



  
WATER PEOPLE  
THEATER

# STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

*Executive Summary  
August 2023*

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Welcome to Water People Theater's 2023-2025 Strategic Plan!

This plan results from a profound journey that began during the COVID-19 pandemic. From mid-2020 to mid-2022, we practiced resilience and radical imagination more than ever to stay relevant, supportive, and true to our communities while trying to keep our organization afloat.

Like many small-sized theaters, Water People faced the challenge of suspending all in-person events when the pandemic struck. Consequently, we had to adapt swiftly and transition our programs into a virtual setting. At that critical moment, we had to decide between opting for pre-recorded sessions, which would be cost-effective but potentially lacking in cultural relevance, or taking the risk of presenting live productions online, ensuring that our programs remained culturally significant and connected to contemporary challenges.

Ultimately, we chose to prioritize fostering relationships with our communities and staying relevant, and thus, we embraced the latter option. This challenging yet exciting process led us to test new tactics and iterate some of our existing programs, allowing us to re-imagine our institutional model, practices, and operations. We produced 47 plays and engaged with over 9,000 audiences between 2020 and 2022.

However, these values-driven decisions also signified financial risks impacting our operations. Given this institutional scenario, we decided to pause, reflect, and strategically plan for the future.

Thus, we embarked on a strategic planning process driven by our dedicated staff and in collaboration with Terra Cotta, a values-driven nonprofit consulting agency.

Our long-term goal with this strategic plan is to transition from survival to thriving mode with our communities and explore the iterative programs we created during the pandemic more strategically. Furthermore, we are approaching our strategic plan as a living document that will allow us to keep our organizational model nimble, collaborative, and responsive to the emerging needs of our communities and staff.

In the following pages, you will discover our goals and strategies for the next two years. As we strengthen our organizational model, our commitment remains to keep our programs accessible and to advance the transformative power of theater.

Thank you for your ongoing support and for taking the time to engage with these pages.

# About Us

Water People Theater is a Latina-led non-profit organization that believes in the transformative power of theater.

For over two decades, we have been dedicated to producing socially engaged theater to serve communities that have been historically excluded from arts ecosystems.



# Our mission

*is to leverage the power of high-quality performances and educational offerings to advance social values, defend human rights, and inspire people to become changemakers.*



# What makes us, us?

Water People Theater (WPT) is led by two Latina immigrants who bring over 50 years of experience in theater. Our firsthand experiences as Venezuelans living in diaspora have inspired us to explore how theater can be a powerful tool for defending human rights, navigating interculturality, and exploring culturally relevant themes in a safe way.

We explore themes of interculturality, migration, climate justice, and human rights through bilingual plays and learning programs. Even though our focus is on working and serving Latinx communities, we are also interested in exploring interculturality in a critical and life-affirming way.



# Our Programs

## *Productions* **Theater**

Our productions present classic and contemporary plays, world premieres, theatrical concerts, and multidisciplinary stage proposals, emphasizing Latinx and Hispanic authors.

Our plays are based on individuals who have challenged normative narratives around gender, citizenship status, and human rights.

## *Learning* **STUDIO**

We provide a human rights and environmental education framework for Latinx and first-generation immigrants kids, youth, and adults through our STUDIO program. We cultivate critical thinking skills by drawing learners to connect larger pressing issues to their lived experiences.

Our unique learning methodology provides social, emotional, and embodied tools that help participants build their confidence and sense of belonging and become agents of change.

# Strategic Goals

**01.** Strengthen Water People Theater's Organizational Model

**02.** Development of Financial Stability & Resilience

**03.** Enhance our Programs & Value Proposition

*We have identified milestones, tactics, deliverables, and indicators of success for each of the objectives above. These items were not included in this executive summary.*



01.

## Strengthen Our Organizational Model

### OBJECTIVES:

- Recruitment of a Resident Advisor to support capacity-building strategies.
- Integrate project-based management to enable meaningful collaboration among staff and board.
- Develop people-centered processes, practices, and policies.
- Deepen our relationships with existing communities and trace a Community Map & Outreach Plan to identify prospective collaborators, partners, and beneficiaries.





02.



## Develop Financial Stability & Resilience

### OBJECTIVES:

- Partner with an arts service organization to develop a financial plan.
- Create a two-year financial plan.
- Expand our network of funders, donors, and sponsors whose values align with ours.
- Develop a plan for diversifying earned revenue streams.



03.

## Enhance Our Programs & Value Proposition

### OBJECTIVES:

- Keep centering our communities in all aspects of our programming
- Assess, optimize, and leverage existing programs to cultivate new partners and collaborators.
- Develop a volunteer-based program to support our capacity-building efforts.
- Strengthen our communications strategies, channels, and messaging to advance our mission, vision, and values.



## Support Our Communities

For 22 years, we have touched the lives of over 118,000 spectators, produced over 38 plays, 21 seasons, five short films defending human rights, ten campaigns for peace, and have participated in 12 Latinx and international film and theater festivals.

Through STUDIO, we have worked with over 127 participants, directly impacting 354 family members through 28 in-person creative labs and 99 online sessions. We have offered 74 scholarships to kids most impacted by larger systems of oppression.

**Your support will contribute to the making of innovative, moving, and bold plays and educational offerings at Water People Theater, directly impacting the communities we serve!**

*Ways in which you can support:*

- [Subscribe to our Newsletter](#)
- [Make a Donation](#)
- [YouTube Giving](#)
- Be an Ambassador: Spread the word about our work



# The People Behind Water People Theater



## *Staff*

### **Rebeca Alemán**

Founder & Executive Director

### **Iraida Tapias**

Artistic Director

### **Carlos Trujillo**

Technology Coordinator

## *Collaborators*

Ramón Camín

Marisabel Muñoz

Oliver Krisch

María Fernanda Rodríguez

Kris Tori

Isadora Villamizar

Estefania Mena

Madeline Nesbitt

## *Board of Directors*

### **José R. Sánchez**

Chair

### **Thais López Vogel**

Vice Chair

### **Phillip Barreda**

Treasurer

### **Marta Medina**

Secretary

### **Casper Sanderson**

Director

### **Rebeca Alemán**

Director

## *Our Dedicated Advisory Board*

### **Pepe Vargas**

Founder & Executive Director of the  
International Latino Cultural Center

### **Vanessa Valecillos**

Dancer & Faculty Member at  
Northwestern University, Chicago

### **Juan Gabriel Moreno**

President and Founder of Juan  
Moreno Architects (JGMA)

### **Oscar Perdomo Marín**

Writer and Poet

# Gratitude

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# WATER PEOPLE THEATER

*Abrimos Caminos | We Open Paths*

