

2026 IMPACT REPORT



ENTERING A NEW
ERA OF THEATER
IN PRINCETON

From the desk of the Producing Artistic Director

This past summer, I was astonished by the artistry we brought to the stage at Festival 56. I was proud to see nearly 50 company members and visiting artists come together to produce a season of five productions. Over eight weeks, laughter filled the air, music rang loud and clear, and voices serenaded the Princeton community. But the magic audiences experience onstage begins months before the first downbeat.

Behind every production is a dedicated group of individuals working tirelessly to make it all possible. Our Board of Directors help market our upcoming season, provide housing for visiting artists, and secure the funding necessary to sustain our work. I am proud to stand alongside them, interviewing and auditioning hundreds of emerging artists from across the country, all eager to bring their talents to Princeton.

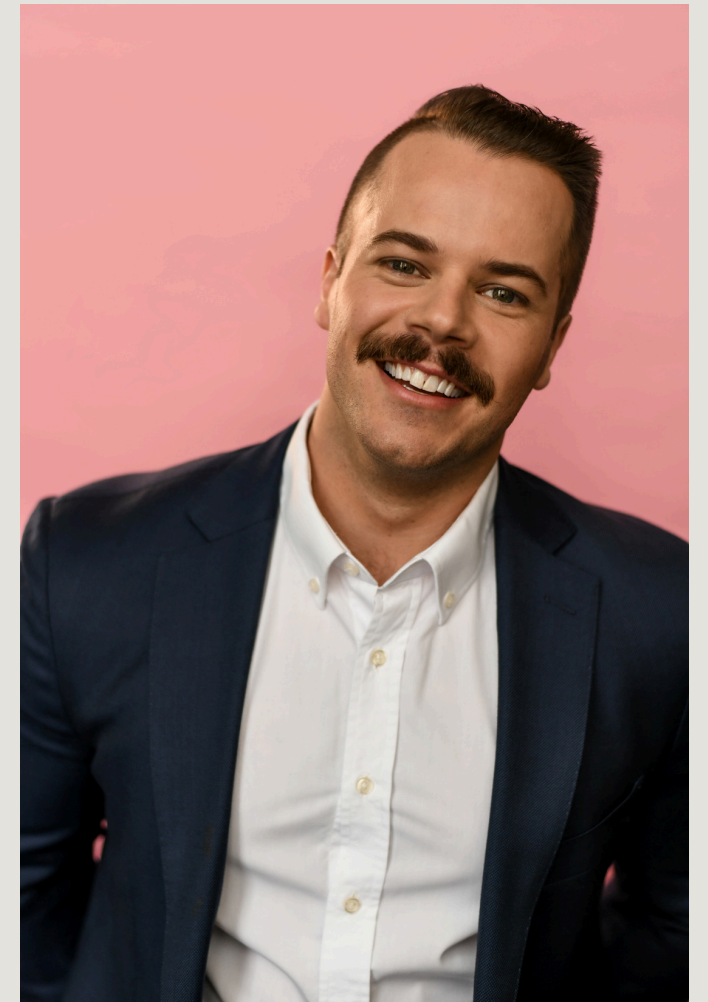
For 25 years, Festival 56 has brought our community together: enriching the cultural life of Bureau County. And we are just getting started! As we look toward the next 25 years, we invite you to join us in building a future where Festival 56 is not only a source of entertainment, but also:

- An economic-development engine
- A place of civic gathering
- An educational outlet
- And an organization that provides an increased identity to Princeton.

The new era of the arts in Princeton start here - join us!

Sincerely,

Mar B





Mission: To advance arts programming and theater education in Princeton and the surrounding areas - providing rural audiences access to affordable, professional productions from artists across the country.

- 5 Fully Staged Productions
- 4 Cabarets
- 1 Staged reading of a new work
- 50 Live performances throughout this summer!

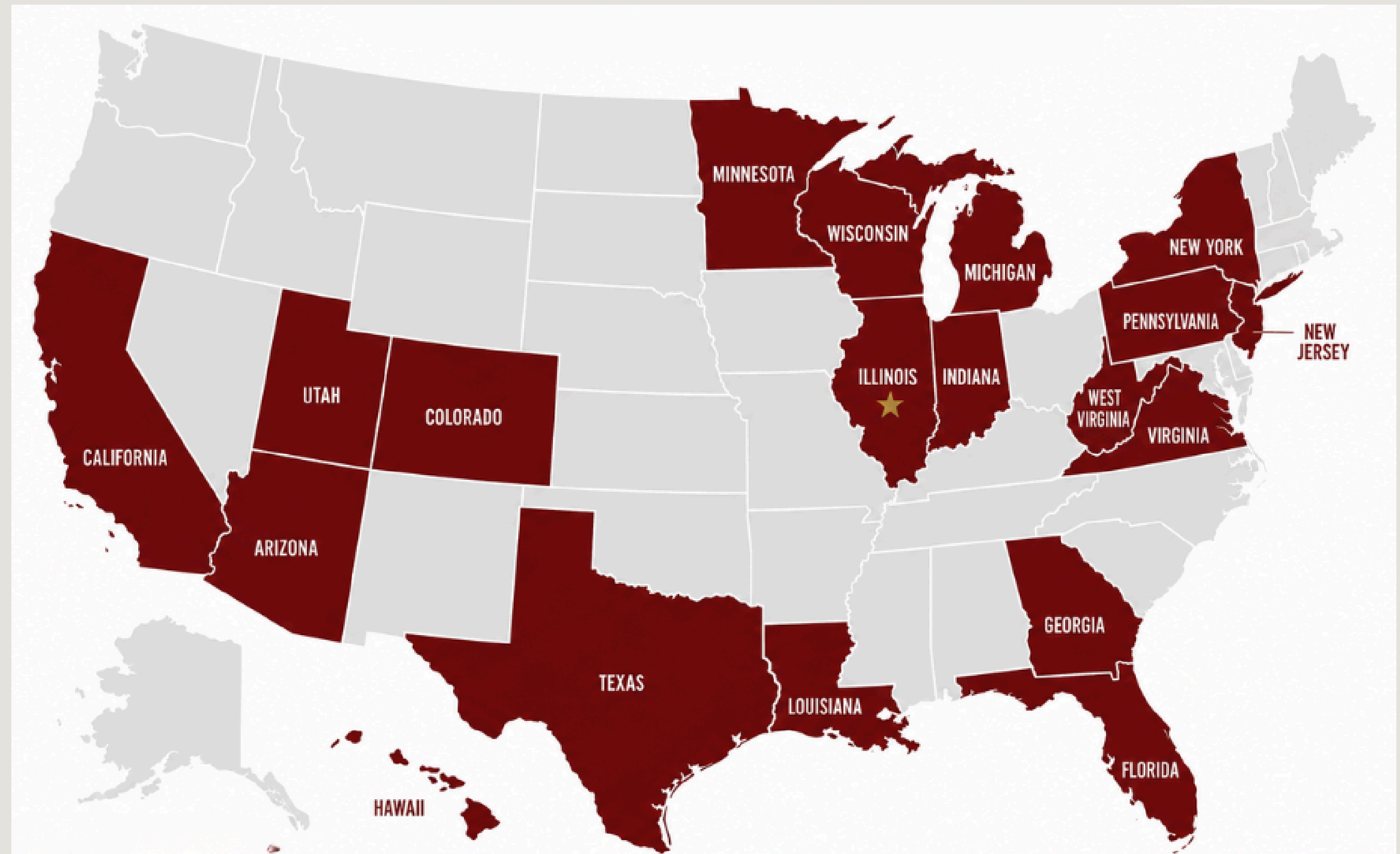
FESTIVAL 56 IS THE ONLY PROFESSIONAL
THEATER COMPANY WITHIN A 60-MILE RADIUS

FROM COAST TO COAST...

**46 VISITING
ARTISTS**

From 19 states

In 2026, 30% of our
visiting artists are
primarily based in
Chicago



EDUCATION & COMMUNITY OUTREACH



28 campers, ages 8–13, participated in **Camp 56**, gaining confidence and communication skills through hands-on experience in a mainstage production alongside our professional company.

Our free *Shakespeare in Soldiers & Sailors Park* performances served nearly **400** patrons in 2026.



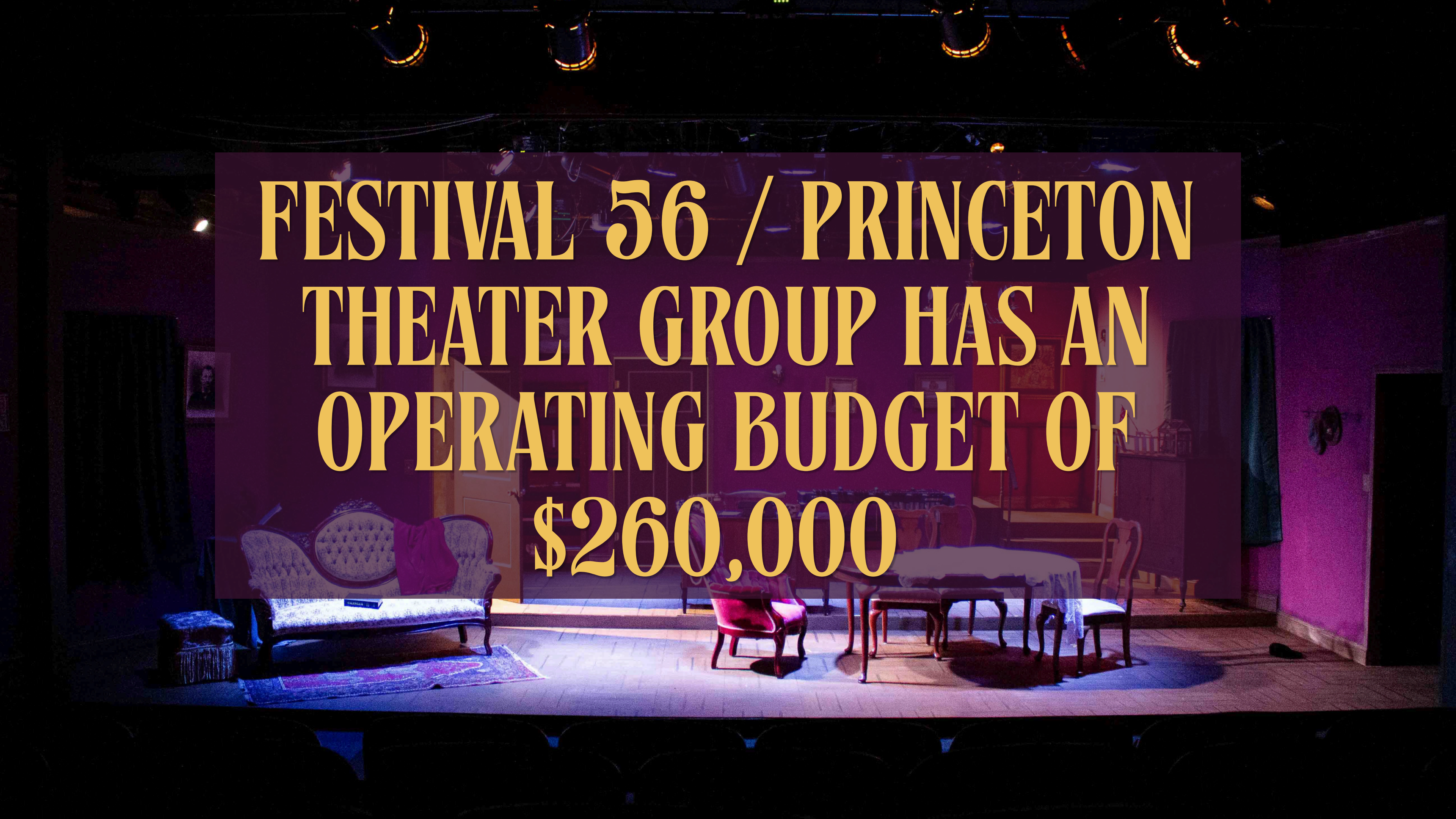
More than **20 Princeton families** opened their homes to our visiting artists, serving as Host Families.

We continued to expand audience engagement through programs such as pre-show lectures for our free Shakespeare productions, and post-show talk-backs on every opening night throughout the season.

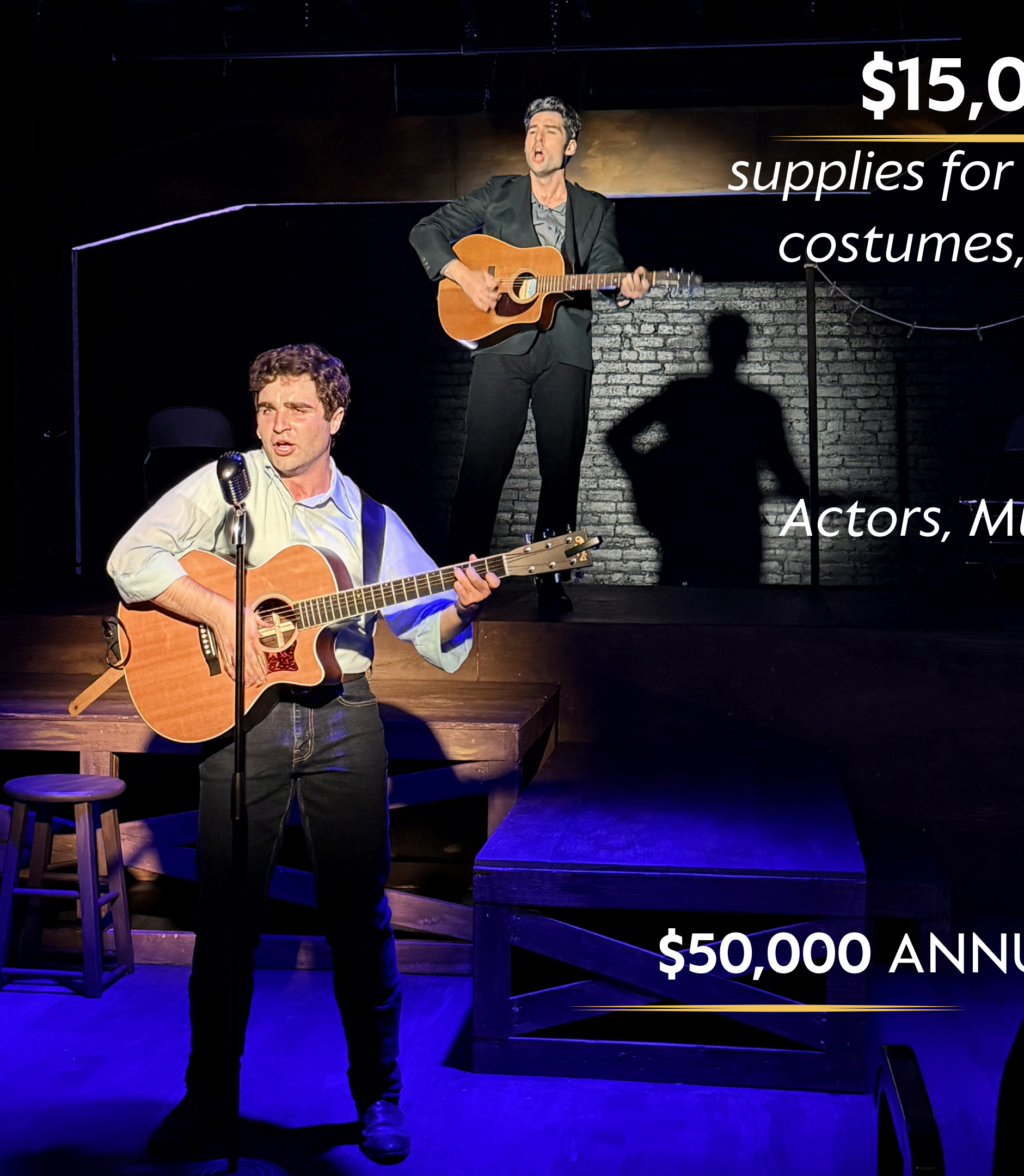
WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO OPERATE A *Summer theater festival*



IN PRINCETON?



**FESTIVAL 56 / PRINCETON
THEATER GROUP HAS AN
OPERATING BUDGET OF
\$260,000**



\$15,000 FOR PRODUCTION COSTS

supplies for all technical departments: scenic, props, costumes, lighting, sound and stage management

\$95,000 FOR SALARIES

Actors, Musicians, Directors, and Production Crew

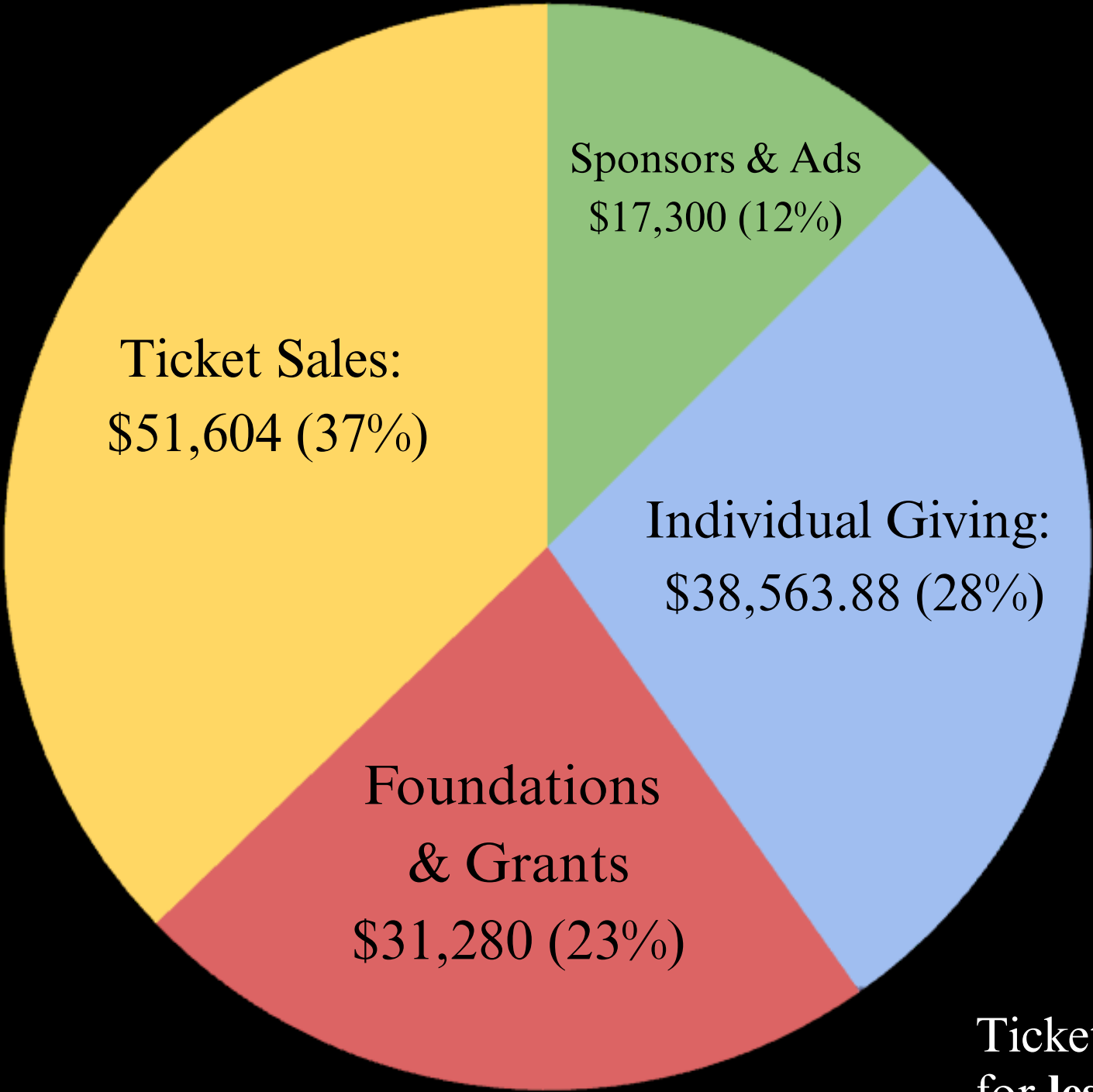
\$18,000 FOR LICENSING

To produce a five-show season

\$50,000 ANNUAL GENERAL BUILDING MAINTENANCE

Including insurance and utilities

2026 CONTRIBUTED REVENUE & TICKET SALES:



Ticket sales only account for **less than 40%** of our total revenue

A man and a woman are shown in a close embrace on a stage. The man, on the left, is wearing a blue and white striped shirt and has his arms around the woman. The woman, on the right, is wearing a light-colored dress with a yellow flower design and has her mouth open as if she is singing or shouting. The background is dark, and the lighting is focused on the couple.

What our audiences are saying...

“We are so lucky to have this theater here in our community”

“My first time at Festival 56 - I will definitely be back!”

“I was completely blown away and transported...this show is not to be missed”

“Outstanding show! We are so fortunate to have these actors visit Princeton.”

HELP SET THE STAGE!

STARTING NOW, WE ARE AIMING TO RAISE
\$200,000 BY DECEMBER OF 2027.



Additional support from:

