

PORCHLIGHT
MUSIC THEATRE

2021-2022

Annual Report

Spring Awakening (2022) Photo by: Liz Lauren

Porchlight Music Theatre 2021-2022 Annual Report

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Blues in the Night (2022)
Photo by Cholette

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MISSION

Porchlight Music Theatre, Chicago's home for music theatre, illuminates the past, present, and future of this American art form through live performance, youth education and outreach programs that positively impact and connect us to our community.

VISION

A nationally recognized cultural institution in Chicago, Porchlight brings people together to explore the human experience through the art of music theatre, fostering empathy, inclusion and community.

VALUES

- **We believe** that all voices and life experiences are essential to portraying on stage a complete picture of the human experience.
- **We are firmly committed** to the music theatre genre presented as an intimate experience.
- **We treat** artists, staff, volunteers, and audiences with respect and dignity, inviting all into our artistic home.
- **We strive** to be inclusive with representation in all aspects of our organization.
- **We invest** in the future of music theatre through nurturing and mentoring the next generation of artists and audiences.
- **We ensure** long-term organizational stability through prudent collaborations, strategic alliances, and sound fiscal planning.

Who we Are

AFFIRMATIONS & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Who we Are

Porchlight reaffirms our total commitment to justice, equity, diversity, access and inclusion as we advance our mission both on and off the stage. These principles are not only essential to Porchlight's future vitality, relevance and sustainability, they are critical to creating a more just and accessible industry for a better society.

Porchlight values its audiences, artists, technicians, staff, board, donors, community partners, teachers, students and volunteers, and the uniqueness each brings to the tapestry of our art. We treat one another fairly and honor each other's experiences, beliefs, perspectives, abilities, and backgrounds, regardless of race, religion, language, immigration status, sexual orientation, gender identification, ability status, socio-economic status, national identity or other identity markers.

Porchlight recognizes the history of oppression and injustice that has resulted in ongoing disparities for those who were brought here against their will or migrated from their homeland, as well as for those who have lived on this land for centuries. Truth and acknowledgment are critical in building mutual respect and authentic connections across all barriers of heritage and difference. This statement is one small step in acknowledging the history that brought us to this place and time, and to help us seek understanding of our place within that history:

Porchlight is committed to aligning our values to our business practices. We are conscious of the need to promote diversity within our staff, board, production companies and audiences, as well as to ensure fairness, justice and inclusivity in our policies and procedures. We recognize this evolution is an ongoing process, and we invite you to follow our goals, progress and ways to get involved at porchlightmusictheatre.org.



“With humility and respect for the original caretakers of the land, we recognize that, at its performance home at the Ruth Page Center for the Arts, Porchlight inhabits the land of the Council of the Three Fires: the Ojibwe, Odawa and Potawatomi Nations, and many other tribes such as the Miami, Ho-Chunk, Menominee, Sac and Fox who also call this land their home. We recognize the sacred lands of all indigenous American Indian, Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian and First Nations peoples.”

Spring Awakening (2022)
Photo by Liz Lauren



Passing Strange
Photo by Lobo Tate

Leadership

Our 2021 - 2022 Year

A LEADERSHIP MESSAGE: RENEWAL & REBUILDING

Greetings! We write this annual message with much excitement for what lies ahead after our “rebuilding year” in 2021-2022, to borrow from the sports lexicon. As you’ll read in this report, Porchlight boldly stepped back into live productions and events last season. It was a busy year, but it wasn’t a normal season by any means. With the Covid pandemic still having a big adverse impact on our business, fiscal year 2022 for Porchlight was a steady progression of reassessment and reinvestment. We had to pivot here and there, but we largely kept to our plan and delivered a season full of excitement and quality.

Here’s a recap of the year’s highlights for us, much of which is detailed in these pages:

- 1.** Returning to in-theater productions with a full slate of Mainstage offerings, as well as new editions of our Porchlight Revisits and New Faces Sing Broadway series. The electricity in the air on our first day back in the Ruth Page theater is something we’ll not soon forget.
- 2.** The growth and momentum of our Porchlight Young Professionals group. PYP ramped up its events and recruitment efforts over the past season, hosting nights at the theater and playing a key role in the success of Chicago Sings.

Continued...

Message

3. Expansion of our newest fan favorite, *Broadway in your Backyard*. This free summer concert series expanded to more neighborhood parks this year — reaching 2,200 people — with the help of the Chicago Park District and other sponsors including Byline Bank.

4. Gathering live for the ICONS Gala 2021 and celebrating with the fabulous Chita Rivera. Galleria Marchetti's indoor-outdoor venue was perfect for our very first major event since Covid, and the excitement was palpable as Chef Rick Bayless accepted the Luminary Award on behalf of his family foundation. Commenting that "theatre in Chicago is BACK and it is ALIVE here at Porchlight Music Theatre!" Bayless articulated what everyone in attendance was feeling.

5. Returning to live final performances for our youth programs. After pivoting between live and virtual for the last two seasons, we were thrilled we could reimplement the live final show so that family and friends could again watch their kids show off the results of their musical journey with Porchlight through our classes and camps.

6. A live Chicago Sings, this time celebrating Stephen Sondheim. After two years, Porchlight was back at the Museum of Contemporary Art playing to an at-capacity crowd in the Edlis Neeson theater, as well as a new PYP companion "Color & Light Lounge" experience.

7. The staged reading of a new musical, *Clear*, by Paul Oakley Stovall. On break from his tour of *Hamilton*, Stovall along with his creative team presented this powerful new work on one night only to a full audience at the Ruth Page.

8. Our first student matinees. We have been welcoming student groups for years, but starting with *Spring Awakening* we offered matinee performances — often at a more accessible time for classes — and at just \$5 per ticket. By securing donations and funding, Porchlight will continue its commitment to this discounted price, which also comes with free dramaturgy and engagement options.

9. Recognition for our art and artists with The Joseph Jefferson Committee: 6 Jeff nominations and 4 awards, and Black Theatre Artists Alliance: 13 BTAA nominations and 3 awards.

10. Your support. As always, your generosity and enthusiasm for what we do means the world to us, and keeps us bringing you the best music theatre experiences in Chicago.

On behalf of the entire Porchlight staff and board, thank you and best wishes to you and yours in 2023!

Brian

Brian Troy, *Board Chair*

Jeannie

Jeannie Lukow, *Executive Director*

Michael

Michael Weber, *Artistic Director*

Leadership Message



Live Audiences Entertained

Mainstage / Large Format Venues Attendance

1k 2k 3k 4k 5k

2,950 *Blues in the Night*

2,540 *Pump Boys & Dinettes*

4,619 *Spring Awakening*

2,200 *Broadway in your Backyard*

Intimate Venue Attendance

100 200 300 400 500

150 *Broadway in your Backyard @ Ambassador Chicago*

200 *New Faces Sing Broadway 1971*

313 *Porchlight Revisits Nunsense*

328 *Porchlight Revisits Passing Strange*

173 *Clear Staged Reading*

300 *Evening on Division*

500 *Sundays on State*

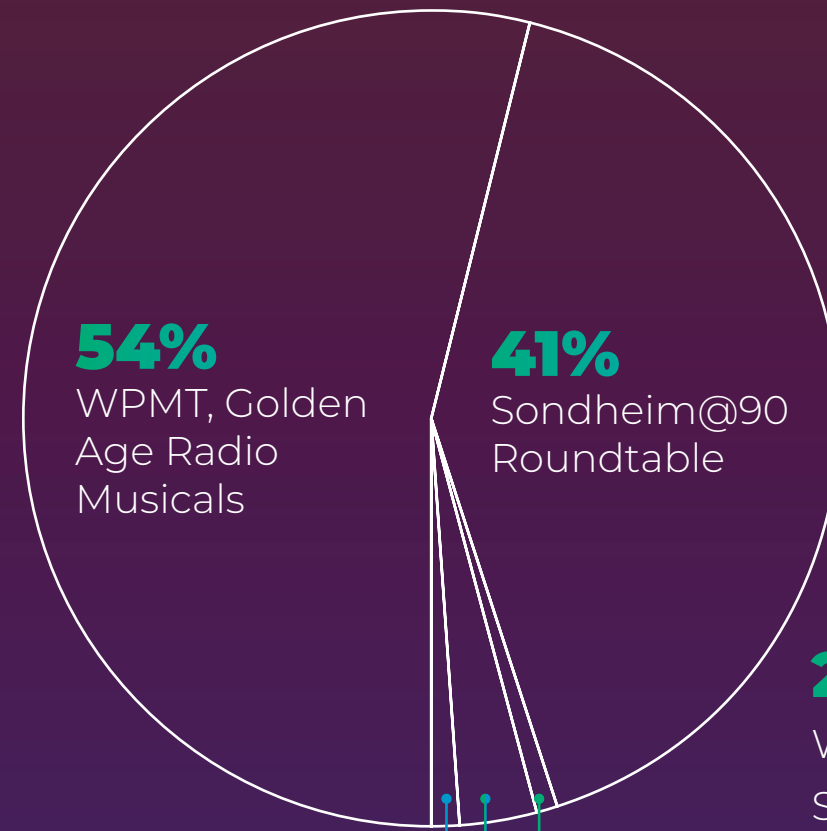
500 *Navy Pier LIVE*

350 *Chicago Sings*

250 *ICONS Gala*



Virtual Audiences Entertained



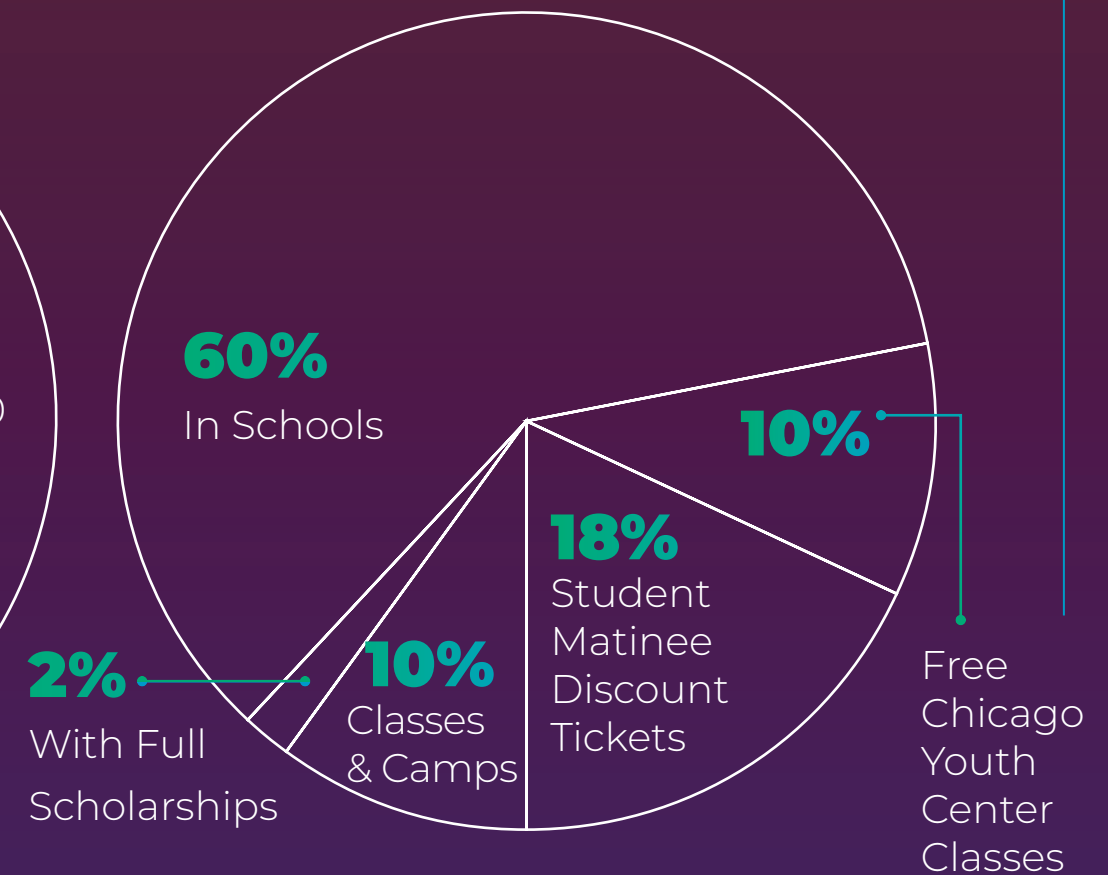
1%
New Faces Sing Broadway 1947

3%
YouTube Subscribers

<1%
Movie Musical Mondays, The Podcast



Students Engaged



2%
With Full Scholarships

10%
Classes & Camps

18%
Student Matinee Discount Tickets

10%
Free Chicago Youth Center Classes



Artists & Staff Employed

297 Performers, Musicians, Creatives & Technicians

15 Teaching Artists

20 Staff

Year-at-a-

Glance

2021 - 2022 LEADERSHIP

Board of Directors

Brian Troy†, Chair
 Jim Jensen‡, Vice Chair
 Jonathan Klein‡,
 Secretary
 Gretchen Upholt‡,
 Treasurer
 Michelle Cucchiaro‡
 Brenda Didier‡
 Jeremy Eden‡
 Rhona Frazin‡
 William Gilmer‡
 Joseph Higgins‡
 Mark Hudson‡
 Charles Laff‡
 Michael Lowenthal‡
 Steve McDonagh‡
 Cesar Rolon, Jr.‡
 Sara Siegall‡
 Tamara Sims‡

Ex Officio:
 Jeannie Lukow‡,
 Michael Weber‡

Emeritae:
 Mary Kay Conley‡
 Rhoda Reeling‡

Pronoun key:

† (he/him/his)
 ‡ (she/her/hers)
 † (they, them, theirs)
 † (any, with respect)

Artistic Advisory Board

Wm. Eric Bramlett†
 John Bucchino†
 E. Faye Butler‡
 Cheri Coons‡
 Kevin Depinet†
 William Finn†
 Joel Grey†
 Larry Grossman†
 Linda Kline‡
 Jesse Klug†
 Sean Allan Krill†
 Dominic Missimi†
 Jill Moore-Pancrazi‡
 Lonny Price†
 Hollis Resnik*
 Bill Russell†
 Chuck Smith†
 Walter Stearns†
 Bob Walton†
 Jim Walton†
 Maury Yeston†
 *deceased

Porchlight Young Professionals (PYP)

Lynn Barlow‡
 Lanie Bayless‡
 Kellie Buffington‡
 August Compton‡
 Cody Czmyr†
 Natalie Doppelt‡
 Nate Groomwald†
 Carolyn Isaac‡
 Rosie Schultz‡
 Becca Sheehan‡
 Yessenia I. Sosa‡

Board Development & Nominating Committee

Jeremy Eden†, Chair
 Michelle Cucchiaro‡
 Rhona Frazin‡
 Bill Gilmer†
 Jon Klein†
 Chuck Laff†
 Steve McDonagh†

Development Committee

Rhona Frazin‡, Chair
 Art Garwin†
 Joseph Higgins†
 Joel Rothman†
 Tamara Sims‡
 Sue Tinnish‡

Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Advisory Committee

Frankie Leo Bennett†,
 Chair
 Felton Armand†
 E. Faye Butler‡
 Ricky Harris †
 Jermaine Hill†
 Tanya Hinton‡
 James Earl Jones II
 Michelle Lauto‡
 Nitha Fiona Nagubadi,
 PsyD, MBA, MS, Ph.D.‡
 Lorenzo Rush Jr†
 Michael Weatherspoon†
 Honey West‡
 Will Wilhelm†
 Aerial Williams‡



Porchlight Music Theatre Executive Director Jeannie Lukow, 2018 Luminary Award Recipient Jim Jensen and 2019 Luminary Award Recipient Jean Klingenstein and Porchlight Music Theatre Artistic Director Michael Weber

Education Committee

Tony Gibson†, Chair
 Brenda Didier‡
 Dushunda Henderson‡
 Karen Jaffe‡
 Michelle Lauto‡
 Steve McDonagh†
 Rob Schroeder†
 Laura Steinfeld-Hamilton‡

Facilities Committee

Chuck Laff†, Chair
 James Brault†
 Yolanda Deen‡
 Lee Dickson‡
 Jim Grusecki†
 William James†
 James Jensen†
 Arlen D. Rubin†

Finance Committee

Gretchen Upholt‡, Chair
 Jim Jensen†
 Michael Lowenthal†
 Jeannie Lukow‡
 Brian Troy†
 Michael Weber†

Marketing & Engagement Committee

Mark Hudson†, Chair
 Elaine Cohen‡
 Michelle Cucchiaro‡
 Jeremy Eden †
 Rhona Frazin‡
 Jim Jensen†
 Boyce Moffitt†
 Amy Osler Lowenthal‡
 Cesar Rolon, Jr.†
 Tamara Sims‡
 Annice Tatken‡



the Team

*Porchlight Young Professionals
 Photo by Chollette*

CURRENT FULL-TIME/ FULL-SEASON STAFF

Staff photos and bios are available
at porchlightmusictheatre.org.

Artistic Director:

Michael Weber†

Audience Services Director:

August Compton‡

Box Office Manager & Administration Associate

Elana Kennedy‡

Design Associate:

Oni Wright‡

Development Director:

Evin Marie Rayford‡

Development & Administration Associate:

Kellie Buffington‡

Education Director:

Rebeccah Singer‡

Executive Director:

Jeannie Lukow‡

Finance &

Administration Director:

Dan Thomas†

Front of House Associates:

Sara Crouse‡

Charlotte Foster‡

Noelle Harrison‡

Noel Hartman†/‡

Christopher Leahy†

Marissa Longo‡

House Manager:

Jordan Fleming‡

Marketing Associate:

Lobo Tate†/‡

Marketing & Communications Director:

Mike Porto†

Media Relations:

James Juliano† &

Jill Evans La Penna‡,

SHOUT Marketing &

Media Relations

Producing Artistic Associate:

Frankie Leo Bennett†

Production Manager:

Majel Cuza‡

Teaching Artists:

Wesly Clergé†

Deanna Cooper†

Agnotti Cowie†/‡

Emma Costello‡

David Goodloe†

Marcus Jackson†

Avery Lareau‡

Dan Marie McMillan†

Zoe Nadig‡

Tia Pinson†/‡

Kayla Pulley‡

Shaina Schrooten†/‡

Pronoun key:

† (he/him/his)

‡ (she/her/hers)

† (they, them, theirs)

‡ (any, with respect)

Meet the Team



2021-2022

The Season

Chicago Sings Stephen Sondheim (2022)
Photo by Chollette



Mainstage
PUMP BOYS & DINETTES

October 30 - December 12, 2021
Ruth Page Center for the Arts

Directed by Daryl Brooks†
Music Directed by Robert Reddrick‡
Choreographed by Rueben D. Echoles†

Porchlight's first in-theater production in nearly two years and one of the longest running shows in Chicago theatre history, *Pump Boys & Dinettes* delighted audiences with its toe-tapping music on guitar, piano, bass and a kitchen utensil or two performed by the cast. Inspired by Director Daryl Brooks' memories of his youth in a small town, *Pump Boys & Dinettes* was a much needed and joyful return to live theatre.

Pronoun key:
 † (he/him/his)
 ‡ (she/her/hers)
 † (they, them, theirs)
 † (any, with respect)

Photos by Chollette

“A love letter to hometown hospitality and nostalgia.”

Christian Bufford,
 Rescripted Reviews

“Wonderfully nostalgic and wildly exuberant.”

Hedy Weiss, WTTW



Cast

Rafe Bradford† (Eddie/Bass), Shantel Cribbs‡ (Prudie Cupp), Ian Custer† (Jim/Rhythm Guitar & U/S L.M), Frederick Harris† (L.M/Piano), Melanie Loren‡ (Rhetta Cupp), Billy Rude† (Jackson/Lead Guitar), Caitlin Dobbins‡ (Stand by - Rhetta and Prudie Cupp), J.J. Smith† (Stand by - Jim and Jackson), Kelan Smith† (Stand by - Jim and Eddie).

Production Team

Rueben D. Echoles† (costume and wigs designer), Jennifer Aparicio‡ (production manager/SM swing), Eric Backus† (co-sound designer), Gianni Carcagno‡ (assistant stage manager/assistant audio engineer), Matthew R. Chase† (audio engineer), Andrea Enger† (assistant stage manager/wardrobe manager), Deya Friedman‡ (production stage manager, AEA), Denise Karczewski‡ (lighting designer), Sydney Lynne‡ (scenic designer), Caitlin McCarthy‡ (properties designer), Johnnie Schleyer† (technical director), Stefanie M. Senior‡ (co-sound designer), Rachel West‡ (lighting supervisor), Rashaad A. Bond† (producing artistic associate), Alex Rhyant† (production and operations director), Michael Weber† (artistic director).

2,540
 Attendance

35
 Performances

29
 Company Members

6
 Black Theatre Alliance Award Nominations

1
 Black Theatre Alliance Awards (Best Set Design, Sydney Lynne)



Mainstage

BLUES IN THE NIGHT

February 9 - March 13, 2022

Ruth Page Center for the Arts

Directed & Choreographed by Kenny Ingram†

Music Directed by David Fiorello‡

Assistant Choreographed by Ariel M. Dorsey‡

Associate Music Directed & Conducted by Maulty Jewell IV†

Blues in the Night's opening was delayed due to a rise in COVID cases but when it did open a few weeks later, audiences and critics agreed that it was a hit. Led by Broadway's Felicia P. Fields and a cast of incredible talent, *Blues in the Night* was set in a history-filled hotel on Chicago's south side one fateful night in the late 1930s where three women share their highs and lows of romance through the iconic songs of Bessie Smith, Duke Ellington, Johnny Mercer, Harold Arlen and many more.

"A real musical escape... elegantly staged and with top-drawer local talent."
Chris Jones, *Chicago Tribune*

"Thrilling...powerful... a bona fide scorcher"
Catey Sullivan,
Chicago Sun-Times

Cast

Felicia P. Fields‡ ("The Lady from the Road"), Donica Lynn‡ ("The Woman of the World"), Clare Kennedy‡ ("The Girl with a Date"), Evan Tyrone Martin† ("The Man in the Saloon"), Terrell Armstrong† ("The Dancing Man"), Anna Marie Abbate‡ (Stand by - The Girl with a Date), Nolan Robinson† (Stand by - The Dancing Man), Aalon Smith‡ (Stand by - The Woman of the World, The Lady from the Road), Eustace J. Williams+ (Stand by - The Man in the Saloon).

Musicians

Maulty Jewell IV† (keyboards), Rafe Bradford† (bass), Darius Hampton† (tenor sax, clarinet, flute), Ricardo Jimenez† (trumpet), Harold Morrison† (drums), Jeff Harris† (bass-sub).

Production Team

Alden Vasquez† (production stage manager), Rueben Echoles† (costume and wig designer), Brandon Wardell† (lighting designer), Eric Backus† (sound designer), Angela Weber Miller‡ (scenic designer), Caitlin McCarthy‡ (properties designer), Matthew R. Chase† (audio engineer), Rachel West‡ (lighting supervisor), Jaime Silverman‡ (wardrobe supervisor), Jennifer Aparicio‡ (production manager), Henry Wilkinson† (technical director), Frankie Leo Bennett† (producing artistic associate), Alex Rhyant† (production and operations director), Michael Weber† (artistic director).

Pronoun key:

- † (he/him/his)
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- † (they, them, theirs)
- ‡ (any, with respect)

Photos by Anthony La Penna

2,950
Attendance

25
Performances

31
Company Members

6
Black Theatre Alliance Award Nominations

2
Black Theatre Alliance Awards
(Best Direction of a Musical, Kenny Ingram and Best Featured Actor in a Musical, Evan Tyrone Martin)

6
Jeff Award Nominations

4
Jeff Awards
(Production/Revue-Large, Director/Revue-Large, Kenny Ingram; Performer In A Revue, Felicia P. Fields; Music Direction, David Fiorello)



SPRING AWAKENING

“This is a show to run to.”
Ted C. Fishman, *NewCity*

“Best local production of
this work to date.”
Chris Jones, *Chicago Tribune*



Pronoun key:
† (he/him/his)
‡ (she/her/hers)
‡ (they, them, theirs)
‡ (any, with respect)

Photos by Liz Lauren

Mainstage

SPRING AWAKENING

April 23 - June 2, 2022

Ruth Page Center for the Arts

Directed & Choreographed by Brenda Didier‡

Music Directed by Justin Akira Kono†

Assistant Directed by Lorenzo Rush, Jr.†

Associate Choreographed by Alejandro Fonseca†

The 2021 - 2022 Mainstage season concluded with the haunting and provocative *Spring Awakening*. This landmark American musical celebrated a journey from adolescence to adulthood with power, poignancy and passion. During the spring run of this production Porchlight saw an increase in younger audiences coming to the theatre and the positive reviews and strong word of mouth made this a must-see production.

4,619 Attendance	34 Performances	42 Company Members
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Cast

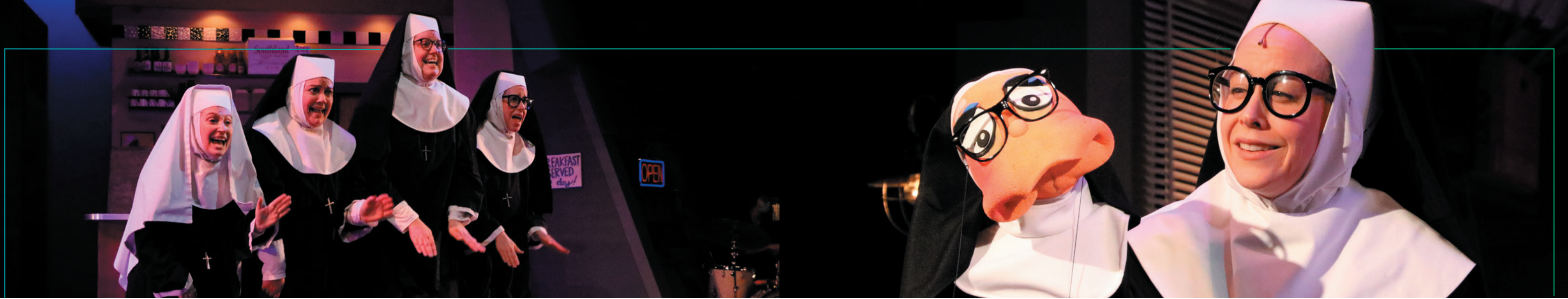
Ariana Burks‡ (Martha), McKinley Carter‡ (The Adult Women), Jack DeCesare† (Melchior), Isis Elizabeth‡ (ensemble / US Anna & Thea), Desiree Gonzalez‡ (ensemble / US Wendla & Ilse), Ryan Michael Hamman†/‡ (ensemble / US Otto & Ernst), Maya Lou Hlava‡ (Wendla), Quinn Kelch† (Moritz), Maddy Kelly‡ (Thea), John Marshall Jr.† (Hanschen), Drew Mitchell† (ensemble / US Melchior & Georg), Michael Joseph Mitchell† (The Adult Men), Juwon Tyrel Perry+ (Georg / US Hanschen), Kevin James Sievert† (Otto / US Moritz), Kelan M. Smith† (Ernst), Sydney Monet Swanson†/‡ (Anna / US Martha), Tiffany T. Taylor‡ (Ilse), Genevieve Thiers‡ (US The Adult Women), Anthony Whitaker†/‡ (US The Adult Men).

Musicians

Justin Akira Kono† (piano, conductor), Hillary Bayley‡ (violin), Marcel Bonfim† (bass), Owen Cooper† (guitar), Sara Morrow‡ (viola), Lior Shragg† (drums).

Production Team

Kristina Fluty‡ (intimacy director), Jonathan Berg-Einhorn† (properties designer), Patrick Chan† (lighting designer), Matthew R. Chase† (sound designer), Bill Morey, USA† (costume designer), Chris Rhoton†, USA+ (scenic designer), Johnnie Schleyer† (scenic supervisor), Jamie Silverman‡ (wardrobe supervisor), Jamie Davis† (audio supervisor & engineer), Jerry Galante† (fight choreographer), Richard Strimer† (production stage manager, AEA), Caitlin Body‡ (assistant stage manager, AEA), Peyton Cooper† (assistant stage manager), Andrea Engeř/= (assistant stage manager), Rachel West‡ (lighting supervisor), Frankie Leo Bennett† (producing artistic associate), Alex Rhyant† (production & operations director), Michael Weber† (artistic director).



Porchlight Revisits
NUNSENSE

November 17 & 18, 2021
Ruth Page Center for the Arts

Directed by Michelle Lauto‡
Music Directed by Kailey Rockwell‡
Choreographed by Jenna Schoppe‡

Nunsense was a celebration of the worldwide tour-de-force that has brought laughter to audiences for more than 30 years. Michelle Lauto, in her directorial debut, had audiences laughing and on their feet for the launch of the eighth season of the Porchlight Revisits series. Rachel Weinberg of RachelWeinbergReviews.com said Artistic Director Michael Weber’s “Behind the Show Backstory” “remains a joy” and she “was particularly impressed with Weber’s discussion of the show in the context of other musicals centered on religious themes.”

Nunsense

“*Nunsense at Porchlight Music Theatre is the perfect blithe comedy to get you back in the habit of live theater.*”

Kathleen Anwar,
 BroadwayWorld.com

“*For a show that’s all about the nuns, I also loved that Nunsense had an all-female directing and choreography team.*”

Rachel Weinberg,
 RachelWeinbergReviews.com

Pronoun key:
 † (he/him/his)
 ‡ (she/her/hers)
 † (they, them, theirs)
 † (any, with respect)

Photos by Justin Kocher

313 Attendance	3 Performances	20 Company Members
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Cast

Missy Aguilar‡ (Sister Robert Anne), Cynthia Carter‡ (Sister Mary Regina), Landree Fleming‡ (Sister Mary Amnesia), Rebecca Keeshin‡ (Sister Mary Leo), Kyra Leigh‡ (Sister Mary Hubert).

Musicians

Kailey Rockwell‡ (conductor/piano), Justin Harner† (additional keyboard), Erik Brink† (reeds), Maddi Vogel† (drums).

Production Team

Rachel Sypniewski‡ (costume designer), Rachel West‡ (lighting designer), Matthew R. Chase† (sound designer), Caitlin Body‡ (production stage manager, AEA), Andrea Enger† (assistant stage manager), Jennifer Aparicio‡ (production manager), Rashaad A. Bond† (producing artistic associate); Alex Rhyant† (production and operations director), Michael Weber† (artistic director).





PASSING STRANGE

Porchlight Revisits **PASSING STRANGE**

May 18 & 19, 2022
Ruth Page Center for the Arts

Directed by Donterrio†
Music Directed by Bryan McCaffrey†
Choreographed by Terri K Woodall‡

This emotional global journey of a young musician chasing youthful dreams and spiritual clarity against a shifting backdrop of locales and acquaintances is loaded with soulful lyrics and passion. It debuted to critical acclaim on Broadway in 2008, and was given the Porchlight Revisits treatment with an incredibly intimate and profound production.

Pronoun key:

† (he/him/his)
‡ (she/her/hers)
† (they, them, theirs)
‡ (any, with respect)

Photos by Lobo Tate

“Stew’s groundbreaking 2008 musical about a Black artist gets a second look”

Matt Simonette,
Chicago Reader



Cast

Michael Maurice Ashford†, Rueben Echoles†, Reneisha J. Jenkins‡, MJ Rawls‡, Nolan Robinson†, Byron Willis†, Jasmine Lacy Young‡.

Musicians

Kelan Smith† (guitar), Marcel Bonfim† (bass), Cami Mennitte‡ (drums).

Production Team

Jyreika Guest‡ (intimacy director), Rachel West‡ (lighting designer), Gregory Graham† (costume designer), Matthew R. Chase† (production manager), Frankie Leo Bennett† (producing artistic associate), Alex Rhyant† (production and operations director), Michael Weber† (artistic director).

328
Attendance

3
Performances

23
Company
Members

1
Black Theatre
Alliance Award
Nominations

We gratefully acknowledge Elaine Cohen and Arlen Rubin, sponsors of the 2021-2022 New Faces Sing Broadway season.



Porchlight's New Faces Sing Broadway series continues to be a platform to showcase the latest new talents in Chicago. Many of the New Faces have gone on to perform in Porchlight Mainstage productions and on stages in Chicago, on Broadway and around the country. In this edition, host Robin DaSilva and the New Faces took audiences on a music-filled trip through the 1947 Broadway season with songs from *Brigadoon*, *Finian's Rainbow*, *High Button Shoes*, *Annie Get Your Gun* and more.

Photo by Porchlight Music Theatre

New Faces Sing Broadway Series

NEW FACES SING BROADWAY 1947

(virtual)

April 8 - May 5, 2022

Filmed at the Ruth Page Center for the Arts

Directed by Adrian Abel Azevedo

Music Directed by Linda Madonia

Hosted by Robin DaSilva‡

Cast

Samantha Behen‡, Anna Brockman‡, Jonah Cochint, Breanna Ghostone‡, Nathan Karnikt, Austin Nelson Jr.†, Oliver Schilling†, Destiny Strothers‡, Ciarra Stroud‡, Austin Winter†/†.

Production Team

Mark Brown† (lighting technician), Chollette† (video editor), Austin Crowley† (videographer), Matthew R. Chase† (sound designer), Alex Groesch† (assistant camera operator), Frankie Leo Bennett† (producing artistic associate), Alex Rhyant (production & operations director), Michael Weber† (artistic director).



Porchlight made its Center on Halsted debut with *New Faces Sing Broadway 1971*. The host for this salute to Broadway 1971 and New Faces return to live performances was Ed Kross. Kross and the up-and-coming actors performed songs from *Follies*, *Hello, Dolly!*, *Jesus Christ Superstar*, *On the Town*, *70, Girls, 70*, *Two by Two*, *You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown* and others.

Photo by Oni Wright

New Faces Sing Broadway Series

NEW FACES SING BROADWAY 1971

August 3, 2022

Center on Halsted

Directed by Frankie Leo Bennett†

Music Directed by Bryan McCaffrey†

Hosted by Ed Kross†

Cast

Rachel Carreras‡, Maddison Denault‡, Kristin Doty‡, Josiah Haugent, David Moreland†, Hanah Rose Nardone‡, Maxel Schingent†/†, Quinn Simmons†, Kelcy Taylor‡, Evan Wilhelm†.

Production Team

David Fiorello (piano), Alex Rhyant (production & operations director), Michael Weber† (artistic director).

Pronoun key:

† (he/him/his)

‡ (she/her/hers)

†† (they, them, theirs)

† (any, with respect)

We gratefully acknowledge sponsors Jeremy Eden & Nancy Marder and the National Alliance for Musical Theatre.



Porchlight welcomed Paul Oakley Stovall (a Chicago-based artist who is currently performing as “George Washington” in the national tour of Lin-Manuel Miranda’s *Hamilton*) and his musical *Clear* for a staged reading starring the author. This pay-what-you-can reading was based on actual events from Paul Oakley Stovall’s life-changing political odyssey as part of the Obama administration. He created *Clear* for everyone who wants to say yes to life, continue searching for joy and live in their truth.

Staged Reading

CLEAR

May 31, 2022

Ruth Page Center for the Arts

Directed by Reneisha J. Jenkins‡

Music Directed by Austin Deadman†

Cast

Paul Oakley Stovall† (Lawson), Nikhil Saboo† (Ryan), Stef Tovar† (Jake), Sharriese Hamilton‡ (Rae), Gabriel Mudd† (Anthony), Andrew Mueller† (Kenny/Tomascz/White Boys), Sara Sevigny‡ (Samantha), Alexis J Roston‡ (Stephens), Tiffany Renee Johnson‡ (Life).

Musicians

Austin Deadman† (conductor/piano), Vance Okraszewski† (bass), Brandon Bott† (drums).

Production Team

Matthew R. Chase† (production manager), Michael Hendricks† (production stage manager), Frankie Leo Bennett† (producing artistic associate), Alex Rhyant† (production & operations director), Michael Weber† (artistic director).

Photo by James Juliano

Summer Concert

BROADWAY IN YOUR BACKYARD

August 10 & 11, 2022

Ambassador Chicago

Directed by Frankie Leo Bennett†

Music Directed by Justin Akira Kono†

Porchlight returned to the Ambassador Chicago in the Gold Coast for a second year with *Broadway in your Backyard*. The performance on the 17th floor Astor Terrace included a reception with drinks and appetizers and a performance from the 2022 *Broadway in your Backyard* Ambassador Chicago company including Caitlin Dobbins‡, Nik Kmieciak†, Jennifer Ledesma‡, Bryan McCaffrey† and David Fiorello†.

Pronoun key:

- † (he/him/his)
- ‡ (she/her/hers)
- † (they, them, theirs)
- ‡ (any, with respect)



Photos by Lobo Tate



Community
Engagement

Photo by Porchlight Music Theatre



Community Engagement

BROADWAY IN YOUR BACKYARD

July 19 - September 6, 2022

Directed by Frankie Leo Bennett†

Music Directed by Justin Akira Kono‡

CAST

Lydia Burke‡, Caitlin Dobbins‡, Nik Kmieciak†, Justin Akira Kono†, Jennifer Ledesma‡, Bryan McCaffrey†, Brandon Pisano†/‡, Lorenzo Rush, Jr†, David Fiorello†.

Broadway in your Backyard, now in its second year, is Porchlight’s free outdoor summer concert series. For 2022, Porchlight partnered with the Chicago’s Night Out in the Parks series — with support from the Mayor’s Office and Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs & Special Events — to reach more parks and people throughout Chicago. The rotating company performed favorite songs from *RENT*, *Hello, Dolly!*, *The Music Man*, *Grease*, *Six*, *The Little Mermaid*, *Hair*, *West Side Story*, *Mamma Mia!* and more.

Pronoun key:
 † (he/him/his) ‡ (they, them, theirs)
 ‡ (she/her/hers) † (any, with respect)

We gratefully acknowledge the sponsorship of the Chicago Park District and Byline Bank.

DATES & LOCATIONS

All performances were one-hour long. 6 p.m. - 7 p.m.

Wicker Park

1425 N. Damen Ave.
 Tuesday, July 19

Unity Park

2636 N. Kimball Ave.
 Tuesday, July 26
(additional support from the Unity Park Advisory Council)

Portage Park

4100 N. Long Ave.
 Tuesday, Aug. 2

Munroe Park

2617 W. 105th St.
 Tuesday, Aug. 9
(additional support from the Beverly Area Planning Association)

Washington Square Park

901 N. Clark St.
 Tuesday, Aug. 16
(additional support from the Washington Square Park Advisory Council)

Park No. 534

1300 S. St. Louis Ave.
 Tuesday, Aug. 23

Gill Park

825 W. Sheridan Rd.
 Tuesday, Aug. 30

Ellis Park

3520 S. Cottage Grove Ave.
 Tuesday, Sept. 6

Photos by Porchlight Music Theatre



Photos by Porchlight Music Theatre

Evening On

W DIVISION ST

September 8, 2021

Evening on Division

Division between State and Dearborn
Starring Lucy Godinez‡ and Billy Rude†

Porchlight Music Theatre was thrilled to perform at the first “Evening on Division,” formerly “Evening on Astor” that featured a wide variety of wonderful food, a terrific selection of drinks, delightful music and a great opportunity to see neighbors and make new friends.



September 12, 2021

Sundays on State

State between Lake and Monroe
Starring Darilyn Burtley‡ and Billy Rude†

Porchlight performed twice at this new event to encourage people to visit State Street. We were invited on behalf of the Chicago Loop Alliance. Neighbors from every Chicago community and beyond came together for this free, interactive block party, while safely enjoying art, culture, active recreation, food and drink, shopping and local attractions in the heart of everyone’s neighborhood – the Loop. Sundays on State met and exceeded the event’s three primary goals of accelerating the economic recovery, uniting the community and creating joy.



September 24 & 25, 2021

Navy Pier LIVE

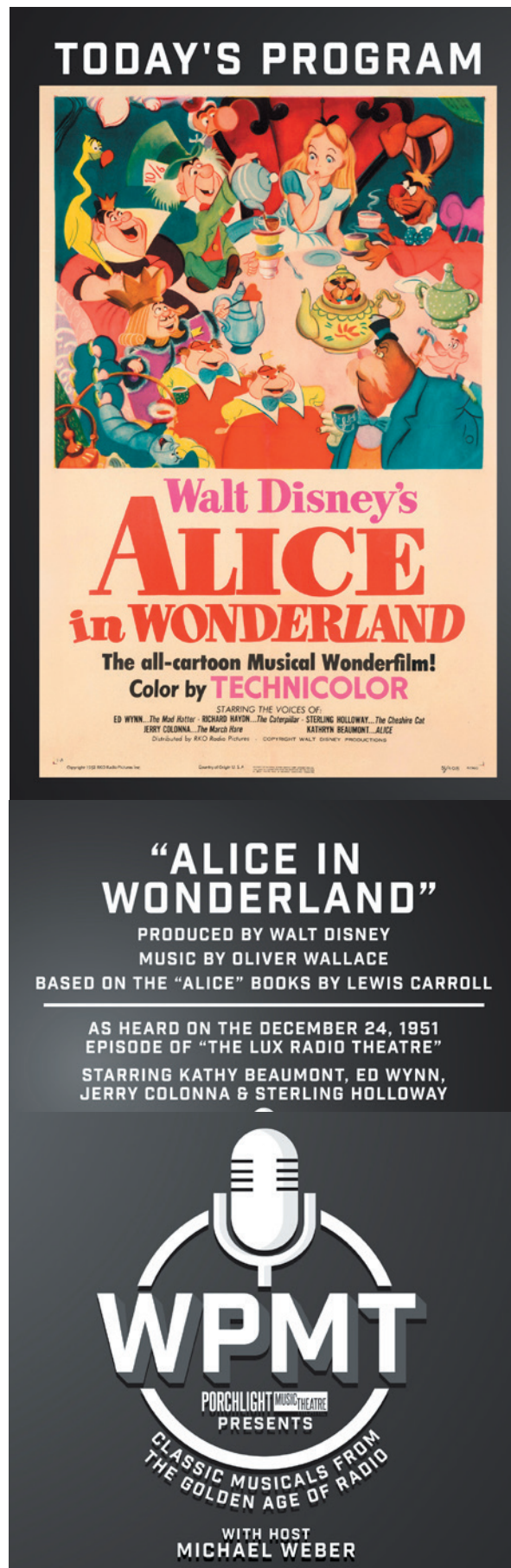
Navy Pier’s Polk Bros Park, Lake Stage
Starring Chuckie Benson†, Rafe Bradford†, Satya Chávez‡, Justin Akira Kono†, Michelle Lauto‡, Robert Reddrick† and Juwon Tyrel Perry†

Porchlight joined more than 40 of Chicago’s brightest cultural institutions performing in the same location for the first time ever in one “can’t miss” event at Navy Pier.



Pronoun key:
 † (he/him/his) † (they, them, theirs)
 ‡ (she/her/hers) ‡ (any, with respect)

Special Appearances



Virtual Programming

PORCHLIGHT ONLINE

Porchlight continued many of the free virtual programs it launched immediately after the start of the pandemic.

WPMT:

Classic Musicals from the Golden Age of Radio

As of the close of FY22, Porchlight had released 112 episodes of WPMT. Every Tuesday fans have been treated to “WPMT: Classic Musicals from the Golden Age of Radio” where Artistic Director Michael Weber introduces musicals from the early to mid 20th century as they were heard on network radio programs such as The Lux Radio Theatre and The Theatre Guild on the Air, often featuring members of the original Broadway casts.

Porchlight By Request

We asked some of our supporters to tell us their favorite show tune, then arranged for a favorite Porchlight performer to sing that request and share it with them and you! The series, created and hosted by Artistic Director Michael Weber, gathered talents from Chicago, Broadway and the world of theater to discuss each of the musical stage works of Stephen Sondheim in celebration of his 90th birthday year. Each “Sondheim @ 90 Roundtable” episode focused on a specific Sondheim musical in conversation with special guests supported by videos of live and filmed performances, providing an engaging and informative overview of that week’s production and Sondheim’s impact on the performing arts. This virtual series continues to be available, free, via our website.

I’ll Drink to That

Porchlight Music Theatre offered “I’ll Drink to That,” a complementary series to “Sondheim @ 90 Roundtable,” hosted by Porchlight Board Member and Hearty Boy Steve McDonagh. Each week, McDonagh shared a cocktail recipe that pairs with that Saturday’s “Sondheim @ 90 Roundtable with host Michael Weber” episode.

[VISIT THE YOUTUBE PAGE](#)

Movie Musical Mondays

Movie Musical Monday returned in spring of 2022 with a monthly meeting on Zoom to discuss new and classic movies. Also in 2022, Porchlight launched the Movie Musical Monday: The Podcast that is available on all listening platforms.

Education & Outreach



Education & Outreach

Porchlight reached more students than ever in 2021 - 2022, through our onsite youth programs, in school programs all over the city, and through our partnership with Chicago Youth Centers.



FOR YOUTH:

Fall and Spring Classes & Summer Camps

Our youth classes were finally back to in-person final performances for family and friends and added a younger age group to serve ages 4-6 years. We were so happy to see familiar faces and new students each term and two of our summer groups were so popular they split into double sections! Our students studied acting, singing, dancing, writing characters, learned to choreograph and collaborate on a story and create props and costume pieces for their performance. Our Advanced Music Theatre Performance campers (aged 14-17) even enjoyed a mock audition masterclass focusing on the college audition process.

Photos by Porchlight Music Theatre

FOR SCHOOLS

“Sing Out!” Residencies, Production Support & Student Matinees

Our signature in-school residency, Sing Out!, has reached so many more students this year — including winning five Creative Schools Fund grants from Ingenuity for program delivery at Orozco Elementary, Palmer Elementary, Hale Elementary, Neil Elementary and Clay Elementary. We were able to bring our expertise in music theatre to several schools as we helped them put on their own musicals at Chicago Academy Elementary, Inter-American Magnet School and Senn High School. We helped with everything from choosing a title and securing rights, casting, choreography, and staging their performance for their family and school community. This year we were so excited for our first student matinee for *Spring Awakening* followed by a talkback with some of the cast. We were able to welcome all students and their chaperones for just \$5/ticket.





PORCHLIGHT'S 2021
ICONS
Gala

Cast

Ariel Dorsey†, Alejandro Fonseca†, Michelle Lauto†, Mia Nevarez†, Laura Savage‡, Kyra Sorce‡, Keely Vasquez‡.

Musicians

Linda Madonia† (conductor/piano), Marcel Bonfim† (bass), Matt Beck† (reeds), Justin Akira Kono† (drums).

Production Team

Adrian Abel Azevedo† (creative associate), Bill Morey† (costume designer), Frankie Leo Bennett† (assistant to Ms. Rivera), Austin Crowley† (videographer), Dan Bragieli† (videographer), Rashaad A. Bond† (production assistant), Alex Rhyant† (production & operations director).

Photos by Antonio Dickey

EVENTS

ICONS GALA

October 20, 2021

Galleria Marchetti

Directed by Artistic Director Michael Weber†

Music Directed by Linda Madonia†

Choreographed by Laura Savage‡

Porchlight kicked off the season in style, moving its annual Gala to the fall and celebrating the amazing Chita Rivera with its first in-person, indoor event in nearly two years. Porchlight marked 26 years as the center for music theatre in Chicago, honored Rivera with The ICON Award, presented Rick and Deann Bayless and the Bayless Family Foundation with the Luminary Award and celebrated Latino business and civic leaders. Matthew Rodrigues, of “Chicago Today” on NBC5, served as host for the evening, and WGN’s Paul Lisnek led a fascinating onstage conversation with Ms. Rivera.

Pronoun key:

† (he/him/his)

‡ (she/her/hers)

‡ (they, them, theirs)

‡ (any, with respect)

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Steve McDonagh

& Dan Smith

Boyce Moffitt

Cesar Rolon, Jr.

Scene Changer Honorees

This honor recognized organizations and individuals who are “changing the scene” of Chicago’s cultural landscape.

Olga Camargo - CEO & Founder, FARO Associates LLC

Martin R. Castro - President & CEO, Casa Central

Dr. Ana Gil Garcia - Professor Emerita & Fulbright Scholar, Northeastern Illinois University

Hilda Frontany - Board Chair, Rincon Family Services

Marlene Gonzáles - President, LCG Group LLC

Iris Y. Martinez - Clerk of the Circuit Court of Cook County

Xavier Nogueras - Co-Founder, Illinois Unidos / Founder, BOCA Media Group

Sylvia Puente - President & CEO, Latino Policy Forum

Shell Reyes - Owner, Shell Reyes Designs & Appraisals

José R. Sánchez - President & CEO, Humboldt Park Health

Mario Treto, Jr. - Acting Secretary, Illinois Department of Financial & Professional Regulation



Your support helps us reimagine what is possible, push the walls of our creativity and dream a bright future for Porchlight. THANK YOU.

Your Support, Our Gratitude

Photos by Antonio Dickey



May 23, 2022
Museum of Contemporary Art

Directed by Artistic Director Michael Weber+ & Producing Artistic Associate Frankie Leo Bennett+
Music Directed by David Fiorello+
Choreographed by Alejandro Fonseca† & Laura Savage‡

Musicians
 David Fiorello† (conductor/piano), Rafe Bradford† (bass), Hillary Bayley‡ (violin), Lewis Rawlinson† (cello), Justin Akira Kono† (drums).

Pronoun key:
 † (he/him/his) ‡ (they, them, theirs)
 ‡ (she/her/hers) † (any, with respect)

Photo by Chollette

EVENTS

**CHICAGO SINGS:
 STEPHEN SONDHEIM**

Chicago Sings is Porchlight's highly anticipated annual fundraising celebration honoring artists whose music has changed the world, presented by a who's-who roster of Chicago music theatre and cabaret favorites. This year's Chicago Sings was a celebration of the life and art of the great composer and lyricist Stephen Sondheim and the presentation of the Guy Adkins Award for Excellence in the Advancement of Music Theatre in Chicago to Jim Corti. The 2022 concert broke previous attendance and fundraising records, and, for the first time in Chicago Sings history, Porchlight offered two opportunities to experience Chicago's music theatre and cabaret performers saluting Sondheim: "It's a Hit" Live Experience that included a reception and live viewing in the Edlis Neeson Auditorium and the "Color & Light" Lounge Experience, hosted by the Porchlight Young Professionals, with a live stream of the concert in a lounge created on the second floor of the MCA.

Cast

Larry Adams†, Bryce Ancil†, Neala Barron‡, Justin Brill†, Brianna Borger‡, Christine Bunuan‡, Lydia Burke‡, Andrés Enriquez†, Parker Guidry†, Cecilia Iole‡, Paul Jordan Jansen†, Mark David Kaplan†, Clare Kennedy‡, Nik Kmieci†, Taylor Lane‡, Evan Tyron Martin†, Beckie Menzie‡, Juwon Tyrel Perry†, Nolan Robinson†, Kelan M. Smith†, Greg Straus†, Genevieve Thiers‡, Nancy Voights‡ with child performers Celeste Kaplan‡, Gabriel Lockhart†, Mateo Martinez† and performer/child supervisor Becky Keeshin‡.

Planning Committee

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 Bill Bergfalk
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 Cody Czmyr
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 Jeremy Eden
 Rhona Frazin
 Art Garwin

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WAYS TO SUPPORT PORCHLIGHT

Our Porchlight community supports us in a variety of ways that allow us to inspire and entertain, and helps us ensure the future of music theatre in Chicago.



THE ANNUAL FUND

Porchlight counts on the hundreds of individuals who make unrestricted contributions each season, enabling us to produce the highest quality, most exciting music theatre featuring the most talented performers, designers and technicians. Because ticket sales only cover about 50% of our nonprofit's budget, these hundreds of annual donors of \$100-\$2,499 make all the difference in our ability to shine.

THE GEORGE K. SARGENT III CASH RESERVE FUND

Achieving financial stability is the key to expanding programming, innovating, taking artistic risks and weathering economic downturns. A cash reserve fund is an important strategic goal championed by long-time board member Kim Sargent who passed away in June 2019. His legacy of strong fiscal stewardship continues to inspire all of us at Porchlight, and we established this fund in his memory. Porchlight commits a percentage of annual surpluses to this Fund, and welcomes contributions to support this endeavor.

ICONS Gala Performers (2021)
Photo by Antonio Dickey

THE SONGBOOK SOCIETY

Members of the Songbook Society are music theatre lovers who have a strong appreciation for the excellence of music theatre and enjoy getting to know others who share the same enthusiasm and passion for Porchlight. Contributing \$2,500+ annually, these dedicated stakeholders serve as advocates and enjoy special access and unique opportunities that deepen their engagement with the art and artists.

THE RACHEL ROCKWELL MEMORIAL FUND:

Supporting Fierce Women Behind the Table at Porchlight Music Theatre

This fund was established by Porchlight board member Brenda Didier to recognize, employ and support women in artistic leadership positions at Porchlight Music Theatre in memory of theatre director, choreographer and performer Rachel Rockwell. Contributions to this Fund will allow us to advance and highlight more dynamic females in our field.

THE CHRISTOPHER N. TISONE MEMORIAL STAGE MANAGEMENT FUND

Through the generosity of the Tisone family, this fund supports a combination of both seasoned stage managers as well as stage managers newer in their careers who are working on Porchlight productions in a given year. Support for this Fund allows us to continue to highlight, support and mentor our "SMs" who make the show run.

PLANNED GIVING

Planned giving is a way to make a future gift through your financial and estate plans. Your gift may provide tax benefits for you or your loved ones, and it will ensure that the enjoyment and enrichment you've experienced at Porchlight is available for generations to come. Through your future gift, you can continue to support Porchlight's artistic work and exceptional arts education and outreach programs.

OUR GENEROUS CONTRIBUTORS

The following reflects contributions received between 9/1/21-8/31/22..

For more information about how you can support our work on stage and in the community, please contact Kellie Buffington, Development & Administration Associate, at kellie@porchlightmusictheatre.org.

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 The MacArthur Fund for Culture, Equity, and the Arts at Prince Daniel and Genevieve Ratner Foundation

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ICONS Gala Performers (2021)
Photo by Antonio Dickey

FINANCIALS

FY22 Statement of Activities

(unaudited)

	Without Donor Restrictions	With Donor Restrictions	Total
Revenue			
Earned			
Production Revenue	\$445,664	-	445,664
Education Revenue	101,104	-	101,104
Other Earned Revenue	31,079	-	31,079
Total Earned	577,847	-	577,847
Contributed			
Individual Giving	330,899	58,248	389,147
Grants incl Government Support	1,226,465	(397,467)	828,998
Events, net of expenses	141,705	-	141,705
Corporate Support	20,508	6,499	27,007
Total Contributed	1,719,577	(332,720)	1,386,857
Total Revenue	2,297,424	(332,720)	1,964,704
Expenses			
Program			
Production Expenses	1,086,927	-	1,086,927
Education Expenses	103,414	-	103,414
Total Program	1,190,341	-	1,190,341
Management and General	789,944	-	789,944
Fundraising	137,485	-	137,485
Total Expenses	2,117,770	-	2,117,770
Change in Net Assets	179,654	(332,720)	(153,066)

Statement of Financial Position for the Fiscal Year ended August 31, 2022

	Unaudited Aug 31 2022	Aug 31 2021
Assets		
Current Assets		
Cash	614,190	835,034
Investments	-	-
Accounts Receivable	4,469	66,316
Pledges Receivable	111,900	48,370
Prepaid Expenses	59,179	34,422
Other Current Assets	39,532	32,887
Total Current Assets	829,270	1,017,029
Other Assets		
Property and Equipment, net	33,136	34,572
Total Assets	862,406	1,051,601
Liabilities and Net Assets		
Current Liabilities		
Accounts Payable	57,585	37,214
Accrued Liabilities	9,414	4,415
Deferred Revenue	172,342	98,268
Total Current Liabilities	239,340	139,897
Long-Term Liabilities		
PPP Loan	-	135,645
Total Long-Term Liabilities	-	135,645
Total Liabilities	239,340	275,542
Net Assets		
Without Donor Restrictions		
General Operating	408,898	245,026
Board Designated "Sargent" Fund	66,226	50,372
With Donor Restrictions	147,942	480,662
Total Net Assets	623,066	776,060
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	862,406	1,051,601



**BOX OFFICE &
PERFORMANCE SPACE**

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**ADMINISTRATION &
PRODUCTION FACILITY**

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