

# 2023 MOTUS ANNUAL REPORT A YEAR OF IMPACT & RECOGNITION



Talkback after a *JustUs* performance with the Office of the Attorney General of D.C., Brian L. Schwab. The performance for 100 prosecutors was aimed to support a more humane juvenile justice system. *JustUs* Monologues were co-read by four leaders responsible for different areas of the juvenile justice system.

Left to Right: Metropolitan Police Dept. Youth, & Family Engagement Bureau Asst. Chief Andre Wright; Hon. Chief Judge of the Superior Court of D.C. Anita Josey-Herring; *JustUs* monologists Brandon Wainright, Colette Payne, Juakin Mobley, and Cynthia Randall; Acting Director of the D.C. Dept. of Youth Rehab Services Sam Abed; D.C. Attorney General Brian L. Schwab ©SHOTS.WITH.SESAY

In 2023, Motus' work at the nexus of original theater, social justice, and public policy reached new audiences via tours and impactful collaborations that further amplified the stories of leaders who are transgender and nonbinary, who experienced incarceration, and who are undocumented.

As over 500 anti-trans bills were introduced across the country, Motus premiered **TRANSformative Stories** with transgender and nonbinary leaders' stories about negotiating oppression and liberation. Motus extended the regional and national reach of *JustUs* with performances in collaboration with district attorneys across the U.S. **UndocuAmerica** murals, created in collaboration with muralist Edica Pacha, were recognized as **Best Mural Series of 2023** by Denver's *Westword*. **Motus' executive leadership was recognized:** Producing Executive Director, Rita Valente-Quinn, joined the Bonfils-Stanton Foundation 2023 Class of Livingston Fellows, and Artistic Executive Director, Kirsten Wilson, was officially named by the City of Boulder as one of the "Women Who Tell Our Stories."

Motus presented 42 programs reaching over 10,000 audience members, of whom 46% identified as Black, Indigenous, & other people of color (BIPOC).



Muralist Edica Pacha depicting *UndocuAmerica* monologist Laura Peniche, 2022 (Displayed at Denver Public Library).

## TRANSformative Stories from Transgender & Nonbinary Leaders



"TRANSformative Stories gives us the opportunity to challenge harmful and deceitful narratives by sharing that which is at the center of our stories and our struggles: our humanity." — **David Breña, TRANSformative Stories Strategist & Monologist**

In 2023, the **world-premiere of TRANSformative Stories** sparked community conversations about the experiences of transgender and nonbinary leaders at a moment when the rights of transgender and nonbinary people are under attack in Colorado and across the country. The premiere featured renowned violinist, opera singer, and transgender rights activist Tona Brown. She is celebrated for being the first trans woman to headline a performance at Carnegie Hall and the first Black trans woman to play for a sitting U.S. President.

We were encouraged by a full house at the *TRANSformative Stories* premiere, including LGBTQIA+ advocates, four state legislators, Boulder County Commissioners, as well as the mayor of Boulder and many Boulder City Council members.



"I'm an elected official and I'm a trans person. Thank you, because these stories are so important to tell to everyone.

*Lots of people have been consuming bad information, misinformation, and tropes, not the human stories that you're telling on stage. These are the kinds of stories - the personal things - that people need to hear and need to see.* — **Colorado Rep. Brianna Titone**

## JustUs: Stories from the Frontlines of the Criminal Legal System



"Motus Theater is doing tremendous artistic work - incomparable to any other in the nation - uplifting the voices of those impacted by incarceration. We are change agents touching hearts and engaging minds." — **Juakin Mobley, JustUs Strategist & Monologist**

Motus' *JustUs* national tour continued to impact criminal legal reform. We engaged six district attorneys as co-readers in GA, IL, NC, and CO. The **District of Columbia's Attorney General and Chief Judge of the D.C. Superior Court co-read monologues in front of over 100 D.C. prosecutors.** The tour included a performance at the **Netroots Nation's National Conference in Chicago** where **Cook County State's Attorney Kim Foxx** co-read a *JustUs* monologue reaching 4650 people.



**Sherry Boston, District Attorney for DeKalb County, GA** after co-reading a *JustUs* monologue said: "I think I speak for everybody in this room that's an elected prosecutor, they didn't grow up in their life with a desire to harm people... Hearing your perspective on my role in contributing to your harm... I know it to be true, but it still continues to hurt to hear."

## UndocuAmerica: Stories from the Frontlines of the Immigration System



*UndocuAmerica* monologists present their stories in Spanish at La Universidad de Chapingo during the Aztec New Year celebrations.

In 2023, Motus Theater went international! Motus Theater's *UndocuAmerica* Monologists and Motus' Artistic Executive Director were honored to be recognized by a descendant of Aztec Emperor Moctezuma, Ituriel Moctezuma, as part of a ceremony at the University of Chapingo where they performed in Mexico.

At home, Motus and the **Boulder Museum of Contemporary Art** presented two visual art exhibitions featuring original artwork created by **Cindy Loya** and **Victor Escobedo** in response to the Motus *UndocuAmerica* monologues of Kiara Chávez & Cristian Solano-Córdova. Through QR codes paired with each artwork, audiences encountering the monologues for the first time could watch videos of the monologists telling their stories.



Artist Cindy Loya, "Returning Home", depicting *UndocuAmerica* monologist Kiara Chavez, 2023, yarn, thread, & recycled textile, 99" x 84". (Presented at the Boulder Museum of Contemporary Art)

## Motus Improv Playback Theater



"As one of the playback actors, I'm able to channel different parts of my lived experience to make small moments come to life. People walk away with a better understanding of themselves when they see their stories played back." — **Alejandro Fuentes-Mena, Playback Project Strategist, Playback actor & UndocuAmerica monologist**

**The Motus Playback Improv Theater ensemble is the most diverse improv troupe in Colorado.** Our culturally competent actors know that each person's story is worthy of great art, valuable not just to the narrator but to the whole community. In 2023, *Motus Playback* performances encouraged a broader awareness and understanding of the diverse experiences and backgrounds that make up Boulder County. Performances were presented at theaters, community events, and even an elementary school! A special performance with the Longmont Museum helped the Boulder County community retell and process memories of the devastating 2013 flood.

**MOTUS THEATER**  
Moving Stories that Move Us Forward

## MOTUS THEATER'S MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Motus Theater is to create original theater to facilitate dialogue on critical issues of our time. We aim to use the power of art to build alliances across diverse segments of our community and country.

### CONNECT WITH US

Subscribe to our newsletter at [motustheater.org](http://motustheater.org) and to our podcast at [shoebxstories.org](http://shoebxstories.org).

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 [motustheater.medium.com](http://motustheater.medium.com)

 [info@motustheater.org](mailto:info@motustheater.org)

## CURRENT BOARD AND STAFF AT MOTUS

### STAFF:

**Kirsten Wilson**, Artistic Executive Director  
**Dr. Rita Valente-Quinn**, Producing Executive Director  
**Cristian Solano-Córdova**, Director of Communications, Outreach, & Development  
**Deb Aydelotte**, Operations Director  
**Juaquin Mobley**, *JustUs* Project Strategist  
**Tania Chairez**, *UndocuAmerica* Project Strategist  
**David Breña**, *TRANSformative Stories* Project Strategist  
**Alejandro Fuentes-Mena**, *Motus Playback Theater* Project Strategist

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

**Art Figel** (*Chair*)  
**Margi Ness** (*Treasurer*)  
**Alexis Miles**  
**David Breña**  
**Katharine Reece**  
**Lorenzo González-Fontes**  
**Perla Delgado**

**Areyana Proctor** (*Vice-Chair*)  
**David Ensign** (*Secretary*)  
**Audrey Fishman Franklin**  
**Juan Stewart**  
**Leslie Allen**  
**Pedro Silva**

**MOTUS THEATER**  
 Moving Stories that Move Us Forward

## 2023 FINANCIALS

With the support of committed individual donors, and national and local funding agencies, Motus Theater continues to be in a solid financial position that allows us to strategically fulfill our mission. Motus ended the year with \$598,454 in revenue from a healthy variety of sources for programming to be executed between 2023 and 2024. Expenses totaled \$588,412 in 2023, showing Motus' increasing investment in our staff and programming contractors for groundbreaking theatrical projects. Motus' carryover will be applied toward our continued investment in programming and staff.

### 2023 MOTUS THEATER REVENUE

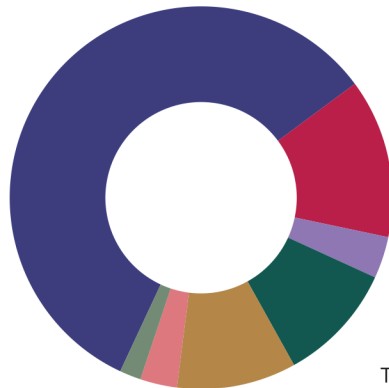
**36.3%**  
Federal & Local Government Grants

**28.8%**  
Foundations

**17.7%**  
Individuals & Business Contributions

**11.3%**  
Donor Advised Funds & Family Trusts

**4.3%** Programs / Special Events      **1.5%** Other



### 2023 MOTUS THEATER EXPENSES

**59.8%**  
Salaries & Payroll Expenses  
*(Artistic / Production / Outreach / Development / Communications / Admin.)*

**13.9%**  
Contract Services  
*(Artists / Production / Video)*

**10.4%**  
Travel / Meeting / Other

**3.6%**  
Advertising & Marketing

**3.2%**  
Production

**1.9%**  
Facilities / Equipment

**7.1%**  
Administrative



Motus continues to work with Grammy-Award winning and Carnegie Hall-worthy musicians. In 2023 Motus Theater went on tour with the internationally acclaimed musical duo *The ReMINDers*, pictured above, in addition to collaborating with *Spirit of Grace* and *Tona Brown*.

## APPRECIATION & THANKS

Motus' work is made possible by the generous support of many individuals, foundations, businesses, and local and federal governments. For a full list of our supporters and partners, please visit [www.motustheater.org/contribute](http://www.motustheater.org/contribute)



## INVEST IN OUR SHARED FUTURE

Motus is a national leader in strategic arts-based conversations. When you invest in Motus, you support healing individuals most impacted by dehumanizing policies, while transforming our country and communities to protect human and civil rights for all. Invest in Motus' mission by becoming a monthly member or committing a 3 year annual pledge. We now take donations in stock! Motus will build innovative programs with your sustaining support!

Set up your monthly donation at [coloradogives.org/MotusTheater](http://coloradogives.org/MotusTheater); or contact us at [info@motustheater.org](mailto:info@motustheater.org) to make a 3 year pledge.



## GET INVOLVED

**Volunteer your hours and acumen** to be the momentum in Motus! Volunteers provided more than 608 hours to Motus in 2023.

**MOTUS THEATER**  
 Moving Stories that Move Us Forward

**2023 MOTUS**  
 ANNUAL REPORT



*7MM/Symantic-Stories Monologues Performing at the World-Premiere, Nov. 2023. © NJM Photography*