



# NAPAMA

NORTH AMERICAN PERFORMING ARTS MANAGERS & AGENTS

**June 1-3, 2025  
at Thalian Hall  
in Wilmington, NC**

**Retreat Program &  
Local Recommendations**

# COLLECTIVE IMPACT

The NAPAMA Retreat is a 3-day gathering, open to anyone in the touring performing arts industry, that offers a chance to connect with colleagues outside of the usual sales-focused booking conference and to share information and resources that can help elevate and strengthen your work.

Why come to the NAPAMA retreat? To Rejuvenate, Develop, and Connect. From roundtables to dine-arounds, from panel speakers to happy hours, from sharing stories to sharing our time, this retreat will inspire you both personally and professionally. Networking and learning from each other encourages fresh ideas and new perspectives. Together, we can envision a future strong enough to thrive under pressure and adaptable enough to overcome challenges and changes in the field.

## Schedule Snapshot

### Sunday

10am - Optional Excursion  
2-4pm - Welcome & Opening  
Round Table Session  
5-6:30pm - Opening  
Reception & Riverboat Cruise  
7pm+ - Dinner on Your Own  
9pm+ - Optional After-Party

### Monday

8-9am - Sponsored Breakfast  
9-10:30am PD - Be Your Own "BOSS"  
10:30-11:30am PD - Marketing Nuts & Bolts  
11:30am-12:30pm - Thalian Hall Tours  
12:30-1:45pm - Sponsored Lunch  
1:45-3:15pm - Re-Envisioning Showcase Forum  
3:15-3:30pm - Break  
3:30-4:45pm PD - Touring Through a  
Commercial Lens  
5:30-6:30pm - Optional Happy Hour  
7pm+ - Optional Dine Arounds

### Tuesday

8-9am - Sponsored Breakfast  
9-10am - PD - Roster Curation/  
Are You Ready for an Agent?  
10-10:15am - Break  
10:15-11:45am Round Tables  
11:45am-12pm - Break  
12-1pm - Closing Reflection  
1-3pm - Lunch on your Own  
3pm+ - Optional Closing Night  
Beach Hang!

# Schedule Details

## Sunday

### 10am Optional Bellamy Mansion excursion

Meet Board Members Erin Miller and Phyllis Rush in the Hampton Inn lobby at 10am to walk 10 minutes/.5 miles to the Bellamy Mansion ! (To go inside, a self-guided tour is \$15.)

### 2-4pm WELCOME & OPENING ROUNDTABLES

Onstage at Thalian Hall

Generously sponsored by: Thalian Hall & Georgia Players Guild

The retreat will open with a Welcome from Shane Fernando, Chief Executive Officer of Thalian Hall; Bill Saffo, the Mayor of Wilmington; and NAPAMA Board President Karen Kennedy. Following an inspiring provocation from Leah Keith from Rhythm of the Arts, we will then break into roundtables about hot topics with time for a larger group conversation. Topics may include: AI use for good, green touring methods, advocacy, wild card subjects and more!

### 5-6:30pm RIVERBOAT CRUISE RECEPTION

Generously sponsored by: 24/Seven Artist Development & Western Arts Alliance (WAA)

Join us on the historic Henrietta riverboat as we celebrate the opening of the retreat! We'll cruise up and down the river and take in the views. Drink Ticket and Heavy Apps provided!

### 7pm DINNER ON OWN

### 9-11pm Optional After-Party

End the evening with connection and cocktails at this casual after-party co-hosted by Shane Fernando and Josh Heim of WAA. Space is limited (depending on weather), so learn more and [RSVP here!](#)

## Monday

### 8-9am SPONSORED BREAKFAST

Continental Breakfast onstage at Thalian Hall

Generously sponsored by: Gail Boyd Artist Management

### 9-10:30am PD SESSION: BE YOUR OWN "BOSS"

All PD sessions are onstage at Thalian Hall

Generously sponsored by: Linehan Entertainment

Exploring smart business practices through the lens of Brand, Organization, Systems, and Strategies (BOSS). This session highlights creative mindsets and practical insights that are helpful to navigate and build a sustainable career as an arts worker, independent artist or entrepreneur. It covers essential topics such as personal branding, financial sustainability, streamlining operations with essential tools, and developing growth strategies.

Panel: Karen Kennedy, 24/Seven Artist Development; Patricia Harris, Harris Associates; and Shana Tucker of Chamber Soul LLC

### 10:30-11:30am PD SESSION: MARKETING NUTS & BOLTS

Generously sponsored by: 24/Seven Artist Development

A session on what venues and promoters need and how artists, agents, and presenters can work collaboratively to best market the show to audiences. Dive deep into topics like what materials should be in an artist's EPK, social media strategies, and possible revenue streams through audience engagement and special programming. The Thalian Hall team will share what works best for their partnerships and communities, with plenty of time for Q&A!

Panel: David Thompson, Creative Director, Thalian Hall Center for the Performing Arts, Wilmington, NC

# Schedule Details

## Monday continued

### **11:30am-12:30pm THALIAN HALL TOURS**

Two groups - 30 minutes each. Meet in the Thalian Hall lobby.

### **12:30-1:45pm SPONSORED LUNCH**

Boxed Lunch onstage at Thalian Hall

Generously sponsored by: CWA Management & Association of Performing Arts Professionals (APAP)

### **1:45-3:15pm PD SESSION: RE-ENVISIONING SHOWCASING FORUM**

Generously sponsored by: Four Mortals Productions

This session will examine the landscape of showcasing – where it’s been and how it can evolve going forward. Looking at both Juried and Independent models, this session will include brief snapshots of showcasing from industry and conference leaders along with collaborative conversation around 3 core topics; “The Fee is WHAT? AKA: Demystifying Costs”, “Showcasing In The Social & Cultural Climate”, and “Building Success: The Role Of Artists, Agents, Presenters & Producers”. Don’t miss this chance to share your thoughts and impact the future of showcasing!

Panel: Crandall Rogers, Founder & President, Four Mortals Productions; Jessica Rosenblatt, Executive Director, Ohio Arts Professionals Network (OAPN); Josh Heim, Executive Director, Western Arts Alliance (WAA); Lisa Richards Toney, Executive Director, Association of Performing Arts Professionals (APAP); Kyle LeMaire, Executive Director, Arts Northwest (ANW)

### **3:15-3:30pm BREAK**

### **3:30-4:45pm PD SESSION: TOURING THROUGH A COMMERCIAL LENS**

Generously sponsored by: Vanguard Arts

Presenters are often balancing mission-based programming with so-called commercial acts, but as the funding landscape and audience habits continue to change, more presenters seem to be shifting their focus to engagements that have a robust audience draw and the potential to make money. This leaves some artists and agents left wondering how they can grow their acts to be commercially viable.

Industry veteran Wayne Forte will share his insight and strategies on how to develop artists from being small or medium acts to money makers and help your artists reach their full potential. We will also take a look at ways to tour as frugally as possible to get through the first couple of seasons, during which fees may not yet be as high as you may wish they could be.

Panel: Luisa Kormann, Booking Agent, Entourage Talent; Wayne Forte, Owner, President and Senior Agent, Entourage Talent

### **5:30-6:30pm Optional Happy Hour**

Continue the conversation by joining your colleagues for an informal happy hour at the Aloft rooftop bar (cash bar!)

### **7pm+ Optional Dine Arounds**

Choose one of our suggested restaurants for a nice meal, casual conversation, and connection with a small group of colleagues (some of whom you may know, others are new friends you just haven’t met yet!) Sign Up in Advance for one of the Dine Around groups [here!](#)

# Schedule Details

## Tuesday

### 8-9am SPONSORED BREAKFAST

Continental Breakfast at Thalian Hall  
Generously sponsored by: DC Jazz Fest

### 9-10am PD SESSION: ROSTER CURATION/ ARE YOU READY FOR AN AGENT?

Generously sponsored by: Rhythm of the Arts

Finding the right fit between an artist and an agent or agency is a lot like dating. It's all about chemistry, communication, common goals, and timing. And many will attest that it's better to be on your own than to be in a mismatched relationship. If you're an agent wanting to expand your roster, what should you look for in an artistic partnership? What is your criteria and how do you find those artists? If you're an artist interested in representation, what questions should you ask or anticipate? What are your expectations and how do you find the right agency? A panel of agents and artists will share their experiences, common pitfalls, and tips to help navigate whether or not a new agent/artist relationship is right for you.

Panel: Kris Kaminski, Senior Managing Partner of ECE Touring; Thia Knowlton, Senior Vice President, Booking Manager of IMG Artists; Wallace Thomas, High Tenor, Ball in the House

### 10-10:15am BREAK

### 10:15-11:45am ROUNDTABLES

Generously sponsored by: No Business Like Podcast

End the retreat with hot topic round tables and lively conversations. Round Table Topics may include: recruitment and retention for new agents, rising touring costs, CRMs and software options, wild card subjects, and more!

### 11:45am-12pm BREAK

### 12-1pm CLOSING REFLECTION

Board president Karen Kennedy and the retreat committee will lead us through a closing reflection and wrap up discussion.

### 1-3pm LUNCH ON OWN

### 3pm+ Optional Closing Night Beach Hang

For those of us staying through Tuesday night, meet Board Members Spring Karlo and Kevin Peters in the Hotel Aloft lobby and share a ride together to nearby Carolina Beach. Explore the historic boardwalk, have a beach picnic, and enjoy the sunset with your new friends and NAPAMA community.



# Things to do in Wilmington

## NEIGHBORHOODS TO EXPLORE

From its early roots at the dawn of the Colonial era, to its tumultuous role in the Civil War, and its development as an important global port during WWI and WWII, the story of Wilmington is always engaging and as distinctive as the cityscape itself.

### Historic Downtown/Riverwalk

Stroll along the [Riverwalk](#) and enjoy a breathtaking view of the Cape Fear River. Stop into the assortment of markets, unique boutiques, art galleries and independently owned outdoor cafés and restaurants that line the nearly two-mile scenic walkway, all set against the picturesque river backdrop that includes the iconic WWII [Battleship NORTH CAROLINA](#). Learn more [here](#).



### National Register Historic District

Explore the area's historic roots on a self-guided or horse-drawn carriage ride of downtown's [National Register Historic District](#). One of the largest and most picturesque historic districts in the South, the 230-plus blocks have some of the finest examples of historic Victorian-era architecture at the [Bellamy Mansion](#), built on the eve of the Civil War; the [Burgwin-Wright House and Gardens](#), the only structure in Wilmington from the colonial era open to the public; and [Latimer House](#), which transports visitors back to the Victorian era to learn tales of the Latimer family.

### Brooklyn Arts District

Located on the historic north side of downtown Wilmington, Brooklyn Arts District is an artist's dream full of industrial buildings and old churches. It is anchored by the [Brooklyn Arts Center + The Annex](#). Originally constructed in 1888 as St. Andrews Church, the building was the center of Wilmington's Brooklyn neighborhood for nearly a century. St. Andrews school building was completed in 1910. Today, both buildings have been restored and refurbished as an event venue that plays host to live music and concerts, weddings, art shows and vintage flea markets.

### Castle Street Arts District

Coffee, wine, shopping, farm-to-table fare, boutiques, and more can be found in Wilmington's Castle Street Arts District, located just a few blocks away from downtown Wilmington.

### THALIAN HALL

Thalian Hall, established in 1858, is one of the oldest continuously operating theaters in the United States. It has been a cultural centerpiece in Wilmington for over 160 years. Thalian Hall's three venues annually host 500 events attended by nearly 90,000 people. In addition to the wide range of community programming, the THCPA provides touring performances through its Main Street Attractions series which include national and international touring artists.



### Midtown

Coffee, wine, shopping, farm-to-table fare, boutiques, and more can be found in Wilmington's Castle Street Arts District, located just a few blocks away from downtown Wilmington.

### South Front District

South Front District is home to older buildings and warehouses that have been transformed into delicious restaurants, funky breweries and picturesque wine bars.

# Things to do in Wilmington

## ACTIVITIES



## Battleship North Carolina

Wilmington was the first city in the country to receive the designation of "American World War II Heritage City." Explore the decks of the World War II-era Battleship NORTH CAROLINA, and experience how the sailors lived aboard the ship during wartime.

## Museums & History

[Cameron Art Museum](#)  
[Visit an Art Gallery](#)  
[Cape Fear Museum of History and Science](#)  
[Wilmington Railroad Museum](#)  
[WilmingtonNColor Tour](#)  
[Wilmington's Famous Ghost Walk](#)  
[Museum of the Bizarre](#)  
[River Boat Tours](#)

## Other Ideas

[New Hanover County Arboretum](#)  
[Airlie Gardens](#)  
[Tour Cinespace Studios Wilmington](#)  
[NC Aquarium at Fort Fisher](#)

## Shopping

[Old Wilmington City Market](#)  
[The Cotton Exchange](#)

Books:  
[Old Books on Front Street](#)  
[Papercut Books](#)  
[Beach Read Books](#)

Vinyl/Records:  
[Gravity Records](#)  
[Modern Legend](#)



Map by City of Willimington

## Beaches

The three main nearby beaches [Wrightsville Beach](#), [Carolina Beach](#), and [Kure Beach](#) each have their own appeal and activities!



## The Riverwalk

The 1.75 mile [Wilmington Riverwalk](#) is located in the heart of downtown Wilmington, at the very edge of the Cape Fear River where the city meets the water. It runs parallel to Water Street and Front Street, and connects with a number of popular downtown streets as well, such as Market Street, Dock Street and Orange Street. Learn [more here](#).

## Bellamy Mansion

Built just moments before the Civil War in 1859-1861, today the home has been converted to a museum and is now one of the only original, fully restored urban slave quarters open to the public in the country. [Learn more here](#).



# Things to do in Wilmington

## EAT & DRINK

### COFFEE

[Hidden Grounds](#)  
[BeSpoke](#)  
[Concorde Espresso Bar](#)  
[Folks Cafe](#)

### SEAFOOD

\$\$\$\$ [Seabird](#): Seafood/farm to table  
\$\$\$ [Catch](#): Modern Seafood cuisine  
\$\$ [Elijah's](#): Oyster and fish camp with waterfront view.  
\$\$ [Pilot House](#): Coastal Carolina cuisine with a sophisticated touch



Food from Seabird. Photo by Lisa Corson

### Restaurants

\$\$\$\$ [Manna](#): American/farm to table  
\$\$\$\$ [Olivero](#): Italian and Spanish inspired focussing on seasonal ingredients.  
\$\$\$\$ [Circa 1922](#): Tapas/small plates  
\$\$\$\$ [Caprice Bistro](#): French  
\$\$\$\$ [The Little Dipper](#): Fondue  
\$\$\$ [Tarantelli's](#): Family Owned Italian  
\$\$\$ [Quanto Basta](#): Italian eatery & wine bar  
\$\$ [Marina Grill](#): American/casual with a waterfront view  
\$\$ [Tequila's Waterfront](#): Mexican  
\$\$ [Prost](#): German cuisine and beer garden  
\$\$ [Savorez](#): Latin American  
\$\$ [Yosake](#): Pan-Asian  
\$\$ [Indochine](#): Thai & Vietnamese  
\$ [Ponysaurus](#): Pizza/American/beer garden  
\$ [Copper Penny](#): American  
\$ [Fork & Cork](#): American  
\$ [Hell's Kitchen](#): American pub food

### SOUTHERN

\$\$\$ [Dram Yard](#)  
\$ [Rooster and The Crow](#)  
\$ [The Basics](#)

### VEGETARIAN/ VEGAN

\$\$\$ [The Green House](#)  
\$ [The Half](#)  
\$ [Sealevel City Vegan Diner](#)

### Nightlife

[Blind Elephant](#)- Wilmington's first craft cocktail bar and the home of spirits and secrets.  
[Tempo 33](#)- where live performances and historic ambiance create the perfect setting.  
[Quanto Basta](#) - Italian eatery and wine bar. "As much as you like, as much as you need."  
[Whiskey Tango Foxtrot](#) - Craft cocktails with premium spirits & fresh ingredients. Experience WTF's drinks, live music, & events.  
[Ibiza - Wednesday Night Drag Karaoke](#) - Sing karaoke with friends and drag performers!  
[KGB](#) - This "underground" decadent lounge is a modern bar with an inspired twist themed around the secretive KGB complete with memorabilia and deep red interior.  
[Pour Taproom](#) - Wilmington's premiere self- taproom for beer, cider, and wine.  
[The Underfront Co.](#) - Wilmington's destination for boutique cocktails and live music situated in the heart of downtown!  
[Cloud 9](#) - Wilmington's premier rooftop bar. Have a hand-crafted cocktail while enjoying views of Wilmington's historic downtown harbor, Battleship North Carolina, and absolutely amazing sunsets.  
[Slainte](#) - Wilmington's oldest Irish pub.  
[Aloft Wilmington at Coastline Center](#) - Rooftop bistro and wine bar.  
[Concorde Espresso Bar](#) - a diverse range of international coffees, cocktails and snacks  
[Barbary Coast](#) - Wilmington's oldest bar with a great selection of beers

### Breweries/Distilleries

End of Days Distillery (Cargo District)  
Hi-Wire Brewery (Soda Pop District)  
Edward Teach Brewery (Brooklyn Arts District)  
Flytrap Brewery (Brooklyn Arts District)  
Front Street Brewery: American pub food

# Thank you to all our generous Retreat Sponsors!

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