

ANNIE

ZACH THEATER

IMPACT REPORT

WHERE AUSTIN LIGHTS UP



2025-2026
SEASON

All photos by AxelB Photography unless otherwise indicated.

Zach
THEATER

A LETTER FROM OUR MANAGING DIRECTOR



Photo by Charles Quinn

As we look back on the 2025-2026 season, we're celebrating just how much your support made possible. Your generosity empowered artists, supported student growth, and connected more people than ever before to the power of live theater.

This season, we produced plays and musicals that spanned thought-provoking new works to modern classics (with a Zach twist, of course) including an original bilingual superhero musical. Each production was brought to life right here on campus in a season that offered something for everyone.

Alongside the artistic excellence expressed on our stages, we made substantial investments in our one-of-a-kind educational programming, developing new pathways for students to grow and succeed. We also deepened our ongoing commitment to accessibility and community outreach, creating more opportunities for Austinites of all ages and backgrounds to connect with theater.

Through all this work, we're proud to be one of the largest employers of artists in Central Texas, investing more than \$5 million in local creative talent this year alone, and continuing to play a vital role in Austin's vibrant cultural community.

None of this happens without you. As you look through these pages, we hope you can see your impact woven into every facet of our season and every corner of campus. Thank you for your support as we continue to build a theater that belongs to everyone.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J Herlich', written in a cursive style.

JAMIE HERLICH
Managing Director





A YEAR IN THE LIGHT

COME FROM AWAY

2025-26 SEASON

107,329 REASONS TO CELEBRATE

THE LARGEST AUDIENCE SERVED
IN ZACH'S HISTORY

7 MUSICALS

3 PLAYS

107,329
PATRONS WELCOMED
ACROSS

473
PERFORMANCES

46,000+
FREE OR DEEPLY
DISCOUNTED
TICKETS

\$5.2 MILLION

INVESTED IN
LOCAL CREATIVE TALENT

427 ARTISTS AND
CREATIVES EMPLOYED





MURDER ON THE ORIENT EXPRESS

MURDER ON THE ORIENT EXPRESS WAS THE SECOND HIGHEST-ATTENDED PLAY IN ZACH'S HISTORY, WELCOMING 12,770 PATRONS ACROSS A SOLD-OUT RUN.

Its success, along with the popularity of *Sally & Tom*, showed that our audiences have a strong appetite for plays as well as musicals, paving the way for more diverse and ambitious storytelling.

STANDOUT SCENIC DESIGN MADE THESE FAN-FAVORITES UNFORGETTABLE.

**“A masterpiece in
set design, absolutely
drool-worthy.”**

— CTX LIVE THEATER

COME FROM AWAY GAVE AUDIENCES A FRESH
TAKE ON THE MODERN BROADWAY CLASSIC,
KEEPING THE HEART AND SOUL OF THE STORY
INTACT WHILE REIMAGINING IT WITH A
DYNAMIC TURNABLE AND STRIKING
ORIGINAL SCENIC DESIGN.



MURDER ON THE ORIENT EXPRESS
DAZZLED WITH ITS INTRICATE TRAIN SET,
BROUGHT TO ZACH IN PARTNERSHIP WITH
ASOLO THEATER AND COMMANDING THE
STAGE AS A CHARACTER IN ITS OWN RIGHT.





ZAPATA: A FOLKLÓRICO SUPERHERO MUSICAL HAD ITS WORLD PREMIERE ON THE WHISENHUNT STAGE AFTER BEING COMMISSIONED BY ZACH IN 2023, EXPANDING THE CANON OF BILINGUAL MUSICALS AVAILABLE FOR YOUNG AUDIENCES.

Now, the story continues to grow. Playwright Jesse Sánchez has developed a full two-act version that will be produced for mainstage audiences, while the original one-act version will continue to be produced across the country for young theatergoers.



ZAPATA



PULITZER PRIZE WINNER SUZAN-LORI PARKS JOINED US DURING REHEARSALS FOR SALLY & TOM, WORKING CLOSELY WITH THE CAST AND CREATIVE TEAM TO REFINE THE SHOW.

Only the fourth production of this play, the work developed and produced here at Zach will go on to become the published version of the script.



Doing plays in Texas is very much a homecoming celebration. Specifically working at Zach Theater, under Dave Steakley's leadership I experience a theatre that's very welcoming to my work and a community that's bold and accepts beautiful challenges. It's a stable and loving environment that's also interested in growing — realizing that beautiful things can be found outside of one's comfort zone.

– SUZAN-LORI PARKS

”





ONCE AGAIN, **100%**
OF GRADUATING SENIORS FROM
OUR PRE-PROFESSIONAL
TRAINING PROGRAMS WERE
ACCEPTED TO PERFORMING ARTS
COLLEGES

3,391 STUDENTS SERVED

DONATIONS ALLOWED US TO SUPPORT
156 FAMILIES AND STUDENTS WITH

\$141,000

IN FINANCIAL AID



2,300+
CAMPERS

LIT UP OUR DOWNTOWN
AND NORTH CAMPUSES

59 STUDENT
PERFORMERS

PARTICIPATED IN ZACH PROFESSIONAL
PRODUCTIONS, LEARNING ALONGSIDE
PROFESSIONAL ARTISTS AND
TECHNICIANS



Zach

YOUTH

WHERE TRAINING SHINES

Zach Youth allows young people to channel their passion for theater into skills, confidence, and real-world experience. Our advanced training programs, including **Pre-Professional Company (PPC)**, **Acting Conservatory**, and **Zach Academy**, give students the rigorous training and mentorship they need to grow as artists and individuals.

Nationally recognized as some of the top theater education offerings in the country, these programs are a defining part of our organization and are at the heart of what makes Zach, Zach.

This year, we welcomed **Charles Swan** to the Zach Youth team as Associate Director of Advanced Training. Investing in this new role allows us to build on the strength of our existing programs and create a more cohesive approach to curriculum.



Through the Heller Awards, one Zach advanced training student received a nomination to the Jimmy Awards, traveling to NYC to represent Texas in a national competition for high school theater students.







LIGHTING UP OUR COMMUNITY

2



\$1.3 MILLION TOTAL SUBSIDIES

14,280

DISCOUNTED TICKETS TO SENIORS, SCHOOLS, STUDENTS,
EDUCATORS, VETERANS, AND ACTIVE DUTY MILITARY

1,396

DEEPLY DISCOUNTED
TICKETS THROUGH THE PAY
WHAT YOU WISH PROGRAM

13

FREE AND DISCOUNTED
VENUE RENTALS TO LOCAL
ARTS ORGANIZATIONS

12

COMMUNITY NIGHTS FOR
MAINSTAGE PRODUCTIONS,
INCLUDING ZACHADEMIA
AND PRIDE NIGHTS

10

ASL-INTERPRETED
PERFORMANCES

FIELD TRIPS FOR ALL

Because of supporters like you, no school is turned away because of cost.

24,785 students from

276 schools across

19 districts attended a show on a field trip

13,737 students were from

133 Title I schools,

55% of all those who attended.

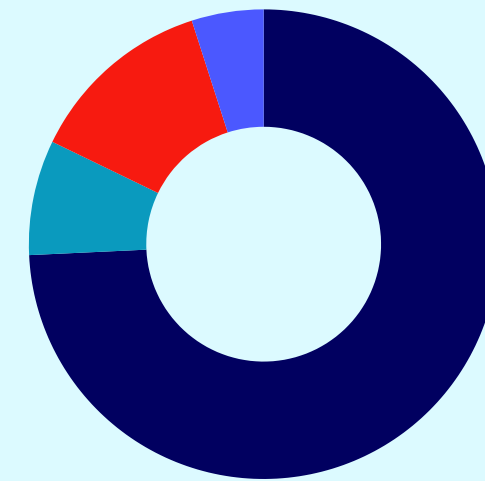




**2025-26 DONOR SUPPORT
TOTALLED \$3,509,983, A 55%
INCREASE YEAR OVER YEAR**

ANNIE

Austinites are choosing to make deeper investments in the theater they call their own, helping fuel the artists, students, and community programs that make Zach a vital part of our city. Zach is building on a strong foundation of donor support, with contributed revenue totals reaching a record high this year.



- DONATIONS FROM SUPPORTERS LIKE YOU 75%**
- COMPANIES 8%**
- FOUNDATIONS 12%**
- GOVERNMENT GRANTS 5%**

GENEROSITY THAT BUILDS MOMENTUM

This record year included the largest unrestricted individual gift in Zach's history — an extraordinary act of generosity that propels us forward and demonstrates the powerful role philanthropy can play in shaping what comes next.



BUILDING FOR WHAT'S NEXT

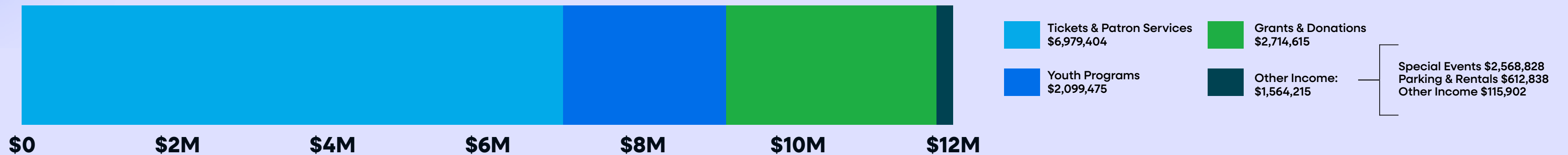
Zach continues to navigate rising costs while maintaining a commitment to accessible tickets, investing in artists, and expanding opportunities for young people.

After several years focused on recovery and optimization, we are entering a new phase:

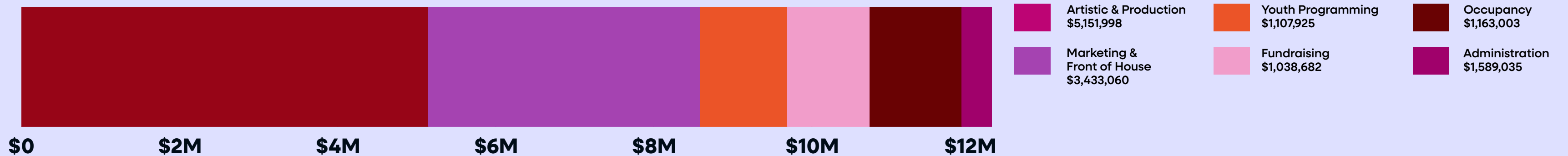
strengthening our business model for long-term sustainability and growth. That means building on growing audiences and increasing revenue while making strategic investments that position Zach to thrive.

Philanthropy remains essential to that future.

25-26 REVENUE \$13,357,709



25-26 EXPENSES \$13,483,703





A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRODUCING ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Zach has been a part of Austin's story for over a century. We create theater that entertains, challenges, inspires, and brings people together through shared experiences. We have long been an artistic engine for our community, bringing ambitious work to our stages, making theater more accessible, inspiring the next generation, and investing in the artists who make it all possible.

Austin is known for its legendary creative spirit, and it's a signature part of what makes it so special. The past years have seen our city experience extraordinary growth, and with that growth comes an opportunity for Zach to play an even greater role in Austin's creative future.

As one of the largest cultural institutions in Central Texas, Zach has both an opportunity and a responsibility to help shape what comes next. As we look ahead, we aspire to not only sustain the work we do, but to grow and evolve alongside our city.

Zach's next chapter is one that will allow us to reach new heights and deepen our impact in Austin and beyond. With your continued support, we can build on more than a century of history and create a future that is even more ambitious, accessible, and vital.

DAVE STEAKLEY,
Producing Artistic Director





A BOLD VISION

A BRIGHTER FUTURE



COME FROM AWAY

Zach's next chapter is one that invites us to imagine what more is possible for our artists, our audiences, and our community.

Our vision is bold: transformative artistic experiences, broader access to the arts, deeper community connection, and a stronger foundation that ensures Zach can continue to inspire and serve Austin for generations to come.

Together, we can ensure Zach not only grows with Austin, but helps shape what Austin becomes.



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A photograph of a stage performance. On the left, a young girl with curly blonde hair, freckles, and a red dress with a black belt and white socks is dancing. On the right, a man in a black tuxedo with a white shirt and black bow tie is in a dynamic pose, looking upwards with an open mouth. The background features a large, decorated Christmas tree with gold and silver ornaments and lights. To the left of the tree are several wrapped gifts. A large, stylized green graphic, resembling a heart or a flower, is overlaid on the scene. The floor is dark and reflective.

THANK YOU