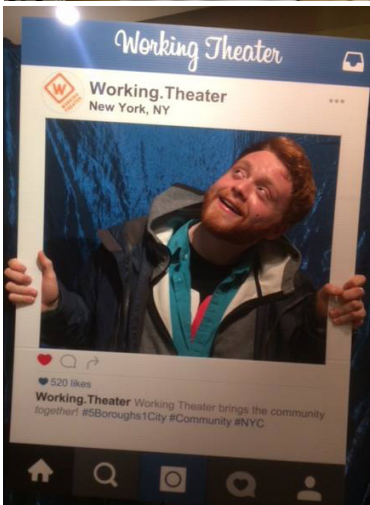




33<sup>RD</sup> SEASON  
ANNUAL REPORT

2017-18



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Photos page 2, clockwise from top: Working Theater's 2018 production of *Alternating Currents*; performers at the Bushwick Community Shine; *Alternating Currents* promo photo at JIB Lanes; performer with WT frame at the Staten Island Community Shine; dance party at the Bushwick Community Dialogue; performance at the Bronx Community Shine.

Photos by P. Kevin O'Leary and Camila Perez Santiago.

# ABOUT WORKING THEATER

Founded in 1985, the Working Theater's mission is to produce plays for and about working people (the majority of Americans working in the industrial, transportation and service industries). We believe that theater should not be a privilege or a luxury, but a staple. We want working people who may not be able to afford commercial theater or who feel that it does not resonate with their lives and experience to make play-going a regular part of their cultural activities. Toward that goal, we offer stories that reflect a diverse population of the working majority, acknowledging their complexity and often-denied power in an increasingly complex world. By creating theater of interest to working people and by bringing this constituency to our productions, we aim to change the composition of New York's theater audience to reflect a full range of socio-economic diversity. In a nation that is frequently divided by cultural and class distinctions and where economic disparity continues to widen, Working Theater is committed to making theater that can bridge those divisions, expanding the reach of theater's impact to all people, uniting us in our common humanity.

For the past three seasons the Company has been immersed in a multi-year community-based theater project, the Five Boroughs/One City Initiative, in which five teams of commissioned writers and directors collaborate with working people in each of the five boroughs of New York City to devise, script, rehearse and premiere an original play firmly rooted in the cultural identity of each neighborhood.

Working Theater has commissioned and produced more than 60 world premieres of culturally diverse new plays. The company has garnered widespread recognition and critical acclaim for its writing, acting and directing, and pioneering efforts in audience development. The Theater has had over 30 original plays published (three featured and fully reprinted in *American Theater Magazine*), six Drama Desk nominations, three Audelco Awards and a Drama Desk Award for Outstanding Ensemble for *Tabletop*.

Our 33<sup>rd</sup> Season ran from September 2017 to June 2018 and featured the development, workshopping, and production of new plays specifically aimed at reaching our audience of working men and women. We continued our collaborative, community-based theater project—the Five Boroughs/One City Initiative. We produced and toured the boroughs with the 3<sup>rd</sup> production to come out of the Initiative, *Alternating Currents* by Adam Kraar, directed by Kareem Fahmy. We continued to develop the remaining 5B1C plays, and commissioned 2 new plays with 2 new playwright/director teams with communities in 2 new neighborhoods. In FY18 we continued to engage communities across the boroughs with Community Shine open mic nights and Community Dialogue events. We offered 2 sessions of our TheaterWorks! adult education program, which teaches writing and performance skills to working people, as well as several presentations of our training and educational plays to classes at Pathways2Apprenticeship. This year Working Theater served over 60 artists and over 1500 audience members across the 5 boroughs of NYC.

# TRAINING/EDUCATIONAL PLAYS



Working Theater presented our Training Plays about diversity and sexual harassment in the workplace to 5 classes across the greater New York area through the organization **Pathways2Apprenticeship**, which assists people from low-income communities to access union apprenticeships in the building trades. Performances were followed by an interactive dialogue between the cast and class attendees.

**“Enough is Enough” & “Mirror, Mirror”** written by **Joe Roland**

**“Mongo”** written by **Ed Cardona, Jr.**

directed by **Kareem Fahmy & Rebecca Martinez**

featuring: **Robert Arcaro, Cynthia Bastidas, Will Dagger, Annie Henk, Andy Lucien, Eric T. Miller, Ernest Mingiole, Clinton Lowe, Isabelle Pierre, Reynaldo Piniella, Arisael Rivera, Amelia Workman**

All plays were originally commissioned by the **International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Local 3**, for its Women’s Conference and Diversity Conference



# FIVE BOROUGH/ONE CITY INITIATIVE

In 2018, funded by a new grant from the **Time Warner Foundation** and continued support from the **21st Century ILGWU Heritage Fund**, the **One World Fund**, the **Howard Gilman Foundation** and the **Shubert Foundation**, Working Theater continued the activities of its Five Boroughs/One City Initiative, a collaborative community-based theater development and production project.

## NEW PLAYS

We began laying the groundwork for 2 new playwright/director teams to collaborate with 2 communities in 2 new NYC neighborhoods to create 2 new plays rooted in the cultural identities of those communities. Stay tuned next season for a TBD new work from Staten Island and a new collaboration from playwright Liba Vaynberg and director Dina Vovsi and communities in Brighton Beach, Brooklyn!

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

In 2018, Working Theater hosted two community engagement events in each borough, in collaboration with our venue & community partners **Local 3 IBEW, CASA/New Settlement Apartments, Snug Harbor Cultural Center & Riseboro Bushwick**.

The **Community Shine** was created to celebrate the arts and artists found locally in each of our partnering neighborhoods. At the Shine, local residents joined together at an open mic to share their talents—from singing to magic to sword dancing!

The **Community Dialogue** featured members of the community coming together over a meal (and in Bushwick—a dance party!) to participate in a discussion about how communities deal with increasing diversity.

Working Theater led **post-performance discussions** after most performances of *Alternating Currents*. Approximately 80% of our general audience stayed to participate in fruitful discussions about diversity in community.

Feb 17, 2018: Queens Community Shine  
March 10, 2018: Staten Island Community Shine  
March 22, 2018: Brooklyn Community Shine  
March 23, 2018: Bronx Community Shine  
April 14, 2018: Queens Community Dialogue  
April 21, 2018: Staten Island Community Dialogue  
April 27, 2018: the Bronx Community Dialogue  
May 20, 2018: Brooklyn Community Dialogue



# OFF-BROADWAY PREMIERE & BOROUGH TOUR



## **OFF-BROADWAY PREMIERE & BOROUGH TOUR:**

APRIL 26-28: IBEW LOCAL 3, FLUSHING, QUEENS

MAY 1-20: URBAN STAGES, MANHATTAN

MAY 16: BRONX MUSEUM OF THE ARTS, THE BRONX

MAY 22-24: SNUG HARBOR CULTURAL CENTER, STATEN ISLAND

MAY 26: RISEBORO YOUTH CENTER, BUSHWICK, BROOKLYN

featuring **Robert Arcaro, Jason Bowen, Rheaume Crenshaw,  
LeeAnne Hutchison, Antoinette LaVecchia, Brian Sgambati, Liba Vaynberg**

*When two newly married electricians move to Electchester everything seems perfect: spacious apartment, low rent, friendly neighbors, and an incredibly close-knit community. But as they settle in, they discover how much they may need to give up in order to really belong.*

SCENIC DESIGN **DAVID ESLER** • COSTUME DESIGN **DINA EL-AZIZ**  
LIGHTING DESIGN **SCOTT BOLMAN** • SOUND DESIGN **LAWRENCE SCHOBER**  
PROPERTIES **CLAIRE M. KAVANAH** • PRODUCTION STAGE MANAGER **EMILY ROTH**  
ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER **MELISSA A. NATHAN** • CASTING **GEOFF JOSSELSO, CSA**  
GRAPHIC DESIGN **CHRISTY BRIGGS** • PRESS REPRESENTATION **EMILY OWENS PR**

*Alternating Currents* is part of Working Theater's Five Boroughs/One City Initiative. The play was developed with 5 Boroughs artistic partners Adam Kraar, GT Upchurch and Tamilla Woodard in partnership with IBEW Local 3, and through conversations with residents of Electchester, Pomonok Housing and the community in Flushing, Queens.





“The cast is delightful...thanks to strong direction by Kareem Fahmy, we don’t miss a beat. The scenes flow together making this puzzle come together flawlessly. A very impressive accomplishment all around. Go see this play.” -*Theater That Matters*



“*Alternating Currents* is a heart-felt ode to the utopian ideal of community driven co-op housing in NYC...Kareem Fahmy has expertly directed this helter-skelter through the many spaces of Electchester ...Liba Vaynberg is captivating...Jason Bowen is a potent force with a strong presence and ability to convey subtext brilliantly...the delightful support cast chameleons bringing Electchester to life through their many characterizations.”- *Stage Biz*



“*Alternating Currents* perceptively explores the messy realities of living and laboring in NYC, and, by extension, the United States today. Vaynberg and Bowen exhibit great chemistry together in addition to communicating their characters & conflicted personal journeys. Arcaro perfectly embodies the type of assertive, experienced working man that one could picture falling into conversation with at the end of the day in one of the working-class bars that still dot the city.” -*Culture Catch*

“This multiplicity of voices shines through in *Alternating Currents*, which, with only six actors but an entire community’s worth of characters, fills Urban Stages’ intimate blackbox with a nuanced portrait of Electchester.” -*American Theatre Magazine*

*Alternating Currents* production photos by P. Kevin O’Leary

# THEATERWORKS!

Working Theater's signature 16-week playwriting and performance class. Participants from **SEIU 32BJ** and **PSC/CUNY** wrote and performed in their own short plays alongside professional playwrights, professional directors & professional actors.

We also hosted a special mini-session with members of **CASA** and **New Settlement Apartments**. Led by director/instructor **Jerry Ruiz**, the class developed material about rezoning in their neighborhoods for use at rallies and informational sessions.

## 32BJ SEIU

**Final Performance Monday, February 12, 2018 at The A.R.T./New York Gural Theatre**

Member Playwrights: **John Ayala, Darrel Best-Wadley, Carlos Cotto, Anthony A. Delfi, Pete Mergel**

Guest Actors: **Dacyl Acevedo\*, Isabelle Pierre\*, Daron Ross\***

Stage Manager: **Alexandra Tenenbaum**

Directed by 32BJ resident TheaterWorks! Instructor **Joe Roland**



# PSC/CUNY “Short Plays on Caregiving”

presented in collaboration with **The Labor of Care Archive,**  
**The Center for the Humanities at the Graduate Center, CUNY** and **PSC-CUNY**

**Final Performance Monday, May 22, 2018**

**The Elebesh Recital Hall at the Graduate Center, CUNY**

## Member Playwright/Performers:

<b>Grisel Acosta</b> , Bronx Community College	<b>Diana Murillo</b> , Kingsborough Community College
<b>Marcos Bernal-Salas</b> , Bronx Community College	<b>Valerie Knight</b> , College of Staten Island
<b>Carmelina Cartei</b> , Hunter College	<b>Andrea Tienan</b> , Baruch College
<b>John Reid Currie</b> , NYC College of Technology	<b>Willie Tolliver</b> , Hunter/Graduate Center, CUNY
<b>Constance Gemson</b> , LaGuardia Community College	<b>Dhipinder Walia</b> , Lehman College

**Guest Actors: Kit Flanagan\*, Flaco Navaja\*, Kris Sidberry\***

## Co-directors:

TheaterWorks! Playwriting Instructor **Joe White** and **David Smilow**

## Program Organizer:

**Kathlene McDonald**, Associate Professor, City College of New York Center for Worker Education

*\*guest actors appear courtesy of Actors Equity Association*



2018 PSC/CUNY TheaterWorks! “Short Plays on Caregiving” Photos by P. Kevin O’Leary

The TheaterWorks! Program is made possible in part by the **New York State Council on the Arts** with the support of Governor Andrew Cuomo and the New York State Legislature; public funds from the **New York City Department of Cultural Affairs** in partnership with the City Council; and the **Axe Houghton Foundation**.

# 2018 ANNUAL AWARDS CEREMONY



honoring **Gary LaBarbera, President Building & Construction Trades Council of Greater NY** for bridging the gap between the arts, labor & community

**April 23, 2018 at Sardi's Restaurant, NYC**

Featuring cocktails, dinner, dessert, a silent auction and a “feel good auction” (in which participants bid to donate tickets to community members for our touring production of *Alternating Currents*)

Entertainment: **“Songs of Empowerment”**

curated by **Elise Goyette, Connie Grappo & Paul Loren**

**Paul Loren** (Piano/ Vocals/Musical Direction), **Ty Tuschen** (Guitar)

Singers: **Brian Collazo aka BSKi, Layla Davias, Lee Wilkof, Nicole Zuraitis**

*Appearing courtesy of the Performers' Unions through Theatre Authority, Inc.*



*Thanks to all who supported the 2018 Annual Awards Ceremony:*

**VIP Tables:**

Belluck & Fox • Empire BlueCross BlueShield • Sheet Metal Workers Local 28

**Patron Tables:**

IBEW Local 3 • Metallic Lathers Local 46 • Northeast District Council of the OP & CM

**Tickets and Ads:**

1199 SEIU • 32BJ SEIU • Administrative Services Only  
Association of Benefit Administrators • Association of Electrical Contractors, Inc.  
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IATSE • Ironworks Local Union 40 • IUOE Local 14-14B • IUOE Local 15 • IUOE Local 94  
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WP Theater • Tamilla Woodard • Workers Unite Film Festival

**Our generous friends and volunteers:**

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*\* member, Working Theater Board of Directors | ^ sponsor, Working Theater's 33<sup>rd</sup> Season*

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*Working Theater is extremely grateful to all of the individuals, foundations and companies that have supported our 33<sup>rd</sup> Season!*

*(Fiscal Year 2018: July 1, 2017– June 30, 2018)*

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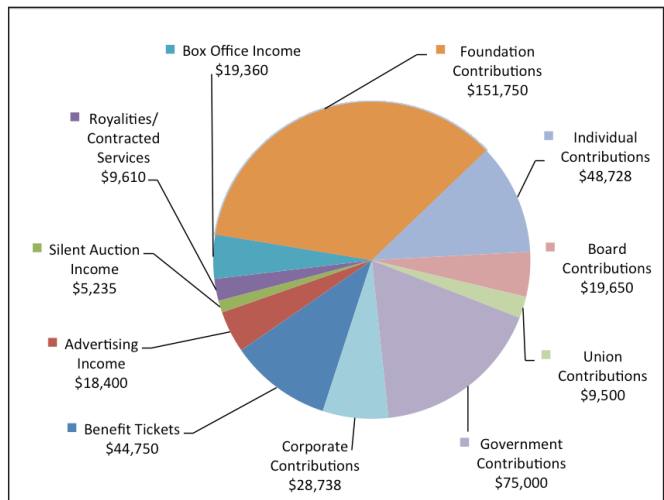
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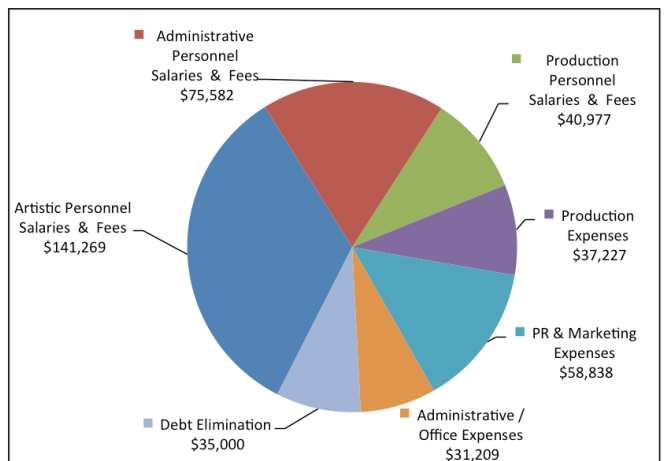
The Working Theater Co., Inc  
 Fiscal Year 2018: July 1, 2017 to June 30, 2018  
 (unaudited figures)

<b>INCOME</b>	
Benefit Tickets	\$44,750
Advertising Income	\$18,400
Silent Auction Income	\$5,235
Royalties/Contracted Services	\$9,610
Box Office Income	\$19,360
Foundation Contributions	\$151,750
Individual Contributions	\$48,728
Board Contributions	\$19,650
Union Contributions	\$9,500
Government Contributions	\$75,000
Corporate Contributions	\$28,738
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$430,721</b>

Thanks to a generous gift from the Howard Gilman Foundation, and the support of our donors and board, Working Theater has eliminated our outstanding deficit and established our first ever operating reserve fund as of FY2018. Thank you to all of our supporters for your commitment to the future stability and vitality of Working Theater!



<b>EXPENSES</b>	
Artistic Personnel Salaries & Fees	\$141,269
Administrative Personnel Salaries & Fees	\$75,582
Production Personnel Salaries & Fees	\$40,977
Production Expenses	\$37,227
PR & Marketing Expenses	\$58,838
Administrative / Office Expenses	\$31,209
Debt Elimination	\$35,000
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$420,102</b>





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Working Theater is a member of the **Alliance of Resident Theatres / New York**, the service organization for New York City's non-profit off- and off-off-Broadway theaters, and **Theatre Communications Group**

2018 subsidized rehearsal studio space provided by the **A.R.T. / New York Creative Space Grant**

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**The Time Warner Foundation** • a generous gift from **Elaine and Alan Weiler**

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520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 303 · New York, NY 10018

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