



2019-2020 GEVA THEATRE CENTER

IMPACT REPORT

Mark Cuddy | Artistic Director

Christopher Mannelli | Executive Director



Word of the Year:

IMPROVISATION

2019-2020 marked Geva Theatre Center's 47th season and Artistic Director Mark Cuddy's 25th. After starting out on a spirited note in September, with the Tony Award-winning musical *La Cage aux Folles*, all plans were brought to an abrupt halt halfway through the year. The sudden outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic brought with it equal parts anxiety, resilience, perseverance and hope. By the end of its 2020 fiscal year on July 31, Geva—and the global theatre community—was looking back on a season they could never have imagined.

Photos by Ron Heerkens Jr.: Esther Winter in *La Cage Aux Folles*. Nikhaar Kishnani and Marina Shay in *Queen*. Danny Vaccaro and Stephen Caffrey in *Slow Food*. Elliot Greer and Samantha Sayah in *Once*.

ARTISTIC & LITERARY HIGHLIGHTS

PRODUCTIONS: The 2019-2020 Season was halted on March 13, 2020, due to the pandemic. Still, seven wide-ranging productions in the Wilson Stage and Fielding Stage were realized before the stages went dark.

Wilson and Fielding Stage highlights included:

Marriage and Babies A mid-life anniversary getaway in *Slow Food* and the trials of new parenthood in *Cry It Out* provided laughs and tears.

Musical Virtuosos Danny Vaccaro's show-stopping performance in *La Cage Aux Folles* and the super talented cast of *Once* book-ended a season with *A Christmas Carol* celebrating the holidays.

Passionate Positions characters wrestled with race, privilege, ethics and history in the searing drama of *The Niceties* and the contemporary drama *Queen*.

NEW PLAY DEVELOPMENT: Geva's literary team continued to impact the theatre industry by deepening relationships with playwrights and shaping new plays for production across the country. Geva supported the development of 12 new plays by writers from western New York and around the country, including:

- "Rochester Stories" commissions by Gabriel Jason Dean & David Dabbon, Allison Gregory, Elyzabeth Gregory Wilder, and the Universes ensemble.
- new plays, including *Lulu in Rochester* by Allison Gregory, *The Sea and the Stars* by Harrison David Rivers, *Dangerous Dress* by Catherine Trieschmann, *Looks Like Pretty* by Elyzabeth Gregory Wilder, and *Africantic* by the Universes ensemble, supported through workshops and intensive rehearsal processes.
- the Regional Writers Showcase featuring Carolyn E. Kourofsky's *Solitude*.
- a partnership with Writers & Books producing online writing opportunities for regional adult and emerging writers.
- community relationships cultivated through engagement, post-show conversations, and the Hornets' Nest series.
- the debut of Geva's "Out of the Rehearsal Hall" podcast featuring conversations with directors Shelley Butler, Mikael Burke; playwrights Elyzabeth Gregory Wilder, Brian Quijada, Dipika Guha; performers Jen Cody, Madeleine Lambert; costume designer Christina Selian; intimacy and fight choreographer Rocío Mendez; and the founders of the Universes ensemble, Steven Sapp and Mildred Ruiz.

HORNETS' NEST: Positive responses to this free play-reading and discussion series continued to affirm its impact on the community. Sheira Feit's play *Little Lives* and *hang* by debbie tucker green each provoked discussion about critical issues, including the line between justice and revenge, reproductive rights, and the importance of civil discourse between those who disagree.

ABRIDGED SEASON AT A GLANCE



WILSON STAGE SEASON:

La Cage Aux Folles (Book by Harvey Fierstein; Music & Lyrics by Jerry Herman; Based on the Play by Jean Poiret)
September 3 - October 6, 2019

The Niceties (Eleanor Burgess)
October 22 - November 17, 2019

A Christmas Carol (Charles Dickens; Adapted/Directed by Mark Cuddy/Music/Lyrics by Gregg Coffin)
November 27 - December 29, 2019

Slow Food (Wendy MacLeod)
January 14 - February 9, 2020

Once (Book by Enda Walsh; Music & Lyrics by Glen Hansard and Markéta Irglová; Based on the Motion Picture Written and Directed by John Carney)
February 19 - March 22, 2020

FIELDING STAGE SEASON:

Queen (Madhuri Shekar) November 7 - November 24, 2019

Cry it Out (Molly Smith Metzler) March 5 - March 22, 2020

READINGS, FESTIVALS, AND EVENTS:

Festival of New Theatre

- *Lulu in Rochester* (Allison Gregory)
- *The Sea and the Stars* (Harrison David Rivers)
- *Dangerous Dress* (Catherine Trieschmann)
- *Looks Like Pretty* (Elyzabeth Gregory Wilder)
- *Africantic* (the Universes ensemble)

Regional Writers Showcase

- *Solitude* (Carolyn E. Kourofsky)

The Hornets' Nest

- *Little Lives* (Sheira Feit)
- *hang* (debbie tucker green)

Drag at Geva

Out of the Rehearsal Podcasts

Virtual Happiness Hours

BY THE NUMBERS

PRODUCTIONS AND ATTENDANCE:

Number of
Productions

7

Number of Public
Readings & Events

40

Number of
Performances & Events

237

Number of
Tickets

86,246

Number of
Subscribers

11,076

Subscriber
Renewal Rate

85%

DONORS:

Number of
Individual Donors

2,062

Donor
Renewal Rate

60%

% of Subscriber
Households Donating

22%

EMPLOYMENT & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT:

Full-time, Part-time &
Seasonal Employees

88

Interns, Apprentices
& Fellows

11

Number of
Volunteers

536

FINANCIAL RESULTS

OPERATING RESULTS: The Covid-19 shutdown and the abrupt cancellation of the end of the 2019-2020 Season had a profound impact on the theatre, the effects of which can be seen below. The organization's operating results decreased from an operating deficit of (\$218,417) in FY19 to an operating deficit of (\$470,361) or .9% of functional expenses in FY20.

- Geva achieved positive cash flow from operations in the amount of \$565,365 for the year ended July 31, 2020, improving unrestricted working capital to (\$132,661) or -.23 months of operations.
- Total operating revenue, support and releases decreased 18% and total operating expenses decreased 15%.
- Geva had an overall slight increase of 1.5% in unrestricted cash contributions, with a 10% increase in individual giving.
- Total ticket income decreased 32% to \$3,259,016 in FY20 from \$4,791,837 in FY19.

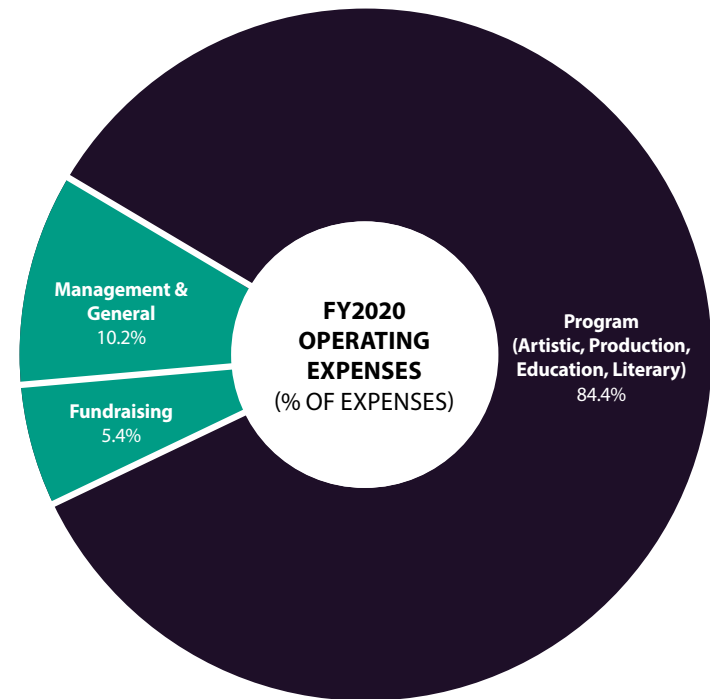
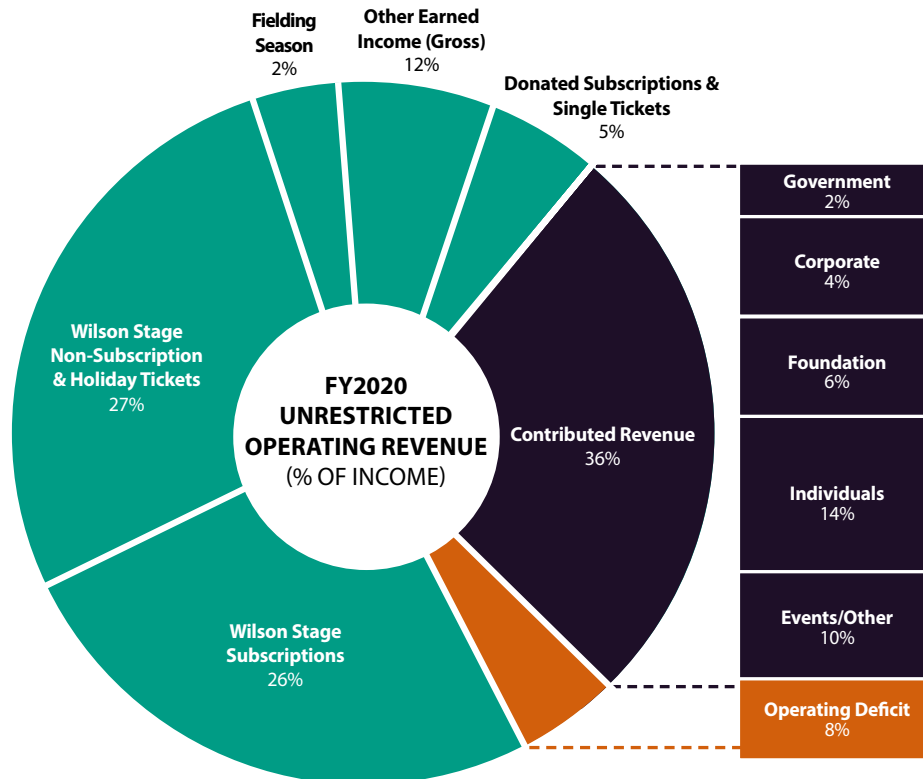
HISTORIC TAX CREDITS: In FY17 Geva Theatre Center entered into a Historic Tax Credit arrangement to assist in the completion of the renovation of its historic facility. The financial statements reflect all affiliate organizations.

FY2020 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

To obtain a copy of the complete audited financial statements, please call (585) 232-1366

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION						
JULY 31,	WITHOUT DONOR RESTRICTIONS		WITH DONOR RESTRICTIONS		TOTALS	
			Non Perpetual in Nature	Perpetual in Nature	2020	2019
ASSETS						
Current Assets						
Cash, Cash Equivalents and Certificates of Deposit	\$ 2,574,591		\$ 643,881	\$ -	\$ 3,218,472	\$ 1,902,726
Accounts, Contributions and Grants Receivable, Net	\$ 383,667		\$ 316,312	\$ 99,581	\$ 799,560	\$ 738,763
Prepaid Expenses and Other Current Assets	\$ 99,586		\$ -	\$ -	\$ 99,586	\$ 303,308
Total Current Assets	\$ 3,057,844		\$ 960,193	\$ 99,581	\$ 4,117,618	\$ 2,944,797
Property and Equipment, Net	\$ 8,521,998		\$ -	\$ -	\$ 8,521,998	\$ 8,834,717
Pledges Receivable, Net of Discounts and Allowances	\$ -		\$ 165,139	\$ -	\$ 165,139	\$ 233,321
Non-Current Certificate of Deposit	\$ -		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 416,625
Investments	\$ 1,558,561		\$ 279,566	\$ 1,364,875	\$ 3,203,002	\$ 2,776,895
Due To/From	\$ (27,001)		\$ 21,582	\$ 5,419	\$ -	\$ -
TOTAL ASSETS	\$ 13,111,402		\$ 1,426,480	\$ 1,469,875	\$ 16,007,757	\$ 15,206,355
LIABILITIES						
Current Liabilities						
Accounts Payable and Accrued Expenses	\$ 178,525		\$ -	\$ -	\$ 178,525	\$ 228,949
Deferred Revenue, Net of Deferred Expense	\$ 2,615,994		\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,615,994	\$ 2,493,856
Current Portion of Long-Term Debt	\$ 395,986		\$ -	\$ -	\$ 395,986	\$ 42,458
Total Current Liabilities	\$ 3,190,505		\$ -	\$ -	\$ 3,190,505	\$ 2,765,263
Long-Term Debt	\$ 2,260,886		\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,260,886	\$ 1,824,031
TOTAL LIABILITIES	\$ 5,451,391		\$ -	\$ -	\$ 5,451,391	\$ 4,589,294
NET ASSETS	\$ 7,660,011		\$ 1,426,480	\$ 1,469,875	\$ 10,556,366	\$ 10,617,061
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	\$ 13,111,402		\$ 1,426,480	\$ 1,469,875	\$ 16,007,757	\$ 15,206,355
STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES						
FOR THE YEAR ENDED JULY 31,	WITHOUT DONOR RESTRICTIONS		WITH DONOR RESTRICTIONS		TOTALS	
	OPERATING ACTIVITY	CAPITAL CAMPAIGN	Non Perpetual in Nature	Perpetual in Nature	2020	2019
REVENUE AND SUPPORT						
Earned Revenue including Investment Activity	\$ 4,016,150	\$ -	\$ (77,617)	\$ -	\$ 3,938,533	\$ 5,633,004
Contributions, Grants and Support	\$ 2,549,190	\$ 17,941	\$ 315,852	\$ 10,700	\$ 2,893,683	\$ 2,431,169
Net Assets Released from Restriction	\$ 259,951	\$ 10,973	\$ (270,923)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Capital Contributions netted against Sale of Assets	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Reclassification	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
TOTAL REVENUE, SUPPORT AND RELEASES	\$ 6,825,291	\$ 28,914	\$ (32,688)	\$ 10,700	\$ 6,832,216	\$ 8,064,173
EXPENSES						
Program Services	\$ 5,812,725	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 5,812,725	\$ 6,850,480
Management & General	\$ 704,812	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 704,812	\$ 713,033
Fundraising	\$ 353,093	\$ 22,281	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 375,374	\$ 462,677
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 6,870,630	\$ 22,281	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 6,892,911	\$ 8,026,190
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	\$ (45,340)	\$ 6,633	\$ (32,688)	\$ 10,700	\$ (60,695)	\$ 37,983
Net Assets, Beginning of Year	\$ 7,698,718		\$ 1,459,168	\$ 1,459,175	\$ 10,617,061	\$ 10,579,078
Net Assets, End of Year	\$ 7,660,011		\$ 1,426,480	\$ 1,469,875	\$ 10,556,366	\$ 10,617,061

FY2020 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS



EDUCATION & ENGAGEMENT IMPACT

EDUCATION:

P.L.A.Y. (Performance = Literature + Art + You) Program

While most of Geva's planned student matinees could not take place, student performances of *The Niceties* and *A Christmas Carol* were well attended.

For *The Niceties*, post-performance talkbacks were facilitated by community members involved in related work, including musician and Monroe County public defender [Danielle Ponder](#) and program director [Shawn Brown](#) of Teen Empowerment.



Cindy De La Cruz and Jordan Baker in *The Niceties*. Photo by Ron Heerkens Jr.

As their comments demonstrated, a number of BIPOC students in the audience related to the character Zoe, a Black student with only white teachers offering non-diversified curricula:

"Zoe has a bigger voice than mine on stage. Most times white people have the bigger voice. This play shows that Black people can have a big voice too. This has inspired me to have a big voice in the room."

"I think the play was about the teacher/student relationship. Oftentimes we students don't believe we can say how we feel. But this play shows us that we can speak our truth, speak truth to power."

"We have only been thinking what our teachers have taught us. We have to stand up."

Cindy De La Cruz, who played Zoe, visited classes at World of Inquiry School and Nazareth College to discuss contextual topics such as de-colonizing curriculum, ways of standing up for yourself, and BIPOC students' experiences in education.

STAGE DOOR: For the Stage Door Project, Geva partnered with Bishop Kearney High School (BKHS) on their staging of *Once*, culminating in a sold-out performance on the Wilson Stage by students, with musical accompaniment by BKHS alumni – just days prior to the shutdown. Nearly 60 students, faculty, and adult volunteers from BKHS worked with Geva’s professional cast and crew on all aspects of their production. Geva’s actors paired up with the student actors sharing their roles, and other Geva staff worked with students in areas of theatre management mentoring them throughout the entire rehearsal process.

AIRcademy: Geva’s annual Summer Academy was transformed into AIRcademy, offering online classes such as performance, auditioning, playwriting, dramaturgy, theatre of protest, and building a career, taught by Geva artists. Operating digitally also allowed for the offering of master classes led by some of the nation’s leading artists, concluding with Jason Bassett, Production Supervisor for *Hamilton*. In total, 32 students took part in six multi-week courses, five master classes, and four topic-based classes.

Throughout the 2020 year, Geva staff and teaching artists responded brilliantly to the challenges that quarantine presented, finding new ways to connect with area educators and students in digital spaces.

ENGAGEMENT:

- The new Geva Play Club provided opportunities for subscribers to read and discuss scripts for *The Niceties*, *Queen*, *Cry It Out*, and *Looks Like Pretty* in advance of the season, and to meet with some of the theatre artists responsible for creating the productions.
- Geva’s newly created engagement department kicked off the 2019-2020 season with “Drag at Geva,” a series of three late-night shows featuring Mrs. Kasha Davis and a bevy of other drag queens from throughout the region. These events attracted new audiences to Geva and built upon the exuberant energy of *La Cage Aux Folles*.
- In conjunction with *The Niceties*, the theatre hosted three dialogues for audiences to explore their responses to and questions about the play and production. A curated list of resources was also developed to further continued dialogue and learning.
- Geva’s relationship with [The Avenue Blackbox Theatre](#) and its Founder/Artistic Director/CEO Reenah Golden continued through the creation of a series of audition workshops for youth in advance of auditions for *A Christmas Carol*. These workshops shared skills and helped young actors build the confidence to enter an audition with preparation and poise.

Even while the pandemic halted in-person programming, Geva continued to find ways to engage with audiences, communities, and local artists and entrepreneurs through virtual dialogues and programs.

ARTISTIC TEAMS FOR GEVA PRODUCTIONS FEATURED IN PHOTOS

COVER

La Cage aux Folles: Melissa Rain Anderson, Director; Adam Koch, Scenic Designer; Steven Royal, Associate Scenic Designer; Brian J. Lilienthal, Lighting Designer; Rachel Szymanski, Assistant Lighting Designer; Danny Erdberg, Sound Designer; Kevin Copenhaver, Costume Designer; Don Kot, Music Director; Sam Hay, Choreographer; Bettie Rogers, Wig Designer; Jenn Lyons, Stage Manager; Jenny Daniels, Assistant Stage Manager; Daniel Parker, Production Assistant; Jean Ryon, Dramaturg

Queen: Pirronne Yousefzadeh, Director; Reid Thompson, Scenic Designer; Reza Behjat, Lighting Designer; Kate Marvin, Sound Designer; Valerie Bart, Costume Designer; Matthew Luppino Stage Manager; Daniel Parker, Production Assistant; Jenni Werner, Dramaturg

Slow Food: Skip Greer, Director; Rob Koharchik, Scenic Designer; Derek Madonia, Lighting Designer; Dan Roach, Sound Designer; Aubrey Sirtautas, Stage Manager; Daniel Parker, Assistant Stage Manager; Fran Da Silveira, Dramaturg

Once: Mark Cuddy, Director; Ann Kreitman, Assistant Director; Tim Mackabee, Scenic Designer; Alex Mannix, Lighting Designer; Andrew Wilhelm, Sound Designer; Christina Selian, Costume Designer; Don Kot, Music Director; Whitney G-Bowley, Choreographer; Blake Segal, Dialect Coach; Jenn Lyons, Stage Manager; Dana Angellis, Assistant Stage Manager; Jean Gordon Ryon, Dramaturg

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The Niceties: Nicole A. Watson, Director; Mariana Sanchez, Scenic Designer; Emily Stork, Lighting Designer; Sinan Zafar, Sound Designer; Casey McNamara, Costume Designer; Adriano Gatto, Fight Choreographer; Emily Mellon, Stage Manager; Jared Lee Morgan, Assistant Stage Manager; Fran Da Silveira, Dramaturg



[www. GevaTheatre.org](http://www.GevaTheatre.org)
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