

Note from the Managing Director

As the 2017-2018 season draws to a close, I want to thank you all for your support of Palm Beach Dramaworks. You've helped make this season a big success, and we are so pleased at your enthusiastic response to our upcoming productions. Many of you have told us how delighted you are about next season's roster of plays, and your excitement can be measured by the subscription renewals that are pouring in.

And yet. . . I've said this numerous times, but it's important to say it once again: Even if we sell out every performance, ticket sales represent only 48% of our budget. In addition to donations from our patrons and subscribers, we rely on government and foundation grants to make up the difference. But these are difficult times for arts organizations in Florida. To put it bluntly, the State Legislature has become largely unresponsive to the needs of Florida's not-for-profit arts and culture industry. State investment in the Florida Department of State Division of Cultural Affairs' (DCA) matching grants program has declined from a healthy \$43 million in fiscal year 2014-2015 to a shocking \$2,650,000 in 2018-2019.

What does this mean for PBD? In 2014-2015 we received \$150,000, the maximum DCA matching grant awarded, to support our general programming. This season we received \$48,105. And next season, the total comes to \$9,856!

The costs to run a theatre are considerable, and at PBD we pride ourselves on paying living wages to artists and staff, and in keeping ticket prices affordable. In order to continue to provide you with the quality you've come to expect from PBD, to continue to

attract the finest actors, designers, and personnel, and to maintain affordable tickets, we must find ways to compensate for diminished government funding.

There are a few ways you can help. Any contribution, large or small, is much appreciated. But one of the most important things you can do is vote in November. The next governor will set the tone for how much and whether the arts are valued.

Beginning in July, you can check our website for links to phone numbers of Palm Beach County candidates and representatives, so that you can call and find out where they stand on funding for the arts. There will also be links to talking points you can share with them on why the arts matter. Did you know, for instance, that for every \$1.00 the state invests, the not-for-profit Florida arts and culture industry returns \$9.00 back into local and state government treasuries?

We urge you to get involved.
Thank you for all you do.



Sue Ellen Beryl

Managing Director