

# LITERARY MANAGERS & DRAMATURGS OF THE AMERICAS (LMDA)

## Executive Plan (2022-2024)

21 February 2022

### **PART I: THE MISSION**

Since its founding in 1985, LMDA has defined its mission as **affirming the function of dramaturgy, exploring its practice, and promoting the profession.**

With approx. 356 members in Canada, the U.S., and Mexico – including literary managers, institutional and freelance dramaturgs, creative producers, literary agents, directors, development executives, educators, students, and other artists and administrators in theatre and the performing arts – LMDA has made its organizational mark on the theatrical landscape by serving its diverse constituency and providing leadership in the growing global field of dramaturgy.

As stated in its bylaws, LMDA's purpose is **to cultivate, develop, and promote the fields of dramaturgy and literary management** by:

- creating an international network of dramaturgs and literary managers
- educating the public about and promoting the work of dramaturgs and literary managers
- establishing a communication network and information bank for members and the public

To fulfill its mission and purpose, LMDA's goals are threefold:

1. **serve the membership**
2. **strengthen the organization**
3. **further the field of dramaturgy**

The organization's first Three-Year Plan, which concluded in 2009, expanded the scope of LMDA's activities in order to better serve the role of dramaturgs and literary managers in North American theatre and to assert the organization's growing responsibilities as a prominent arts service organization. The second three-year plan, concluding in 2012, worked to sustain the organization's expansion in tangible ways while reaching beyond our borders in North America.

The third plan concluded in 2016 and made furthering the field a top priority, which encouraged the organization to make bold gestures and take a clear leadership role in dramaturgical discourses. Among its accomplishments were completing a comprehensive membership survey, developing outreach to and involvement of early-career dramaturgs (including Lessing Week fundraising activities), expanding regional activity and reporting, establishing a rolling membership renewal, creating a strong presence on social media, supporting the launch of the National New Play Network New Play Exchange, disseminating Employment Guidelines, and initiating Sample Contracts.

The scope of the Executive Plan was adjusted to two years in 2016 to coincide with the term of the President and Executive Committee. The plan that concluded in 2018 brought new and revised online resources, such as the updated LMDA Bibliography and Guide for Dramaturgy Programs. The plan that concluded in 2020, focused on creating Good Practices documents to encourage equity, diversity, and inclusion, and support the work and values of our membership. The 2020 annual conference was meant to be in Mexico City but, due to COVID-19-related safety concerns and restrictions, was the organization's first fully "virtual" conference; sparking connections with artists beyond the Americas, including artists from the Lark, Dramaturgs' Network (d'n), and the Asian Dramaturgs Network. 2021 transitioned to a "hybrid" mode in which both in-person and virtual programming and convening were offered in service of the membership's connectivity.

This presidency seeks to advance these efforts to engage and support our current membership while further building our relationships with dramaturgs and theatre artists in the Americas and around the globe, as we continue to adapt and expand definitions of dramaturgy and its new best practices.

This plan is a living document whose success relies on an active dialogue among the LMDA Executive, Board, and membership.

## **Part II: THE PLAN (2022-2024)**

This plan strives to fortify our internal and external relationships, communications, and resources, as we work to serve our entire membership and the field of dramaturgy, thus strengthening our theatrical contributions and collaborations.

During the next two years, the Executive Committee will focus on the following objectives and strategies to further LMDA's primary goals:

### **Goal 1: Serve the Membership**

#### **Objective 1: Continue to clarify, promote, and expand member benefits.**

- Explore new ways to communicate member benefits and grow the current communications including the newsletter. Work with Membership Committee and Advocacy Committee to support their efforts towards and automatically generated welcome letters upon receipt of dues for new members.
- Accessibility Services such as sign language interpretation, closed captioning, translations, ADA compliant facilities, and childcare have all been LMDA offerings and will continue to be offered as needs are communicated. Funding for these services will take priority.
- Work toward securing funding that would support a permanent paid position for a Digital Resources Coordinator, to maintain and improve the LMDA Website and all digital resources offered to members. In addition to the Listserv, other online forums for connectivity currently include Zoom meetups and Facebook groups. Advancements to include, member profiles for "Find a Dramaturg" comparable to that of more advanced platforms (NPX, social media, etc.) and a more robust information bank with technology resources for dramaturgs. For example, housing tutorials for programs such as Canva for the creation of digital lobby displays.
- Create an education to employment pipeline via mentorships within the membership. Grow the current Mentor Match program and seek funding via graduate programs that desire a more robust placement track record for their outgoing alumni. Explore lateral mentorships between ECD, mid-career, and seasoned dramaturgs.
- Provide access to group learning, discussion, and resource-sharing with the LMDA Anti-Racism Task Force and Dramaturging the Phoenix which are open to all members of LMDA.
- Continue to support and improve programs that bring dramaturgs together in conversation and solidarity such as the Mentor Match, Dramaturging the Phoenix, and the IDL.
- Continue to support the editors of the LMDA *Review* and newsletter in their curation of out-facing publications.

#### **Objective 2: Continue to develop and expand LMDA's constituencies.**

- Continue to eliminate economic barriers to LMDA including the "Pay What You Can" membership tier, sponsored memberships, and conference grants and scholarships. Follow up in service of member retention.
- Cross-regional partnerships and connectivity will continue to engage membership via affinity spaces, regional activities, and the annual conference. Providing access to LMDA events on Zoom to eliminate geographic barriers for members.
- Establish an LMDA BIPOC Affinity Space open to all LMDA members who identify as members of

the global majority. A space for celebrating, commiserating, and strategizing toward collective liberation as dramaturgy practitioners of color. Identify and explore the need for other affinity spaces (i.e. Parent Dramaturgs, Faith-based Dramaturgs, etc.) and work toward establishing support.

## **Goal 2: Strengthen the Organization**

### **Objective 1: Clarify and strengthen the brand for the organization.**

- Analyze the current LMDA brand and eliminate barriers to access and understanding. Survey the membership to gain knowledge of their current perceptions of LMDA's brand.
- Continue to support the Anti-Racism Task Force in its work to provide space to learn, process, discuss, and unpack systems of racism as they are present in our industry and culture. Share resources and learnings toward awareness and advancement with the membership at large.
- Share the newly revised Values Statement and create an LMDA Code of Conduct to reinforce our beliefs while establishing these documents as our standing community agreements. We all come with many assumptions and it's important to clarify our expectations to the benefit of our members and create spaces that all feel safe to be in.
- Explore rebranding LMDA digital assets with VP of Communications to freshen the image to the public and stimulate activity toward new memberships.
- Work toward securing funding to grow paid positions within LMDA, both current and future. While LMDA is a primarily volunteer-run organization, its growth and sustainability is dependent on increasing compensation for increased time, labor, and skill.

### **Objective 2: Secure sustainable funding to fulfill LMDA's mission.**

- Continue to support the funding efforts in place such as the Lessing Circle, Lessing Week, and Radiating Change campaign. Active participation in the sharing and promoting of these fundraisers will be a priority for scheduling communications.
- Support the Grants Coordinator in such work as the NEA and all other applications. Committing to drafting statements and other materials as needed and conferring on final drafts prepared by the Grants Coordinator.
- Explore funding via partnerships, collaborations, and professional exchanges across the international theatre field. Research non-traditional sustainability models and examine existing unconventional funding sources.
- Continue to support and advance ongoing efforts to retain and grow membership including personal outreach, growth of member benefits, and annual campaigns.

### **Objective 3: Develop dramaturgical connections beyond Canada and the U.S.**

- Build structures for sustainability between LMDA and LMDA Mexico, modeled on the structures which supported the growth of LMDA Canada over time.
- Conduct an assessment of the International Dramaturgy Lab and grow relations with those partners beyond that program. Explore what other collaborations have the potential to develop between the organizations toward the advancement of dramaturgy globally.
- Explore and advance the evolution of international best practices by continuing to participate, present, and attend convenings hosted by other international dramaturgy organizations.

- Deepen the commitment to alternating LMDA annual conference locations between its three countries, doubling back through the U.S. between those in Canada and Mexico, consistently. Explore travel grants specifically for those traveling internationally for any annual conference.

### **Goal 3: Further the Field of Dramaturgy**

#### **Objective 1: Lead the discourse on the future of theatre and the performing arts.**

- Release updated employment guidelines as a result of the dedicated work from the Compensation Task Force.
- Strategize accountability measures around “calling in” in an effort to redefine best practices in harm prevention/reduction. Examine case studies of industry incidents that had a harmful impact on dramaturgs to analyze the needs of the field for immediate and long-term response.
- Affinity Spaces have been established for Latinx Dramaturgs and Dramaturgs with Disabilities for the field by members of LMDA and with LMDA support. However, these spaces are not restricted to LMDA members and will continue to be open to any within the field of dramaturgy who identify with the People with Disabilities and/or Latinx communities. LMDA will continue to support its members in their own individual field advocacy.
- Continue conversations with SDC about including Dramaturgs in their union protections. Support dramaturg-liaisons in sharing historic knowledge and new learnings in an effort to better understand the mutual benefits to all interested parties.
- Partnerships with adjacent organizations, such as NNPN (the organization operating NPX), to develop alliances deepen connections across disciplines. Partnerships with theatre training organizations, such as KCACTF Dramaturgy Intensives, to develop new methods of dramaturgy training.

### **PART III: THE PEOPLE**

This plan’s objectives will be pursued by the LMDA Executive Committee. Each officer will chair an area committee of at least three others, including when possible a Board member, another officer, and an early-career member. Collectively, the LMDA officers and committee members should reflect the diversity of the organization. Officers are expected to volunteer an average of 5-10 hours per month, and committee members are expected to volunteer an average of 3-5 hours per month.

As part of their duties, the members of the Executive Committee also sit on the LMDA Board of Directors, which currently includes *Jenna Rodgers* and *Anne G. Morgan* (co-chairs ), *Marie Barlizo*, *Ken Cerniglia*, *Michael Chemers*, *Liz Engelman*, *David Geary*, *Natasha Sinha*, and *Gavin Witt*.

Here is an outline of area responsibilities and personnel for the Executive 2022-24 term:

**President, Lynde Rosario:** sets the agenda for the organization; nominates and supports the work of the LMDA Executive; provides vision for the organization, its programming, and conferences; and represents LMDA to other organizations.

**Past President, Bryan Moore:** provides leadership continuity and institutional knowledge, and undertakes specific past president projects to be determined at the beginning of term.

**President-Elect, TBD 2023:** shadows the President and formulates a new two-year plan and Executive slate.

**President, LMDA Canada, *Matt McGeachy***: represents the organizational interests of the Canadian membership on the Executive. [Elected by the LMDA Canada membership.]

*President-Elect LMDA Canada 2023: TBD*

**Administrative Director, *Lindsey Barr***: manages the administrative elements of the organization, including membership renewal, accounts receivable and payable, inquiries, meeting agendas and minutes, coordinate voting, and craft/disseminate press releases. [Paid position appointed by the Executive Committee for renewable one-year terms.]

**Treasurer, *Tanya Palmer***: supervises the annual budget, collection of dues, cash reserves, and the processing and administering of grants; coordinates fundraising efforts and grant writing.

**VP Advocacy, *Karen Jean Martinson***: oversees the revision and dissemination of the Employment Guidelines and Sample Contracts, coordinates activities that protect and promote the work of members and the profession. **Committee members: *Elliot Folds, Shelley Graham, Liana Irvine, and Dan Smith***

**VPs Anti-Oppression, *Martine Kei Green Rogers, Russ Dembin, and Emma Bilderback***: collaborates with LMDA leadership to build and strengthen LMDA's diversity programs and policies. Work with the VPs for Advocacy, Membership and Communications to build on LMDA's efforts to actively recruit & retain a diverse membership and to identify opportunities and partnerships that deepen LMDA's engagement with issues of environment and sustainability. **Committee members: *all participants on the LMDA Anti-Racism Task Force***

**VP Communications & Marketing, *Jacqueline Goldfinger***: coordinates the website, newsletter, and internal and external communications. **Committee members: *Rudy Ramirez, Lexi Silva, Jonathan Norton, Chris Mills, David Omar Davila, and Jordan Schwartz***

**VPs Freelance Dramaturgs, *Finn Lefevre and Natasha Hawkins***: represents freelance dramaturgs, brainstorms programming specific to freelance dramaturgs, coordinates with the VP of Programs, VP of University Relations, and VP of Institutional Dramaturgs for the creation of programming specific to, or that includes, the needs of freelance dramaturgs. **Committee members: *Joanna Garfinkel***

**VP Grants & Awards, *Roxanne Ray***: coordinates the promotion, evaluation of applications, and selection of winners for LMDA's grants and awards.

**VP Institutional Dramaturgs, *Deanie Vallone***: represents institutional dramaturgs, brainstorms programming specific to institutional dramaturgs, coordinates with the VP Programs, VP University Relations, and VP for Freelance Dramaturgs for the creation of programming specific to, or that includes, the needs of institutional dramaturgs. **Committee members: *Heather Helinsky***

**VP Membership, *Heather Helinsky and Evan Medd***: works to recruit and retain members from a wide range of dramaturgical fields, backgrounds, and career stages.

**VP Mexico, *Brenda Muñoz***: represents the organizational interests of the Mexican membership on the Executive. **Committee members: *Lourdes Guzmán González, Martha Herrera-Lasso, Erendira Santiago, and Kathia Flores***

**VP Programs, *Jessica Kahkoska and Linnea Valdivia***: identifies and meets the needs of the LMDA constituencies – e.g., freelancers, institutional dramaturgs and literary managers, early career

dramaturgs, etc. – with tailored programming.

**VPs Publications, *Elizabeth Coen* and *Kristin Leahey*:** recruits and supports the editors of the *LMDA Review*. **Associate Editors: *Allison Backus* and *Diego Villada***

**VP Regional Activity, *Liana Irvine*:** coordinates the activities of the LMDA regions and reporting of the Regional Representatives. **Committee members: *all Regional VPs of the 18 regions (16 U.S., Canada, and Mexico) that make up LMDA***

**VP University Relations, *Jane Barnette*:** represents professors and students in universities and colleges, coordinates the activities of the U Caucus at the annual conference. **Committee members: *Amanda Dawson* and *Jenny Sledge***

**Conference Coordinator (selected for each annual conference) *Brian Quirt, Banff 2023*:** Develops programming, supervises local planning, and reports updates to and attends meetings with the President and Executive Board. **Associate Coordinator, *Jenna Rodgers*:** Reports to Conference Coordinator, Becomes the Head of the Local Committees (programming committee of 4-6 people, conference committee of on-site volunteers)