NORTHLIGHT THEATRE
INTENSELY ENTERTAINING

2016—2017 ANNUAL REPORT
It was a record-breaking season at Northlight, featuring Mike Nussbaum in the world premiere of *Relativity*, the audience-pleasing *Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley* by the writing team of Lauren Gunderson and Margot Melcon, and the provocative *Faceless* by recent Northwestern graduate Selina Fillinger. These new pieces took their first steps here at Northlight, and now, as a result of our success, they are appearing in our fellow theatres all over the country. For example, I will direct *Faceless* with most of the cast from Northlight’s production at the Repertory Theatre of St. Louis in January 2018.

Aside from the financial rewards of these successful new work investments, the artistic achievements (including two Joseph Jefferson Award nominations for New Work) are really the goal. To contribute to the theatrical canon, to raise the artistic bar, to articulate timely themes through our work, and the mission of Northlight: to promote change of perspective and encourage compassion—*this is really our core purpose.*

The coming seasons will see more artistic risk, more opportunity for the next generation of artists, and a continued responsibility toward Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion. Artists must lead the conversation on many fronts, not through talk, but through practice, and Northlight has done that for as long as I can remember. My predecessors – Greg Kandel, Michael Maggio and Russell Vandenburgoucke – were certainly dedicated to these ideals, and we proudly carry that torch.

The future is burning bright at Northlight. We are grateful that you are helping us light the way.

BJ Jones  
*Artistic Director*
FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Northlight continues its courageous tradition of developing new work. This past season saw some of our greatest accomplishments with the world premiere productions of Lauren Gunderson and Margot Melcon’s Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley, Selina Fillinger’s Faceless, and Mark St. Germain’s Relativity. Accompanying these extraordinary new plays we also produced Sharyn Rothstein’s By the Water and Anthony Giardina’s The City of Conversation. All of these works produced countless conversations among our audiences about politics, women’s issues, immigration, climate change, and family dynamics. It proved to be one of the most successful seasons in our history.

But Northlight engages our community in multiple ways beyond the art we produce on our stage. Through our ever-widening arts education programming, we delivered high quality learning experiences to over 4,000 students this year. Northlight brings immediacy and meaning to young people’s perspectives of the world and of each other. Our Speak Up! theatre for social change program is an innovative approach to teaching students how to address the critical issues impacting their lives. We deliver theater programming to area social service organizations and enhance the lives of many through our Season Access program. And our Evanston community outreach now includes programming with the YWCA, Family Focus, and Y.O.U.

Our continued growth and success would simply not be possible without the generosity and commitment of the entire Northlight Theatre family, and we are incredibly grateful for this dedication. To our loyal audiences, donors and funders, thank you for trusting us and taking a journey with us season after season. As we make no small plans for our future, we know you share our belief that theatre matters. We look forward to providing intensely entertaining theatre for future generations.

Timothy J. Evans
Executive Director
84.3% Subscription Renewal Rate

10.5% Increase in Total Ticketed Attendance

10.7% Increase in Average Ticket Price
2016|17 SEASON

THE CITY OF CONVERSATION
By Anthony Giardina
Directed by Marti Lyons
September 15 – October 23, 2016
Midwest Premiere
A multi-generational look at a family divided by politics, this play felt particularly relevant during the season of the Presidential election.

MISS BENNET: Christmas at Pemberley
By Lauren Gunderson and Margot Melcon
Directed by Jessica Thebus
November 10 – December 24, 2016
World Premiere
This charitably imagined sequel to Pride and Prejudice featured a diverse cast and a feminist point of view, while paying homage to the beloved style and tone of Jane Austen.

FACELESS
By Selina Fillinger
Directed by BJ Jones
January 26 – March 4, 2017
World Premiere
Unquestionably timely and provocative, this new drama depicted a white American teen on trial for terrorism and the female Muslim lawyer appointed to the prosecution.

BY THE WATER
By Sharyn Rothstein
Directed by Cody Estle
March 16 – April 23, 2017
Midwest Premiere
A compelling family drama at its heart, audiences responded warmly to the stellar cast and touching story of a Staten Island neighborhood struggling to recover after Hurricane Sandy.

RELATIVITY
By Mark St. Germain
Directed by BJ Jones
May 11 – June 25, 2017
National New Play Network Rolling World Premiere
An uncanny pairing of actor and role propelled this re-telling of Einstein’s personal life to great success, with legendary actor Mike Nussbaum starring as the infamous genius.

THEATRE ATTENDANCE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Production</th>
<th># of Performances</th>
<th># of Tickets</th>
<th>Individually Sold Tickets</th>
<th>Complimentary Tickets</th>
<th>Student Matinee Tickets</th>
<th>Total Attendance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The City of Conversation</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>5,680</td>
<td>2,750</td>
<td>737</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>9,377</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miss Bennet</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>5,611</td>
<td>6,682</td>
<td>759</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>13,252</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faceless</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>5,565</td>
<td>2,149</td>
<td>798</td>
<td>1,340</td>
<td>9,852</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By the Water</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>5,658</td>
<td>1,528</td>
<td>728</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>8,058</td>
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<tr>
<td>Relativity</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>5,809</td>
<td>7,209</td>
<td>978</td>
<td>187</td>
<td>14,183</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>218</td>
<td>28,523</td>
<td>20,518</td>
<td>4,000</td>
<td>1,881</td>
<td>54,722</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
NEW PLAY DEVELOPMENT

Interplay, Northlight’s New Play Development Program, invests in provocative new works, providing customized support in the critical stages of early play development. Northlight seeks to serve the specific needs of a play on its path to full production, and can provide support in the form of playwright commissions, workshops with actors, and private or public readings.

IN THE 2016|17 SEASON:

TWO PUBLIC READINGS

Public readings provide audiences the opportunity to participate in a part of the evolutionary process, and the playwright with an opportunity to hear audience response that is integral to shaping the play for full production.

FACELESS (October 3, 2016)
Already scheduled for production later in the season, this reading helped emerging playwright and recent Northwestern graduate Selina Fillinger with the final stages of development before rehearsals began.

SANCTIONS (April 24, 2017)
Continuing Northlight’s long relationship with playwright Bruce Graham (The Outgoing Tide, White Guy on the Bus, Stella & Lou, Funnyman), his latest piece explored a fictional exposé of a university athletic department.

TWO COMMISSIONS

Commissions give Northlight the opportunity to develop ongoing relationships with playwrights whose work reflects Northlight’s artistic mission. Commissions may take multiple years to complete and may or may not be produced by Northlight, but continue to grow Northlight’s national reputation and contributions to the American theatre canon.

Sharyn Rothstein (author of By the Water)
MAKE IT NICE: this three-person drama follows a complicated friendship between a self-made landlord and one of her new, low-income tenants. As of summer 2017, a second draft is underway.

Michael Hollinger (author of Red Herring)
MR. DICKENS’ HAT: Set in London, 1865, this ensemble piece highlights six actors as 20 or more characters. With its Victorian winter setting and Dickensian devices and themes, the play is intended as a holiday show. Begun in spring 2017, a first draft is due in October.
THREE WORLD PREMIERE PRODUCTIONS

The 2016-17 Season boasted three world premieres, all of which exceeded financial expectations and received glowing critical and popular response:

MISS BENNET: CHRISTMAS AT PEMBERLEY (which received a public reading in the season prior) proved to be an ideal combination of classic feel, modern sensibility, and holiday cheer. Playwrights Margot Melcon and Lauren Gunderson were both heavily involved in re-writes and adjustments throughout the rehearsal process. The positive collaborative experience inspired Northlight to continue exploring Gunderson’s work, programming her play The Book of Will for the following season.

FACELESS inspired intense community engagement with its timely themes and launched the professional career of playwright Selina Fillinger. The Chicago Tribune called Fillinger “A whopping talent... I suspect any TV network in receipt of this script would have its interest immediately perked,” and Variety praised: “Fillinger’s sophisticated character development and sharp dialogue mark her as a significant young talent.” Faceless will be produced by The Repertory Theatre of St. Louis in 2018, directed by BJ Jones and featuring most of Northlight’s original cast.

RELATIVITY highlighted a new model in American theatre: the rolling world premiere. Produced in conjunction with the National New Play Network (NNPN), multiple theatres mount the same new play within a 12-month period while the playwright is part of the process, working on the script and making adjustments based on what is learned from each production. Relativity was also produced by Florida Studio Theatre (Florida), Taproot Theatre (Washington), and Riverside Theatre Company (Iowa).

Pictured: (top) Emily Berman, Jennifer Latimore, Aila Peck, (middle) Lindsay Stock and Susaan Jamshidi, (bottom) Mike Nussbaum and Katherine Keberlein.
EDUCATION

Northlight’s Education Department approaches all aspects of education programming with a spirit of collaboration to encourage students’ artistic growth through self-expression and unbridled creativity.

SCHOOL YEAR AT-A-GLANCE

8 Student Matinees

38 Schools/Sites

137 Classrooms

43 Teaching Artists/Apprentices/Interns

OVER 4000 K-12 Students Served

NEW PARTNERSHIPS

Y.O.U.
A generous grant from the Evanston Community Foundation allowed us to partner with four Y.O.U. after-school enrichment sites (Dawes, Oakton, Walker, Washington) to pilot a Speak Up! program with 3rd-5th graders.

YWCA Evanston/North Shore
Support from Allstate allowed us to pilot a new program at the YWCA Evanston/North Shore for families with children in the Domestic Violence Program. We run a monthly Masterclass with the goal of allowing parents to have a positive, collaborative art-making experience with their children.

SCHOOLS SERVED:

ASPIRA Charter School*
Baker College Prep
Crystal Lake South High School
Dawes Elementary School*
Deer Path Middle School
District 214
Disney II Magnet High School*
Elk Grove High School
Fairview South School
Glenbrook South High School
Guerin College Preparatory High School
Hinsdale Central High School
Hiriam H. Belding Elementary School
John M Palmer Elementary School*
John Middleton Elementary School
Libertyville High School
Loyola Academy
Maine East High School
Marie Murphy School
Mother McAuley Liberal Arts High School
Nichols Middle School
Niles North High School
Niles West High School
North Shore Center
Oakton Elementary School*
Old Orchard Junior High School
Oliver McCracken Middle School
Orrington Elementary School
Roycemore School
The Ancona School
UCSN Roberto Clemente
Walker Elementary School
Washington D. Smyser Elementary School
Washington Elementary School
William Howard Taft High School
William P. Gray Elementary School*
Wolfgang A. Mozart Elementary School*
YWCA Evanston/North Shore

*ECF grant/Y.O.U. after-school enrichment site
° Recipient of Creative Schools Fund Ingenuity & CPS Arts Grant
Season Access: Northlight served the largest number of students on record for the world premiere Faceless, bringing this powerful and relevant new play to more than 1,350 students from 18 different schools.

PROGRAMS:

NORTHLIGHT ON CAMPUS
This residency program focuses on theatre skills and the fundamentals of acting, developed through the adaptation of a familiar story. It is custom-designed for each school as a before, during, or after-school program.

MASTERCLASS
These short-term programs provide an in-depth experience with advanced theatre topics such as stage combat, playwriting, improv, theatre design, and more. They are typically designed for one to three class sessions.

SEASON ACCESS
Students attend Northlight’s mainstage productions at little or no cost, enhanced by in-school workshops, study guides, post-show discussions, and an optional pre-show Artist Engagement workshop.

SPEAK UP!
This theatre for social change residency asks students to address issues impacting their community, bringing current events into the classroom and fostering social responsibility through the process of creating an original performance.

Northlight on Campus: 4th Graders from William P. Gray Elementary School presented adaptations of “5 Tales from Latin America” for their program’s final showcase.
27 ENGAGEMENT EVENTS
10 PARTNERING LOCATIONS
54 POST-SHOW DISCUSSIONS
16 FEATURED DISCUSSION GUESTS
At Northlight, engaging our audience means going beyond the outstanding work on stage. Each production offers a variety of free audience events to add depth and context to the play, and to serve our community by offering a platform for civil discourse. Each production also features a number of post-show discussions led by Northlight Artistic staff and joined by members of the cast and/or a featured guest expert.

**EVENT HIGHLIGHTS:**

**BACKSTAGE WITH BJ**
Behind-the-scenes discussions with Artistic Director BJ Jones (held every production)

**TECH TALKS**
Observation of a technical rehearsal while elements such as lighting and sound are layered into the production. (3 per season)

**WOMEN IN POLITICS**
Northwestern University faculty and cast members addressed the role women have played in politics over the last five decades, and how women’s place on the national stage is now being portrayed on the theatre stage. (*The City of Conversation*)

**INTERFAITH COMMUNITY PANEL**
Religious leaders from several different congregations in the surrounding area discussed the play from the perspectives of Christianity, Judaism and Islam. (*Faceless*)

**CHANGING CLIMATE, CHANGING LIVES**
A panel of environmental experts explored the human implications of climate change and the many ways our changing environment can affect our lives. (*By the Water*)

**PARTNERING LOCATIONS:**
Bernard Weinger JCC (Northbrook)
Bookends & Beginnings (Evanston)
Curt’s Cafe (Evanston)
Evanston Public Library
Highland Park Public Library
Illinois Holocaust Museum (Skokie)
MCC Education Center (Morton Grove)
Morton Grove Public Library
Skokie Public Library
Wilmette Public Library
After a three-year hiatus from a traditional gala fundraiser, Northlight returned to the gala model with a travel-inspired evening of cocktails, food, and music at the Woman’s Club of Evanston on Friday, November 4, 2016. Television anchor/journalist Bill Kurtis served as the Master of Ceremonies for this festive event, which brought 280 guests and raised $190,560.

**HONORARY HOSTS**
(each a former President of Northlight Theatre’s Board of Trustees)

Paul Finnegan  
Paul Lehman  
Karen Hunt  
Ann and Bernie Jennett  
Judy and Bob Kemp  
Donna LaPietra and Bill Kurtis  
Susie McMonagle and Dan Reinberg  
Anuradhika and Rahul Roy

**HOST COMMITTEE**

Cindy Clark and Bob Regan  
Candace Corr and BJ Jones  
Nancy Cunniff and Alan Zunamon  
Jane and Timothy J. Evans  
Donna and Gene Frett  
Catherine Hayden and Tom Carmichael

**GALA SPONSORS**

![BMO Harris Bank](image1)  
![ComEd](image2)

![Acquirent](image3)  
![F&G Bank & Trust](image4)  
![Hagerty](image5)  
![LionBird](image6)

![Leapfrog](image7)  
![Northwestern University](image8)  
![Polsinelli](image9)  
![Quarles & Brady](image10)  
![Romano Design](image11)  
![Tom Stringer](image12)
## Income

### Earned Income

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>Ticket Sales</td>
<td>$2,107,856</td>
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<tr>
<td>Education Programs</td>
<td>$101,020</td>
<td>2.89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene Shop Outside Projects</td>
<td>$25,711</td>
<td>0.74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Royalties/Other Earned Income</td>
<td>$7,585</td>
<td>0.22%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Earned Income</strong></td>
<td><strong>$2,242,172</strong></td>
<td><strong>64.12%</strong></td>
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### Contributed Income

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<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individuals</td>
<td>$539,584</td>
<td>15.43%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Corporations</td>
<td>$116,400</td>
<td>3.33%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Foundations</td>
<td>$427,870</td>
<td>12.24%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>$28,000</td>
<td>0.80%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Special Events (net)</td>
<td>$143,007</td>
<td>4.09%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Contributed Income</strong></td>
<td><strong>$1,254,861</strong></td>
<td><strong>35.88%</strong></td>
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**Total Income**: $3,497,033

**Change in Net Assets**: $279,139

## Expenses

### Program Expenses

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<tr>
<td>Education Programs</td>
<td>$135,388</td>
<td>4.21%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Production</td>
<td>$1,919,305</td>
<td>59.64%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Program Expenses</strong></td>
<td><strong>$2,054,693</strong></td>
<td><strong>63.85%</strong></td>
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### Support Expenses

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<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General &amp; Administrative</td>
<td>$934,810</td>
<td>29.05%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advancement/Fundraising</td>
<td>$228,391</td>
<td>7.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Support Expenses</strong></td>
<td><strong>$1,163,201</strong></td>
<td><strong>36.15%</strong></td>
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**Total Expenses**: $3,217,894

**EXPENSES**

- **Program**: 64%
- **Support**: 36%

**BREAKDOWN: CONTRIBUTED INCOME BY SOURCE**

- Individuals: 43%
- Foundations: 34%
- Government: 2%
- Corporations: 9%
- Special Events: 11%

**EXPENSES**

- **Advancement/Fundraising**: 7%
- **General & Administrative**: 29%
- **Program**: 64%
20% INCREASE IN NUMBER OF INDIVIDUAL DONORS

22% GROWTH IN DONATION REVENUE

13 NEW MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES & ADVISORY COUNCIL
THANK YOU

LEGACY SOCIETY
The Northlight Legacy Society encourages donors to remember Northlight in their estate planning, promoting artistic excellence for decades to come. Their support of the arts ensures that theatre can be shared with future generations. Northlight annually hosts a behind-the-scenes look at the theatre for this group of committed individuals.

Legacy Society Members
Karl & Diane Berolzheimer
Margo & Paul Brown
Marcia Mead Stillerman
Lloyd Morgan
Carol & Steve Mullins
Janet Mullet
Trimmy & Neal Stamell

NORTHLIGHT VISIONARIES CIRCLE
The Northlight Visionaries Circle consists of lead supporters, contributing $1,000 or more to Northlight's Annual Fund. These members help to realize the vision, both present and future, of Northlight Theatre with their generosity. Members engage with the theatre and artists on a deeper level through special events, education site visits, backstage tours, lunches with our directors, and our Donor Exclusive Newsletter. Circle members are also invited to attend dress rehearsals, Opening Nights, and more.

PRODUCERS $25,000 and Above
Betsy & Keith Colburn
Paul & Mary Finnegan
Sam & Marianne Oliva
Tom Stringer & Scott Waller
Tim & Sue Sullivan

PLAYWRIGHTS $10,000-$24,999
Mark & Kathy McCarville
Carol & Steve Mullins
Evelyn Salk

DIRECTORS $5,000-$9,999
Julie & Josh Chernoff
Freddi Greenberg & Dan L. Pinkert
Dan & Melanie Peterson
Greg & Anne Taubeneck
Bernard Dowling
Paul Lehman & Ronna Stamm
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Alan M. Zunamon & Nancy Cunniff
Donna & Gene Frett
Lois Melvoin
Robert S. & Sandy G. Silver
Bob & Lisa Silverman
Craig Golden & Michal Allen Heifitz-Golden

DESIGNERS $2,500-$4,999
Carole Cahill
BJ Jones & Candy Corr
Susie McMonagle & Dan Reinberg
Lisa Sandquist & Peter Kinney
Christy Callahan Pfeifer
Susan Karol & Glenn Warning
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