



seattle
arts &
lectures

22 Annual 23 Report



Mission

Seattle Arts & Lectures cultivates transformative experiences through story and language with readers and writers of all generations.

Vision

SAL envisions a future in which story and language continuously and courageously revitalize equity, justice, and belonging.

Values

Belonging. We believe access is core to belonging, and we bring an intersectional lens to breaking down historical and societal forces that create and enforce racial, economic, access, and geographic barriers. We strive to foster spaces where all community members feel valued, invited, and welcomed in a spirit of mutual inspiration and exchange.

Racial Equity. We bring an anti-racist lens to all of our programmatic and budgetary decisions to work against the historical and present-day effects of white supremacy. We prioritize, amplify, and celebrate the voices, stories, and lived experiences of writers and readers who identify as Black, Indigenous, and people of color in the community and beyond.

Transparency & Trust.

We build trust through transparency in our processes, decision-making, follow-through, and accountability. We prioritize thoughtful, intentional action; responsiveness over reactivity; and regular, open, and honest communication centered on community feedback.

Curiosity. We cultivate curiosity—in our audiences, students, staff, and community members—by providing opportunities for wonder and learning that are rooted in humility and make visionary futures possible.

Joy. We value the joy forged through individual acts of reading and writing and the connection and community created through the sharing of stories.



Last year was a time of continued transformation, growing momentum and, after years of constant pivoting, a chance to look to the future.

Thanks to strong support for our youth programs, increased ticket sales, a sold-out gala, and incredible support from donors like you we ended the year well in the black. Thank you!

We welcomed two new staff members to our Youth Programs team, nurtured new writers-in-residence, and returned to pre-pandemic service levels through our Writers in the Schools (WITS) program. Last year's WITS program brought sequential creative writing inspiration to 4,500 students at 31 K-12 public schools in 4 school districts and at two Seattle Children's sites. Our Youth Poetry Laureate & Fellowship program, mentored by Arianne True and Sasha LaPointe, supported 13 amazing youth poets growing into their lives as artists and activists.

We saw audiences grow and felt the joy rise up and ripple out. Patti Smith rocked Town Hall with her stories, songs, and photos. Kids and adults alike agreed that Jason Reynolds is our hero. We cheered with Benaroya Hall full again for Isabel Wilkerson, Louise Penny, and Tom Hanks. Our free event with Ross Gay (thanks to a partnership with the Marguerite Casey Foundation) invited us into a "lab of wonder and care." And our commitment to continuing free and greatly reduced ticket prices as well as online programming ensured that everyone, whoever or wherever they are, belongs at SAL.

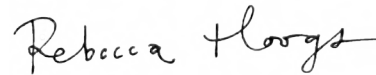
Acclaimed travel writer, Pico Iyer, remarked with surprise and admiration that Seattle is one of the few places where audiences prefer a lecture over a conversation. This community, I told him, thrives on depth. Attention is a gift, and we value communal listening, learning, and the potential for connection and transformation that occurs in an encounter with language and ideas. In every space that SAL inhabits we strive to cultivate the conditions for depth, attention, and transformation.

I am proud to be part of a community that values creative and critical expression, and I am so grateful to you for supporting SAL's work.

With appreciation,



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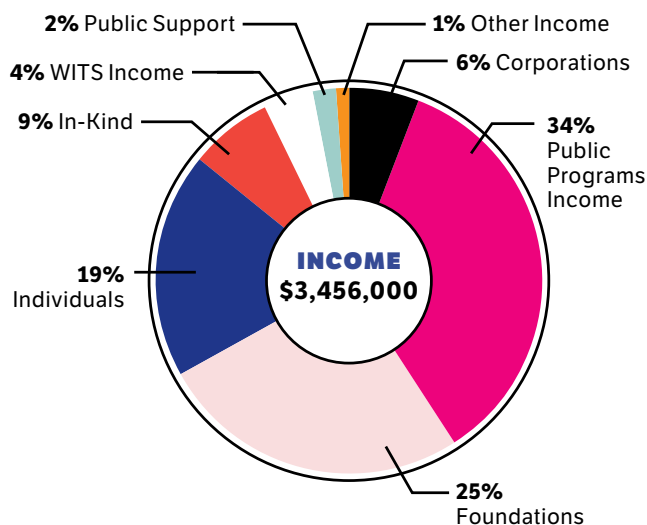
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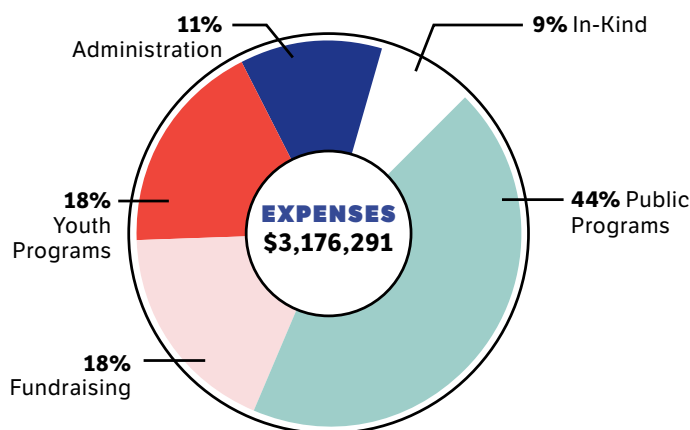
Jamie Miller

Naria Santa Lucia

2022/23 FINANCIALS



61%
of SAL's income
comes from
charitable gifts



This is just a quick note to tell you how much I enjoyed the SAL poetry program last evening. Having read the book included with this ticket, I thought I was prepared for the virtual reading. However, I was simply swept away by the beauty and power of the work when read by Jenny Xie. There simply isn't anything like hearing the poets themselves. They are the same words on the same page, but the power is in the poet and it comes through the voice and demeanor.

Thank you for continuing to bring these wonderful poets to Seattle.

SAL patron

PUBLIC PROGRAMS

“

Smith's 90 minutes was perfect. Best cultural evening I've had in a long time. Filled my heart and mind. I've spent my entire adult life idolizing her—I could not have chosen a better idol. Thanks for hosting her in Seattle. I hope it was a huge boon for SAL.

SAL patron

“

Sasha LaPointe's conversation with Julian Aguon is the best thing I've heard all year. Thank you, SAL and Sasha, for introducing me to his work and his wisdom (and his fire!). I listened straight through. Then again, stopping the recording to jot down his language.

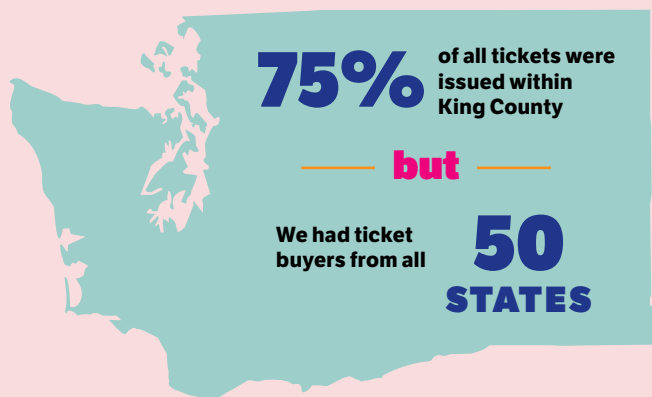
SAL patron

“

Jon Meacham was able to awaken in me my love of country. I didn't expect this. SAL patron

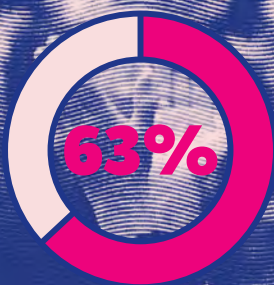


We worked with **29** community partners across **31** events

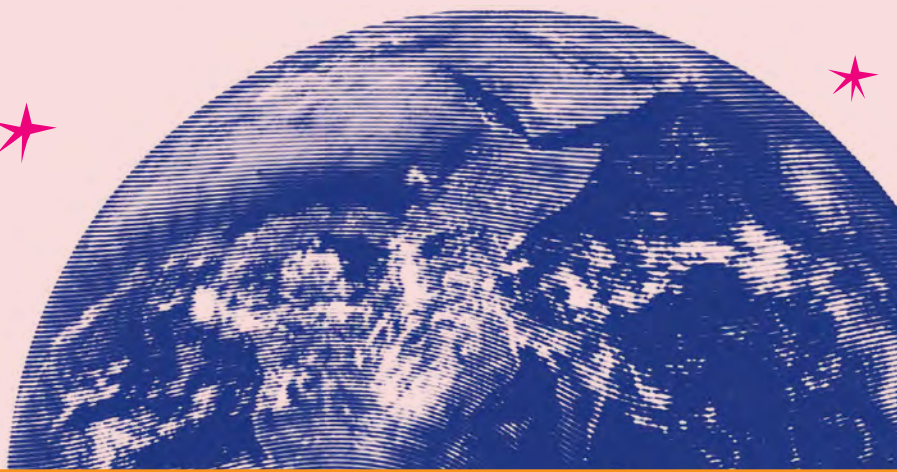


NEARLY
1/4

of all tickets were either free or reduced price.



63% of all ticket holders joined us in-person, and 37% watched online.



YOUTH PROGRAMS

Seattle Arts & Lectures believes that literacy and a love for writing is a life-long process that starts in our public schools and connects directly to our public stages. Through our youth programs, SAL connects working professional writers with students and teachers to elevate and amplify the voices of students throughout the Puget Sound region.



22

WITS writers



5,162

K-12 students



234

classrooms



141

classroom teachers



33

public schools &
hospital-based
programs

“

In our classroom, we encourage students to be brave and try, and WITS did a great job bringing out the best in our students. I am absolutely thrilled with the results.

Classroom teacher



“

I did a poem about music & I am VERY proud of it. Every time I read it it makes me a little happier.



“

I liked hearing & learning from someone who does writing as part of their job.



“

I loved how I could write about anything I wanted to; the freedom made me feel strong.



“

Writing the poem, I feel as if it unlocked a part of my soul.



“

I was able to put all of me on paper and that felt really nice.

100%

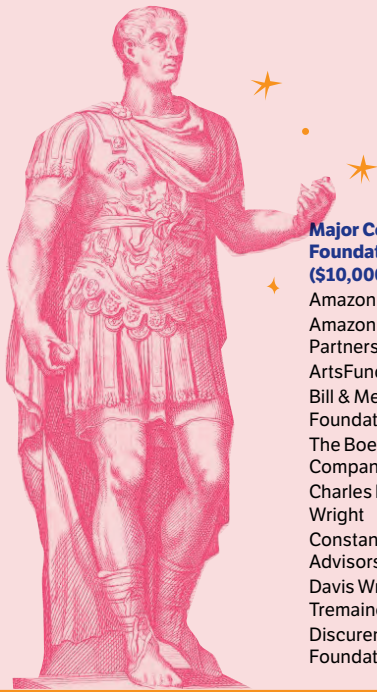
of teachers agreed they enjoyed working with their WITS writers & would like to participate again.

88%

of students reported they expect to continue improving their writing skills.

84%

of students reported feeling proud of their work.



THANK YOU

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