



**Working Theater 25th Anniversary Season
Annual Report 2010**



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

In 2009/2010 we celebrated our 25th Anniversary by producing 25 different projects and events over 25 weeks.

The overall goals of our 25th Anniversary Season were to develop new plays that speak to our mission and to develop a deeper connection with both our audience and our artists, creating a stronger community of individuals committed to the Theater's mission, which will be essential to our success for the next 25 years.

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

Letter from Producing Director Mark Plesent
August, 2010

Wow, what a year we've had! It's been a couple of weeks since the final event of our season, a staged reading of Victor Lodato's beautiful and heart wrenching play *Slay the Dragon*. While I am certainly relieved to have a break I am also overwhelmed with a sense of awe at the courageous, entertaining and inspiring work so many artists shared with Working Theater's audience this season.

There are too many highlights to share in this letter. Whether it was watching André De Shields transform before our eyes every night into the abolitionist leader Frederick Douglass during the run of *Mine Eyes Have Seen the Glory*, hearing a 6' 4" transport worker sing an Edith Piaf song during our Open Mic Night, seeing most of the original cast of Rob Ackerman's *Tabletop* bring the play to electrifying life in a reading to a standing room only crowd, working with master playwright Kia Corthron on her latest play *Bugs of the Pigs in the Lions*, witnessing one of the best final performances of our TheaterWorks! class by members of the building service workers union Local 32B/J or hearing an outstanding cast read the play *Song to a Child Like Me* which Working Theater commissioned from Manny Borrás an inmate at the Walkill Correctional Facility, each of the 25 events we produced brought something truly special to the table. Taken as a whole they represent the most exciting year in Working Theater's history.

A very special thank you needs to go out to our Artistic Associates who made this season possible. Ed Cardona Jr. whose play *American Journalero* was one of the big hits of the season and who managed to show up at almost every one of our 25 events. André De Shields who, having acted and directed for us in the past, this year completed the Working Theater trifecta by contributing to the season as a playwright. Honor Molloy who connected me to so many new playwrights and contributed her own dark and glorious play *Maiden Voyages* to the season. Lisa Ramirez who wowed two sold-out houses with a reprise of her solo show *Exit Cuckoo* and then proved equally adept as a playwright of multi-character plays with her commissioned piece *The Poultry Play* (working title). Maureen Towey who worked for two weeks with professional actors and members of the retiree community at the Lincoln Square Community Center to produce a surprisingly relevant and extremely moving re-interpretation of Chekov's *Three Sisters* cast entirely with older actors. I also must thank our former Artistic Director Connie Grappo who was instrumental in the planning of the 25th Anniversary Season. Thanks as well go to Luke Harlan, Dina Vovsi and Nicole Watson for producing our Director's Salon and managing to attract over 30 aspiring directors under 30 to the various readings and events during the Salon's two weeks at the Abingdon. None of it would have been possible without our hard-working interns, Isobel Bruce, Zack Moody and Dina Vovsi.

Finally I would like to thank Working Theater's Board of Directors who, though they thought I had lost my mind when I presented the idea of producing 25 projects in honor of our 25 year history, supported me and the rest of Working Theater's staff in so many ways throughout the year. And of course none of this would have happened with out the incredible generosity of all of our supporters. Each of you provided the means to support the artistic process of so many artists this year (please check out the full list on page 4). Each of them believe, as you do, that theater should not be created just for the elite but for everyone and that representing working people's lives on stage adds an undeniable and necessary richness to the cultural life of all New Yorkers.

- Mark

FIRST STAGE PRODUCTIONS



André De Shields as Frederick Douglass in *Mine Eyes Have Seen the Glory...*
February 4-14, 2010. Photo © Lia Chang

• ***MINE EYES HAVE SEEN THE GLORY:
From Douglass to Deliverance***
created & performed by **André De Shields**
directed by **Alfred Preisser**

at the Abingdon Theatre Arts Complex,
June Havoc Theatre.

A one-person show combining story, song and dance, in which the Broadway star explored the life of the Great Emancipator Frederick Douglass, his abolitionist contemporaries and his latter day progeny.

• ***AMERICAN JORNALERO***
by **Ed Cardona, Jr.**
directed by **Victor Maog**

at the Abingdon Theatre Arts Complex,
Dorothy Strelsin Theatre

with **Jeff Biehl, Neal Hemphill, Mat Hostetler,
Andrés Munar, José Joaquin Perez
& Gerardo Rodriguez**

A humorous and poignant look at a group of day laborers waiting to be picked up for work and their collision with two inept citizen vigilantes fashioning themselves on the Minuteman Project, a group originally organized to patrol the U.S. Southern border in an effort to keep illegal immigrants out.



José Joaquin Perez and Mat Hostetler in *American Jornalero*
March 4-14, 2010. Photo © Lia Chang

• ***THE THREE SISTERS PROJECT***
adapted from the play by **Anton Chekhov**
directed & developed by **Maureen Towey**

at the Lincoln Square Neighborhood Center
with **D. Michael Berkowitz,**

**Stephen Bradbury, Ronald Cohen,
Arthur French, Laura Grey,
Mary Beth Peil, Judith Roberts, Rebecca Schull
and Ching Valdes-Aran**

and Lincoln Square Center members:

**Carshi Draghi, Jorge Hudson, Tom Kennedy,
Violet Stephenson** and special guest **Mike Stein**

Artistic Associate Maureen Towey reimagined Chekhov's *Three Sisters* set in a retirement community with a cast of actors all over the age of 60. The play was rehearsed and staged site-specifically at Lincoln Square Community Center, and professional actors worked alongside community members over a 2 week rehearsal process culminating in a public staging.



Rebecca Schull, Mary Beth Piel and Judith Roberts rehearse *The Three Sisters Project*
March 26, 2010. Photo © Lia Chang

“FUTURE OF WORKING THEATER” DEVELOPMENTAL READINGS

Working Theater developed 9 new plays, each with a rehearsal process that culminated in a public staged reading:

- *Progress in Flying* by **Lynn Rosen**, directed by **Daniella Topol**, with music by **Mary Kelly**
- *Maiden Voyages* by **Honor Molloy** and **Bronagh Murphy**, with original music by **Susan McKeown**, directed by **Jessica Bauman**
 - *Gail* by **Mike Batistick**, directed by **Arin Arbus**
 - *Bugs of the Pigs in the Lions* by **Kia Corthron**, directed by **Kent Gash**
- *The Golden Vanity: william bell/ adrian on the island* by **Alejandro Morales**, directed by **Scott Ebersold**
 - *Uncle* by **Eleanor Herman**, directed by **Henry Miller**
 - *The Electric Baby Play* by **Stefanie Zdravec**, directed by **Daniella Topol**
- *Velázquez* by **Gordon Dahlquist**, directed by **David Levine**, airs by **Michael Friedman**
 - *Slay the Dragon* by **Victor Lodato**, directed by **Jackson Gay**



Pictured L to R: Kia Corthron, Gordon Dahlquist, Eleanor Herman, Lynn Rosen, Victor Lodato, Alejandro Morales, Daniella Topol, Stefanie Zdravec, Mike Batistick, Arin Arbus, Manuel Borrás

COMMISSIONS

Our Reading Series also included 2 Working Theater Commissions:

- ***The Poultry Play*** (working title)
by **Lisa Ramirez**
directed by **Lisa Peterson**

Artistic Associate Lisa Ramirez travelled to Sullivan County in upstate New York to interview workers (predominately undocumented Latina immigrants) working in chicken processing plants. Her preliminary draft focused as much on these women's personal lives as their working conditions

- ***Song to a Child Like Me***
by **Manuel Borrás**
directed by **Arin Arbus**

Manuel Borrás is an inmate at Walkkill Correctional Facility whose writing was brought to our attention by director Arin Arbus and her work with Rehabilitation through the Arts. The Theater commissioned him to write a play inspired by his early family life growing up Puerto Rican in the Bronx.

DIRECTORS' SALON

Our first-ever Directors' Salon was curated by **Luke Harlan, Dina Vovsi** and **Nicole Watson** and featured readings of new plays for and by emerging young playwrights and directors, as well as a "Working Directors Panel", moderated by Producing Director **Mark Plesent**, in which established directors **Scott Ebersold, Victor Maog, Wendy McLellan, Alfred Preisser** and **Maureen Towey** met with aspiring directors to discuss the "state of the union" for emerging directors in New York.

Readings included:

- ***Talking Dirty*** by **Clare Lizzimore**, directed by **Dina Vovsi**
- ***Fat Cat Killers*** by **Adam Szymkowicz**, directed by **Luke Harlan**
- ***7 Sisters*** by **Bridgette Wimberly**, directed by **Mary Geerlof**
- ***I Put the Fear of Mexico In 'Em*** by **Matthew Paul Olmos**, directed by **Jess Chayes**
- ***The Boy Who Couldn't Smile*** by **Erica Ranade**, directed by **Dina Vovsi**
- ***Flow*** by **Crystal Skillman**, directed by **Nicole Watson**

WORKING THEATER HITS SERIES

In celebration of our 25-year history, Working Theater took a quick look back at 5 of our most noteworthy shows and presented 4 as Staged Readings featuring most of the original cast members, and *Exit Cuckoo* as a fully-staged benefit performance.

- ***Exit Cuckoo* by Lisa Ramirez**
(2009, originally directed by **Colman Domingo**,
2010 Benefit Performance directed by **Colman Domingo** and **Raquel Cion**)
- ***Tabletop* by Rob Ackerman**, directed by **Connie Grappo** (1999)
- ***Hold Please* by Annie Weisman**, directed by **Connie Grappo** (2003)
- ***I am a Man* by OyamaO**, directed by **Bill Mitchelson** (1993)
- ***Special Interests* by Joe Sutton**
(1990; originally directed by **Mark Lutwack**, 2010 reading directed by **Luke Harlan**)



The 2003 original cast of Annie Weisman's *Hold Please*, who reunited in April for a reading of the play. (L to R Jeanine Serralles, Emma Bowers, Kathryn Rosseter and Laura Esterman)

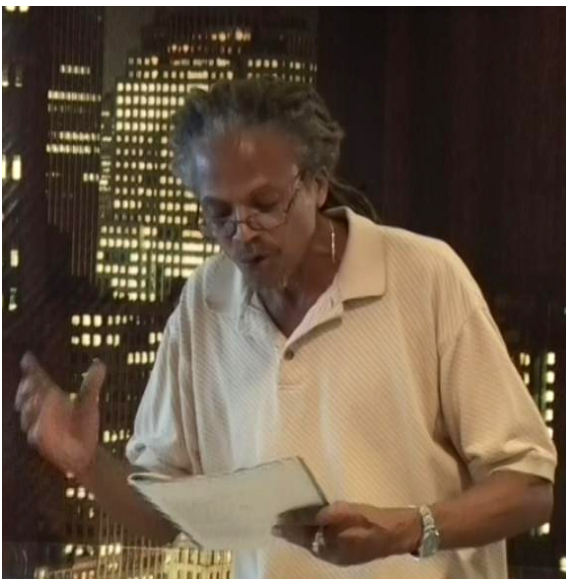


Exit Cuckoo (nanny in motherland), written & performed by Lisa Ramirez, 2009

THEATERWORKS! & COMMUNITY OUTREACH EVENTS



TheaterWorks! student & playwright Julian Pimienta (center) with actors Jeffrey Joseph and Sarah-Doe Osborne February 2010



TheaterWorks! student, playwright, poet & Open Mic Night participant Stephen Yearwood

• THEATERWORKS!

In FY10 we hosted 2 sessions of our **16-week playwriting and performance class**, taught by Educational Instructor **Joe Roland** at **SEIU 32BJ** (building service workers union) which culminated in two free, staged reading style performances where the students were joined by professional actors and directors in a professional theatre.

• OPEN MIC NIGHT

At our first annual "Working People's Open Mic" 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 who had become involved through our Special Constituencies Initiative, to a choir of domestic workers who we met through our outreach efforts during 2009 production of *Exit Cuckoo*.

• SPECIAL CONSTITUENCIES INITIATIVE (SCI)

Through our unique grassroots audience development program we offered 2,000 subsidized tickets to 3 First Stage Productions & 15 staged readings and free tickets to 3 special events

Workers represented in our audience included members of: CWA Local 1180 (communications workers), District Council 37 (municipal workers), Teamsters Local 237 and Professional Staff Congress (CUNY professors), the United Federation of Teachers, the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 3, Domestic Workers United.

• IBEW Local 3 WOMEN'S CONFERENCE SKITS

In November of 2009, Local 3 Business Manager Chris Erikson approached the Theater to commission a series of skits to be performed at the union's Women's Conference. Educational Instructor **Joe Roland** wrote the skits, and **Frank Licato** directed professional actors in the pieces.

A very special thank you to all of the talented artists who took part in our season:

Aaron Weiner	Eleanor Herman	Judith Granite	Nicole Watson
Adam Blodgett	Elizabeth Rice	Judith Roberts	Nikki Columbus
Adam Szymkowicz	Emma Bowers	Julian Pimiento	Nikki Walker
Aedin Maloney	Erica Ranade	Julian Stetkevych	Nina Hellman
Ailsa Prideaux-Mooney	Ernst Germain	Katharine Dunwoody	Nina Mehta
Albert Jones	Fei Xu	Kathryn Rosseter	Orlagh Cassidy
Alejandro Morales	Felix Solis	Kathy Hendrickson	OyamO
Alfred Preisser	Fiana Toibin	Keira Keeley	Parker Leventer
André De Shields	Frank Licato	Kent Gash	Patrick Avella
Andrea Day	Gabriel Gutierrez	Kevin Kean Murphy	Peter Paredes
Andrès Munar	Geraldo Alberto	Kia Corthron	Philip Callen
Anna Kull	Gerardo Rodriguez	Laura Carbonell Smith	Ramsey Faragallah
Anna Lamadrid	Gibson Frazier	Laura Esterman	Raquel Cion
Annie Henk	Glynis Bell	Laura Grey	Ray Negron
Annie Weisman	Godfrey Simmons	Lawrence Floyd	Rebecca Schull
Arin Arbus	Gordon Dahlquist	Lisa Peterson	Renita Martin
Arthur French	Grant Neale	Lisa Ramirez	Rob Ackerman
Baibre Dowling	Greg Keller	Lorey Hayes	Rob Bartlett
Ben Holbrook	Greg Mullavey	Louis Cancelmi	Robert Arcaro
Bill Mitchelson	Guy Ruben	Luke Harlan	Ronald Cohen
Brenda Lawless	Heather Raffo	Lynn Rosen	Royce Johnson
Brian Hastert	Heidi Schreck	Makeda Declat	Rutanya Alda
Bridgette Wimberly	Henry Miller	Manuel Borrás	Ruth Kavanagh
Bronagh Murphy	Honor Molloy	Marc Damon Johnson	Sam Ghosh
Carl Capotorto	Ian Quinlan	Marguerite Scott	Samantha Colicchio
Carmen Mathis	Isobel Bruce	Maria Helan Lopez	Sarah Doe Osborne
Caroline Clay	Jack Koenig	Maria-Christina Oliveras	Scott Barrow
Carshi Draghi	Jackson Gay	Marilyn Torres	Scott Ebersold
Cassie Beck	James Dumont	Mark Margolis	Scott Lucy
Charlotte Sorock	Jay Patterson	Mark Smaltz	Sevrin Mason
Chauncey D. Gilbert	Jaye A. Garcia	Marshall Paillet	Shelby Glover
Ching Valdes-Aran	Jean Lubin	Mary Beth Peil	Shpresa Ukosata
Christine Lewis	Jeanine Serralles	Mary Geerlof	Stefanie Cannon
Christopher Luner	Jeff Biehl	Mat Hostetler	Stefanie Zdravec
Clare Lizzimore	Jeffrey Joseph	Matt Stadelman	Stephen Bradbury
Colman Domingo	Jenafeca Smith	Matthew Paul Olmos	Stephen Singer
Connie Grappo	Jeremy Webb	Maureen Towey	Stephen Yearwood
Crystal Skillman	Jess Chayes	Melissa Murray	Susan Louise O'Connor
D. Michael Berkowitz	Jessica Bauman	Mia Katigbak	Susan McKeown
Dale Soules	Jinn Kim	Micaela Rosmaninho	Taino Brigs
Dan Stowel	Jocelyn Kuritsky	Michael A. Jones	Tala Ashe
Daniel Manley	Joclyn Campbell	Michael D. O'Hara	Tanisha Ford
Daniella Topol	Joe Roland	Michael Deep	Thom Rivera
Danny Wolohan	Joe Sutton	Michael Friedman	Tim Cain
Danyon Davis	Joe White	Michael Puzzo	Tobe Johnson
Daryl Lathon	Joel de la Fuente	Mike Batistick	Toks Olagundoye
David Grimm	Joel Harrison	Mike Stein	Tom Kennedy
David Levine	John Halbach	Mirsada Damms	Ty Jones
David Sedgwick	Johnny Ramey	Mohamed Taseen	Victor Lodato
David Stott	Jon Bass	Moira Stone	Victor Maog
Dean Nolen	Jorge Hudson	Molly Camp	Violet Stephenson
Dexter Brown	Jorge Rubio	Molly Powell	William Jay Marshall
Dina Vovsi	José Joaquin Perez	Monique Vukovic	William Wise
Ed Cardona, Jr.	Joseph Goodrich	Nandi Keyi	Yadira De La Riva
Ed Vassallo	Joseph Parks	Neal Hemphill	Zachary B. Moody
	Juan Loney	Nedra Gallegos	

2010 ANNUAL AWARDS CEREMONY GALA

Our 25th Anniversary Annual Awards Ceremony was our most successful to date!



Producing Director Mark Plesent, Board Member Lavender Rouzier and Honoree Chris Erikson at the 2010 Annual Awards Ceremony

We honored **Christopher Erikson, Business Manager, IBEW Local 3** for bridging the gap between the arts, labor & community on Monday, May 10th, 2010 at **Sardi's Restaurant**

The gala featured cocktails, dinner and dessert, a Silent Auction, stand-up comedy by **Rob Bartlett** and an impromptu serenade by **Andr  De Shields**

The 2010 Awards Ceremony was generously sponsored by **MAGNACARE**

Thanks to those who supported our 2010 Annual Awards Ceremony Gala with Ticket and Ad Purchases:

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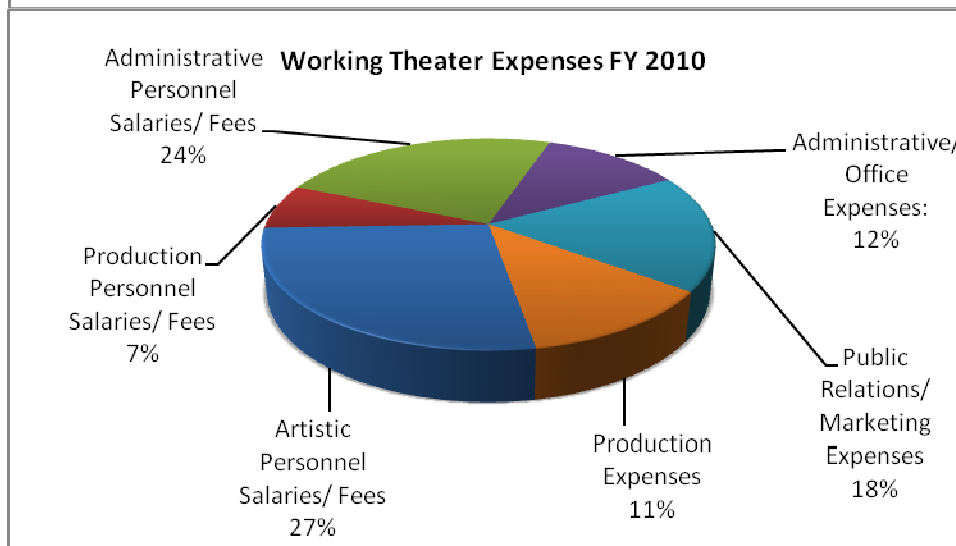
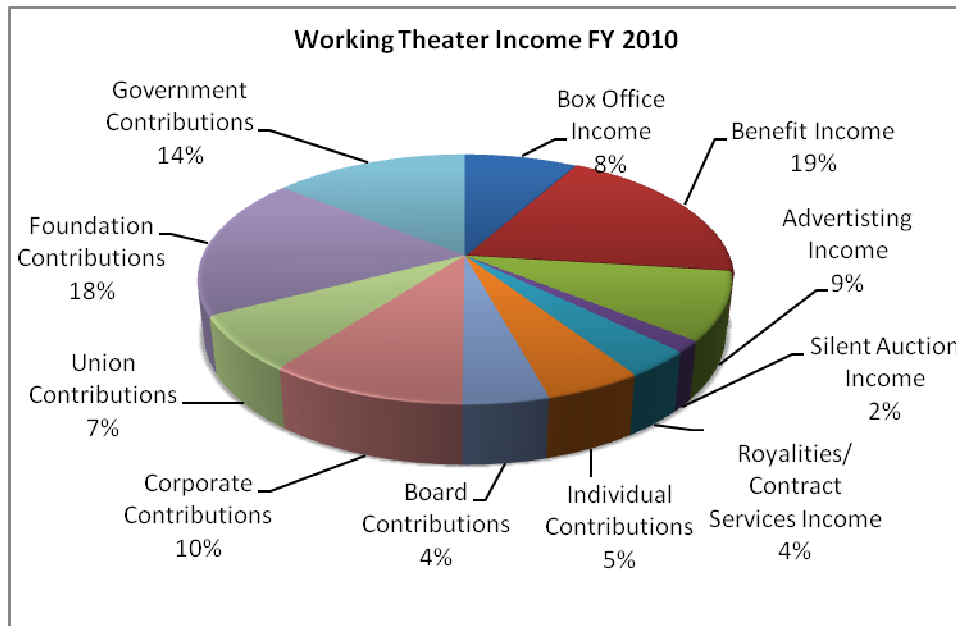
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DC37, Local 372
District Council 37
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DC 37, Local 420
DC 37 Retirees Association
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FINANCIALS

The Working Theatre Co., Inc.
Jul '09 - Jun 10



	Income:		Expenses:
Box Office	\$28,490	Artistic Personnel Salaries/ Fees	\$91,135
Benefit	\$66,053	Production Personnel Salaries/ Fees	\$23,227
Advertising	\$30,881	Administrative Personnel Salaries/ Fees	\$79,958
Silent Auction	\$ 5,206	Administrative/ Office Expenses	\$39,872
Royalties/ Contract Srves	\$12,174	Public Relations/ Marketing Expenses	\$59,904
Individual Contributions	\$17,435	Production Expenses	\$40,783
Board Contributions	\$15,300	Total Expenses:	\$334,879
Corporate Contributions	\$35,600		
Union Contributions	\$24,950		
Foundation Contributions	\$64,600		
Government Contributions	\$49,530		
Total Income:	\$350,218		

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Our deepest thanks to the individuals, foundations and companies that have supported us this season:

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for their donations of beer and wine for our 25th Anniversary Season events



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Mario Cilento
Jordan Fox

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Mark Plesent: Producing Director
Laura Carbonell Smith: Director, Special Events & Marketing
Joe Roland: Director of Educational Programs
Isobel Bruce, Zack Moody & Dina Vovsi: Administrative Interns/ Line Producers
Sarah Livescault: Graphic Design
Leigh Giroux: Legal Representation

Working Theater 25th Anniversary Artistic Associates:

Ed Cardona, Jr., André De Shields, Honor Molloy, Lisa Ramirez and Maureen Towey

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 theatres, and **Theatre Communications Group**.

Working Theater's programs are sponsored in part by public funds from:

New York City's Department of Cultural Affairs
The New York State Council on the Arts
The National Endowment for the Arts

