

# Ferryman Collective Becomes a 501(c)(3) Nonprofit, Establishing Itself as the First VR Repertory Theatre Company

*Ferryman Collective formalizes as a nonprofit, expanding its mission to create and share award-winning live VR theatre with global audiences.*

LOS ANGELES, CA, UNITED STATES, July 27, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Ferryman Collective](#), a pioneering force in the evolution of live, immersive theatre in Virtual Reality (VR), has announced its official transition to a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. This milestone represents a major step toward aligning with the rich tradition of nonprofit theatre in the U.S. including long-term sustainability, expanding access, and continuing a legacy of creating original productions that can be licensed and shared with other companies for broader reach and impact.



Ferryman Collective co-founders Deirdre V. Lyons, Stephen Butchko, Whitton Frank, and Christopher Lane Davis, joined by company associate Tanvi Agrawal, at SXSW XR Experience 2025. Photo credit: Oscar Moreno

“

As a nonprofit, we can expand our reach, uplift new and underrepresented voices, ensuring that VR theatre remains a place for bold experimentation and deep human connection.”

*Whitton Frank*

“Virtual reality has given us the power to bring people together across continents in shared, live experiences—becoming a nonprofit gives us the foundation to make that access equitable and sustainable,” said Stephen Butchko, co-founder of Ferryman Collective. “We’re not just telling stories—we’re building a platform for artists and audiences to connect, grow, and imagine new worlds together.”

Founded in 2020, Ferryman Collective has redefined the possibilities of live performance, crafting emotionally

resonant and interactive theatrical experiences inside VR platforms. With the recognition of our

nonprofit status by the IRS in May 2025, Ferryman Collective joins the ranks of countless esteemed arts organizations that rely on the nonprofit model to deliver powerful, community-driven cultural programming.

“As theatre-makers, we’ve always been inspired by the way nonprofit companies serve their communities and invest in artists,” said Deirdre V. Lyons, Ferryman co-founder.

“Becoming a 501(c)(3) allows us to expand access to our work, support the next generation of immersive storytellers, and build the VR Theatre Repertory model that mirrors the structure of regional and national stages.”

Ferryman’s productions have consistently garnered international acclaim:

-Uncanny Alley: A New Day (2024) – Winner of XR Must’s Best Interactivity/Performance Award and [Fanheart3’s XR Experience Award](#) at the 81st Venice Film Festival. Co-Created with Virtual Worlds Company.

-Find WiiLii (2023) – A cross-cultural collaboration with Korea’s GiiÖii studio, premiered at SXSW and featured at BIFAN and A Maze Berlin.

-Gumball Dreams (2022) – Winner of the [SXSW Audience Award](#) and VR Golden Fire Ball Award; finalist for the AWE Auggie for Best Art/Film. Based on company member Christopher Lane Davis’ world, Gumball Lounge.

-Welcome to Respite (2021) – Tribeca and Venice premiere; Winner of Raindance’s Best Narrative Experience and multiple international accolades. A collaboration with Odyssey Adventure Co.

These productions have been showcased at premier festivals including Tribeca, SXSW, Venice,



Ferryman Collective co-founders Stephen Butchko, Christopher Lane Davis, Whitton Frank, and Deirdre V. Lyons, along with company associate Tanvi Agrawal, pictured in their VRChat avatars in 2025.



Ferryman Collective co-founders Deirdre V. Lyons and Stephen Butchko accept the Best Indie Creator award at the 2025 Auggie Awards during Augmented World Expo. Photo credit: Ben Erwin

Raindance, Kaohsiung, and Imagine, with select works translated into multiple languages to reach a broader global audience.

This year, Ferryman Collective was honored with an Auggie Award at AWE (Augmented World Expo), winning Best Indie Creators for its innovation in immersive storytelling.

The nonprofit model will support:

- The expansion of the VR Theatre Repertory season featuring four award-winning shows.
- New productions developed in collaboration with diverse creators worldwide.
- Online workshops and hands-on classes to mentor emerging artists in immersive performance.
- Community engagement initiatives designed to make virtual theatre accessible to audiences of all backgrounds.

Ferryman Collective's transformation into a nonprofit is not just an organizational shift, it is a commitment to deepening the mission of building meaningful human connection through immersive storytelling. By anchoring the company's work in a nonprofit structure, they can further impact, reduce barriers to entry, and solidify virtual theatre as an essential and enduring part of the global cultural landscape.

Deirdre V Lyons  
Ferryman Collective  
[info@ferrymancollective.com](mailto:info@ferrymancollective.com)

Visit us on social media:

[LinkedIn](#)  
[Bluesky](#)  
[Instagram](#)  
[Facebook](#)  
[YouTube](#)

---

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/834314105>

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2025 Newsmatics Inc. All Right Reserved.