



**SCHOOL OF  
THEATRE AND MUSIC**

2022-2023

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS CHICAGO

**ANNUAL**

**REPORT**



*In loving memory of William Kaplan, teacher and long-term supporter of our school and college.*

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## **MISSION STATEMENT**

The School of Theatre and Music provides innovative, rigorous, and comprehensive academic and performance programs as part of our diverse, urban context.

Our programs develop practical knowledge, cultural sensitivity, intellectual resourcefulness, and imaginative daring in emerging artists and scholars. We connect students to Chicago's abundant, vibrant theatre culture and to the city's dynamic jazz and classical music networks.

# DIRECTOR'S REPORT

**In 2022-2023 we appreciated working in person again after COVID and looked toward the future.**

In the same classrooms, rehearsal halls, and performance spaces, this past year students, faculty, and staff worked together to present over forty concerts, four mainstage plays, and numerous student-directed projects. Faculty composed commissioned works, released albums, designed and directed plays at prominent regional theatres, coached voice for major motion pictures, published book chapters, signed book deals, organized national conferences, and more. Likewise, students studied with renowned guest artists, authored or composed and presented new works, performed at regional conferences, served as teaching artists in Chicago Public Schools, and interned with Chicago area music businesses. Meanwhile, the School Antiracism Advisory Committee continued to work toward goals outlined in the School of Theatre and Music's (STM) Antiracism Commitment and Action Plan and faculty continued to incorporate the voices of STM students in course content and artistic projects. Finally, music faculty submitted a proposal for a Bachelor of Music in Music Education degree designed to be relevant to the diverse racial/ethnic and musical backgrounds of UIC students and to provide them with access to a career in public-school music teaching. This annual report provides an overview of the year and a window into some of the above activities and accomplishments.

Best wishes,

Christine Dunford

*Director*

# THEATRE AND MUSIC AT UIC

## PERSONNEL

28

Full-Time  
Faculty

19

Adjunct  
Faculty

19

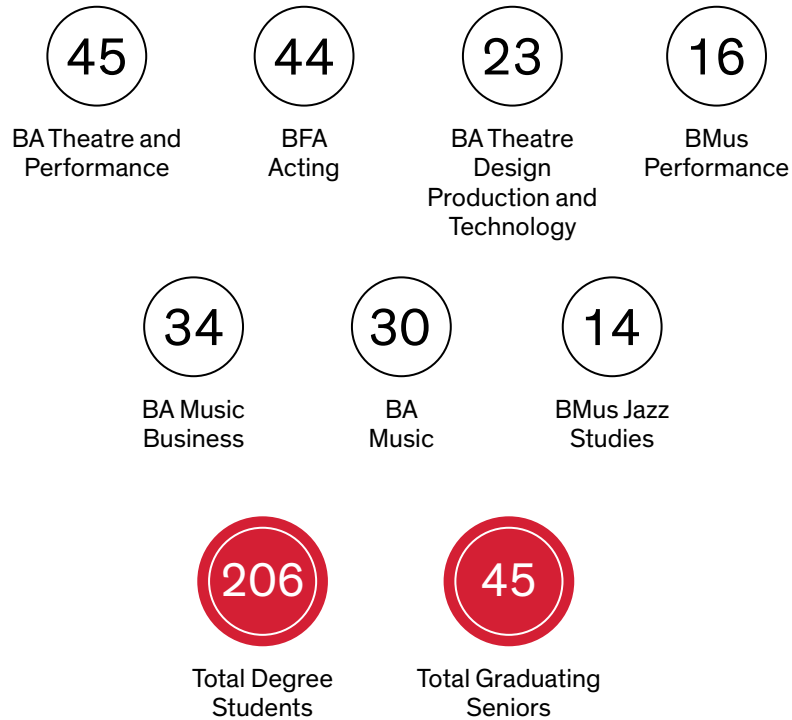
Private Lesson  
Faculty

8

Staff



## STUDENT PARTICIPATION

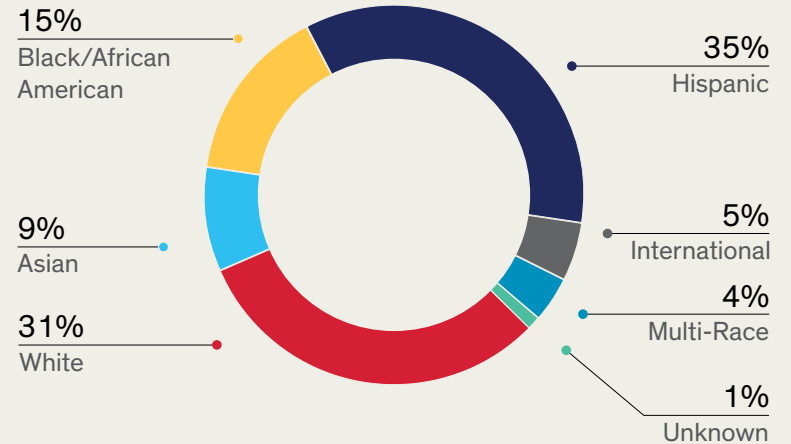


## ENSEMBLES

334 students registered in Ensembles in 2022-2023. Students from across the campus participated in the following ensembles:

Chamber Choir	Mariachi Fuego	Symphonic Band
Chamber Ensemble	Orchestra	Treble Choir
Jazz Combo	Pep Band	University Choir
Jazz Ensemble	Percussion Ensemble	Wind Ensemble
Jazz Workshop	Pop Rock Band	

## ENROLLMENT BY RACE/ETHNICITY



## GENERAL EDUCATION

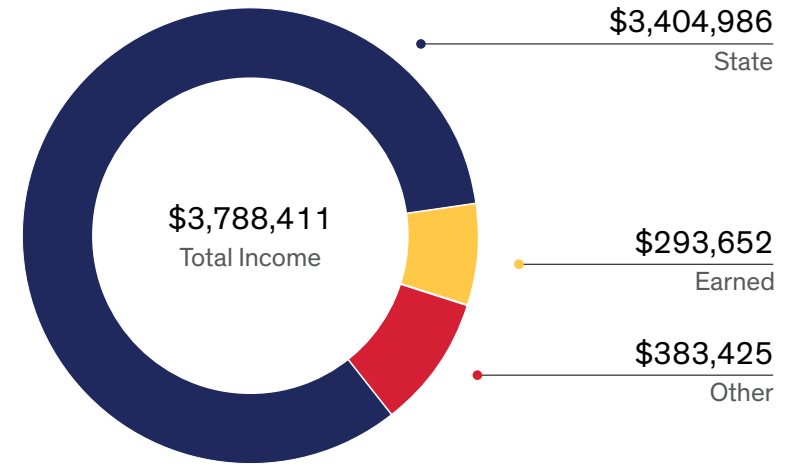
5774 unique students across campus took a theatre or music General Education Course.

Academic Program Name	Number of Students	Percent
Computer Science	801	14%
Biological Sciences	396	7%
Psychology	272	5%
Liberal Arts – Undeclared	263	5%
Finance	249	4%
Mechanical Engineering	213	4%
Accounting	206	4%
Criminology, Law, and Justice	185	3%
Integrated Health Studies	178	3%
Marketing	171	3%

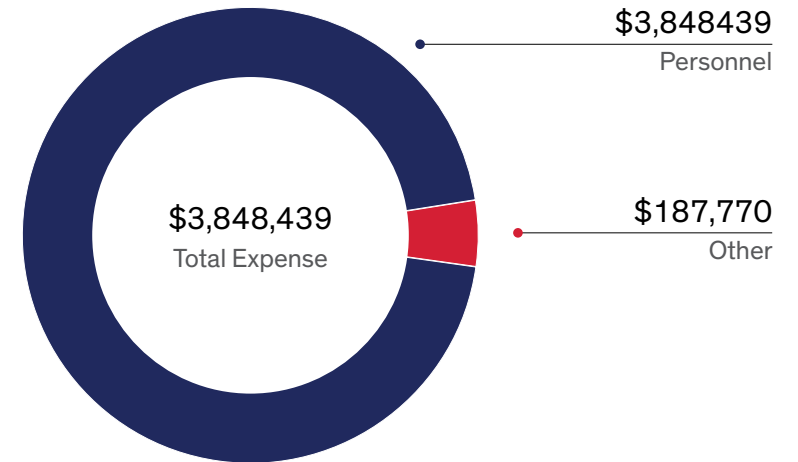
# INCOME AND EXPENSES



## INCOME



## EXPENSE



# RECRUITMENT AND ADMISSIONS

*Outreach in Chicagoland Schools*

This year, STM faculty and recruitment staff visited over 40 schools in the Chicagoland, giving clinics, masterclasses and workshops to prospective performing arts students. Faculty and staff made meaningful connections with parents, counselors, and teachers introducing them to our various programs and degrees.



STM also organized individualized visit experiences for hundreds of prospective students. These visits included class observations of performing arts courses, sample private lessons, campus tours, and information sessions about the application/audition process. Additionally, STM continued to utilize digital marketing, with additional resources for YouTube and Google Display Ads, along with strategic improvements to Search Engine Marketing. These efforts have resulted in STM's most successful recruitment cycle on record. STM received the greatest number of applications and has admitted the highest number of students in the unit's history.



#### List of schools/events attended:

- Richards High School
- Rich Township High School
- Oak Lawn High School
- Lincoln-Way Central High School
- Lincoln-Way West High School
- Bremen High School
- Tinley Park High School
- Jones College Prep
- Lincoln Park High School
- Shepard High School
- Schaumburg High School
- Conant High School
- Hillcrest High School
- Merit School of Music
- Chicago High School for the Arts
- Bolingbrook High School
- Lane Tech High School
- Elk Grove High School
- Gwendolyn Brooks College Prep
- Northshore College Fair
- Rich Township Arts Fair
- Breman Township Arts Fair
- Virtual College Fairs through Music Admissions Roundtable
- Rolling Meadows Jazz Festival
- Plainfield Concert Band Festival
- Midwest Band & Orchestra Clinic
- Illinois High School Theatre Festival
- American Choral Directors Association College Fair
- Shepard High School Choral Festival
- Chi Arts College Fair
- August Wilson Monologue Competition



# YOUTH PROGRAMS

STM serves students from Chicago-area schools annually through youth programs and performances. Students have the opportunity to learn from UIC faculty and renowned guest artists. Many students who attend the Youth Programs go on to pursue a degree at UIC.



Youth programs are also an opportunity to make new friends and become part of Chicago’s growing performing arts community. This year, the Jazz Festival brought Grammy Award-winning drummer Jared Schonig, The Choral Festival hosted the highly acclaimed singer Adrian Dunn, Honors Band Festival invited conductor Ogechi Ukazu, and the Concert Band Festival featured composer John Mackey and clarinetist Julian Bliss. In theatre, the National August Wilson Monologue Competition returned to UIC this year with featured guest Christian Helem.

## YOUTH PROGRAM EVENTS

Event	Number of schools in attendance	Number of students who participated
UIC Honors Band Festival	17	69
UIC Choral Festival	6	115
UIC Concert Band Festival	6	314
UIC Jazz Festival	10	234
UIC Symphonic Band Camp	19	41
August Wilson Monologue	10	200



# THEATRE AND MUSIC SEASON



UIC and community members enjoyed a total of 73 performances this year, doubling the attendance from 2021-2022 theatre and music season. Audiences enjoyed a diverse program of theatre and music performances. The theatre season invited special guest directors Marcela Muñoz to direct *the strangers* by Christopher Oscar Peña, and Ericka Ratcliff to direct *Blues for an Alabama Sky* by Pearl Cleage. Theatre faculty Yasen Peyankov directed *Pshitter!* by Henry Wishcamper and faculty Edward Torres directed *Yerma* by Federico García Lorca.

The Music Department held its weekly Music Convocation and public concerts at UIC and at community venues including Benito Juarez High School and the Logan Center for the Arts. The Music Convocation featured world-renowned artists including trombonist Kalia Vandever, Chicago's Balinese Gamelan, conductor Kedrick Armstrong and orchestrator Dr. Marcus Norris of Lyric Opera of Chicago's *The Factotum*.

See the listing of our past performances here:

[theatreandmusic.uic.edu/past-events](http://theatreandmusic.uic.edu/past-events)

Theatre and Music Season Event Attendance:

8,489

# OUR DEGREES

## BFA ACTING

Students gain conservatory-style training in a liberal-arts setting through the BFA in Acting, working closely with world-class faculty from Tony Award-winning theatres. Students take six semesters of voice for the actor and six semesters of movement for the actor. Eight semesters of acting culminate in a semester-long audition class taught by casting directors from the Goodman Theatre and Chicago Shakespeare Theater.



## **BA THEATRE AND PERFORMANCE**

Students take advantage of a wide range of courses across the discipline and focus study through three tracks: general, performance and authorship. The program allows for both flexibility and focus in the study of theatre.

## **BA THEATRE DESIGN, PRODUCTION, AND TECHNOLOGY**

Students develop a strong foundation in theatre through core courses then deepen their study in the area of design that interests them. Courses are offered in acting, scenic design, lighting design, costume design, make-up design, set construction, costume construction, stage management, directing, playwriting, and contemporary performance. All students graduate with a portfolio.

## **BA MUSIC**

Students study music while developing a strong liberal arts foundation. They take core music courses and four terms of private instruction while playing in music ensembles and taking advantage of over 200 other disciplines at UIC. Some BA Music students pursue a double degree.

## **BA MUSIC BUSINESS**

Students combine music study with courses from UIC's College of Business Administration in accounting, marketing, and finance. They complete up to two internships in Chicago's music industry and develop essential business and music knowledge and skills necessary to pursue a career in this ever-expanding field.

## **BMUS PERFORMANCE**

Students pursue advanced study in piano, voice, guitar, and orchestral instruments. Students have access to Chicago's most outstanding artist-teachers and develop their musicianship through regular master classes with acclaimed guest artists, and multiple performance opportunities with the many ensembles.

## **BMUS JAZZ STUDIES**

Students develop the tools for a professional career in jazz and related fields of contemporary music. They receive weekly coaching from top Chicago jazz musicians, jazz-centric coursework in theory, and arranging, and performance opportunities both on and off campus.

# NEW AND EXCITING



## BACHELOR OF MUSIC IN MUSIC EDUCATION COMING FALL 2024

The Department of Music in the School of Theatre and Music and the College of Architecture, Design, and the Arts have received approval from the University of Illinois Board of Trustees and the Illinois Board of Higher Education to offer the Bachelor of Music (BMus) in Music Education. The educator preparation program embedded within this new degree is pending the review and approval of the Illinois State Board of Education. Once approved, the Department of Music will welcome its first cohort of music education degree students to begin their first semester in Fall 2024.

## LATIN AMERICAN MUSIC FESTIVAL 2024

The School of Theatre and Music at the University of Illinois Chicago is delighted to present a three-day Latin American Music Festival in April 2024.

The festival will feature faculty and students from UIC and Indiana University's Latin American Music Center as well as leading scholars, and artists from the greater Hispanic communities throughout Chicago.

Highlights will include days devoted to Mariachi and Choral music, as well as performances by acclaimed international Latin American artists and DJs.

## BRIDGE TO THE FACULTY SCHOLARS BECOME FULL TIME FACULTY

The Bridge to the Faculty program established in 2020 by the UIC Office of Diversity, Equity and Engagement awarded the UIC School of Theatre and Music two postdoctoral candidates. After completion of the first year, the department notified the college and the Office of the Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs and recommended Dr. Xiomara Cornejo and Monty Cole for a full time faculty position in the Theatre department.

## WELCOME NEW FACULTY

**Michael Allemana**, Ph.D. Teaching Associate and instructor of jazz guitar. Dr. Allemana is a guitarist, composer, and ethnomusicologist who has been a fixture on the Chicago jazz scene since the early 1990s. From 1997–2012 he was a member of saxophone legend Von Freeman’s quartet at the famed New Apartment Lounge. In 2013, he established a quartet in partnership with Freeman’s brother and guitar legend George Freeman, that features drum master Bernard Purdie and organist Pete Benson. They released their first album, *Live at the Green Mill* on ears&eyes Records, in 2017.

**Alyssa Allgood**, Director of the Vocal Jazz Ensemble and an instructor for courses in Jazz arranging. Allgood is a Chicago-based jazz vocalist, bandleader, educator, composer, and arranger who has been described as “assured and daring” by *DownBeat Magazine* and a “model of sophisticated song interpretation” by the *Chicago Tribune*.

**Xiomara Cornejo**, Ph.D. Assistant Professor. Dr. Cornejo is a Salvadoran American theatre director, and award-winning designer, playwright, dramaturg from Compton, California. Her professional work includes theatre directing, after-school arts programming, social justice theatre, and community organizing. Xiomara received a BA in Theater Directing/Performance from California State University Long Beach.

**Monty Cole**, Assistant Professor. Cole is an award-winning theatre and film writer-director and teacher from Oak Park, IL. He has workshopped and directed new plays and re-imaginings of classic texts with companies across the country including Steppenwolf, Center Theatre Group, The Goodman Theatre, The Repertory Theatre of St. Louis, Victory Gardens Theater, the Center for New Performance, Cape Cod Theatre Project, Alley Theatre, and others.

**Wing Lau**, Ph.D. Lecturer and instructor in music theory, aural skills, and keyboard skills. Dr. Lau’s research interests include rhythm and meter, text-music relations, performance analysis, musical humor, and aural skills pedagogy. Her forthcoming contribution to a collected pedagogic volume explores how compositional and performative distortions of expected intonation and rhythm in musical numbers suggest humor and sarcasm. Before joining UIC Dr. Lau taught at the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville.

**Joon Park**, Ph.D. Associate Professor and instructor of music theory. Dr. Park joins the UIC School of Theatre and Music from the University of Arkansas where he served as an Assistant Professor. Bridging theory and practice, Dr. Park is equally comfortable performing as he is teaching and writing about music. He is an active jazz pianist and a continuo player, and his scholarship has been published in world renowned academic journals such as *Music Theory Online* and the *Journal of Jazz Studies*.

**Serena Weren**, DMA, Director of Bands. Dr. Weren is an active guest conductor, clinician, and adjudicator for concert and marching bands across North America, and was a featured educator at the first National Marching Band Camp in Guatemala. Her current research interests include investigating social and physiological relationships to music making and improving health and wellness knowledge including through her work with Athletes and the Arts. Prior to joining UIC, she was an Associate Professor and Director of Bands at Loyola University New Orleans.

# ALUMNI AND FACULTY

## ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT



**Emily Fine**, BA in Music Business class of 2023, earned a position as the Music Partnership Coordinator at the Country Music Hall of Fame in Nashville. The Music Partnership Coordinator is a coveted position, which was searched for nationally. Fine competed with candidates from programs at highly ranked music business programs and universities.







**Chassion Rice**, BA in Music Business class of 2023 earned a position as Billing Coordinator at Universal Music Group. Music Business Coordinator, Robert DiFazio shared his excitement, “This is an extraordinary achievement, similar to a communications student

being placed at the White House straight out of college as a junior speech writer. The competition for this full-time, full benefits position is the highest that there is and includes lots of candidates from top 25 universities.”



**Al'Jaleel McGhee**, BA Theatre and Performance class of 2019, was the understudy for Roundabout Theatre's national tour of *A Soldier's Play* by Charles Fuller. McGhee received high praise by the cast and director for learning every role as an understudy in this clip on Broadway Chicago.



**David Hernandez**, BA Theatre and Performance class of 2020, earned the position of Theatre Director at Argo Community High School in Summit, Illinois. Through his leadership, Hernandez has increased enrollment of students in Argo High School's theatre program. He has

introduced peer mentorship opportunities, eight student produced plays, a speech team, and a musical. Hernandez will celebrate the 2023/2024 season with the mark of 100 years of Argo Theatre.

## FACULTY IN THE FIELD

**Marques Carroll**, music faculty, released his second album, *Foundations* following his hit debut album *The Ancestors Call*. Carroll also released his first book series for trumpet studies titled, *The Holistic Trumpet*. Learn more here [marquescarrollmusic.com](http://marquescarrollmusic.com).

**Xiomara Cornejo**, theatre faculty, produced her award-winning play *Romero* creating a partnership between UIC, Steppenwolf Theatre and Centro Romero. The play had three staged readings directed by Sandra Marquez with professional actors from Chicago. The production sold out in all three venues.

**Lydia Diamond**, theatre faculty, had the Chicago premier of her play *Toni Stone* at the Goodman Theatre. *Toni Stone* received critical praise from *Chicago Tribune*, *Chicago Reader*, *Chicago Theatre Review* and *Chicago Sun-Times*. Joseph Aaron Johnson, BA Theatre and Performance 2021, performed as Elzie in *Toni Stone*.

**Robert DiFazio**, music faculty, wrote a chapter in the book *It's All About the Music Marketing Stupid* by Kent Anderson and Jerry Brindisi. DiFazio's chapter is titled “Music Industry Analytics” and is available here [musicmarketingstupid.com](http://musicmarketingstupid.com). DiFazio also struck a deal with major music publisher, Warner Chappell Music, as the Head of R&D for Song Sleuth [songsleuth.io](http://songsleuth.io).

**Amos Gillespie**, music faculty, was featured in an episode of PBS' *Songs About Buildings and Moods*. Gillespie discussed a music piece he wrote inspired by Frank Lloyd Wright's Emil Bach House. Watch the episode here [pbs.org/video](http://pbs.org/video).

**Tanera Marshall**, theatre faculty, was the voice coach for the upcoming film *Hunger Games: The Ballad of Songbirds and Snakes* which filmed in Poland and Germany. Marshall also worked on *The Brutalist* with Adrien Brody and Felicity Jones in late December and January.

**Yasen Peyankov**, head of theatre, guest starred in an episode of the Amazon Prime series *Upload* and filmed a supporting role in the upcoming biopic *Maestro* directed by and starring Bradley Cooper as Leonard Bernstein. He recently finished a 6-week run at Steppenwolf Theatre playing the role of Nikolai in *Describe the Night*.

**Brent C. Talbot**, head of music, coordinated the Mayday Group's 34th Colloquium in Xalapa, México where he also presented his "Creating a Third Record for Music Education," an article featured on the *Music Educators Journal*. Talbot's article "Queer futurity and Afrofuturism: Intersectional utopias in music education" was also published in *Philosophy of Music Education Review* and "Collaborative untangling of positionality, ownership, and answerability as white researchers in indigenous spaces" was published in the *International Journal of Music Education*. See full list of publications here: [brentctalbot.com](http://brentctalbot.com).

Visit our website to see news and upcoming events by UIC School of Theatre and Music Faculty.

## EQUITY DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

The School of Theatre and Music continued to address structural racism in the arts through the Antiracism Advisory Committee (AAC) led by James McNally Associate Director for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion. Central to their work this year was the development, implementation and analysis of equity and inclusion focus groups. The AAC also conducted an internal equity audit of recruitment and outreach practices. Finally, the AAC also presented a series of "The More You Know" workshops that address experiences of bias at UIC in the context of research.

 **SCHOOL OF  
THEATRE AND MUSIC**

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