated, as defined by the CDC.

Masking

In order to create opportunities for patrons who had health vulnerabilities to participate in the Festival, certain performances required masks to be worn by audience members, staff and volunteers.

SURVEY METHODOLOGY



BorderLight Survey Sizes

The reported figures for ticketed attendance comprise patrons who purchased tickets through BorderLight's Box Office and Playhouse Square's Box Office. These numbers do not include all walk-up and cash purchases. Attendance at free performances was gathered using clickers and reported on House Manager reportage sheets. This number excludes casual contacts with commuters, visitors, and downtown residents.



Of Online Artist Survey Responses



Of Online Seasonal Staff Survey Responses



Of Online Volunteer Survey Responses



Of In-Person Patron Interview Responses



Of Online Patron Survey Responses



The combination of local, national, and international shows is so unique and so exciting to be a part of. This is what makes BorderLight one of my favorite US festivals.

-2022 BorderLight Artist



FESTIVAL LEADERSHIP

BorderLight Staff

Dale A. Heinen

Acting Executive Director

Yazmin Maldonado

Engagement & Advancement Manager

Josy Jones

Associate Producer

Arlene Watson

Development Director Inbloom Consultant

Palmer Event Solutions

Production + Event Logistics

Jetpack Group

Website Design

CLE Consulting Firm

Accounting + Professional Services

Board of Directors

Dan Moulthrop

President

Jon Bloomberg

Secretary

Luis Cartagena

Treasurer

Amb. Gina Abercrombie-Winstanley*

Joe Cimperman
Patrick Espinosa
Charlotte Fowler
Audra T. Jones
Megan O'Bryan
Dr. Felicia Phillips
Craig Saavedra
Terry Stewart

Felton Thomas, Jr.

^{*}ex-officio

THANK YOU!

BorderLight Festival is made possible through the generous support of our festival sponsors.

Marquee Sponsors



THE GEORGE GUND FOUNDATION

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Stagelight Sponsors









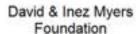


















The Hermit Club and St. Anthony's Library Company

In-Kind Sponsors













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Patron Circle

Joel Adelman **Anonymous** Anonymous

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Jon & Laura Bloomberg LuAnn & Andy Brown

Jim Brown

Joe Cimmperman Rachel Costanzo Anna Dodson Becky Dunn Pete Granson Roe Green

Carrie Gustafson

Pam Haag Lee Heinen Megan O'Bryan

Craig & Joaquin Saavedra

Marjorie Simon

Chann & Ed Spellmann

Harriet Warm

Morris Wheeler & Joanne Cohen

John C. Williams

Jeff Wolk

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Jamie Belkin & Jerry Mizer

Fred Bidwell

Dick & Doreen Cahoon

Luis Cartagena

Tom & Cindy Einhouse

Lauren Fine David Goodman Denis Griesmer **Nancy Griffiths** Mary Louise Hahn Audrey Heinen Joe Heinen Stewart Kohl Edith K. Lauer

KeyBank Employee Match

Felicia Phillips Joy Roller **Faye Sholiton Terry Stewart Betsy Stueber Felton Thomas**

Dan Moulthrop

Patrick & Jeanne Walker

Dan Wasdahl Jill and Jeff Zimon

2022 FESTIVAL PHOTO LIBRARY



A Reading of the Plague By Albert Camus



Above De "C" As in Camping



American Refugee



Bees



Bell, Book, and Late-Nite Drive Thru



Birdbrain



Central Concern



Charming Disaster's Musical Tarot Show



Coco and Gigi



Dancing Wheels Quest For Equality



Dear Cleveland: The Symphonic Soliloquies



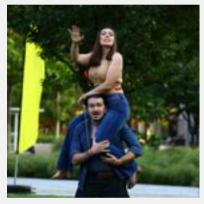
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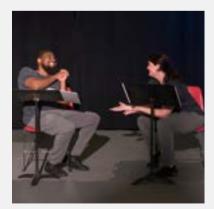
Fragile Eggistence



Fragments of Samantha



Fran and Gus



Gray Space



Help Me Help You Help Yourself



Here Now; The Soapbox Testaments



Hey Siri



It's Now or Never: My Life in the Late Middle Ages



Khuraki



Maya: The Illusionist



Nature Song



Not A Uterus in Sight



Oasis



Pajama Stories for All; Adults; Children



Pedro Gonzalez and Tania Timmons



Pinch and Squeal's Wizbang!



Polynesian Dance Performance



Coqui by Poncili Creacion + Near West Theatre



Raj Suresh and Amanda Averell



Shadow Realm: Down the Rabbit Hole



Shmilf Life



Slanted: How an Asian American Troublemaker Took on the Supreme Court

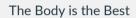


Song Embroidery



Songcraft







The Last Hurrah



The Pink Hulk: One Woman's Journey to Find the Superhero Within



The Small Garden



The Victim Goddess



The Walks



Un/Packing

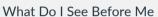


Under the Sycamores



Web of Deceit







Where Our Shadows Like to Play



Wonderlanding

PHOTO CREDITS

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Page 2: Artist photo, Mark Horning, Mark Horning, Mark Horning, Denise Astorino, Steve Wagner, Bob Perkoski, Bob Perkoski, Steve Wagner

Page 3: Steve Wagner, David Dietz, Bob Perkoski, Steve Wagner, Bob Perkoski, Artist Photo, Artist photo, Artist photo

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