



The Saints Award Their 2023 Grants to the Metro Chicago Performing Arts Community

The Saints, Chicago Volunteers for the Performing Arts, announce the awarding of \$88,824 in grants to 20 arts organizations in the Chicago metropolitan area for 2023-24. The grants, ranging in amounts from \$1,000 to \$5,000, were awarded to theater, dance and music organizations' projects. Over the last 30+ years, the Saints have given nearly \$1,370,000 to many different performing arts groups.

The grants will fund projects such as: unique costume design, performing arts opportunities for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, commissioning new works by emerging composers and by Black, Indigenous, and people of color playwrights, enhancement of performance/rehearsal spaces and the purchase of technical equipment, to name a few. Evaluation criteria looked at the project description, financial viability and legal verification, collaboration among organizations, dedication to cultural and ethnic diversity and addressing underrepresented or differently abled performers and audiences.

The selection process was undertaken by an all-volunteer grants commission that evaluated all proposals. Current funding for the Saints Grants comes almost exclusively from the annual membership dues and donations of its members. Awardees range from relatively new companies to some well-known brand names in Chicago performing arts and are located throughout the Chicago area.

More than 1,500 members of **The Saints: Volunteers for the Performing Arts** provide volunteer services for over 200 Chicago area performing arts organizations annually, along with financial support through our MatchGrants Program. Saints membership both provides an opportunity to support the arts in metro Chicago and see shows affordably by ushering.

The Saints will celebrate our grant recipients on June 20, in person for the first time since 2019.

The recipients of the 2023 Saints grants, in alphabetical order:

A.B.L.E. - ARTISTS BREAKING LIMITS & EXPECTATIONS



An organization that provides performing arts opportunities for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) to develop confidence and skills will get funding to perform in ensembles this fall. We'll cover a portion of production costs, such as, costumes, props, access services, visual aids, and sensory support.

(1st time applicant)

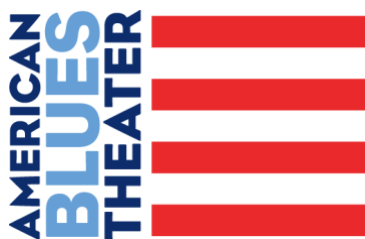
ableensemble.com



AGUIJÓN THEATER COMPANY

This theater fostering the diverse culture of Chicago's Latino artists for nearly 35 years will receive funds to provide English supertitles for their Spanish production of Mario Cantú Toscano's *La Pinche India* that "explores the racism and classism perpetuated against our indigenous peoples in Latin America" and will be part of the 6th Annual Destinos Chicago International Latino Theater Festival.

aguijontheater.org



AMERICAN BLUES THEATER

We'll help this theater, founded in 1985, with a shiny new lighting console to be used in their first ever permanent home for productions exploring "the lives of everyday people who inhabit the working neighborhoods of America." You'll be able to find them in Chicago's Lincoln Avenue North Arts District where they will show us that it's a wonderful life!

americanbluestheater.com



CHICAGO A CAPPELLA

This organization dedicated to furthering ensemble singing will receive funds to mentor and promote emerging women composers in the art of a cappella choral music through their *HerVoice* Emerging Women Composers Competition open to composers of all ages who identify as female.

chicagoacappella.org



CHICAGO CHORAL ARTISTS

An Oak Park choral ensemble of dedicated musicians, often featuring new commissions, has been presenting their innovative music to audiences for over 40 years. They will get support for their winter concert, *Fear Not*, featuring work that "speaks to finding courage and hope in times of struggle."

chicagochoralartists.org

EIGHTH BLACKBIRD PERFORMING ARTS ASSOCIATION



This Chicago based contemporary music sextet derives its name from the eighth stanza of Wallace Stevens' poem *Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird*. The Saints will help shed some light on their Creative Lab Concerts as they continue to “move music forward through innovative aesthetics.”

eighthblackbird.org



THE FACTORY THEATER

With more than 100 plays written and produced, this Rogers Park theater is currently the longest running in Chicago presenting only original works created by its ensemble. We'll help The Factory collect, compile and archive all these works in order to ensure their legacy.

thefactorytheater.com



THE GIFT THEATRE

This Jefferson Park 50 seat storefront company has moved in with its Portage Park neighbors at Filament Theatre to partner up for 2023 as year-round co-tenants in a larger performance space. They will receive funds to add energy efficient LED lights to their stock to reduce rental fees and highlight their productions.

thegifttheatre.org

GOLDEN TICKET PRODUCTIONS



We're happy to fund this community theater that serves the northern and western Chicago suburbs and help them with their production of *9 to 5, the Musical*, promoting important messages about equality, justice, and empowerment in the workplace.

(1st time applicant)

goldenticketproductions.com



HELL IN A HANDBAG PRODUCTIONS

Called "The gold standard of camp in Chicago" by The Chicago Reader, this itinerant theater company has been producing shows for more than 20 years. They will now be able to purchase new lighting and sound equipment as they turn their Lincoln Square rehearsal space into a permanent performance venue.

handbagproductions.org



KHECARI

The Saints will help shed light on late summer performances of *Tend* as it "positions each audience member as a self-care consumer; booking a one-on-one appointment, filling out an intake form, and getting placed in a salon chair. The performer becomes the technician providing the service, the audience member becomes the client". Book your consultations now.

khecari.org



OAK PARK FESTIVAL THEATRE

This company will be staging an indie rock musical for the first time in their 48-year history, staged in the historic Pleasant Home mansion in Oak Park. The Saints will provide funding for some of the musical elements needed for this show loosely based on Chekov's *The Seagull*.

oakparkfestival.com



OIL LAMP THEATER

A The 60-seat Glenview theater company that is known to offer fresh-baked complimentary cookies at each performance to make you feel at home, will get our support for their first-ever musical production to push their creative and spatial limits and keep their lamp lit.

oillamptheater.org



A RED ORCHID THEATRE

An Old Town staple preparing for its 30th season will be able to fully cover a workshop of their new play *Turret* which will allow them to explore critical performance elements and will feature ensemble members Shade Murray (director), Michael Shannon and Travis Knight.

aredorchidtheatre.org



SCHOLA ANTIQUA OF CHICAGO

This music ensemble will receive funding to perform the commissioned work of an emerging composer of Chilean heritage with a program of three free public concerts, all while taking advantage of intimate spaces throughout Chicagoland, including the Tudor-Native American fieldhouse of Indian Boundary Park.

schola-antiqua.org



THE SELDOMS

We'll help this dance company with set and costume elements for a multi-media dance performance about "radical beauty, wildness and wildflowers, and the resilience and fragility of the natural world." *Superbloom* premieres at the Harris Theater and includes performances at the Chicago Botanic Garden at a later date.

theseldoms.org



THE STORY THEATRE

A theater company that asks you to tell your story will get funding for the first work in a collaboration with their 2023-2024 Resident Playwright, Justine Gelfman, for a program providing early-career playwrights with a year-long residency which includes a fully produced world premiere.

thestorytheatre.org



STRAWDOG THEATRE COMPANY

With over 30 years as an ensemble theatre, the Saints will help this company committed to providing admission-free programming to fund their BIPOC Playwright Residency designed to support the creation of new work by Black, Indigenous, and people of color playwrights.

strawdog.org



THEATER WIT

The theater that came back during Covid with a season of “Go Big or Stay Home” will get funds to install much needed technology to support assistive listening devices for all performances in their three-theatre building, going big with a big sound, as well.

theaterwit.org



THEO UBIQUE CABARET THEATRE

A company now fondly known as Theo, will receive support for the first fully mounted production of Baked! The Musical. With Book, Music, and Lyrics by Jord Liu and Deepak Kumar, this reflection on failure, self-worth, and the question of what we owe people we love features an all-Asian American cast and writing team.

theo-u.com