

Our History: 2002 to Today

The Pear was founded in 2002 by Diane Tasca and a group of dedicated theatre artists. We have always been a small theatre with a HUGE heart. Since inception, the Pear has offered audiences a broad mix of productions, which our audiences have loved:

- * **Classics** including works by Shakespeare, Congreve, Ibsen, Chekhov, Synge, Wilde, and Shaw
- * **Acclaimed modern plays** by authors such as O'Neill, Miller, Williams, Coward, Hansberry, and Wilder
- * **Challenging contemporary works** by playwrights like Nottage, Kushner, Stoppard, Ruhl and Zimmerman
- * **New works** by local writers--full-length plays and 10-minute *Pear Slices*

In 2015, the Pear moved from its tiny 40-seat space on Pear Avenue to a larger (90 seat) venue just blocks away at 1110 La Avenida. This new location allowed us to perform more challenging works, making attending the Pear more enjoyable by enhancing our technical options and audience and performer spaces. We are the only Bay Area theatre with the ability to transform audience seating from show to show—from proscenium to thrust to runway to in-the-round.

We've been thrilled to see that our audience support has grown substantially since our move. During this time, we have won several "Best Production" awards from the Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle, as well as the Critics Circle's Paine Knickerbocker Award in 2015.

2020 is a difficult year for all theaters. First, California passed a new law, AB5, which increased compensation expenses for artists, directors, designers and permanent employees. Then the pandemic shutdown hit. We are producing digitally until we are allowed to reopen the theater.

We are determined to keep the Pear functioning creatively, serving our artists and audiences, while creating a revenue stream to stay in business until we can reopen for live performances.

Over the past few years, we have begun to seriously address diversity, inclusion, and inequities in our practices. With the hiring of Artistic Director Sinjin Jones, and then with the wake of the Black Lives Matter protests, we realize how much more we still have to do. Together we are reviewing all our practices to set policies and goals that make the Pear a pro-actively inclusive environment.

Our Mission Statement

Pear Theatre was founded in 2002 with a mission to offer theatre that challenges our community to see all aspects of our world fully, with intellectually stimulating, emotionally powerful, and professional productions.

Our Commitment to Inclusiveness

To fully portray today's world, we are dedicated to engaging diverse voices in our programming and to fostering an inclusive environment in all aspects of our work as artists, staff, volunteers and audience.

What We Do

The Pear Theatre is committed to supporting our diverse audiences, actors, writers, directors and designers, education and our community at large.

Audiences: To date, the Pear has given our audiences over 120 full-length productions, varying in content and style, always staged with imagination, emotional power, and intellectual rigor. The space is elegant, comfortable, and accessible, so that seeing a play at the Pear is a wonderful experience.

Actors: We support, encourage, and respect the craft of acting, and Pear actors have been particularly praised for their rich, multifaceted performances.

Writers: Unique in the Bay Area, the Pear has the treasure of an active Playwrights Guild, as well as a play development program (*Fresh Produce*) that cultivates new works.

Directors and Designers: Directors create a collaborative atmosphere, encouraging set, lighting, sound, and costume designers to create imaginative solutions to theatrical challenges.

Education: In 2018, we launched the *Pear Seeds* program, which offers playwriting classes to youth who produce their own new plays, mentored by the Pear's theatre artists.

Community at Large: We recognize that our responsibilities go beyond just producing entertaining plays. We have a unique platform to foster mindfulness within our community, and we continue to strive to find ways to practice leadership of thought.

For us to successfully support the many forms of opportunities for these groups, it is imperative that we provide an inclusive environment for diversity and access. As a theatre company, we are committed to a minimum of 50% diversity in everything we can control. This means that 50% of our season's plays are by playwrights from diverse backgrounds, defined as non-white, not cis-gender, queer, non-male. Through this and more non-traditional casting, we intend to consistently diversify the faces and voices seen and heard from our stage.

To foster access to more diverse audiences, we are instituting new outreach and discount programs to groups representing diverse backgrounds, tailored to the theme of each production.

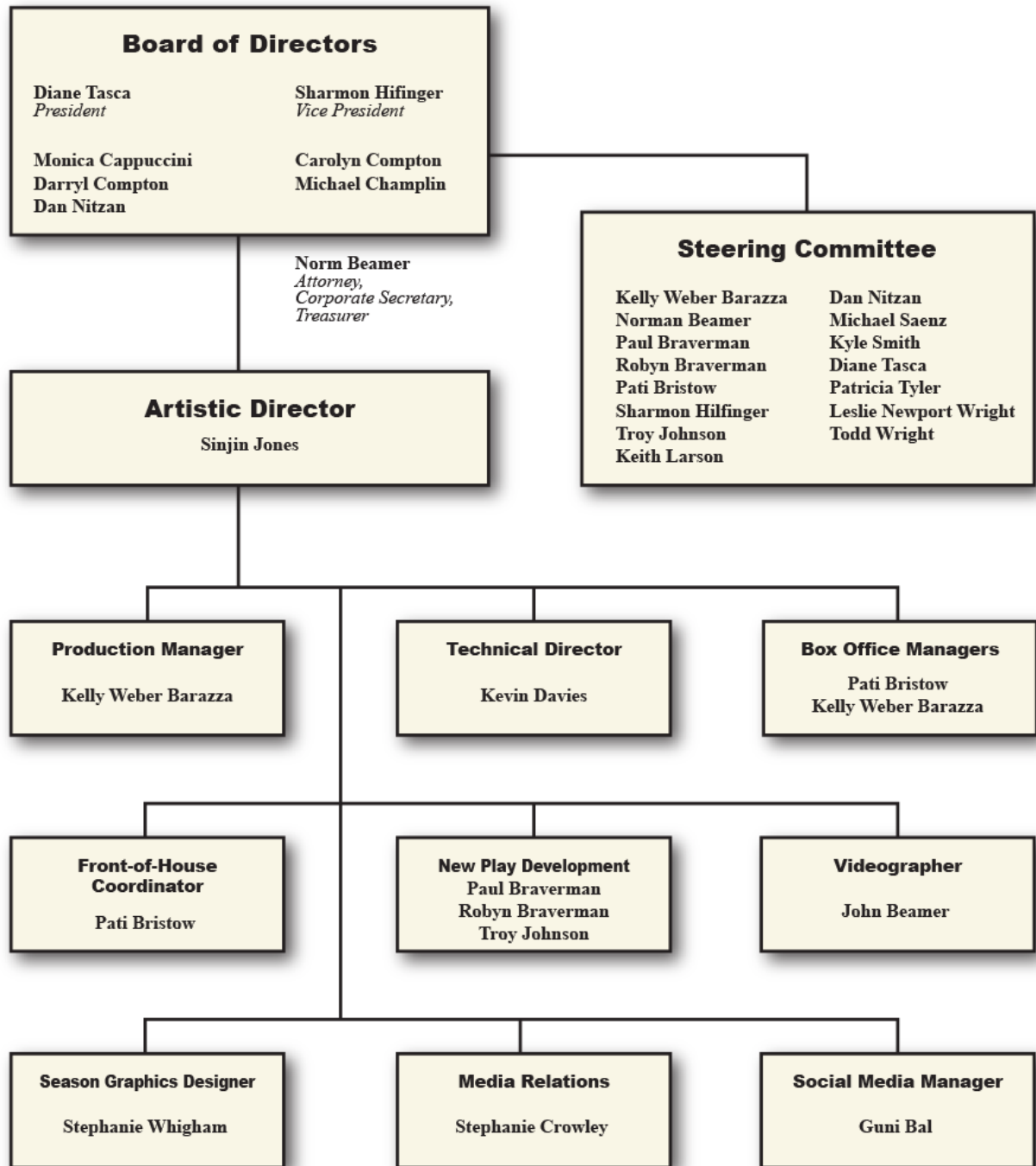
The Pear Playwrights Guild is currently planning events (workshops, contests, readings) that will attract playwrights from more diverse backgrounds to be a part of the Guild and eligible to submit plays for consideration in future seasons.

We are committed to diversifying our pool of directors, making sure that directors of all backgrounds are considered. For plays by or about a certain ethnicity, race or sexual orientation, we will make it our practice to hire directors with that background.

We also aim to increase student ticket sales by significantly expanding outreach to student groups in the South Bay, and creating student-specific engagement opportunities (study guides, tours, and interview opportunities).

The Pear is also committed to actively expanding its Board to include members with backgrounds and experiences that will help us understand, promote and broaden inclusiveness and diversity in all of our practices.

The Pear Team



Pear Board of Directors

The Pear Theatre is a 501(c)(3) tax exempt not-for-profit corporation operating under the laws of California.

The Board of Directors is responsible for the fiscal oversight and management of the theatre. It meets once a month to review the operations of the theatre.

Our revenue comes from individual tax-deductible donations (including stock), ticket sales, rental income, education fees, and grants. Pre-pandemic annual revenue was over \$200,000, with a net profit that varies from year to year.

We currently have four salaried positions: Artistic Director, Production Manager, Technical Director, and Videographer, as well as an ongoing contract with our publicist. Salaries and operating expenses are approved by the Board.

The Artistic Director manages the budget for each show, which includes royalties, promotional costs, stipends for the director, actors and designers, as well as expenses for the scenery, costumes, and lighting. The Board reviews these expenses to make sure they are in line with our overall operating budget.

The Board reviews the season selection, as proposed by the Artistic Director.

The Board is responsible for raising money for the theatre. We have at least two fundraising drives per season. Preparing and executing our fundraising efforts is a primary activity for Board members. In addition, each member of the Board is expected to bring in \$1,000 in donations each season. This amount can take the form of a donation by an individual or an aggregate of donations from a group. In some cases, Board members volunteer special skills/services in lieu of making a monetary donation.

Board members serve as ambassadors for the Pear. We are looking for individuals who will bring in new patrons and help welcome theatre-goers, making them feel part of our Pear community. For this reason, we expect Board members to serve for at least two years. Board members are expected to purchase season tickets and to attend gala openings, when possible, to help promote the Pear and become familiar faces to our patrons.

The Board is currently comprised of seven individuals. We would like to expand this to twelve members. In order to realize our goals to create an actively diverse community at the Pear, we are seeking candidates who have backgrounds and experiences that will help us understand, promote and broaden inclusiveness and diversity in all of our practices. Our primary requirement is that Board members love the Pear and embrace our mission to create a vibrant, inclusive theatre!