

# HOUSTON IS INSPIRED 2025 - 2026

INFORMATION SESSION  
APRIL 17, 2025



# MISSION

The Hobby Center for the Performing Arts **deepens** understanding of our **shared humanity**. We serve as a **connector**, **convenor** and **incubator** for all Houston audiences, artmakers and arts organizations. By presenting engaging performances and educational programs, we **strengthen our sense of belonging** to shape a more **cohesive and connected** Houston community.

# VISION

The Hobby Center is the **central hub** for artists and audiences in Houston and is the **driving force** in the **performing arts ecosystem**. Building on a legacy of presenting the best of Broadway, the Hobby Center **reflects the diversity** of our city through a wide range of exceptional **artistic** and **educational** programming on and off stage. Compelling artists from Houston and around the globe engage audiences through **dynamic** and **innovative** artmaking and storytelling.

# VALUES

TENACITY   RESPECT   INCLUSION   GRATITUDE   EXPLORATION

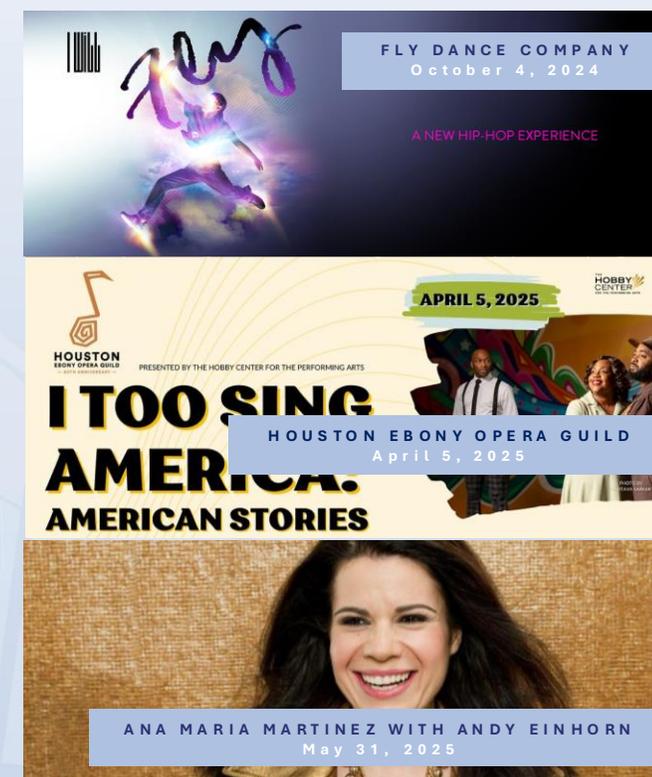


As part of its new mission, the Hobby Center for the Performing Arts piloted the **Houston Is Inspired initiative** in the **2023-24 Season** with **ISHIDA Dance Company** and **Urban Souls Dance Company**. After a successful pilot, the Hobby Center committed to implementing its new artist residency annually with the **2024-25 Season** featuring FLY Dance Company, Houston Ebony Opera Guild, and Ana María Martínez with Andy Einhorn. The **2025-26 Season** marks the Hobby Center's **first open call** as it furthers its mission to deepen understanding of our shared humanity.

## 2023 – 2024 Season Series Launch



## 2024 – 2025 Season Established Artist Residency Program



# PROGRAM COMPONENTS

*In partnership with the Hobby Center, three selected projects will receive...*

Five days of full access to Zilkha Hall, including stage, dressing rooms, technical equipment, and production staff for rehearsals, tech and final performance

Stipend of \$20,000 to support the creation and development of the performance

Marketing investment from the Hobby Center and project-specific promotional plan created and executed in partnership with artist/organization

Professional photography of performance

Box office support and 30 complimentary tickets for the performance

Community engagement and/or educational opportunities that best align with presentation

Approximately a 90 to 120-minute ticketed performance at Zilkha Hall to culminate the week-long residency

***Each week-long residency is valued at over \$60,000 in support of the project.***







## *To apply, applicants must:*

- Be a **Houston-based** performing artist(s) or organization(s).
- Define how the Houston Is Inspired residency will **deepen their artistry, further their creative work, and celebrate any specific milestone** for the artists or the city of Houston.
- Demonstrate **readiness to present** a 90–120-minute performance in Zilkha Hall.
- Commit to **spreading the word** via all their communication channels and audiences.
- Be available to fully participate in one of the selected **residency weeks** slated for:
  1. **November 3 – 7, 2025**
  2. **January 26 – 30, 2026**
  3. **April 27 – May 1, 2026**



## ***SUBMISSION GUIDELINES***

Proposals must include a **description of the performance**, a **biography of the artists** and/or organization, and a **link to previous performances**. Multi-disciplinary projects and collaborations are welcome.

Proposals must define how the Houston Is Inspired residency will deepen their artistry, further their creative work and celebrate any specific milestone. The Hobby Center is committed to selecting artists who will benefit from this week-long residency by demonstrating an opportunity for **growth**, highlighting an **underrepresented** organization, showcasing a **unique** art form, collaboration or innovative project, or celebrating an artistic **milestone**.



## ***SELECTION PROCESS***

Applications ranging from all performing arts disciplines will be evaluated by a panel of **local arts community members** and **Hobby Center staff**. Using the selection criteria, the panel will assess the applicant's artistry and how the residency will further their creative work.



# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

***Is this application only for nonprofit organizations?***

No. The application is open to artists, performing arts groups, and nonprofit organizations based in the Greater Houston area.

***Does the project have to be a new work, or can it be something previously created?***

Projects can be brand new or previously developed pieces that the applicant wants to refine during the residency week leading up to the final performance.

***Do partnerships need to submit multiple applications?***

No. If you're applying as part of a partnership, please identify one lead organization to submit the application on behalf of the group. Be sure to name all partner organizations in the application. All partnering entities must meet the eligibility requirements. The \$20,000 artist fee will be issued to the lead organization, who will be responsible for distributing it among partners.

***What are the time parameters of the residency?***

The residency runs Monday through Friday, culminating in a final performance on Friday. Artists/organizations will collaborate with the Hobby Center's technical team to build a weekly schedule. While days are not 24 hours, the schedule is generally based on an 8-hour workday with union breaks included. The Hobby Center is flexible and will work to accommodate artist availability.

***How many performances are there?***

Each finalist will present one performance, typically on the Friday evening of their residency week. Alternate timing may be discussed depending on other campus events that day.

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### ***What kind of access do artists have to technical support and production time?***

Artists will work closely with the Hobby Center's technical team to create a personalized production schedule for the week. Expect 8-hour days with required breaks. The final performance is scheduled for Friday. Artists should arrive mostly performance-ready (set built, lines memorized, choreography rehearsed, etc.).

The week is meant for fine-tuning and enhancing the work using the Hobby Center's professional equipment and technical staff. For technical specifications, visit: [Zilkha Hall Rentals – The Hobby Center](#)

**Please note:** Zilkha Hall does not have an on-site scenery shop or costume warehouse. As a touring venue, all props, sets, and scenery must be built and ready for load-in prior to the start of the residency.

### ***Does the Hobby Center provide projectors?***

Yes. Zilkha Hall has a projector and screen available as part of its house technical inventory. Specifications are available in the link above.

### ***Can we include specific technical needs in our application?***

Yes. You may include detailed technical requirements as part of your project proposal.

### ***How have other artists or organizations used the \$20,000 stipend?***

Past participants have used the stipend in various ways, such as compensating artists, producing sets, boosting marketing efforts, and more. Finalists are not required to submit receipts or reports on how the stipend is used.

### ***Since the final performance is ticketed, who receives the proceeds?***

All ticket proceeds go to the Hobby Center to help fund the residency program. Artists are guaranteed a \$20,000 stipend and receive 30 complimentary tickets to use at their discretion.

Ticket sales do not offset the full cost of the residency, which is valued at \$60,000 and fully funded by the Hobby Center. The Hobby Center will work with each finalist to understand their audience and set appropriate ticket prices to encourage strong attendance.

# GRATITUDE

*Contact for questions:*

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**The Hobby Center for the Performing Arts** serves as a connector, convenor and incubator for all Houston audiences, artmakers and arts organizations. Opened in 2002, the campus houses two theaters including the 2,650-seat Sarofim Hall and the 500-seat Zilkha Hall. Delivering a best-in-class patron experience, the Hobby Center welcomes over 500,000 audience members annually to engage with high-quality arts programming including the Memorial Hermann Broadway at the Hobby Center series. The Hobby Center is also home to a full season of musical theatre produced by Principal Resident Company Theatre Under the Stars, as well as a variety of diverse performances from both Houston-based and touring artists and companies. Education and accessibility initiatives are central to the Hobby Center's impact in Houston through programs like the ExxonMobil Discovery Series that welcomes thousands of students to free performances every season.

Please visit [TheHobbyCenter.org](http://TheHobbyCenter.org) for more information.

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