Letter from
Mark Nerenhausen

My friends,

I come to you at the end of what has truly been an incredible year for Hennepin Theatre Trust. My heart is full of joy for all we have accomplished together in the Hennepin Theatre District.

This year saw us achieve landmark development as an organization throughout; we secured ownership of our historic theatres, and in doing so we have cemented the enduring impact our venues have on the cultural landscape of our community. Continuing the history of comedy on Hennepin Avenue, the Trust welcomed Brave New Workshop into the organization, renaming their performance space the Dudley Riggs Theatre to uphold the legacy of the troupe’s founder and inventor of improv comedy. To conclude the fiscal year, I announced my retirement and, after a national search, passed the torch to Todd Duesing to take up leadership of the Theatre District.

As we close this chapter for the Trust, I look back not only at the last year, but at my 50-year career leading performing arts centers. I have been humbled and inspired by all of you—audience members, donors, patrons, sponsors, staff and friends. Together over the years, we have gathered to experience these timeless musicals and the stories they tell, finding joy, understanding and healing. I have been honored to experience the transformative power of the performing arts alongside each of you, and I look forward to all that is to come for Hennepin Theatre Trust. I do not have the words to express my appreciation for the experiences and memories I leave the field with. There truly is no business like show business—thank you for the career of a lifetime.

Sincerely,

Mark Nerenhausen
Former President and CEO
Note from Todd Duesing

Dear friends,

I am filled with immense gratitude and humility as I begin my tenure as President and CEO of this remarkable civic organization. It is both a privilege and an honor to serve in this leadership role and I am truly excited to take the baton and lead a stellar group of innovators of new ideas, guardians of historic landmarks and drivers of economic and social change.

I humbly ask for your support throughout the journey ahead. I’m incredibly thankful to those who were instrumental in creating the Hennepin Theatre District we know today, and we will continue the legacy of inspiring theatregoers from across the state. It drives the cultural and economic vitality of the Theatre District and supports programming that transforms and inspires through the power of the arts.

As we embark on this new chapter to realize our bold vision for the Hennepin Theatre District, I look forward to all that the coming years have in store for us on this journey together.

Sincerely,

Todd Duesing
President and CEO
About Us

Mission
We create positive change through the arts by bringing together people, businesses and organizations to create and enjoy cultural experiences.

Vision
To advance the cultural and economic vitality of Minnesota through leadership of a dynamic arts district, anchored by and defined by a major performing arts center.
In 2022-2023, Hennepin Theatre Trust:

Reached 51 Minnesota legislative districts

Partnered with 49 community organizations across the region

Collaborated with 345 Minnesota artists

Nearly 100 school theater programs serving 8,000 students and thousands of audience members across Minnesota
Orpheum Theatre
The Orpheum Theatre, originally known as the Hennepin, opened in 1921 and was billed as the largest vaudeville house in the country at the time.
Seats: 2,579

State Theatre
The State Theatre opened in 1921 and was then considered the most technologically advanced and elaborate theatre in the United States.
Seats: 2,181

Pantages Theatre
The Pantages Theatre opened in 1916 as a vaudeville house and part of Greek immigrant Alexander Pantages’ renowned consortia of theatres.
Seats: 1,014

Dudley Riggs Theatre
The Dudley Riggs Theatre at 824 Hennepin Avenue is home of the Brave New Workshop, the nation’s oldest sketch comedy troupe. The theatre is named after the Brave New Workshop founder.
Seats: 187

The Hennepin
The Hennepin is a historic arts and cultural event center located at the heart of downtown Minneapolis’ vibrant theatre district.
Hennepin Theatre Trust poised to accelerate vision for Hennepin Theatre District after redeeming City-issued bonds for Orpheum, State and Pantages theatres and completing lease 13 years ahead of schedule

Minneapolis (Oct. 18, 2022) — Hennepin Theatre Trust has redeemed the bonds issued by the City of Minneapolis for the Orpheum, State and Pantages theatres, completing—13 years ahead of the schedule—the City’s original vision for the restoration and activation of the theatres. By redeeming the bonds, Hennepin Theatre Trust has completed the lease with the City and is now poised to accelerate its work as a major performing arts center in rejuvenating and driving the vitality of the Hennepin Theatre District in downtown Minneapolis.

“Since its founding, Hennepin Theatre Trust has been committed to the economic and cultural vitality of the District, the city and the state of Minnesota. The Trust has actively advanced the vision of the Hennepin Theatre District with world-class entertainment and large-scale public art installations, while making a difference in the lives of thousands of students across the state through musical theatre education programming. Thanks to our stable financial footing, Hennepin Theatre Trust has realized the original vision of the City of Minneapolis 13 years early, and we are now poised to accelerate the work we’ve been doing for the last six years as a civic institution and a nationally-recognized performing arts center in the heart of Minnesota.”

—Mark Nerenhausen, President and CEO of Hennepin Theatre Trust

President and CEO Mark Nerenhausen honored with President’s Award by Meet Minneapolis

Minneapolis (March 14, 2023) — Meet Minneapolis, the city’s convention and visitors association, awarded Hennepin Theatre Trust president and CEO Mark Nerenhausen with the President’s Award in recognition of his distinguished leadership of the Hennepin Theatre District in downtown Minneapolis.

“Since his arrival in Minneapolis, Mark has been a driving force for an organization that welcomes more than a half million visitors to Minneapolis each year to enjoy a positive experience downtown. Across its five historic venues in the Hennepin Theatre District, Hennepin Theatre Trust drives the vitality of downtown Minneapolis and the economic growth and prosperity of the state. Mark has been instrumental in the renovation and revitalization of Hennepin Avenue, building a vibrant, dynamic and welcoming historic Hennepin Theatre District for all. We are pleased to honor him with this well-deserved award.”

—Melvin Tennant, president and CEO of Meet Minneapolis

Hennepin Theatre Trust renames theatre on Hennepin Avenue as the Dudley Riggs Theatre, carrying on legacy of the Brave New Workshop comedy theatre’s founder

Minneapolis (Nov. 10, 2022) — Hennepin Theatre Trust announced that it has renamed the theatre located at 824 Hennepin Ave. as the Dudley Riggs Theatre. The name honors Dudley Riggs, the founder of satirical improvisational theater and founder of the Brave New Workshop, the nation’s oldest sketch comedy troupe.

“I am absolutely delighted to hear that the building at 824 Hennepin Ave., where the Brave New Workshop continues to make us laugh, will now be named the Dudley Riggs Theatre. My deepest thanks to Hennepin Theatre Trust for this magnificent tribute to my late husband, Dudley Riggs, who brought Instant Theater to Minneapolis in 1958, beginning what became the Brave New Workshop and a thriving theater community here in the Twin Cities today. Knowing Dudley, he would have been humbled by this honor and amused that his name will remain on Hennepin Avenue, where it all began.”

—Dr. Pauline Boss, University of Minnesota professor emeritus and widow of Dudley Riggs

“Dudley was a true pioneer in improvisational comedy, bringing it to Minneapolis and providing me and Tom Davis, along with so many others, our starts. On top of that, a magnificent man and a true friend. Oh, and funny!”

—Al Franken, former United States Senator and Brave New Workshop alumnus.
On Our Stages

Brave New Workshop

Andrea Bocelli

Mary Chapin Carpenter and Shawn Colvin

David Sedaris

To Kill a Mockingbird

Cats
Ain't Too Proud

“Weird Al” Yankovic

Cirque Dreams

Billy Porter

Disney Junior

Potted Potter
Education in the Spotlight

Hennepin Theatre Trust’s Spotlight Education programming is an essential part of arts education in schools across Minnesota. One of the largest education programs of its kind in the nation, Spotlight helps over 8,000 students in more than 100 schools build confidence, empathy, critical thinking and lifelong skills that will support them on and offstage.

170,000 students and community members who engaged with their local Spotlight evaluated productions in 2022-2023.

4,200 students, parents and theater lovers who took part in Spotlight Showcase, Minnesota high school theater’s biggest celebration.

140 local artists who engaged with Spotlight as paid evaluators and teaching artists during the 2022-2023 season.

190 elementary school students introduced to the thrill of the performing arts through our Disney Musicals in Schools program.

“My daughter was cast as young Anna in the Disney Musicals in Schools production of Frozen. This experience has lit a light in her soul that has elevated her confidence, creativity and a love for the performing arts. I believe you have opened a door to her future.”

—Elizabeth Chidothe, parent from Susan Lindgren Elementary School
Left: Critical Review students at the Minnesota capital to discuss young voter participation with leads of Hamilton and Secretary of State Steve Simon.

Right: Christine Heesun Hwang, Spotlight alum and Eponine in the touring Broadway production of Les Misérables, performs at an exclusive Spotlight Education and donor event.

Disney Musicals in Schools Student Share, an opportunity for young actors across the region to perform on the Pantages Theatre stage.

Mia Nelson, 2023 Triple Threat on Hennepin performer from Rosemount High School, named Semifinalist at the fourteenth annual National High School Musical Theater Awards (Jimmy Awards®)
Community Engagement Highlights

Hennepin Theatre Trust transforms the places and spaces of the Hennepin Theatre District to create a more vibrant, welcoming and inclusive Hennepin Avenue.

It’s the People celebrates the diverse community of people who live, work and play in the Hennepin Theatre District through larger-than-life portraits on the sides of buildings along the avenue.

Hennepin Theatre Trust displays beloved vintage figurines from Dayton’s Holiday Show in downtown storefronts with plans to restore over 30 of the iconic figures.

On National Cat Day, the Trust and the Animal Humane Society partnered together to highlight the virtues of giving everyone a second chance at the Jellicle Ball, celebrating the run of Cats.

Outside Vibe by 5 to 10 on Hennepin is a youth-focused community program that activates Hennepin Avenue throughout the summer with live music, art and social support opportunities in partnership with Kulture Klub Collaborative.
The Trust hosts monthly Art Salons: interactive creative gatherings that are free and open to the public so everyone in our community can come together to learn, share and celebrate the arts.

We Are Still Here is a multiyear collaborative partnership between the Native American Community Development Institute (NACDI) and Hennepin Theatre Trust to bring large-scale, high-profile public artworks to the Hennepin Theatre District and the American Indian Culture Corridor.

Hennepin Theatre Trust’s galleries provide access to unique art and cultural experiences throughout the Theatre District and create opportunities to highlight local artists and community groups.

The Trust works with artists ranging from emerging talent to internationally acclaimed professionals to create murals that bring artistic vitality to a busy urban environment.

Hamilton cast member D. Jerome performed a powerful rendition of the National Anthem at the Twins’ home opener.

We Are Still Here is a multiyear collaborative partnership between the Native American Community Development Institute (NACDI) and Hennepin Theatre Trust to bring large-scale, high-profile public artworks to the Hennepin Theatre District and the American Indian Culture Corridor.
“I was thrilled to be in the room where it happens to help welcome Hamilton to the Orpheum Theatre stage. This production captures the birth of the great American experiment in democracy and showcases some incredible talent. Live venues were among the first businesses to close down from the pandemic and the last to reopen, but we decided we couldn’t let arts and culture die. Actors, stagehands, musicians, audiences, and organizations like the Hennepin Theatre Trust rallied behind my bipartisan bill, the Save Our Stages Act, to make the largest investment in the arts in American history and help theaters survive so we can continue to enjoy performances like Hamilton for generations to come.”

— Senator Amy Klobuchar
“The arts are the heartbeat of our city. Hennepin Theatre Trust’s Broadway season isn’t just a series of shows, it’s a critical industry to help revitalize downtown. Broadway’s presence downtown makes Minneapolis a destination for theatregoers from across the region—and helps create a vibrant and welcoming place for all. Arts aren’t just an amenity, they’re a necessity to the identity of our city.”

—Minneapolis Mayor Jacob Frey

“I create art that actively decolonizes and breaks down the colonial borders that we have. I love We Are Still Here because they believe that Natives should be the drivers of our own narrative.”

—Jerica Fountain, We Are Still Here 2022-2023 Cohort mentee

“Performing my school medley at Showcase was probably the best experience I’ve ever had onstage.”

—Spotlight Education alum

“This portrait means community and family. When I saw it, I just saw pure love.”

—Jonathan Thomas, It’s the People subject

“I could rave about Spotlight for the rest of my life. I don’t think I would be able to achieve the sort of success I’ve been getting now if I hadn’t been a part of a program like Spotlight.”

—Christine Heesun Hwang, Spotlight alum and Éponine in the touring Broadway production of Les Misérables

“Spotlight Education provides incredible opportunities for my students in so many more ways than I had ever hoped. Hennepin Theatre Trust’s public recognition helps us, as directors, to keep advocating for arts education. That dedication and growth can provide confidence, skills, empathy, understanding, curiosity, leadership, memories and rewards that last a lifetime.”

—Amy Monson, theater director for Mayo High School in Rochester, Minnesota

“The work you do is so integral to the community and the lives of our youth, and I’m glad to do my part to support your service in whatever way I can. Your work promotes the necessary cultural opportunities that allows our youth and larger community to thrive.”

—Senator D. Scott Dibble

“As an independent journalist and photographer, being featured as a subject is letting me know that my work is not in vain.”

—King Demetrius Pendleton, It’s the People subject

“This portrait means community and family. When I saw it, I just saw pure love.”

—Jonathan Thomas, It’s the People subject
Administration

BOARD OF DIRECTORS
This list reflects members as of June 30, 2023
Andrea Mokros
Barbara Brin
Jay Novak
Gloria Freeman*
Kathleen Gullickson
Michele Engdahl
Travis Barkve
Marie Becker
Orlando Bryant
Al Coleman
Ryan Johnson
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Christine Kwiat
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Bill Moffly*
Andrea Kajer
Christine Kwiat
Dorain Larison
Bill Moffly*
Jayne Haugen Olson
Melvin Tennant
Jenny Weber*
Bret Weiss
Daniel Tenenbaum
Sue Ross
Justin Buoen
Molly Biwer
Herschel Herndon*
*Left mid-year

STAFF
This list reflects Hennepin Theatre Trust staffed employed as of June 30, 2023
Robert Allen,
Security Specialist
Peter Anderson,
House Manager
Lauren Anderson,
Actor
David Balk,
Event Coordinator
Matthew Barrett,
Marketing Manager
Scobie Bathie,
Event Lead
Emmalynn Bauer,
Director of External Relations
Brooks Becker,
Director of Finance
Denzel Belin,
Actor
Chelsea Bertsch,
Accounting Associate
Ginger Campbell,
Bartender
Liam Carr,
Communications Specialist
Timothy Carroll,
Archivist
Lydia Dalton,
Event Lead
Jesse Daniels,
Marketing Manager
Paul Dickinson,
Production Assistant
Daniel Dickinson,
Production Assistant
Shannon Dolan,
Development Event Specialist
Isabella Dunsieth,
Actor
Yelizaveta Ferrari,
Controller
Jared Fleming,
Front of House Associate
Melvin Freeman,
Security Specialist
Julie Gotlieb,
Development Officer for Corporate Relations
Tanya Gravening,
Public Art Manager
Ashley Grossman,
Digital Marketing Manager
Corey Gulla,
Front of House Associate
Rebecca Haddad,
Director of Development
Jonathan Huerta,
Event Operations Manager
Brandon Isabell,
Security Specialist
Andrew Johnson,
Event Center Director
Morgan Kempton,
Spotlight Education Coordinator
Ari Koehn Sweeney,
Director of Creative Art Partnerships
Lisa Krohn,
Director of Booking
Megan Kunz,
Director of Marketing
Julia Larson,
Spotlight Education Artistic Manager
Jasmine Magner,
Donor Stewardship Coordinator
Mary Jane Mansfield,
Public Art Manager
Rachel McCloud,
Front of House Associate
Bailey McDonald,
Event Lead
Shaied McDonell,
Security Specialist
Caleb McEwen,
Artistic Director of Brave New Workshop
Nathan Meyer,
Photographer & Videographer
Douglas Neithercott,
Actor
Ryan Nelson,
Actor
Tracy Philippi,
Bartender
Nichole Pretzer,
Theatre Operations Manager
Jonathan Pumper,
Music Director
Victor Quinones,
Event Lead
Brooke Robison,
Digital Media Specialist
Taj Ruler,
Actor
Emily Sasik,
Donor Stewardship Specialist
Emma Schlei,
Accounting Associate
Don Shier,
Event Center Sales Manager
Dale Stark,
Public Relations Manager
Anneliese Stuht,
Major Gifts Officer
Carlye Vandanton,
Salesforce Administrator
Matthew Vichlach,
Technical Director
Britta Wells,
Spotlight Education School Manager
Suzanne Whitman,
Marketing Coordinator
Evan Williams,
HR Business Partner
Cheryl Willis Mayer,
Front of House Associate
Our sponsors, funders and partners — thank you!

Our supporters make it possible for Hennepin Theatre Trust to drive cultural and economic vitality in Minnesota. We thank our sponsors, funders and partners for their continued support. These lists reflect our sponsors, funders and partners for the fiscal period July 1, 2022, to June 30, 2023.

HennepinTheatreTrust.org/Support
Donors

We are so grateful for the support we receive from members of our community. We see the impact of these gifts every day in every region of Minnesota.

HennepinTheatreTrust.org/Support

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This activity is made possible by the voters of Minnesota through a Minnesota State Arts Board Operating Support grant, thanks to a legislative appropriation from the arts and cultural heritage fund.