



LIGHTS UP
EDGEWATER

A NEW HOME

FOR ART, ARTISTS, AND COMMUNITY

LIGHTS UP EDGEWATER, **A \$3 MILLION** **CAMPAIGN TO:**

Purchase and renovate Steep's new home
to create a bold, inviting theatre

Invest in artists through increasingly equitable
compensation and supportive facilities

Build on its commitment to fiscal
sustainability





**“the most fearless
theater in town”**

— *Chicago Tribune*

Jerry MacKinnon, Jr., Sarai Rodriguez, and Caroline Neff
in *The Knowledge*, 2013

“ *I make theatre because I have optimism that if the world is going to drag itself through this century it needs its stories to be told with clarity and force. At Steep Theatre I find that clarity and force. It is unpretentious. It is human. It inspires me more than I can say.* **”**

Simon Stephens, Tony Award-winning playwright

Chicago Tribune

Top Ten Shows of the Year
2010 | 2013 | 2017



Top Ten Shows of the Year
2005 | 2007 | 2008 | 2010

WBEZCHICAGO

Top Ten Shows of the Decade
2001 — 2010



A QUINTESSENTIAL CHICAGO STOREFRONT THEATRE

Since its founding in 2000, **Steep Theatre** has distinguished itself as one of Chicago's most vital and acclaimed theatre companies. Called "**the most fearless theater in town**" by the ***Chicago Tribune*** and "**one of the great Chicago storefront theaters**" by ***Crain's***, Steep produces plays that tell the stories of ordinary people in extraordinary situations — small stories that illuminate larger societal issues.

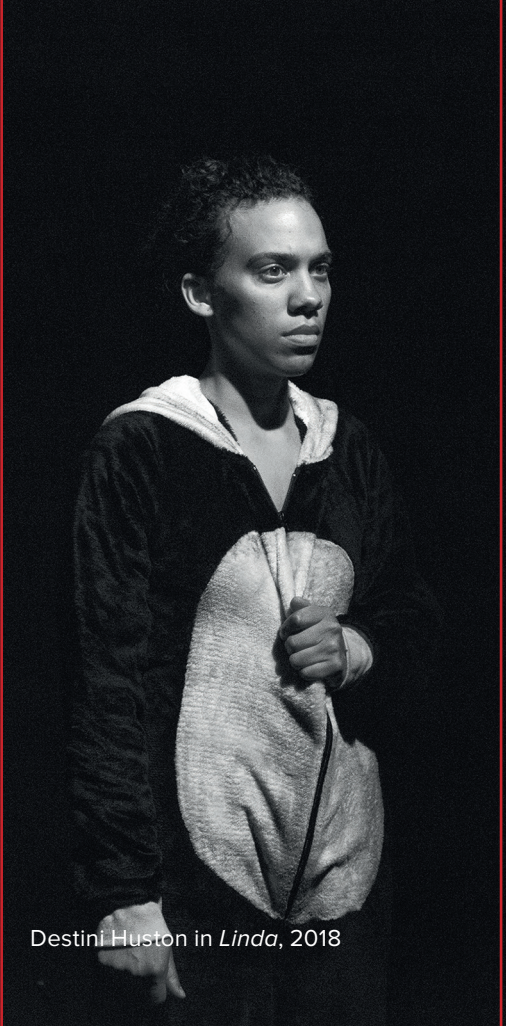
Steep occupies a unique space in the Chicago theatre ecosystem: a space where artists making their stage debuts share the stage with seasoned performers; where theatre-makers discover new voices and build community; and where audiences eagerly return for high-caliber work, unique programming, and uncommon access to the people behind the art.

ART, ARTISTS, AND COMMUNITY

Having a home venue has been a vital part of Steep's success over the past twenty years. It has allowed the company to create **a uniquely warm, inviting atmosphere** that supports honest, fearless work from artists and emboldens audiences to engage in challenging stories and conversations. It has grounded Steep in its **community**, which has inspired it to build a cultural resource for neighbors, artists, and audiences alike.

After two decades of storefront rental, Steep lost its longtime home to commercial developers in 2020, and Edgewater lost an indispensable cultural hub.

Lights Up Edgewater will provide a 30% down payment to purchase Steep's new home, plus fund the construction and renovation to transform the former church into an accessible, **welcoming theatre** with an inviting lobby lounge and **state-of-the-art performance and artist spaces**.



Destini Huston in *Linda*, 2018

INVESTING IN HOME



Investing in 1044 W. Berwyn will bring back to the neighborhood a key source of light and secure a beacon for art, artists, and community for decades to come.



“one of the great
Chicago storefront theaters...”

— *Crain's Chicago Business*, 2022

Brandon Rivera, Victor Marañna, and Sebastian Arboleda
in *The Leopard Play*, or *sad songs for lost boys*, 2020

A black and white photograph serves as the background for the page. On the left, a man with a shaved head and a mustache, wearing a dark suit, white shirt, and dark tie, stands with his hands clasped in front of him. He is holding a dark briefcase with both hands. A white label on the front of the briefcase reads "LELA & CO." in black capital letters. On the right, a woman with long, dark, curly hair is shown from the chest up, wearing a white, strapless, lace-trimmed dress. She has a wide-eyed, open-mouthed expression, as if she is shouting or in a state of intense emotion. The background is dark and textured, with some indistinct shapes that could be part of a set or a wall.

INVESTING IN ARTISTS

Steep is creating a **new theatre venue** that will be the bold physical manifestation of the ensemble's values – one that will create a **supportive space** for artistic risks and audience engagement, while upholding the company's commitments to be **an actively anti-racist, community-focused organization**.

Steep's fearless work extends beyond creating a new venue. **Lights Up Edgewater** will support equitable and robust artist compensation while allowing Steep to expand and better compensate the staff who makes everything Steep does possible.

INVESTING IN THE FUTURE

Steep has always been committed to **accessible ticket prices**, intimate performances for small audiences, and large artistic ensembles that collaborate to bring powerful stories to life. These commitments define Steep, and they require financial support.

Lights Up Edgewater will create an operating and facilities reserve fund to cushion the journey forward and cement Steep's viability in a period of re-emergence and growth.



Joel Reitsma and Peter Moore
in *Birdland*, 2018

Monica Chadha, Civic Projects Architecture



**Less than two blocks from its long-time space,
Steep's new permanent home at 1044 W. Berwyn will feature:**

**An intimate, column-free, 70- seat flexible theatre
with high ceilings**

**A public space that will serve as the theatre's
lobby lounge, offering full bar service and
performances and events like those at The Boxcar**

**Accessible and comfortable backstage and office
space**

**Outdoor space with ample parking, room for
community activities, and the opportunity to expand**



“*Steep is Chicago theater at its best — plays that are interesting, well-acted, and psychologically astute, produced in an intimate neighborhood space for a discerning audience. This theater has earned our attention and deserves to thrive.*”
— Hope & Jeff Sheffield, Lights Up Edgewater Campaign Donors

Joel Reitsma, Nate Faust, Jessica Dean Turner,
and Aurora Adachi-Winter in *Red Rex*, 2019

NAMING OPPORTUNITIES

Key Facility Priorities

Black-Box Theatre	\$1,500,000
Lobby Lounge	\$500,000
Patio	\$250,000
Green Room	\$150,000
Administrative Office Suite	\$75,000
Control Booth	\$75,000

Facility Expansion Opportunities

Artist Workspace	\$500,000
Lobby Expansion	\$250,000

GIVING DETAILS

Gifts may be pledged over a period of up to three years.

Contact Kate for wire and securities transfer information

Mailing Address

PO Box 607415
Chicago, IL 60660

EIN


36-4459659

Steep Theatre is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization; all contributions are tax-deductible as allowed by law.

Contact

Kate Piatt-Eckert, Executive Director
kate@steeptheatre.com
(773) 649-3186

steeptheatre.com/lightsup



“We are excited to welcome Steep Theatre back to Edgewater and are eager to see the positive impacts of their work as they engage the community by creating memorable experiences through the stories they tell.”

**— Christina Pfitzinger, Executive Director,
Edgewater Chamber of Commerce**

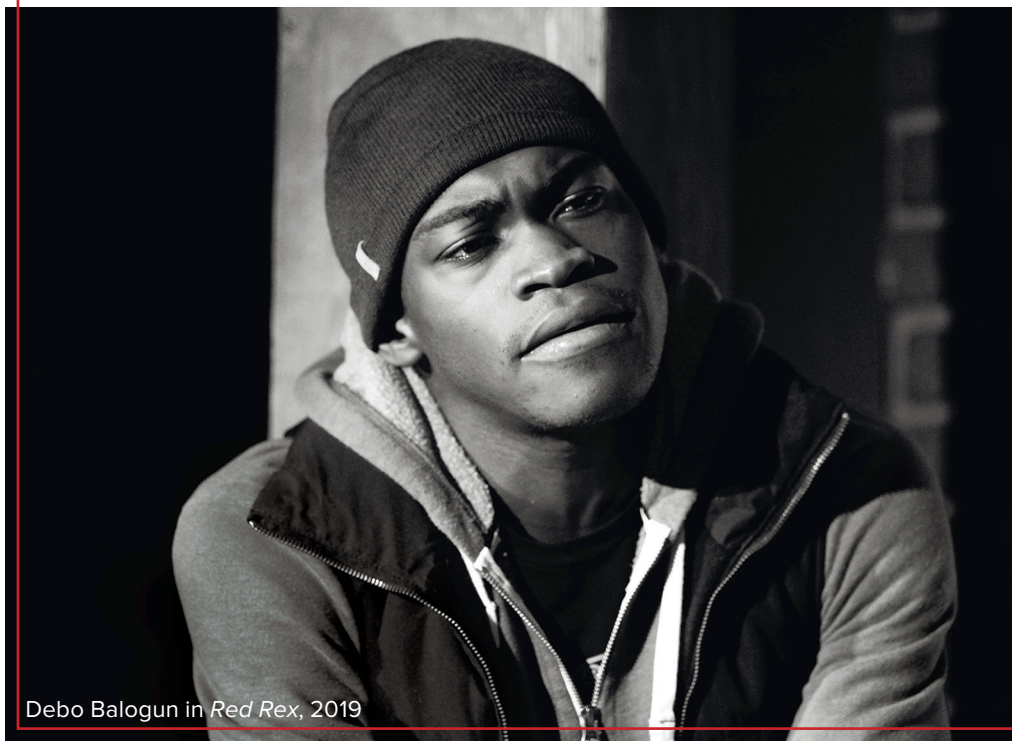
“It is actually hard to capture Steep for us because it is a combination of opposites. The plays strain and stretch us while the community spirit comforts and sustains us.”

**— Ann McGill & Kate Welborn,
Lights Up Edgewater Campaign Donors**

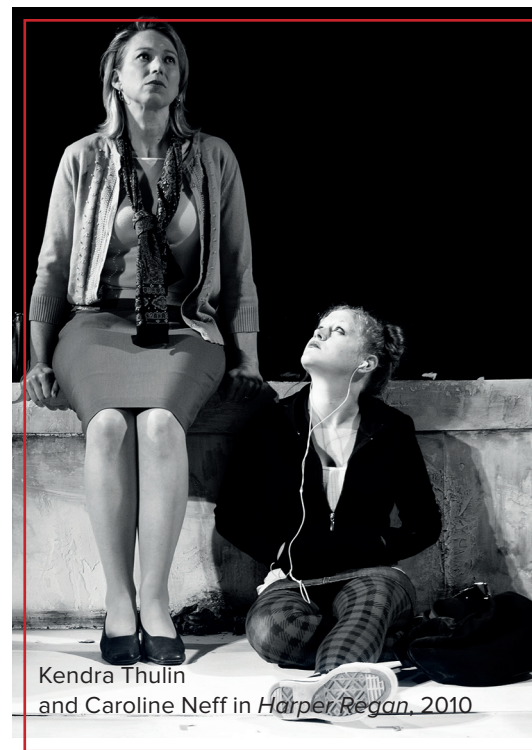
“ We fell in love with *Steep* as soon as we stepped inside. It is the wonderful combination of people, talent and community producing amazing art. ”

— Colleen & John Mueller,
Lights Up Edgewater Campaign Donors

Alex Gillmor and Julia Siple in *Breathing Corpses*, 2008



Debo Balogun in *Red Rex*, 2019



Kendra Thulin
and Caroline Neff in *Harper Regan*, 2010

Leadership

Peter Moore, Artistic Director

Kate Piatt-Eckert, Executive Director

Board of Directors

Cooper Melgreen, President

Anne Puotinen, Secretary

Doug Passmore, Treasurer

Dave Bartusek

Dave Bock

Kelly Carpenter

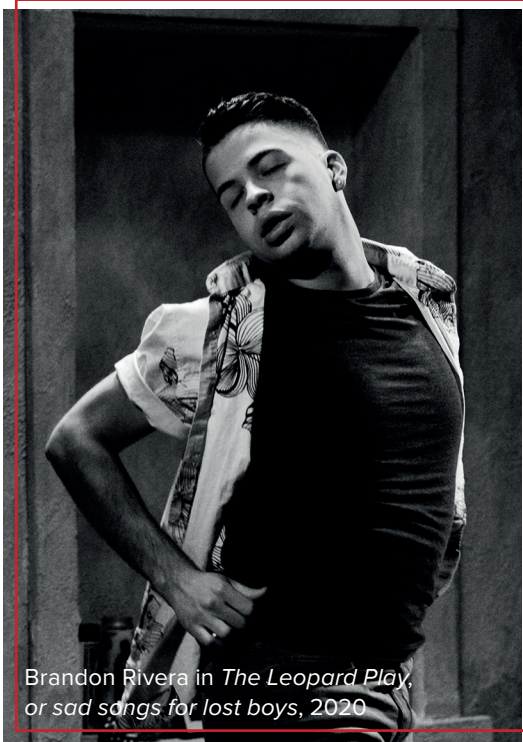
Sonya Dekhtyar

Stu Kiesow

Ted Lowitz

Anne Marie Dumas Mitchell

Jessica Schrey



Brandon Rivera in *The Leopard Play*,
or sad songs for lost boys, 2020



Amber Sallis in *Pomona*, 2019

Meet
Steep's
Ensemble
here





“utterly riveting”

— *Chicago Tribune*

Jamila Tyler, Ashlyn Lozano, and Amber Sallis
in *Pomona*, 2019

RESPECTING THE LAND AND EACH OTHER

As we make a **new artistic home**, we do so with profound appreciation for those who occupied the land before us and **with respect and generosity** for those who will join us in the future. **Our commitment to become an actively anti-racist company is part of our ongoing work to create a truly welcoming and inclusive space for theatre and conversation, and it is a critical part of how we see our role as a community-focused arts organization.** We endeavor to create a space where all feel safe and seen enough to be their whole selves and to experience the ideas and emotions that our plays explore. You can learn more about our work to help eradicate white supremacy from theatre at steeptheatre.com/antiracism.

The area where Steep sits is the traditional homelands of the people of the Council of Three Fires, including the Ojibwe, Potawatomi, and Odawa. American Indians continue to call this area home, and now Chicago is home to the sixth largest Urban American Indian community that still practices their heritage, traditions, and care for the land and waterways. Although for over 200 years Native Nations have been forcibly removed from this territory, we acknowledge that this land continues to be a site of gathering and healing for more than a dozen other Tribal Nations and remains home to over 100,000 tribal members in the state of Illinois. You can support them by supporting Native-led organizations working in a variety of ways to preserve their sovereignty and culture, cultivate community, and enable erased and displaced peoples to flourish. **Check out the work of organizations like The American Indian Center, support Native art and artists, organizers, activists, and people in your home and work communities in concrete ways, and move with awareness, compassion, and bravery.**



steeptheatre.com/lightsup



1044 W. Berwyn Avenue, Chicago, IL 60640