



# Young Audiences Arts for Learning

Oregon & SW Washington

# ANNUAL REPORT

2020-2021



THE  
right  
BRAIN  
INITIATIVE

# Art is Essential

Over the 2020–2021 school year, we learned a lot about what is essential. We learned that connection is essential. Community is essential. Having safe and healthy ways to express ourselves when we are going through something hard is essential.

Young Audiences is proud to have met the challenges of 2020–2021 head-on, bringing connection, community, and creativity to students and teachers across Oregon and SW Washington. We provided 448,000 arts experiences, all during the hardest school year in memory.

Thanks to your support, we were able to do what we do best during the pandemic: connect artists with students and teachers to inspire young people and expand their learning through the arts. Whether it was on-screen, in-person, or through one of 16,000 art kits that we delivered to kids around the region, we brought essential arts services to young people who needed them more than ever.

*Art is such an integral part of brain development and having the opportunity to not only get supplies in the hands of our students, but lessons to go with those supplies in our distance learning model is huge! We are so appreciative of our partnership with Right Brain and their creative thinking this year to support our schools and our students.*

*—Audrea Neville,  
Executive Director of Schools,  
Hillsboro School District*

**448,000**  
arts experiences

**144**  
schools

**16,000**  
art kits

**49,000**  
students

Young Audiences is in the process of creating a Land Acknowledgment that outlines our commitment to partnership and repair with Native and Indigenous communities in our region, and which will be announced in 2022.

# Bringing New Energy

In 2021, Young Audiences welcomed several new staff members to the team.



Executive Director Lauren Jost joined Young Audiences in May 2021. Lauren had been working in New York City for the past 15 years as a theatre producer and arts educator, and the Artistic Director of Spellbound Theatre, making theatre for very young audiences.

She is thrilled to be back home in the Pacific Northwest and serving her community through her two passions: arts education and organizational strategy.



Melody Garza Mikkelsen joined Young Audiences as the Director of Development in October 2021. Melody has extensive experience in fundraising and arts education, and has worked for the Spokane Symphony, California Symphony, and most recently as the Executive Director of the Oklahoma Youth

Orchestras. As a former kindergarten music and beginning band educator, Melody delights in sharing our work with people who are passionate about arts opportunities for students.



In December 2021, Christi Zorilla Soto joined the team as the Central Oregon Programs Manager. She is a multicultural visual artist and educator with several years of experience working with arts and culture non-profit organizations. Her career has focused on art education

in different fields, including a museum educator, visual arts teacher for multiple grade levels, and co-founded Correlacion Contemporanea Art Residency and Education Programs, providing arts education to Native Amazon communities and professional development programs for art students.

Also joining Young Audiences in 2021 is Allena Vestal as the Arts Education Program Coordinator. You can catch Allena running the show behind our programs, like SH/FT and Live SET!

## Our Commitment to Equity

**2021–Present**  
Equity Action Plan

**2019–21**  
Equity Policy

**2018–19**  
Equity Statement  
and Racial Focus

**2018**  
Equity Definition

**In January 2021, Young Audiences announced our comprehensive Equity Plan, detailing organization-wide strategies for enacting our Equity Commitment. Board and staff have been working together to examine every aspect of our governance, policies, and practices and ensure that Young Audiences is an accessible, inclusive, and anti-racist organization.**

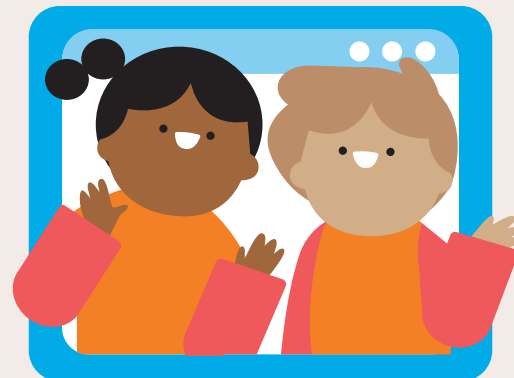
**We have engaged artists, school district leaders, and our arts education colleagues to deeply explore how bias and structural racism influences our work, and how to collaborate for more equitable policies, structures, and programs at Young Audiences.**

**Equity is not a sidebar or an addendum to our work. It is the center. It is essential.**

# Responding to the Pandemic

Here at Young Audiences, we believe that students learn best when they are creating, designing, drumming, and dancing. When the world transitioned to online learning, we knew we had a hard job to do. Our mission is to “inspire young people and expand their learning through the arts” and we weren’t about to let a pandemic get in the way of this essential task. So we did the same thing we ask our students to do: we got creative!

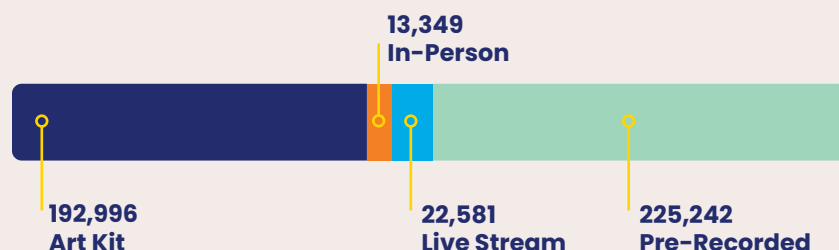
- We made sure our performing artists were still able to do their work by funding the process of transferring their offerings to online streaming platforms.
- We provided training for teachers on how to engage children online through creative, arts-integration teaching techniques.
- We created asynchronous artist residency programs that teachers could use to engage students at home and keep the spark of creativity flowing.
- We virtually participated in classrooms around the region to ensure students were still able to engage with professional artists as part of their education.



*“It made the world a smaller place in our students’ minds....it felt like we were having a real impact on the students and making more opportunities for compassion. That’s really the heart of what I got out of this year, more than any other year.”*

—Todd Fadel, music teacher at Boise-Eliot/  
Humbolt Elementary School

## Program Delivery Methods



## Just a few of the programs that adapted to changing needs:

Our Roster Artists’ residencies, workshops, and performances

Our Teaching Artist Studio professional development

## Community Partnerships make BIG Impact:

We are so thankful to the funders who make Young Audiences programs available in specific communities through our regranting to schools.

THE FIRSTENBERG FOUNDATION:  
SW Washington Title I schools

FAR WEST RECYCLING:  
Beaverton area schools

# The Right Brain Initiative: Endless Joy

Imagine you've been stuck at home all year, and trying to get creative for the hundredth time with the same old markers and crayons. Now imagine that you suddenly are given a bag of paints, brushes, unique collage and assemblage materials, and a book full of creative activities focused on your social and emotional learning.

The "Endless Joy" initiative delivered 16,000 art kits to schools across the Portland metro area with activities created by our teaching artists to help children process and express their experiences of the last year through art. The lessons were available in five languages, in addition to English, to serve the diverse needs of individual students.

In addition to Endless Joy, the Right Brain Initiative served 21,432 elementary and middle school students in Portland Public Schools, Corbett and Parkrose School Districts through virtual arts integration programming.



*"The art kits YA are providing our students with will enhance their experience while in comprehensive distance learning. Students are engaged in the high hands-on projects that allow them to create through a media other than a screen. Engaging with the arts provides our students with comfort and solace in a trying time while awakening curiosity and creativity."*

**—Francesca Sinapi, Equity, Access & Engagement Officer, Hillsboro School District**

## Hillsboro Partner Schools

1. Butternut Creek Elementary, 2. Eastwood Elementary, 3. Farmington View Elementary, 4. Free Orchards Elementary, 5. Groner K-8, 6. Hillsboro Online Academy, 7. Imlay Elementary, 8. Indian Hills Elementary, 9. Jackson Elementary, 10. Ladd Acres Elementary, 11. Lenox Elementary, 12. Lincoln Street Elementary, 13. McKinney Elementary, 14. Minter Bridge Elementary, 15. North Plains Elementary, 16. Orenco Elementary, 17. Patterson Elementary, 18. Poynter Middle School, 19. Quatama Elementary, 20. Reedville Elementary, 21. Rosedale Elementary, 22. Tobias Elementary, 23. West Union Elementary, 24. Witch Hazel Elementary, 25. WL Henry Elementary

We served almost all elementary schools in the Hillsboro School District. HSD statistics: 41% white, 33% Ever English Learners, 138 languages represented at home, 59% free/reduced lunch

## North Clackamas Partner Schools

1. Ardenwald, 2. Beatrice Morrow Cannady, 3. Bilquist, 4. Happy Valley Elementary, 5. Linwood & Sojourner, 6. Lot Whitcomb, 7. Milwaukie El Puente, 8. Mount Scott, 9. Oak Grove, Oregon Trail, 10. Riverside, 11. Scouters Mountain, 12. Seth Lewelling, 13. Spring Mountain, 14. Sunnyside, 15. Verne Duncan, 16. View Acres

We served all elementary schools in North Clackamas School District. NCSD statistics: 42% BIPOC, 23% Ever English Learners, 76 home languages and 34% free/reduced lunch



# Audio SET at Home

Equipping teens to learn real-world sound engineering side-by-side with professional sound engineers is the heart of Young Audience's popular Live SET (Sound Engineering for Teens) and Studio SET programs.

Because we couldn't work side-by-side this year, we adjusted our regular sound engineering course and piloted a fully remote sound engineering course focused on student's home studio spaces.

→ The first cohort of Home Studio SET brought together alumni students from past years who helped design the curriculum and adapt to online learning. The second cohort was a group of brand new students.



→ Teens explored sound engineering through live online lectures, as well as one-on-one consultations with audio engineers based on their specific projects and interests.

→ Students were given funds to purchase home audio equipment, boosting their learning and creative potential.



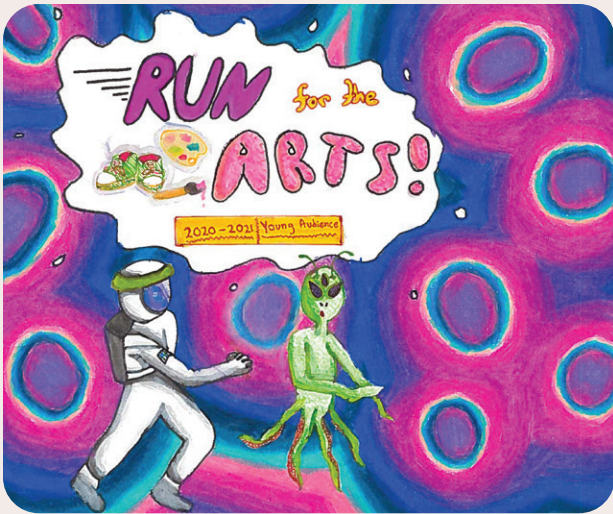
## Teaching Artist Studio

→ Young Audiences provided professional development for 181 artists in the region through both a drop-in online workshop series, and an in-depth, year-long cohort for teaching artists to deepen their practice and try out new strategies and techniques.

→ Transitioning this program to an online format gave us the opportunity to connect with and support artists across the state and lower the barriers of access for this innovative program.

*"I was very impressed that in three short hours together, and with some encouragement from their amazing classroom teacher, most of the students accomplished what I had intended for them to do: become a unique, one-of-a-kind, self-created, magical character. We all felt the magic, even over Zoom."*

**—TAS Participant**



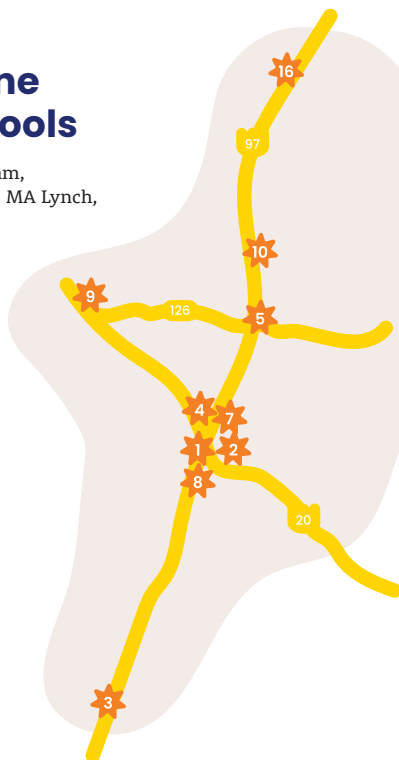
# A Fresh Take: Fun for the Arts

The long-running, much beloved “Run for the Arts” got an upgrade in 2021 as “Fun for the Arts,” which gave schools the opportunity to engage in a more physically-inclusive dance-a-thon as a school-based fundraiser. Even from home, students could dance along with teaching artists and raise money for their school art programs!

## Staying the Course in Central Oregon

### Bend / La Pine Partner Schools

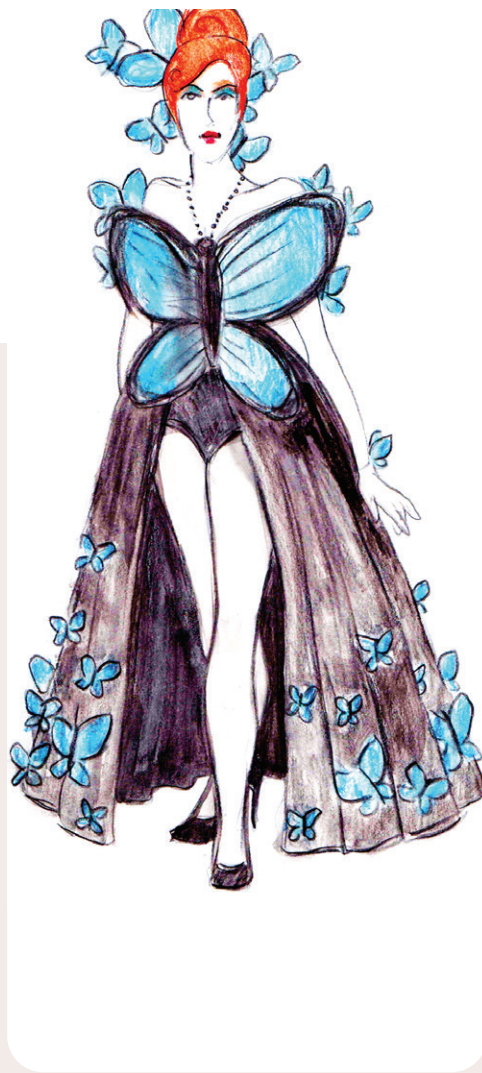
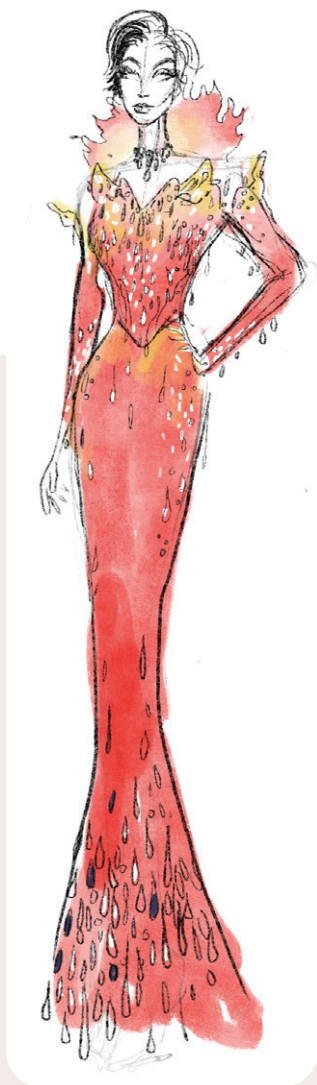
1. Bear Creek, 2. Buckingham,
3. La Pine, 4. Lava Ridge, 5. MA Lynch,
6. Madras, 7. Ponderosa,
8. RE Jewell, 9. Sisters,
10. Terrebonne



Like all of our in-school programs, our Central Oregon based artists had the huge challenge of converting their regularly offered residency programs to virtual learning opportunities. Artists received training and coaching from our staff members in order to create pre-recorded video lessons or to plan out how to engage students when art class is happening on a screen instead of a studio.

Despite these challenges, our Central Oregon schools and artists came together to inspire young people and expand their learning through the arts!

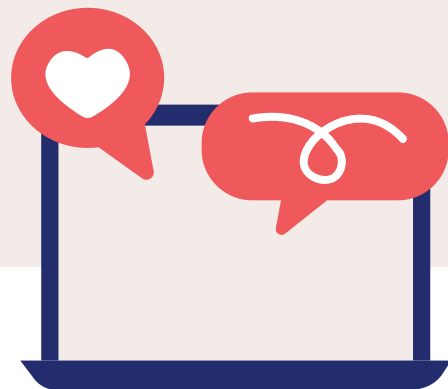




# Celebrating Creativity with SH/FT

Student sketches based on inspiration provided by their Drag Queen performers.

What do you get when you combine recycled fashion, drag queens, and the unending creativity of young people? SH/FT, an experiment and celebration in fashion! This one-of-a-kind program partnered young, aspiring designers with professional designers to create runway looks like you've never seen before. The final event was live streamed for Young Audiences' partners, sponsors, families, and community members on May 13, 2021 to celebrate a year of creativity, resilience, and self-expression.







**Poison Waters, designer Julia Bond and high school students strutting their stuff at SH/FT Holocene.**



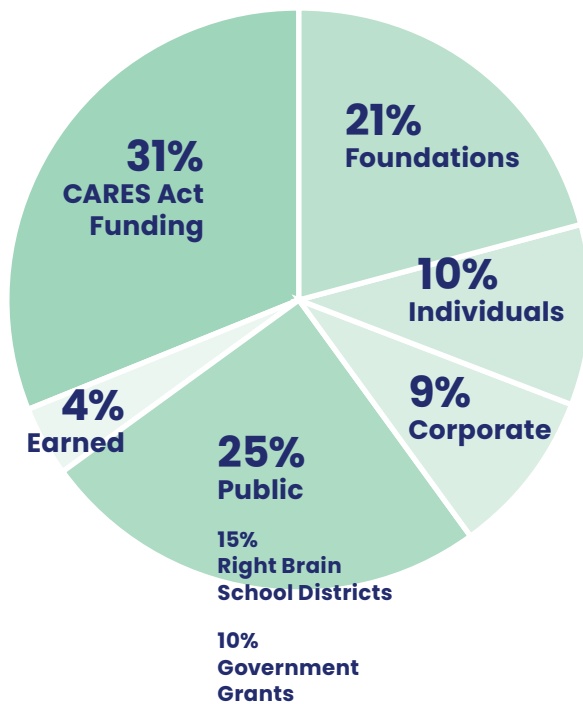
**Inanna Miss showcasing her runway look created by professional designer Vicki Wilson and student designers Dylan and Ella.**



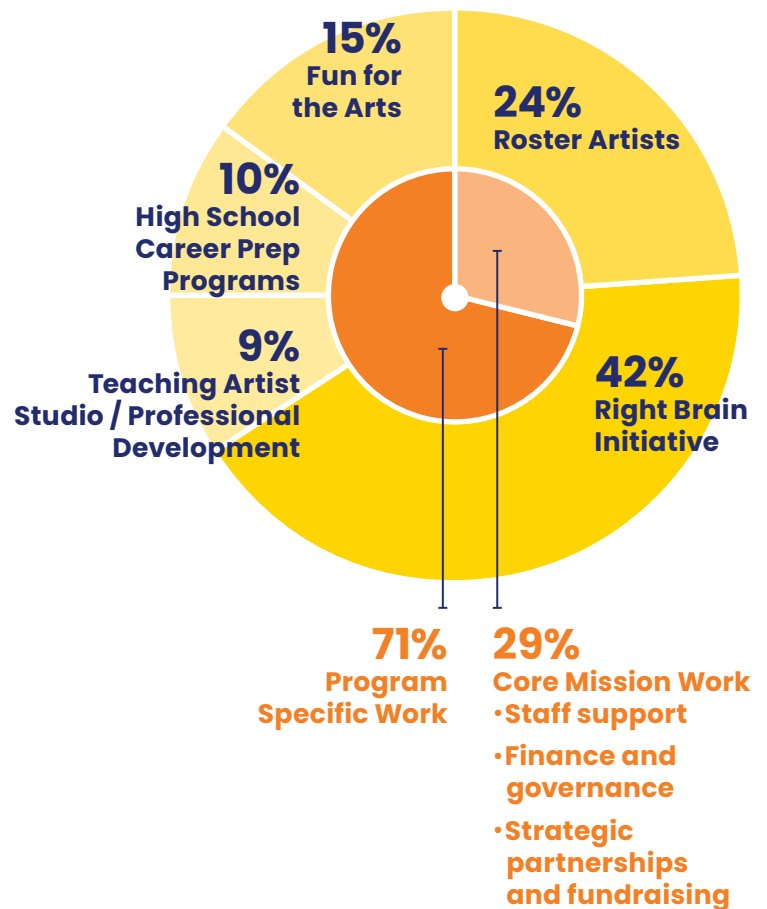
# Finances

This year was filled with challenges, but Young Audiences was able to meet them with resilience and dedication, thanks to the support of our many funders. The entire community, from the federal government down to local sponsors, made it possible to continue providing artists with work and provide young people with arts experiences that can spark imagination and deeply impact learning. Thank you to all our sponsors, donors, and institutional funders. Art is essential. Joy is essential. Your support is essential! Thank you!

## Income



## Expenses



# Our People

## Our Board

### Executive Officers

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Allie Maki Maya

Maia McCarthy

Ryn McCoy

Melody Mikkelsen

Koko Olszewski

Kristi Riedel

Kim Strelchun

Allena Vestal

Christi Zorrilla Soto



We are grateful to our diverse and growing community of supporters who care about arts education and invest in it through grants, sponsorships, and donations:

School districts including Corbett, Hillsboro, North Clackamas, Parkrose, and Portland Public.

Applied Materials Foundation

Biamp Systems

The Commerce Bank of Oregon

Far West Recycling, Inc.

First Tech Federal Credit Union

Genentech

Sam & Sooky Goldman Family Foundation

Hillsboro Arts & Culture Council

iQ Credit Union

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