



What is the Latina/o Theatre Commons (LTC)?

The Latina/o Theatre Commons (LTC) is a growing network, a forward-thinking movement, and a digital workspace made up of passionate Latina/o theatremakers and scholars from across the country. The LTC is a self-organized collective that has chosen to adopt a commons-based approach to advocate for Latina/o theatre as a vital, significant presence in the New American Theatre. We foster emergent national leadership through an organic organizing method of activating our networks and expanding our circles of connection. We seek to celebrate diverse connections, honor our past with reflection, and envision our future with optimism and enthusiasm.

The LTC operates as a collaborative initiative with HowlRound, a knowledge commons by and for the theatre community, housed at Emerson College. HowlRound, through Emerson College, acts as fiscal sponsor for the LTC, and provides infrastructure and mentorship to support our growth. In our actions, the LTC espouses the philosophical methods of HowlRound, and works to promote a commons-based approach to update the narrative of the American theatre through *advocacy, artmaking, convening, and scholarship*.

How did the LTC form?

In May 2012 at Arena Stage, a group of eight Latina/o theatremakers (now known affectionately as the “DC 8”) led by Karen Zacarías came together under the auspices of what is now HowlRound and the idea for the LTC was born. That group partnered with Latina/o theatre communities from across the country to create a dedicated steering committee of over thirty practitioners who worked together to produce the first LTC National Convening, held in October 2013 at Emerson College in Boston. The National Convening was an historic event and an invaluable experience, and the LTC self-determined to continue and began looking ahead to future projects. After the 2013 National Convening in Boston, the LTC Steering Committee grew to almost fifty practitioners passionately working on initiatives all over the country. Through collective efforts and a dedication to the commons-based approach, the LTC has been able to reach our goals of promoting the breadth of Latina/o theatre across the nation and re-imagining the American dramatic narrative. See the full LTC Steering Committee [here](#).



(Left, a listening circle at the 2013 LTC National Convening. Right, a timeline of Latina/o theatre, created by the conveners.)

What else has the LTC produced?

Café Onda: The Online Journal of the LTC

Café Onda is the online journal of the LTC, hosted on HowlRound that seeks to expand and extend the national dialogue and discourse around Latina/o theatre. Like HowlRound, Café Onda uses a commons-based approach to increase the effective use of resources and to democratize access, which means that anyone can submit a pitch for consideration. All writers are paid for their contribution. Café Onda publishes content in English and Spanish, and is working towards being a completely bilingual space. For information on writing for Café Onda, click [here](#), and to see what has already



A knowledge commons by and for the theatre community

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been published, click [here](#). To submit a pitch, e-mail cafeonda@howlround.com. Café Onda is a reflection of opinions and current trends in the field and is bringing new definitions to the questions: *What Latina/o theatre is happening around the country? What are the challenges and opportunities that need to be discussed?*

The 2014 LTC National Convening at the LATC 2014 Encuentro: A National Latina/o Theatre Festival

In Fall 2014, the Los Angeles Theatre Center (LATC), in association with the LTC, presented the 2014 LATC Encuentro. Encuentro translates to “an encounter,” a theme that was a core component of this groundbreaking festival, which was the largest national Latina/o theatre festival in over twenty-five years. The Encuentro featured fifteen diverse productions from across the country and the Festival artists worked together during the month-long residency to build a public performance of co-created new works. On the final weekend of the Encuentro, the LTC Steering Committee gathered in Los Angeles for the Second National Convening and viewed performances, engaged in discussions about art-making and aesthetics, and attended the first in-person LTC Steering Committee 2.0 meeting. Through these five days of convening, the LTC Steering Committee sought an answer to the core question of the Encuentro: *What is the state of Latina/o theatre today?*

The 2015 LTC Carnival of New Latina/o Work, hosted by The Theatre School at DePaul University

In Summer 2015, the LTC organized a weeklong Carnival in Chicago which showcased twelve new plays by Latina/o playwrights. The Carnival culminated in a three day convening that invited both Latina/o and ally theatremakers to share in the work and encourage productions of these new plays. By increasing the visibility of work by Latina/o playwrights and providing open access to sixty plays by these twelve writers, to encourage the production of new work in the nation’s resident theatres. The Carnival was a direct response to the question posed by many artistic directors and literary managers all over the country: *Who are the Latina/o playwrights that we should be producing?*

Growth of Attendance at LTC Events Since 2013

<i>Event</i>	<i>Number of Attendees</i>	<i>Growth of Attendance</i>
2013 Convening - Boston	76	-
2014 Convening - Los Angeles	110	44%
2015 Convening - Chicago	190	72%

What organizations and foundations support the LTC?

The LTC has been supported by Aetna, The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs, the Djerassi Resident Artists Program, the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, Emerson College, HowlRound, the Institute of International Education (IIE), The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, The Joyce Foundation, the Los Angeles Theatre Center, The Richard H. Driehaus Foundation, The Theatre School at DePaul University, and The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation. The LTC 2014-2015 Initiatives were supported in part by the National Association of Latino Arts and Cultures, the Ford Foundation, and the Surdna Foundation through a grant from the NALAC Fund for the Arts Grant Program.

How do I get involved in the Latina/o Theatre Commons?

The LTC is committed to radical transparency, knowledge sharing, and making the dissemination of knowledge accessible to all. With the exception of LTC Producer, all Steering Committee members are volunteers and routinely work and advocate for the betterment of the field as a whole—sharing resources and encouraging collaboration to build a better future for all. We send out a quarterly email (contact abigail@howlround.com to sign up!), host a [Facebook group](#), and guidelines for new LTC Steering Committee membership will be published in Fall 2015.