

# AMERICAN THEATRE

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*Clockwise from top left: Ben Wolfe, Sarah Chong Harmer, Sarah Fleming Walker.*

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## Austin Playhouse Welcomes 3 to Leadership Team

*The company has added associate artistic directors Ben Wolfe and Sarah Fleming Walker, and Sarah Chong Harmer as education and community engagement programs manager.*

**BY AMERICAN THEATRE EDITORS**

**AUSTIN:** [Austin Playhouse](#) has announced the expansion of their leadership team, with Sarah Fleming Walker and Ben Wolfe joining as associate artistic directors, and Sarah Chong Harmer being promoted to education and community engagement programs manager. Harmer joined the Austin Playhouse team in 2021 as production coordinator and safety manager. Her promotion to education and community engagement programs manager will facilitate those programs' return after a hiatus due to COVID-19.

These leadership decisions come as part of the theatre's five-year strategic plan, developed in collaboration with the DeVos Institute of Arts Management. Fleming Walker and Wolfe both served on the planning committee and will each focus on specific areas of growth. Fleming Walker will support the professional acting company, and Wolfe will manage new-play development and diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives.

"In many ways, this is a very natural evolution for the company," said co-producing artistic director Lara Toner Haddock in a statement. "Sarah stepped up during the pandemic and created and directed our virtual *Postcards from Austin* series, highlighting artistic voices from around Austin. Ben directed our return to live theatre this December and starred as Hercule Poirot in our full-length virtual production of *The Mysterious Affair at Styles*. As artists they've demonstrated the creativity and adaptability that are necessary in this moment, and now as leaders, they'll bring that talent to overseeing all of our programming."

In addition to their directing credits, both Fleming Walker and Wolfe have been longtime members of the Austin Playhouse acting company. "Austin Playhouse has been instrumental in my personal and artistic growth over the years," said Wolfe in a statement. "I couldn't be more excited to utilize the knowledge gained from our past to shape our future growth—as individuals, as an organization, and as part of our community."

Founded by co-producing artistic director Don Toner in 2000, Austin Playhouse is dedicated to providing a home for theatremakers in Austin, with a new-play development program, theatre for youth, and a subscription season featuring contemporary plays and regional premieres.

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