To the Harris Theater Family,

Far from being unlucky, the Harris Theater’s thirteenth season was full of good fortune—particularly for audiences, who had a menagerie of thrilling music and dance from all over the world to choose from. Visually stunning, emotionally moving, heart-pounding exciting, or intellectually stimulating, the diverse art that filled our stage all had one thing in common—it was of the highest artistic caliber.

Three of the outstanding dance performances this season included stunning new work from Brian Brooks, the Theater’s inaugural Choreographer in Residence. Brian’s creativity and openhearted approach to dance were not only in evidence onstage, but in the classrooms and studios where he shared his unique talent with professionals, high school students, and teachers — elevating the Theater’s community engagement to new heights.

We were lucky to work with 27 community partners to connect exceptional artistic experiences with everyone from young children attending the Exelon Family Series with families through the USO of Illinois, to teen dancers from After School Matters who made the Theater their home for a summer, to veterans from the Jesse Brown VA Medical Center enjoying exciting MIX at SIX performances.

Of course, this year would have been woefully incomplete without the kaleidoscope of performances by our amazing resident companies, who continue to represent the best Chicago has to offer as they push themselves, and each other, to new heights.

This 2016-17 Annual Report highlights some spectacular accomplishments for the Harris, both onstage and off, and celebrates your generosity. None of this would have been possible without you — our community of donors, subscribers, ticket buyers, and volunteers who continue to make the Harris Theater Chicago’s home for music and dance.

With our deepest gratitude,

Patricia Barretto
Alexandra C. and John D. Nichols
President and CEO Endowed Chair
Harris Theater for Music and Dance
Dear Friends,

On behalf of the Harris Theater’s Board of Trustees, I want to thank you for making the 2016-17 season an incredible success. Together, artists and audiences breathed life into every corner of our unique building. This includes the auditorium and the lobby, where recent renovations — made possible by generous donors to the Imagine campaign — have further enhanced the Harris experience.

Working diligently and creatively, the Harris team exceeded goals for both ticket sales and fundraising, and the Theater closed the year with a balanced operating budget. This success is due to our growing audience, generous donors, loyal patrons, and devoted staff.

The close of 2016 brought with it the end of Michael Tiknis’ exceptional 12-year tenure at the helm of the Harris Theater, closing one chapter and opening the door for a new one — led by the wonderful Patricia Barreto. I am so delighted that the Board of Trustees has named Patricia the President and CEO. So many of the successes of this year were reflections of her leadership, overseeing the marketing, development, and community engagement departments. Patricia’s exemplary leadership, passion for the performing arts, and commitment to partnership embody the mission of the Harris Theater. I am very confident that with her vision the Harris Theater will prosper and continue to further our mission — connecting diverse audiences with outstanding artists from across the city, the nation, and the world.

As always, we continue to be incredibly grateful to you, our patrons and fellow Harris Theater family members for your support. I look forward to seeing you at the Theater for an inspiring music and dance performance.

With deep gratitude,

Alexandra C. Nichols  
*Chairman, Harris Theater Board of Trustees*
Harris Theater Presents

The Harris Theater's thirteenth season featured an array of international acts, groundbreaking dance, and classic music, including **19 world premieres and 4 Harris-commissioned original works**. The Theater welcomed 21,364 audience members to the **HTP Mainstage, Exelon Family Series, Beyond the Aria**, and **MIX at SIX** performance series. Leading performers included Batsheva Dance Company, Angélique Kidjo, STREB, Joyce DiDonato, Danish Dance Theatre, Lil Buck, Wendy Whelan, Shanghai Jingju Theatre Company, and Jessica Lang Dance.

**SEASON HIGHLIGHTS**

- Two world premieres of work created by Brian Brooks, the Harris Theater's inaugural Choreographer in Residence, including *Terrain* for Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, and *Thunder* for the Chicago Academy for the Arts (see Choreographer in Residence section).

- The exciting daredevils of New York City's STREB brought their distinctive style of acrobatics and dance to two packed houses. With a live DJ on stage, t-shirt cannons, and exhortations to yell and interact with the performers, STREB successfully transformed the Harris Theater into a raucous, circus-like environment.

- The Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center continued its residency with five performances, including a world premiere of *Rime Sparse*, a new work by Jonathan Berger (supported by the *Laura and Ricardo Rosenkranz Artistic Innovation Fund*) and the annual performance of Bach's *Brandenburg Concertos*.

- **Beyond the Aria**, a partnership with Lyric Opera of Chicago, reached new peaks in its third year, with 5 performances featuring opera stars paired with early-career artists from the Ryan Opera Center. Standouts included a transcendent performance by Renée Fleming and Eric Owens' touching ode to his father.

- Two sold out performances of Batsheva Dance Company's breathtaking *Last Work*, an evening-length piece by internationally revered choreographer Ohad Naharin, who captivated the audience during a post-performance talk on opening night.

"At the Harris Theater, a miracle happens and I often feel my hands can actually execute something more than my heart can imagine."

- Wu Han, Co-Artistic Director, Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center
Resident Companies

During the 2016-17 season, the Harris continued to provide support and capacity building services for resident companies, including: subsidized and waived rental costs, marketing and audience engagement support, capacity building resources, and artistic collaboration opportunities.

23 resident companies held 69 performances of 49 productions, drawing 48,182 audience members to the Harris. The Theater provided all resident companies with a reduced nonprofit rental rate, underwriting 68% of the actual daily usage costs of being in the Theater. Resident companies received technical and production counsel from Harris staff, and access to union sound designers, lighting designers, and stagehands from the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees (I.A.T.S.E.).

The Harris Theater also continued to fully subsidize rental rates for specific companies, including:

- Companies that were new to the resident company program and growing to meet the financial and technical demands of presenting at the Harris
- Companies undertaking projects that stretched their artistic vision to new heights

The Harris Theater provided roughly $150,000 in waived and reduced rent, positioning 8 resident companies to reach approximately 10,000 patrons.

23 representatives of 10 resident companies took advantage of the Harris Theater’s Learning Lab workshops. Topics included developing social media content, using Google Analytics, and techniques for visualizing data.

The Theater’s Tessitura Consortium provided resident companies with the opportunity to become a sub-licensee of the Tessitura ticketing and donor database system for a significantly subsidized fee. During the 2016-17 season, the Theater hosted two Learning Lab workshops specifically for members of the Tessitura Consortium, led by professional consultants.

The Committee on Resident Companies (CORC) met each quarter to facilitate collective peer exchange among resident companies, Trustee representatives, and staff. Over four meetings in 2016-17, an average of 12 companies participated in each meeting, and 21 companies attended at least one meeting during the year.

"The Harris Theater is home to Chicago’s best acoustics and most adventurous programming. Showcasing cutting edge music and dance sets the Harris apart from all other performing arts institutions. Their enthusiasm, vision, and creativity was exemplified in their role as hosting partner for the Ear Taxi Festival of contemporary classical music. The theater was vibrant with sound-video installations, symposiums, cabaret events, and six days of extraordinary new art music. Only at the Harris!"

- Stephen Burns, Founder and Artistic Director of resident company Fulcrum Point New Music Project
HIGHLIGHTS OF RESIDENT COMPANY PERFORMANCES, COLLABORATIONS, AND COMMISSIONS

• The Harris was the central hub for the inaugural Ear Taxi Festival, a six-day festival of new music co-curated by Stephen Burns (Founder and Artistic Director of resident company Fulcrum Point New Music Project) and composer Augusta Read Thomas. The festival, which made excellent use of the new lobby expansion, provided performance opportunities for dozens of Chicago’s new music ensembles and musicians, and served as a catalyst for the creation of new work by Chicago-based composers.

• Hubbard Street Dance Chicago presented the world premiere of *Terrain*, the first commission by Brian Brooks in his role as Choreographer in Residence.

• In April, Visceral Dance Chicago premiered *Synapse*, an original piece by artistic director Nick Pupillo, commissioned by the Harris Theater with support from the *Pamela Crutchfield Dance Fund*.

• Chicago Philharmonic, the Theater’s newest resident company, collaborated with Visceral Dance Chicago for the evening-length piece *The Dream*, a theatrical reimagining of Fyodor Dostoyevsky’s story, “The Dream of a Ridiculous Man.”

• Chicago Opera Theater presented the Midwest premiere of Philip Glass’ *The Perfect American*, featuring fellow resident company Apollo Chorus.
Community Engagement

The Harris Theater's Community Engagement activities aim to build bridges between artists and youth and families from throughout the Chicago region, taking advantage of the Theater's access to the world’s leading musicians and dancers.

2016-17 Community Engagement by the Numbers

- 1,400 free tickets made available to youth and families across 18 performances
- Partnerships with 27 community organizations
- Opportunities for 200 young people in 15 educational and enrichment events

Access Tickets & Exelon Family Series

The Harris Theater worked with 25 community partners to make available 1,400 free tickets across 18 performances. The Theater hosted two targeted enrichment activities for Access Tickets participants surrounding performances in the Exelon Family Series.

- STREB: Harris Theater hosted Caring for Kids Program at Shirley Ryan Ability Lab (formerly Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago) for a pre-performance pizza party and creative activities. Families had the chance to meet the STREB performers and ask questions before seeing the company's thrilling performance on the Harris stage.
- Angélique Kidjo: The international superstar performed a "storyteller" style concert, complementing songs from her career with inspirational life stories and interaction with the audience.
- Rennie Harris Puremovement: Harris Theater hosted USO of Illinois' Discovery Kids program for a pre-performance pizza party and hip-hop mini-workshop with the Rennie Harris dancers.

Access Tickets partners and all Exelon Family Series audiences received worksheets and other program materials to encourage learning, discussion, and appreciation for the arts.

Arts Education Partnerships

In 2016-17, Arts Education Partnerships provided opportunities for roughly 200 young people to connect with the world's leading musicians and dancers through 15 events, including master classes, workshops, open rehearsals, and an artist residency (see Choreographer in Residence section).

2016-17 Community Engagement Partners (27)

After School Matters
(8 distinct programs)
Albany Park Theater Project
Bounce Children's Foundation
Caring for Kids at the Shirley Ryan Ability Lab
Chicago Academy for the Arts
Chicago High School for the Arts
Chicago Kids Got Talent
Chicago Youth Programs
Chicago Youth Symphony Orchestras
Cool Classics!
Curie Metro HS
Francis W. Parker School
Gilda's Club Chicago
Greeley Elementary Band
Jesse Brown VA Medical Center
La Rabida Children's Hospital
Lurie Children's Hospital
Mercy Home
Merit School of Music
Mitchell Elementary
Music Institute of Chicago
Refugee One
Ronald McDonald House
Sarah's Circle
Teen Living Program
Turning the Page
USO of Illinois
HIGHLIGHTS OF ARTS EDUCATION PARTNERSHIPS PROGRAMS:

- In the summer of 2016 the Harris hosted a summer-long residency for one of After School Matters’ ASM Summer Dance Ensemble at the Harris Theater. 26 young dancers made the Harris Theater’s state-of-the-art facilities their home for the summer, studying ballet, contemporary, and jazz technique and choreographing their own work.

- In October, the Calidore Quartet conducted a workshop with Vernacular Quartet, a student ensemble from Merit School of Music’s tuition-free conservatory strings program. In addition to instruction on technique, Calidore members shared insights on the personal dynamics of working together as a quartet.

- In December, dancer Lil Buck led an energetic workshop for 19 teens from After School Matters’ Hi-Def Dance Ensemble. Lil Buck shared the history of “jookin,” the style of Memphis street dance that he has elevated into a significant art form. During a lively conversation, Lil Buck shared his personal philosophy, encouraging the teens to devote themselves to expanding their horizons, learning new things, and challenging themselves.

- In March, Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center’s Kristen Lee and Arnaud Sussman worked with six gifted young violin students from the Music Institute of Chicago’s Academy program.

- In May, Clifton Brown, rehearsal director and dancer with Jessica Lang Dance, taught a master class for 23 intermediate dance students at the Chicago High School for the Arts (ChiArts). The class combined technical instruction with company repertoire, as students learned a section of Lang’s Thousand Yard Stare.
Choreographer in Residence

During the 2016-17 season, the Harris Theater ventured into new territory with the launch of the Choreographer in Residence program. During his first year in residence, renowned dancer and choreographer Brian Brooks took full advantage of the position, partnering with local companies to create new work, and expanding the Theater’s community engagement programs.

New Work

- World premiere of *Terrain*, created for resident company Hubbard Street Dance Chicago
- World premiere of *Thunder*, created in collaboration with advanced dance students from arts education partner Chicago Academy for the Arts, with live accompaniment from local musicians, the Chicago Bulls Bucket Boys

Community Engagement

- Extended residency with advanced dance students at the Chicago Academy for the Arts, culminating in the new work described above
- Public master class for advanced and pre-professional dancers, in partnership with Hubbard Street Dance Chicago's Studio Series
- Free professional development workshop for CPS dance teachers, including choreographic elements, lesson planning, and a conversation about Illinois’ new Arts Learning Standards

*Support for the Choreographer in Residence is provided by the Jay Franke and David Herro Choreographer in Residence Fund.*

“I consider myself deeply fortunate to have found a partner in the Harris Theater, which stands beside performing artists and ensembles as a strong supporter and an outstanding collaborator. For me, the Harris has provided a foundation where we make dance itself. The floor we stand upon. The studio in which we discover. The stage on which we perform.”

- Brian Brooks
Thunder choreographed by Harris Theater Choreographer in Residence Brian Brooks, performed by Chicago Academy for the Arts on May 4, 2017, photo by Kyle Flubacker
Imagine: The Campaign for Harris Theater

During fiscal year 2017, the fourth year of the five-year Imagine campaign, the Theater continued to invest in critical upgrades to physical and digital infrastructure and raised over $2 million in new funds from more than 1,000 donors. This brought the total raised to $31,239,802.

Fundraising
In addition to ongoing major donor solicitations spearheaded by leaders on the staff and Board of Trustees, the Theater continued to expand the campaign’s base of support through the Legacy Society and Take Your Seat initiatives.

Building on planned giving efforts in the previous year, the Legacy Society was formally launched, recognizing the generous individuals leaving a future gift to the Harris Theater. Legacy Society members have remembered the Harris Theater in their estate plans in many ways — through wills, retirement plans, life-income plans, and other creative planned-giving arrangements. In appreciation for these gifts, Legacy Society members have the opportunity to deepen their engagement with the Harris with special benefits, including:

- Access to private rehearsals and artist meet-and-greets events
- Recognition in Legacy Society member listings in Harris Theater Presents program books
- Invitations to special donor events throughout the season

This year, the Theater was able to secure 3 new planned gift commitments and send 2 planned giving newsletters.

In January, the Harris launched the Take Your Seat campaign, enabling donors to permanently dedicate a seat inside the Harris Theater auditorium for $25,000 or $10,000, payable over five years. Since the public launch of Take Your Seat, 25 seats have been named, raising nearly $300,000.
Capital Improvements
Following the completion of major construction in early 2016, attention turned to upgrading the Theater's facilities and digital infrastructure.

Facility upgrades include:
- New black marley dance floor (the Theater has always borrowed one in the past)
- Dedicated heating to the backstage area
- New waste receptacles for the lobbies
- Upgrading the HVAC system to a Building Automated System (BAS)
- Replacing all box office ticket printers

Digital improvements include:
- New website, featuring improved navigation, a mobile-friendly interface, and ADA accessibility
- Upgrades to Tessitura (the Theater’s ticketing and donor database), improving ticketing functionalities and integration with the website
- Cyber security updates to protect the local network from hacker attacks and viruses
- Phone system upgrades, adding needed stability for the box office's high call volume
2016-2017 Revenue

**Earned Revenue**

$1,603,485  Box Office & Rental Fees

$977,178  Ticket Sales

$1,185,000  Investment Draw

**Contributed Revenue**

$1,684,829  Contributions & In-kind

$3,188,846  Temporarily Restricted Contributions

$406,550  Sponsorships

**Total Revenue**

$3,765,663

$5,280,225
2016-2017 Expenses

Program-Related Expenses

$6,227,261  Resident Company Support & Capacity Building Programs*

$1,890,081  Harris Theater Presents

$297,959  Community Engagement

$8,415,301

Administrative and Fundraising Expenses

$435,401  Fundraising

$727,436  Administrative Support

$1,162,837

*Includes depreciation expense of $1,646,205. Total expenses, minus depreciation, are $7,931,933.
Imagine Campaign Honor Roll

PREMIER BENEFACTOR, $5,000,000+
Irving Harris Foundation, Joan W. Harris
Chauncey and Marion D. McCormick Family Foundation,
   Abby McCormick O'Neil and D. Carroll Joynes
Alexandra C. and John D. Nichols

MAJOR BENEFACTOR, $3,000,000+
The Harris Family Foundation, Caryn and King Harris

LEAD BENEFACTOR, $1,500,000+
Jay Franke and David Herro

BENEFACTOR, $1,000,000+
The Crown Family
The Elizabeth Morse Charitable Trust and
   Elizabeth Morse Genius Charitable Trust

PREMIER PATRON, $750,000+
Jack and Sandra Guthman

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The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation
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The Northern Trust Company
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Lil Buck with Mihai Marica performed on December 6, 2016, photo by Kyle Flubacker
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(Listing as of September 22, 2017)

“One thing that is fantastic about being on the Harris Theater stage is the intimacy that you feel with the audience. There's not one bad seat in the Harris Theater and you can connect to any audience member, no matter where they're sitting, and it's such a great space to feel the energy go back and forth as a dancer.”

– company member, Giordano Dance Chicago
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(Listing as of October 27, 2017)
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