



## The Sooner Theatre of Norman, Inc.

### Financial Report FY 2012



Photos (top to bottom): 2013 Sooner Stage Presents *Man of La Mancha*, Patty Griffin, 2013 Sooner stage Presents *White Christmas*, 2011 *Mardi Gras*; 2013 Sooner Stage Presents *Hello, Dolly!*, starring Jennifer Baker; *Asleep At The Wheel*; Delbert McClinton



## **THE SOONER THEATRE OF NORMAN, INC.**

The Sooner Theatre belongs to The City of Norman. It is listed on the National Registry of Historic Places and is truly a Norman landmark. The Board and Staff are proud "stewards" of the management and activities of the facility, and have made significant investments of time, effort and resources to assure the survival of The Sooner...Norman's Premier Performing Arts Venue and Academy.

## **OUR MISSION**

The mission of The Sooner Theatre of Norman, Inc., is to provide cultural, educational and entertainment opportunities, by operating a financially sound performing arts center, while maintaining its historical integrity and character.

## **OUR FUNCTION STATEMENTS**

**PRESENT** quality theatrical productions

**PROVIDE** a quality venue for the presentation of cultural, artistic, educational and community development activities that improve the quality of life for our citizens and to

**SERVE** as an historic anchor for the development of partnerships with other arts and business entities to create a revitalized, downtown arts district for Norman.

## **THE SOONER THEATRE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

President, Laurie McReynolds, University of Oklahoma

Vice President, Eric Melton, American Red Cross

Treasurer, Beth Pepper, Eide Bailey

Secretary, Susan Vassilakos, Community Volunteer

Past President, Steve Sayers, Dell Computers

Woody Glass, Attorney at Law

Tyler LaReau, LaReau and Associates

Tim Lashar, Lashar Comfort Systems

Mark Ledbetter, Republic Bank and Trust

Andy Paden, Insurica

Leanne Pence, Box Talent

Amy Pepper, University of Oklahoma Legal Clinic

Anitra Tucker, Community Volunteer

John Waller, Norman Community Foundation

### **Advisory Members**

Jud Foster, City of Norman

Chuck Thompson, Republic Bank of Norman

Tom Cooper, First American Bank

Jerry Hargis, Theatre Consultant

## **SOONER THEATRE STAFF**

Jennifer Heavner Baker, Executive Director

Nicki Kralsky, Business Manager

Brandon Adams, Associate Artistic Director

Katherine McLaughlin, House Operations Manager

Nancy Coggins, PR and Development

Thomas Muhn, Technical Director

Tish Willis, Studio Director

## **THEATRE ACTIVITY**

In 2002, our Board of Directors approved a programming portfolio consisting of seven initiatives. Our programs serve quality of life needs in the areas of culture, education, theatre and music for an increasing number of citizens.

### **1. THE MAIN EVENT SERIES**

The Sooner Theatre's concert series.

**2011-2012 Season:** Robert Cray, A Tribute to Wayman Tisdale with Tom Braxton, The Oklahoma Rodeo Opry, The Four Freshman

**Current Season:** Patty Griffin, Marcia Bail, Asleep at The Wheel, Delbert McClinton

### **2. SOONER STAGE PRESENTS**

The Sooner Theatre's self-produced theatrical series.

**2011-2012 Season:** *The Secret Garden, Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*

**Current Season:** *Man Of La Mancha, White Christmas, Hello Dolly*

### **3. THE STUDIO OF THE SOONER THEATRE**

This initiative addresses the educational and service mission of the Sooner Theatre, by providing instructional activities for adults and children in performance related areas to include classes, camps, master classes and workshops.

The Studio of The Sooner Theatre is thriving! Currently, more than 730 students are participating or will participate in a camp or class at The Studio! It's hard to believe that just four years ago we were supplementing extra space. We traded space with the Norman Public Library and borrowed and rented space from the City of Norman Parks & Recreation Department including the Irving and Whittier Recreation Centers, Reeves Building, Rotary House and the Senior Citizens' Center. In addition we utilized space at All Saints Catholic School, Middle Earth, First Presbyterian Church and Norman Public Schools.

We are thankful to have our Studio downtown Norman in the hustle and bustle of the growing arts district. Our landlord has been quite supportive and donates to our organization. Our space at 227 E. Main Street, houses our classes, rehearsals for our productions, the majority of our summer camps, as well as storage for costumes and props. We are now utilizing the space for small performances and have had several rental inquiries as well.

We feel our initial investment of \$50,000 for renovations, was well worth it!

The Studio offers 26 classes a week during the school year and 23 camps and classes during the summer. The Studio offers Acting I and II, Musical Theatre I and II, Intro to Musical Theatre, Theatre Dance, Tap I, II, and III, Ballet, Hip-Hop, Show Troupe, Broadway Kids, Broadway Babies 1 & 2, Claymation, Song Study/Audition Technique, private dance, private voice and group voice. We have also added three new production classes and one new production camp to the schedule, giving our students more opportunities to perform each year!

**Last fiscal year's Studio productions included:** *All Shook Up, 101 Dalmatians, Good News, Footloose, Piggy Nation and The Wizard of Oz.*

**Our current Studio Season:** *Crazy For You, Jungle Book, The Little Mermaid, Cinderella, How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying and Seussical.*

Our annual cost to run the Studio last year, including utilities, instructor fees, repairs, maintenance, and supplies was \$156,375. Plus, we gave a total of 43 scholarships at a value of \$16,255. This year to date, we have given 80 scholarships at a value of \$30,865!!! We are proud of our solid program and are currently addressing the issues of our continued "growth" and the impact it's having on our building.

Many of our students perform in the community for various events including roles in commercials and films. This past year, one of our Studio trained students, traveled to NYC for final callbacks for 3 Broadway shows, *Annie*, *Mary Poppins* and the new musical *Matilda*. We also had a student training in LA for pilot season. Twelve Studio students auditioned for and were selected to play the Munchkins and Winkies in the National Tour of *The Wizard Of Oz*, and we had several students featured as the kids in *The OKC Philharmonic Christmas Show* for the past two years.

Last year, The Studio was selected to premier the new children's musical *Piggy Nation!* 20 students were selected and performed the Oklahoma and Southwest Premieres just 3 weeks ago. The L.A. based author Richard Rosser was here to work with the students and attended all 3 performances. This was quite a coup for The Sooner Theatre and the community of Norman. October of fiscal year 2012, The Sooner took a group of 80 to NYC to work with Broadway veterans including Anne L. Nathan, from the original Broadway cast of *Thoroughly Modern Millie*, Michelle Lookadoo, from the Broadway casts of *Mary Poppins* and *Anything Goes*, Jim Cooney and Marc Tuminelli, in workshops including Tap, Vocal Performance, Auditioning, Make-up and Hair, and Musical Theatre Dance. While in NYC, these students also had the opportunity to see two Broadway shows, and gain a better understanding of the industry from the performers and professionals who live it. We have planned another trip for this October!

Listed below of places our students have performed:

The 2009 Mayor's Convention, NAC Arts Explosion, The 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Depot, Norman Music Festival, Kids for Kids Sake, Earth Day, The Oklahoma Rodeo Opry, The OKC Thunder, the Andy Roddick Tennis Exposition, OKC Arts Festival, Norman's Centennial Follies, Lyric Theatre, Jewel Box Theatre, University of Central Oklahoma, OMEA All State Chorus, Oklahoma City's Centennial Parade, Norman Christmas Parade, Norman Public Schools, Oklahoma Summer Arts Institute, Norman Chamber of Commerce Annual Banquet, May Fair, June Bug Jam, and The Chocolate Festival, several events at the University of Oklahoma, local church events.

The Studio regularly hosts Master Classes and Workshops with Broadway performers and performers from National Tours. Past Master Classes include performers from, *Wicked*, *Cats*, *Will Rogers Follies*, *The Who's Tommy*, *The Phantom of The Opera*, *Hairspray*, *Legally Blonde*, *The Wizard of Oz*, *Memphis*, *West Side Story* and *The Addams Family*. Last summer, we hosted Iqbal Theba from FOX's hit show *GLEE*. Tituss Burgess, who originated the role of Sebastian in the Broadway smash *Disney's The Little Mermaid*, has also worked with Studio students in vocal workshops, and we plan to bring him back this summer.

We also bring in leaders from our industry to work with the students. For example, college professors will visit our teen classes and discuss and answer questions about the transition from high school performing arts to college performing arts, as well as hold mock auditions to give the students an idea of what to expect.

#### **4. SPECIAL EVENTS**

The Sooner Theatre hosts an annual Murder Mystery Dinner and Show, which raised a total of \$13,000 toward operations last year. For this year's event we have already received \$10,000 in sponsorships, and the food has been completely donated. Projected totals thus far are at \$20,000!

#### **5. RENTAL ACTIVITIES**

Community organizations and individuals have the opportunity to rent the theatre for their activities, meetings or performances. Our renters are important to our survival. Our Rental revenue for 2011-2012 was \$15,548.

##### **2011/2012 RENTALS**

- Antioch Community Church
- Hispanic Flamenco Ballet
- Rocky Horror Picture Show
- Julia's Academy of International Dance
- Weddings & Engagements
- Crimson & Cream Pageant
- Norman Music Festival
- Showtime Dance Studio
- June Bug Jam
- Ben Rector Concert

#### **6. OUTREACH AND DEVELOPMENT**

In addition to our programming, The Sooner staff is deeply rooted in the community. We have staff members who hold Board of Director seats or committee positions for several Norman organizations. We also provide entertainment for community events in Norman and neighboring communities, including matinee performances for Norman Public Schools, plus we keep our doors open for all Downtown related events.

##### **Our Outreach and Development includes:**

United Way's Celebrity Sing, The Main St. Christmas/Holiday Parade, NAC Arts Explosion, The 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Depot, Norman Music Festival, June Bug Jam, Norman Chamber Of Commerce Banquet, May Fair, The Assistance League's Gala, Kids for Kids Sake, Norman Chamber of Commerce, Citizen's Advisory Council, Norman Convention and Visitors Bureau, The Norman Public School's Gifted Council and the Norman Arts Council. We are represented at the Norman Downtowner's Association, Norman Arts Council's Roundtable, Norman Rotary, the United Way Cabinet, Assistance League, Norman Public Schools PTA and several other organizations.

**We also participate as donors for community events to include:**

Assistance League  
Community After School Program  
Tour de Vin  
Norman Regional Health System "United Way Silent Auction"  
Meals on Wheels  
Among Friends ...an Activity Center for Adults with Special Needs  
Travelers Aid & Homeless Assistance Center  
Norman Regional Hospital  
Blanchard Public Schools  
Oklahoma Statewide Independent Living Council  
Cleveland County Family YMCA  
Travelers Aid and Homeless Assistance Center  
Norman Public Schools  
Moore Public Schools  
Norman Chamber of Commerce  
Meals on Wheels  
United Ministries  
University of Oklahoma  
Southwestern Publishing  
Oklahoma Youth Orchestra

As you can see from this list, the programming portfolio is ambitious. It is designed to provide more activities, for more groups and therefore... more audiences. This is a way to maximize Theatre appeal by a broader portion of our community, and to hopefully ensure long term fiscal return

## **7. Sooner Cinema**

The Sooner Theatre's film and video offerings.

## **STAFFING**

Our mission, function and program direction have, each year, been approved by the City administration, and Municipal money has been provided for The Sooner to have a firm "base" for staffing the facility, and on which to build its activities. According to Theatre Facts, A Report on Practices and Performances in the American Nonprofit Theatre, a typical theatre our size, with a similar County population count, and the same amount of programming will have 8-10 full time employees. Our current staff manages both the Sooner Theatre and The Studio of The Sooner Theatre with 6 full-time employees and 1 part-time employee. We also utilize the Federal Work Study program at OU, providing one student at 20 hrs a week.

This current The Studio will contract 40 instructors, 7 choreographers, 5 accompanists, 6 counselors, and numerous musicians.

Our board of directors provides benefits to our employees through Blue Cross Blue Shield of Oklahoma. As you know, the turnover rate in the "nonprofit world" has always been high, and it's even higher in the "theatre world", so offering benefits to our theatre employees is an incredible feat for our organization. This past fiscal year we paid \$13,216 in Health Insurance costs.

## **ECONOMIC USE OF PAST FUNDING**

- Salaries 2003/2004 **\$86,847.27**
- Salaries 2004/2005 **\$94,634.36**
- Salaries 2005/2006 **\$108,541.76**
- Salaries 2006/2007 **\$141,000.00**
- Salaries 2007-2008 **\$146,473.00**
- Salaries 2008-2009 **\$187,202.00**
- Salaries 2009-2010 **\$184,516.00**
- Salaries 2010-2011 **\$190,950.00**
- Salaries 2011-2012 **\$184,600.00**

The Municipal money we receive in the amount of **\$65,274** is paying for approximately 33.5% of our payroll expenses. (2011-2012)

We are now paying 20% of our total utility costs, which through December of 2012 totaled \$2800.

## **OTHER SOURCES OF INCOME**

In addition to the Municipal money our other sources of income are from our annual Murder Mystery Fundraiser, Sponsorships, Donations, Program Advertising, Rentals, Grants, and our camps and classes. All of these help cover our current operating budget of approximately **\$687,104**

## **THANK YOU**

Our product tells what we stand for, what we want to offer the community and how well we know our business. At The Sooner Theatre we host professional artists to first-timers and foster performers from 3 years old on up. Our presentations reflect our mission, our image and ultimately they determine our survival. We embrace the fact that we are not "Community Theatre" but "Theatre for the Community". Nearly 15,000 people walked through our doors last year and we were able to track ticket sales to 135 Oklahoma zip codes and 58 out-of-state! We hope you agree that The Sooner Theatre grants a major return for City's investment.

Thank you for all that you do to take care of the beautiful Sooner Theatre! The air conditioning, carpet and curtains have been a true blessing!! I hope you can drop by to see our new ramp, roof and proposed lighting upgrades. Kudos to Jud Foster and James Briggs for the hard work and dedication to this amazing Norman landmark.