



Soulpepper
Annual Report
2025



A message from the Board Chair

Soulpepper opened in 2025 with two hugely successful productions, which together illustrated brilliantly who we are. *Kim's Convenience*, directed by Weyni Mengesha, was a powerful re-mounting of the most successful production in the company's history. It has since gone on a North American tour. And in partnership with Crow's Theatre, The Musical Stage Company, and TO Live, we co-produced the ambitious Canadian premiere of *A Strange Loop*. Together, these productions symbolized everything that Soulpepper represents – artistic excellence, inclusion, thematic relevance, and collaboration.

Indeed, Soulpepper's collaboration success has grown – with Crow's Theatre, with the four participants in the Creative Collaborative Initiative, and with many others in the community.

Listening, and responding to, the community has led to numerous wonderful opportunities to throw our doors open. From Community Movie Nights to Bollywood Zumba to the Queer Youth Cabaret and numerous other programs, it's clear that Soulpepper today sees itself as an organization that not only produces great art but operates boldly in the Public Domain.

Early in 2025, our marvellous Artistic Director Weyni Mengesha informed us of her plan to step down from her role in August, to spend more time with her young family and on other projects. Weyni's impact on the company, during her seven-year tenure, has been most impressive. She led the creation of a new artistic vision and organizational values, she programmed with distinction, and she directed award-winning productions herself. Weyni will be missed.

During the year, we bade farewell to board members Nick Chambers, Maureen Dodig and James O'Sullivan, each of whom had made tremendous contributions to the company. It has been an honour to lead the Board of Directors – a group of community-minded volunteers who care passionately about the future of the company, and who contribute so generously.

ROBIN CARDOZO

Chair of the Board,
Soulpepper Theatre Company

DANA LAFARGA

Incoming Chair
Soulpepper Theatre Company

Subsequent events: In September 2025, the very talented Paolo Santalucia joined Soulpepper as Artistic Director. Paolo is already making his mark; together with our terrific Executive Director Gideon Arthurs, Soulpepper has top-notch executive leadership. And in December 2025, the highly-experienced Dana Lafarga was elected Board Chair, as I stepped down at the end of my term. Dana will be outstanding as our new Chair.



A message from Executive Leadership

At Soulpepper, we have continued to redefine what it means to be a theatre company, opening our doors to welcome more people to access the transformative power of theatre. Through the work on our stages and Public Domain programs, we are trying to meet these complicated times by inviting our community to choose presence over polarization, relationships over retreat, and shared experience over isolation. Over the course of hundreds of performances, we endeavored to present another full slate of world-class productions to excite and invigorate our audiences. Building on the success of our pilot programs, we have proudly doubled our Public Domain Programming events, welcoming 17,000+ attendees to free community events designed to build community and bring people together. And of course, we continued to offer world-class artist training through the Academy, graduating the latest cohort of five extraordinary artists to take their place as the newest members of Soulpepper's family.

Our strategic partnership with Crow's Theatre continued this year, as well as our Creative Collaborative Initiative with Musical Stage Company, Obsidian Theatre, Bad Hats Theatre, and the Toronto Fringe Festival. With these leading Canadian companies, we presented landmark productions including the world premiere of Akosua Amo-Adem's *Table for Two*, the Canadian premiere of Tony-Award winning musical *A Strange Loop*, and acted as the new Festival hub for the most profitable Toronto Fringe Festival since before the pandemic.

As we expanded our output, we were able to increase our impact on the lives of artists. Throughout our 2025 season productions and Public Domain initiatives, we have engaged over 225 artists and 700 part-time cultural sector workers, while welcoming more than 20,000 new patrons through our doors. These successes show how true collaboration, a deep commitment to community access and investment in our artists can lead to a more sustainable and impactful future for Soulpepper.

With gratitude, love and deep admiration, we bid farewell to our visionary Artistic Director, Weyni Mengesha, after nearly seven years of devoted service. We marked her departure with a summer celebration, announcing Soulpepper's newly named Weyni Mengesha Theatre in her honour. Paolo's appointment as Artistic Director came after an extensive national search that affirmed Soulpepper's place as one of Toronto's most important theatres.

We are grateful to the community of artists, donors, corporate sponsors, government partners, Board volunteers and cultural workers who make Soulpepper what it is. In a moment of deep civic strain and social fragmentation, Soulpepper offers a humanist response by gathering people together to discover, listen, and imagine a more connected, more sustainable future for the communities we serve.



GIDEON ARTHURS

Executive Director,
Soulpepper Theatre Company



PAOLO SANTALUCIA

Artistic Director,
Soulpepper Theatre Company

Subsequent events: In December 2025, our incredible Board Chair Robin Cardozo stepped aside after three years, replaced by Dana Lafarga. We will have time to celebrate him in next year's annual report, but in the meantime, we thank him from the bottom of our hearts for his service, generosity and kindness.





ARTISTIC ACHIEVEMENTS

8 PRODUCTIONS, INCLUDING:

4 **WORLD PREMIERES:** *TABLE FOR TWO, LADIES OF THE CANYON, TAKWAHIMINANA, SIX STRING*

ONE NORTH AMERICAN TOUR:
KIM'S CONVENIENCE

ONE CANADIAN PREMIERE:
A STRANGE LOOP



8 CO-PRODUCING PARTNERS

16 DORA AWARD NOMINATIONS

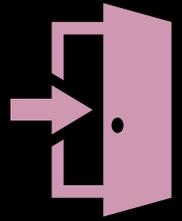
PUBLIC DOMAIN GROWTH

138
**EVENTS &
ACTIVITIES**

Including community movie nights, storytelling events, gatherings, free exhibits, wellness programming, dance classes and much more.

17,255 ATTENDEES
AT FREE COMMUNITY EVENTS

**TOOK PART IN
DOORS OPEN
TORONTO**



**1100 YOUTH ENGAGED
IN FREE WORKSHOPS**

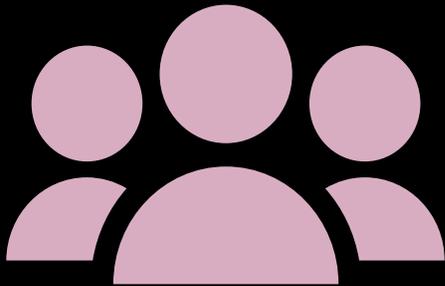


Thank you to our Public Domain Community Partners:

Kick Start Arts, Paprika Festival, Nia Centre For The Arts, Covenant House, YMCA, Replay Storytelling, Sleepless Cinema, and Neighbourhood Information Post.



AUDIENCE IMPACT



65,000+
ATTENDEES
THROUGH OUR DOORS



20% TOTAL
AUDIENCE GROWTH
YEAR-OVER-YEAR



20,000+
NEW-TO-FILE
PATRONS

CONTINUED INDICATORS THAT OUR **STORIES FOR A STRONGER CITY** TRANSFORMATION PLAN IS WORKING:



75% INCREASE IN ATTENDEES AT FREE COMMUNITY EVENTS
EVEN WITH A 2X INCREASE IN PUBLIC DOMAIN ACTIVITIES PROGRAMMED, YEAR-OVER-YEAR.



BOX OFFICE REVENUE IS PROJECTED TO INCREASE BY 259%
SINCE 2022, WITH A 122% INCREASE IN TICKETS SOLD OVER THAT PERIOD.

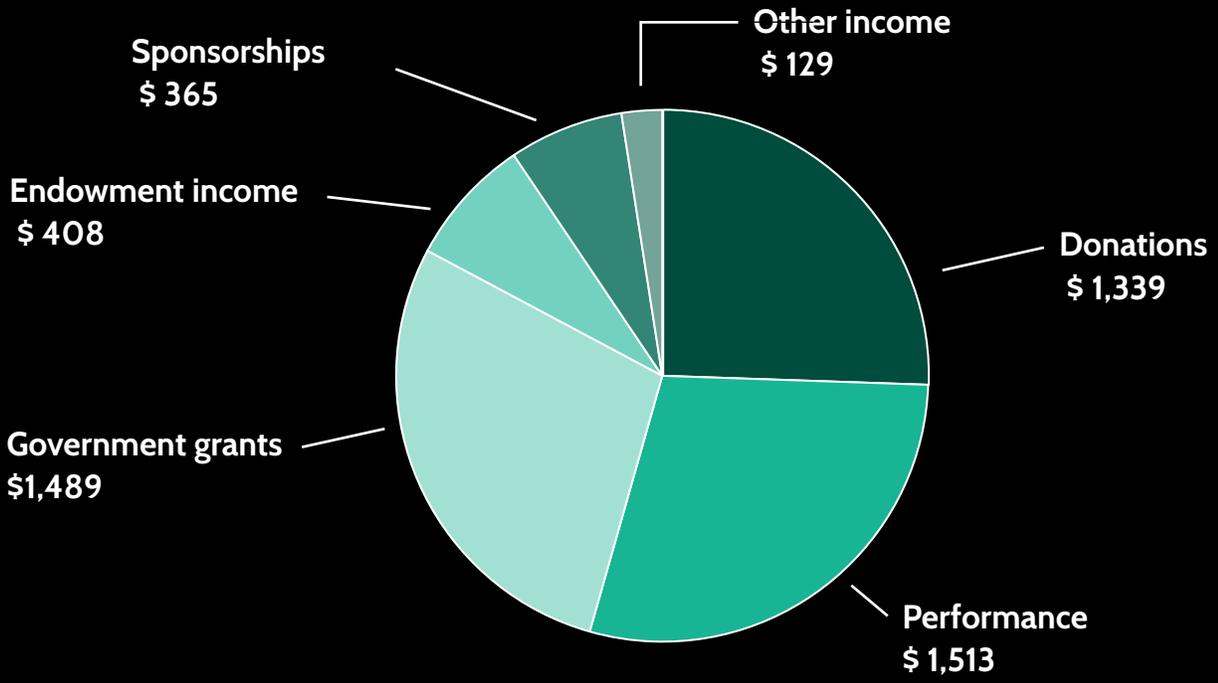


31% OF OUR AUDIENCE MEMBERS ARE BRAND NEW
TO SOULPEPPER SINCE 2024, WITH THE AVERAGE AGE OF ATTENDEES MORE THAN
20 YEARS YOUNGER THAN OUR PRE-PANDEMIC DEMOGRAPHIC.

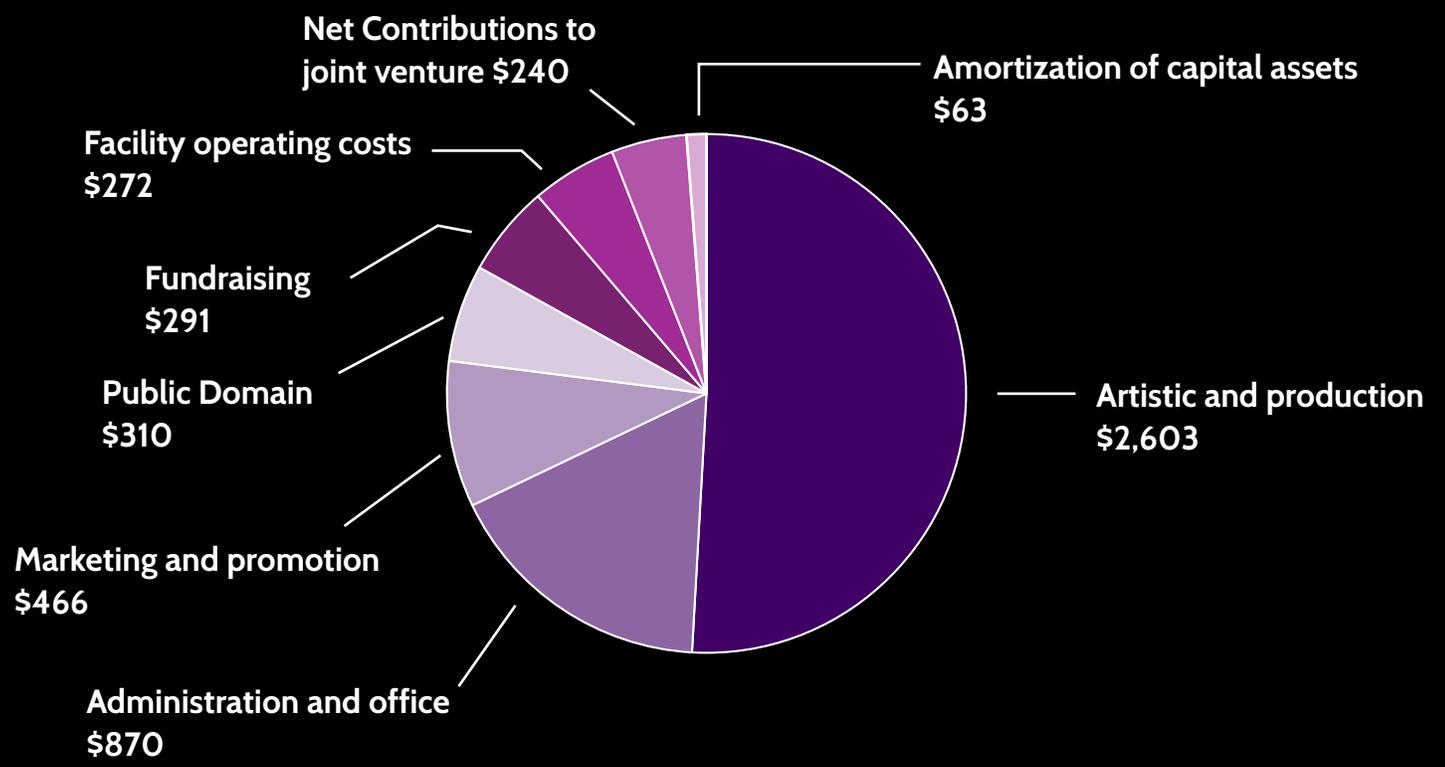


Financials: January 1 - August 31, 2025

2025 Revenues (\$000's)



2025 Expenses (\$000's)



Audited financial statements available upon request

Thank you to our 2025 supporters

GOVERNMENT FUNDERS

Canada Council for the Arts
Ontario Arts Council
Toronto Arts Council
Ontario Cultural Attractions Fund
Department of Canadian Heritage
City of Toronto

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\$10,000+

Woco Foundation
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& Jim Pitblado, C.M.

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Hersh Zeifman, In Memory of
Nina Hope Wright
Marc Zwelling

Soulpepper Legacy Circle

The following people have generously arranged bequests to Soulpepper:
Robin Cardozo
Roger Garland, C.M.
Ken Gingerich & Michael Oakes
Shira Hart
Anne Louise Layton
Claude Marchand
Jenny Tan
The Estate of Wuchien Michael Than
7 Anonymous friends of Soulpepper

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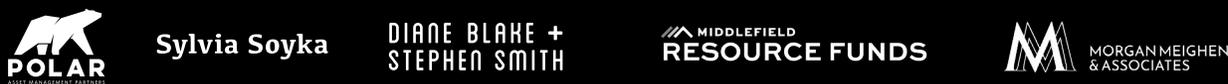
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Cover Image: Hailey Gillis in *Ladies of the Canyon: Joni and the California Scene*; Co-Created by Hailey Gillis, Raha Javanfar, Frank Cox-O'Connell, Directed by Frank Cox-O'Connell, Music Direction by Raha Javanfar (2025). Lighting Design by Echo Zhou, Sound Design by Andres Castillo-Smith. Photo by Dahlia Katz.

Page 4: Malachi McCaskill, Charlie Clark, Sierra Holder, Nathanael Judah, David Lopez, Marcus Nance, Matt Nethersole, David Andrew Reid, Amaka Umeh in *A Strange Loop*; Written by Michael R. Jackson, Directed by Ray Hogg, Music Direction by Chris Tsujiuchi, Choreography by Rodney Diverlus (2025). Set Design by Brian Dudkiewicz, Costume Design by Ming Wong, Lighting Design by Michelle Ramsay, Sound Design by Brian Kenny. Photo by Dahlia Katz.

Page 5: Freshly Hatched Storytelling event participants, 2025. Photo by Darian Hang.

Page 6: Esther Chung, Kelly Seo, Ins Choi, Brandon McKnight & Ryan Jinn in *Kim's Convenience*; Written by Ins Choi, Directed by Weyni Mengesha (2025). Set Design by Joanna Yu, Costume Design by Ming Wong, Lighting Design by Wen-Ling Liao, Projection Design by Nicole Eun-Ju Bell, Sound Design by Fan Zhang. Photo by Dahlia Katz.

Page 7: Michaela Washburn in *Takwahiminana*; Written by Matthew Mackenzie, Directed by Mike Payette, Choreographed by Anoshinie Muhundarajah (2025). Set Design by Dawn Marie Marchand, Costume Design by Jolane Houle, Lighting Design by Andre du Toit, Video Design by Amelia Scott, Sound Design by Aaron Macri, Composition by Noor Dean Musani. Photo by Dahlia Katz.

Back Cover: Audience at Freshly Hatched Storytelling event, 2025. Photo by Darian Hang.



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