



**HISTORIC LINCOLN THEATRE
ANNUAL REPORT | FY 2019-2020**



Skagit Counties Historic Performing Arts Center
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BIG PLANS AND BIGGER DREAMS

The Historic Lincoln Theatre entered our FY in July of 2019, excited for an incredible line-up of shows, fundraisers, and live events that were coming our way. This Fiscal Year was set to bring in our first million-dollar season, with incredible guests like Los Lobos, Sonny Landreth, Eric Johnson, and more slated for the start of 2020.

Kicking off the fiscal year was Skagit Theatre Camp, in its second year as a solitary Lincoln Theatre program. We were proud to hold a two-week long camp with 40 campers between the ages of 6 and 12 - concluding in weekend performances of School House Rock Jr, LIVE for family, friends, and the community. Following directly behind camp came our 17th Annual BrewFest on the Skagit - featuring over 25 brewers and cideries from Skagit Valley, Whatcom County, and beyond! We enjoyed a beautiful day on the Skagit riverwalk with great beer, cider, food trucks, and live music from The Woods Sisters, Waking Maya, and Baby Cakes to end the night!

In the fall we kicked off our inaugural Trivia Night Fundraiser at Hillcrest Lodge in Mount Vernon. This fun new event was hosted by Skagit favorites Clay Christofferson and Randall Riggs. Our emcees hosted 21 teams and 4 great rounds of trivia - all focused around a silent auction and raise the paddle, bringing in \$4500 towards funding the Lincoln's new lightboard - replacing its old outdated model and allowing for high quality lights for our many great shows.

Theatre Arts Guild (TAG) and META Performing Arts put the new lightboard to good use with 3 incredible shows back to back - META brought us Matilda: The Musical and FAME: The Musical this year, while TAG opened the world premiere of Pray The Gay Away by local playwright Conrad Askland. All three shows were sell-out crowds and incredible works by our great Skagit County talent.

Live events were a thing for the history books this fiscal year, from our first SOLD OUT New Year's Eve event with The Blind Boys of Alabama, to a return visit from comedian Paula Poundstone, and a triumphant homecoming of local favorite Ross Mathews who joined us for a night of comedy benefitting the Skagit Valley Hospital Foundation and Cancer Care Center.

As always, alongside these great live events and shows, the Lincoln continued to screen first run films, NT Live performances, and MET Opera performances. We were also able to host multiple rental events like Fidalgo Danceworks The Nutcracker, and traveling film festivals such as Fly Fishing Film Tour and the Manhattan Short Film Festival. The Lincoln also enjoyed its yearly special events - from Willy Wonka in Smell-o-Vision, a back-to-back showing of Rocky Horror Picture Show, The Sound Of Music Sing-A-Long, and Winterstock 2020 - featuring Kuinka and Sway Wild.

A beautiful and busy year for us at the Historic Lincoln Theatre, all of which accumulated to give us one of our very best fiscal years on record! We are so thankful to Skagit County for coming to our shows and events and keeping the Lincoln light burning in our community.



AN UNEXPECTED INTERMISSION

On March 9, 2020, the Lincoln Theatre closed its doors to the public amid the growing rise of the Coronavirus Pandemic (COVID-19.) We put up signs, turned on our stage's Ghost Light, and locked our doors, sending staff to work solely from home, unsure of when we would be returning, but hopeful that it would not be long. As of the end of our Fiscal Year in June of 2020, our theatre is still closed to the public for film and live performances, and many of our staff members are still working from home. We will be able to open our doors for film at less than 50% of our capacity once the state reaches Phase 3 of the WA State Governments Phased Approach Reopening Plan, but we are not positive when that will be. We will have to wait until we reach Phase 4 before we can open to live performances. For the safety of our citizens, the Governor currently has put in place a freeze on all counties moving into the next phase.

The Lincoln's closure has not been easy, but it has not dampened our spirits. We have worked tirelessly since closing our doors to keep the theatre in top shape, and continued to work hard as a team to find ways to keep us afloat until we are able to return to the community. Staff have taken the time to deep clean the theatre and each of its 490 seats, as well as refinishing floors, restoring historic entryways, and remodeling to allow for a better theatre in a post-COVID world. In addition to many donations from our devoted supporters, local government, and numerous small grants, a PPP Loan was awarded to the Lincoln to give us 10 weeks of staff payroll coverage. We are currently awaiting word from Congress about a CARES Act extension that would allow our staff to continue to make these critical improvements.

We quickly adjusted to new ways to serve our community in this time, including an incredible Virtual Cinema experience that can be accessed from the safety of your own home, and with entry into Phase 2 a weekly Popcorn Pop-Up at the front entrance of the theatre - allowing community members to access our famous organic popcorn, pick up theatre merch, rent from our large collection of DVD and Blu-Ray films, or even renew their memberships or donate to continue supporting the theatre.

In the summer we will launch a Lather, Rinse, Renew Membership Drive, as well as move our 18th Annual BrewFest on the Skagit to become BrewFest BEYOND The Skagit - allowing the community to still participate on their own time and in a safer way. In the fall we will continue to do things virtual, launching a Virtual Concert Series that will begin with a farewell concert for Skagit County favorites The Sky Colony and a welcome concert to the new head of the MV School District Mariachi Program featuring Mariachi Camarillo. The fall will also see the beginning of an interior remodel of the Lincoln Lobby, allowing us to create more room for social distancing when we are able to safely welcome back the public.

While a pandemic is not an ideal way to run any business, it has been extremely hard on arts organizations and historic theatres like the Lincoln. For most, they were the first to close their doors, and they will be the last to open them when it is finally safe to do so. This is not the first pandemic that the Lincoln Theatre has faced, and it will likely not be the last - but until we are able to open again to the public we will continue to rely on the support of our great Skagit Community, grants, community funding, and especially memberships and donations to get us through this difficult time. We thank you, our members, for the ongoing support during this time. We will continue to keep you updated on our activities during this closure and reopening plans. We wish you, your family, and loved ones health and peace. Until we are able to safely return, we will continue to shine the ghost light to keep out the dark.



FY 2019 FINANCIALS

Lincoln Fiscal Year End Balances
As of June 30 every Year 2015 - 2020.



This fiscal year was on record to be one of the best years for the Lincoln Theatre in our nearly 100 year history. By the end of March 2020, we had more revenue than either of the two previous years, and by the end of the fiscal year, we still had more revenue in FY 2020 than we had in FY 2018. This is in part to great programming, but more so in part to even greater support from our Skagit County community and members.

While the COVID-19 pandemic has not been a financial win for anyone, we are still proud to note that our unearned income grew by \$34K in FY 2020 between the end of March and the end of June - this is thanks to the hard work of our staff, grants, membership, and contributions from our incredible supporters like you.

For reference, when we speak of earned income for the Lincoln, that would be front of the house tickets, concessions, ticketing and rental fees. Currently earned income is practically impossible, however we do hope to open for film soon. In regards to unearned income, we look at things such as membership, contributions, sponsorship and grants. During our COVID Intermission, we will continue to rely on these options until we are able to open to the public again.

A Note From our Executive Director: It's Only An Extended Intermission.

In March of 2020, to paraphrase Nick Hornsby from his book High Fidelity, we "lost the plot for a while then, and we lost the subplot, the script, the soundtrack, the intermission, my popcorn, the credits, and the exit sign." In these strange times we had to find a new way of preserving the history of the Lincoln Theatre while presenting innovative content. The Arts are celebrated for creativity, so with creativity and collaboration in mind the Lincoln's Staff, Board of Directors and Membership have collectively worked to keep the Lincoln in the spotlight. We started our fiscal year in July 2019 with our most successful season in the Foundation's history; then we went dark for the rest of the year. During that time, we introduced first our Virtual Cinema, then our Popcorn Pop Up, and finally Live Streamed Concerts from our stage - all in an effort to keep us a vital and vibrant part of our community. Until today, with a healthy contingency savings account and a PPP grant we were able to keep our staff doing what they do best; maintaining our lovely 94-year-old historic landmark and coming up with ideas to keep us viable in a post-COVID world. Now we are advancing headfirst into whatever comes next. We are confident that this is just an extended intermission, and the plot, the script, the soundtrack, and our famous popcorn, will return for the second act.

- Roger Gietzen
September 2020



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