



Contents:

Letter from Producing Artistic Director	3
<i>Honey Brown Eyes</i>	4
Developmental Readings	6
Commissions	7
Community Outreach & Events	8
Directors Salon	10
2011 Annual Awards Ceremony Gala	12
Financials	13
Supporters	14
Board of Directors and Staff	16

Working Theater is dedicated to producing new plays *for* and *about* working people.*

Our 26th Season ran from January-June 2011 and featured the development and production of several of these plays, as well as other events aimed specifically at reaching our audience of working men and women.

*working people refers to the wage and salaried workers of modest means working in factories, stores, offices, hospitals, classrooms and other workplaces throughout America.

Cover Photo Credits Clockwise from Top L: Beatrice Miller in *Honey Brown Eyes* © Lia Chang; Edoardo Ballerini in *Honey Brown Eyes* © Lia Chang; *Honey Brown Eyes* poster art © Elsie & Co.; Open Mic Night © Matthew Hennessy

A NOTE FROM THE PRODUCING ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

As our 26th Season wound down with the final reading of our commission of Lisa Ramirez's *To the Bone*, about the lives of Latina poultry processing workers, I was struck by the sense that we were really just beginning. Over the past two years Working Theater has exploded with new projects, commissions, works-in-progress and countless new artists who are discovering a home here. As we move into our 27th year it is my commitment (and challenge) to keep all of these extraordinary works of art moving forward toward production while continuing to engage and serve our core constituency of working people.

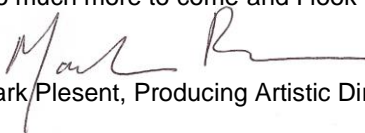
The season began in January with our production of Stefanie Zdravec's Helen Hayes Award-winning *Honey Brown Eyes* directed by Erica Schmidt. Set in 1992 Bosnia, the play is a powerful exploration of the extraordinary lengths ordinary people will go to maintain their humanity in times of war. We had a wonderful cast and artistic team and the play was well received by both critics and audiences alike. I am happy to report that the play will be produced next in San Francisco at SF Playhouse this fall. I am a huge fan of Stefanie's work and thrilled that she was just selected as one of the newest New Dramatists, beginning a 7-year residency there.

This year we also developed and presented readings of 6 brand new plays (3 of them Working Theater Commissions) from playwrights Rob Ackerman (*Tabletop & Disconnect*), Michael Aman, Chay Yew, Ed Cardona, Jr. (*American Journalero*), Manny Borrás Olivera and Lisa Ramirez (*Exit Cuckoo*). Each of these new projects reflected the mission of Working Theater to portray the lives of working people on stage in its own humorous, tragic or imaginative way.

Our second annual Directors Salon, a week of events that support emerging directors, was curated by Luke Harlan, Dina Vovsi and Nicole Watson (3 young directors themselves). They did an extraordinary job packing the week, starting with a fabulous opening night party at which 7 emerging directors were chosen from a hat (in keeping with the core Salon value of inclusion) to each direct one scene from Clifford Odets' labor classic *Waiting for Lefty*. We presented this MashUp on the last night of the Salon to a standing room only (and hugely responsive) audience. The Salon also featured a refreshingly irreverent night of director driven work and some truly inspiring panels that included some of the best directors, producers, agents and designers working in the field today. I must thank all the donors to the Salon who helped us reach the funding goal for our first ever Kickstarter campaign! The Salon was an overwhelming success and has become a signature program at the Theater.

In 2011 we completed two sessions of our TheaterWorks! program with members of 32BJ SEIU, (property services workers), who wrote some of the best plays from the program yet. We also hosted our now annual Open Mic Night for working people, once again showcasing some of the extraordinary talent that exists in the men and women who are the cab drivers, nannies, doormen and city workers who keep New York running. Finally, our Annual Awards Ceremony, at which we honored the inspiring George Gresham, President of 1199 SEIU United Healthcare Workers East, and presented scenes from the Directors Salon's *Waiting for Lefty* MashUp, was a great evening and provided much needed support for all of our projects this season.

I personally thank all the individuals, foundations, unions and corporations who so generously donated to Working Theater this year allowing us to increase our output and visibility for the second year in a row. And as I said this is just the beginning. There is so much more to come and I look forward to seeing all of you during our 27th Season!


-Mark Plesent, Producing Artistic Director

MAINSTAGE PRODUCTION



presents the NY premiere of the Helen Hayes Award-winning

HONEY

by Stefanie Zdravec directed by Erica Schmidt
with Edoardo Ballerini, Sue Cremin,
Gene Gillette, Beatrice Miller,
Daniel Serafini-Sauli & Kate Skinner

BROWN

EYES

Set design: **Laura Jellinek** | Lighting design: **Jeff Croiter** | Sound design: **Bart Fasbender** | Costume design: **Emily Rebholz**
Fight direction: **J. Steven White** | Production Manager: **Ken Larson** | Production Stage Manager: **Fran Rubenstein**
Assistant Stage Manager: **Joan Cappello** | Casting: **Judy Henderson** | Press Representation: **Sam Rudy Media**
Graphic Design: **Elsie & Co.** | Flyer Design: **Sarah Livescault** | Production Photography: **Lia Chang**

HONEY BROWN EYES

by **Stefanie Zdravec**

directed by **Erica Schmidt**

with **Edoardo Ballerini, Sue Cremin, Gene Gillette, Beatrice Miller, Daniel Serafini-Sauli & Kate Skinner**

1/9 - 2/6/2011

The Clurman Theatre at Theatre Row

410 West 42nd Street

Once members of a band together.

Now on opposite sides of a war.

Can a bond formed through music survive a world spinning out of control?

Set in two kitchens, *Honey Brown Eyes* portrays the 1992 war in Bosnia through two encounters of unsettling intimacy.



"Ms. Zdravec has tackled a bruising subject and dared to approach it through her own, more humanistic aesthetic, one that can spot isolated moments of grace in even the most nightmarish scenarios." -New York Times

"a meaningful production...worth seeing and thinking about after we leave the theatre"
-nytheatre.com

"vivid staging from director Erica Schmidt and disarming performances from the cast"
-Backstage

"an emotionally compelling drama" -Curtain Up

"the production has a strong, almost hypnotic power" -Theatre is Easy



Above Right: Kate Skinner as Jovanka and Daniel Serafini-Sauli as Denis.
Above: Edoardo Ballerini as Dragan.
Photos © Lia Chang

DEVELOPMENTAL STAGED READINGS

Working Theater presented public developmental readings of 3 brand new plays:

CALL ME WALDO

by **Rob Ackerman**

directed by **Tamilla Woodard**

with **Therese Barbato, Matthew Boston, Brian Dykstra,
Alexis McGuinness & Jennifer Dorr White**

When an ordinary electrician is possessed by the spirit of Ralph Waldo Emerson, extraordinary things happen. A bright and biting new comedy by the author of the Drama Desk Award-winning *Tabletop*.

VISIBLE CITIES

by **Chay Yew**

directed by **Mike Donahue**

with **Joanna P. Adler, Josh Barrett, Jackie Chung, Jennifer Ikeda, Natalie Martin,
Quentin Maré, Orville Mendoza, Stephen Park & Gordana Rashovich**

More than 100 people made the shirt you're wearing right now. Who are those people? *Visible Cities* explores the high- stakes realities of international fashion, globalism, immigration, and counterfeit culture.

THE UNBLEACHED AMERICAN

by **Michael Aman**

directed by **Alfred Preisser**

with **André De Shields & Alison Fraser**

A startling play based on the life of Ernest Hogan, an African-American who made a small fortune in the 1900s writing the first "coon song".



Pictured (L to R): Rob Ackerman, Tamilla Woodard, Chay Yew, Mike Donahue, Michael Aman, Alfred Preisser. Opposite page: Ed Cardona, Jr., Manuel Olivera, Arin Arbus, Lisa Ramirez, Lisa Peterson
Photo credits: Lia Chang, Colman Domingo

COMMISSIONS

Working Theater presented 3 public developmental readings of our 3 commissions currently in the works:

LA RUTA

by **Ed Cardona, Jr.**

with **Laura Butler, Teddy Cañez, Brian D. Coats, Zuleyma Guevara, José Joaquin Perez, Gerardo Rodriguez & Ruby Ruiz**

Ed Cardona, Jr.'s brand new play explores the sacrifices and danger endured by a group of Latinos smuggled across the U.S. border by a band of "coyotes." The audience will join the characters on their journey set entirely in the claustrophobic confines of a truck.

SONG TO A CHILD LIKE ME

by **Manuel Olivera**

directed by **Arin Arbus**

with **Teddy Cañez, Annie Henk, A.Z. Kelsey, Maria-Christina Oliveras, José Joaquin Perez & Jacob Ming Trent**

In 2010, Working Theater commissioned this impressive first full-length play by new voice Manuel Borrás Olivera. *Song to a Child Like Me* is a powerful look at the life of a 1st generation Puerto Rican youth coming into his own in the 1980s Bronx.

TO THE BONE

by **Lisa Ramirez**

directed by **Lisa Peterson**

with **Philip Callen, Maria Helan, Annie Henk, José Joaquin Perez, Lisa Ramirez, Emma Ramos, Gerardo Rodriguez & Tatiana Suarez-Pico**

Lisa Ramirez based this gripping play (formerly titled *The Poultry Play*) about immigrant women laboring in chicken processing plants on interviews she conducted with actual poultry plant workers in upstate NY.

(This project is supported by the ILGWU 21st Century Heritage Fund)



COMMUNITY OUTREACH & EVENTS

- **SPECIAL CONSTITUENCIES INITIATIVE (SCI)**

Our unique grassroots audience development program aims to make theater affordable and accessible to the working men and women of New York. Over the years we have used SCI to offer theater to a diverse cross-section of the working population, including postal workers, municipal employees, healthcare workers, building service workers, transport workers, domestic workers and taxi drivers.

In 2011 we offered over 1500 free and subsidized tickets to working men & women to our mainstage production of *Honey Brown Eyes*. All other events in the season were presented free of charge, with a suggested donation at the door. Workers represented in our audience included members of: CWA Local 1180, District Council 37 AFSCME, Teamsters Local 237, Professional Staff Congress, the United Federation of Teachers, the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 3 & Domestic Workers United.



Actors and graduating students take a bow after the 2011 TheaterWorks! Final Performance

- **THEATERWORKS!**

In FY11 we hosted 2 sessions of our **16-week playwriting & performance class**, taught by playwright **Joe Roland** at **32BJ SEIU** (whose members include security officers, doormen, porters, maintenance workers, bus drivers & aides, window cleaners and food service workers). The classes culminated in a free, staged reading style performance where the students were joined by professional actors and directors at the Beckett Theatre on Theatre Row.



Actors Gerardo Rodriguez & Maria-Christina Oliveras performing the work of students from 32BJ SEIU at the 2011 TheaterWorks! Final Performance

Domestic Worker Christine Lewis performing at Working Theater's 2011 Open Mic Night
Photo by Matthew Hennessy



- **OPEN MIC NIGHT**

At our 2nd Annual Open Mic Night we invited our constituency of working men and women to take the stage with their original poetry, songs, short stories and plays. Participants in the evening ranged from former TheaterWorks students, to audience members and first-time theatergoers who had become involved through our Special Constituencies Initiative.

2ND ANNUAL DIRECTORS SALON

This unique program of Working Theater evolved out of a need for a community and support network for emerging directors in New York City. The Salon was developed by directors Luke Harlan, Dina Vovsi and Nicole Watson in 2010. It is now an annual week of events that gives emerging directors the chance to showcase their work, meet with other directors and theater artists, to hear from leaders in the fields of directing, design and arts management and most importantly, a platform to actually direct.



Above: Directors Davis McCallum, Victor Maog & Erica Schmidt at the Director Panel; Left: Luke Harlan, Dina Vovsi & Nicole Watson

This year, the Directors Salon week of events featured 3 panels, a Night of Director-Driven Work, and our *Waiting for Lefty* MashUp, where emerging directors were chosen from names in a hat for the chance to direct a scene from Clifford Odets' *Waiting for Lefty*. Each director chosen at random was assigned to a different scene, culminating in a performance of the entire play at the end of the week.

- **PANELS**

The Salon offered 3 nights of Panels for emerging directors to meet with leaders in the field.

This year's panels featured directors **Tamilla Woodward, Davis McCallum, Erica Schmidt & Victor Maog**, Artistic Directors **Kristin Marting** (HERE), **Ralph Pena** (Ma-Yi Theatre) & **Liz Jones** (P73 Productions), agent **Kate Navin** (Abrams Artists), commercial producer **Janet Paillet** (*Scottsboro Boys, Passing Strange*) and designers **Rachel Hauck** (*A Boy and His Soul, Creature*), **Emily Rebholz** (*Bloody Bloody Andrew Jackson*) & **Richard Fisher** (*Exit Cuckoo, Throat*.)

- **NIGHT OF DIRECTOR-DRIVEN WORK**

Out of countless submissions, these pieces were selected as a diverse representation of emerging director-driven work:

RUB-A-DUB-DUB by **Mike Anderson**, directed by **Isaac Klein**
with **William Connell, Bernardo Cubria, Cooper D'Ambrose & Will Rogers**

The story of three famed men in a tub: the Butcher, the Baker, and the Candlestick Maker, as they struggle to survive when lost at sea. An exemplar of playwright Mike Anderson's "Cartoon Theatre," which winningly embraces the irreverent, fun-loving, fantastical, and often-times exceptionally poignant form that is the cartoon.

NUESTRAS VIDAS PRIVADAS/ Our Private Lives
by **Pedro Miguel Roza Florez**, directed by **Kira Neel**
with **Yanko Bulic, Pablo Vargas, Laura Spalding, Martin Balmaceda,**
Patricia Becker & Kira Neel

An exploration of the process of rebuilding and healing after private and public disasters.

NOTHING AND NOT MUCH: stores about the universe

Directed by **Rachel Park & Kevin Bigger**

with **Jake Green, Blair Lewin, Leanne Becker & Laura Princiotta**

A fanciful exploration of one eternal soul's journey through time and space. Adapted from and inspired by the stories of Italo Calvino.

- **THE WAITING FOR LEFTY MASHUP**

directed by **Jesse Bonnell, Sherri Kronfeld, Rebecca Martinez, Lillian Meredith,**
Rachel Solomon, Leta Tremblay, & Patrick Vassel

featuring **Ben Beckley, Kate Benson, Daryl Brown, Matt Brown, Philip Callen,**
Adam Couperthwaite, Garrett Hendricks, Lanna Joffrey, Sarah Koestner,

Lauren Currie Lewis, Clinton Lowe, Michael Micalizzi, Lisa Ramirez & Danny Wolohan

The final culmination of our random opening night lottery was followed by a feedback session to discuss the directors' various approaches to Clifford Odets' working classic.

2011 ANNUAL AWARDS CEREMONY

Working Theater's 2011 Annual Awards
Ceremony honored

George Gresham, President

1199 SEIU United Healthcare Workers East

for bridging the gap

between the arts, labor & community

on Monday, May 16th, 2011

at **Sardi's Restaurant**

and featured cocktails, dinner & dessert, a Silent
Auction and a special performance of the **2011
Directors Salon's *Waiting for Lefty MashUp.***

Many thanks to those who supported the Gala:

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Board Member Pat Judah Harris awards
Honoree George Gresham

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Page 73 Productions

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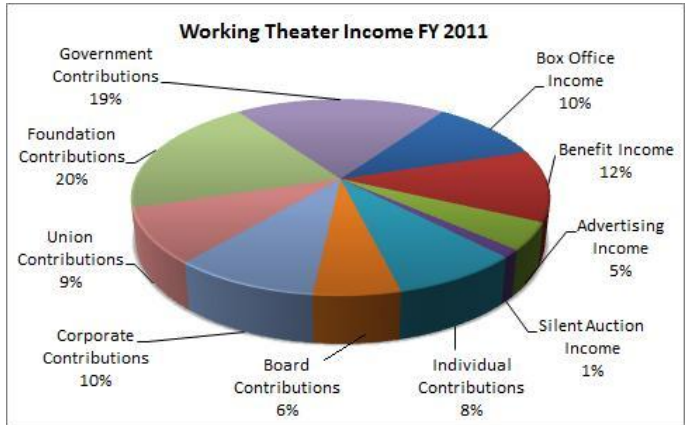
Walker's Restaurant

FINANCIALS

The Working Theatre Co., Inc. Jul '10 - Jun '11

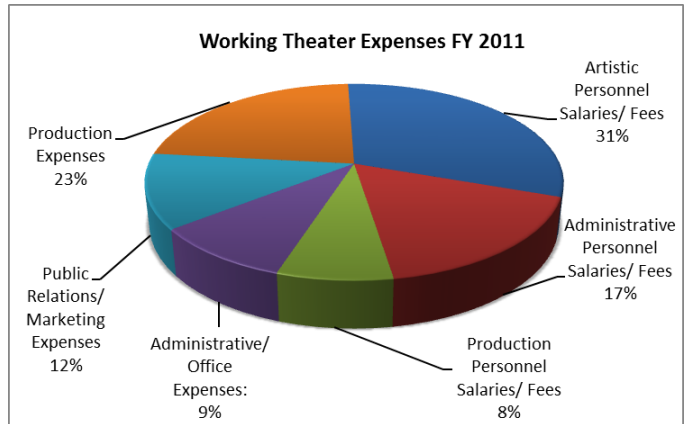
Income:

Box Office Income	\$ 31,644
Benefit Income	\$ 35,950
Advertising Income	\$ 13,650
Silent Auction Income	\$ 3,885
Individual Contributions	\$ 25,511
Board Contributions	\$ 17,168
Corporate Contributions	\$ 28,840
Union Contributions	\$ 27,535
Foundation Contributions	\$ 60,600
Government Contributions	\$ 59,152
	\$303,935



Expenses:

Artistic Personnel Salaries/ Fees	\$ 98,360
Administrative Personnel Salaries/ Fees	\$ 54,456
Production Personnel Salaries/ Fees	\$ 23,979
Administrative/ Office Expenses	\$ 29,927
PR/ Marketing Expenses	\$ 39,095
Production Expenses	\$ 72,287
	\$318,104



SUPPORTERS

Our deepest thanks to all of the individuals, foundations & companies that have supported us this season (FY 2011: July 1, 2010- June 30, 2011)

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Joe Roland: Director of Educational Programs
Lisa Ramirez: Artistic Associate
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Dina Vovsi: Literary Associate
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