



# STAGES

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE ENGLERT THEATRE

**Summer 2018**



## **In Conversation with Bridget Kearney of Lake Street Dive**

DANIEL BOSCALJON INTERVIEWS  
NATIVE IOWA-CITIAN BASSIST  
BRIDGET KEARNEY AHEAD OF LAKE  
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IT ALL HAPPENS HERE.

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## Welcome to The Englert Theatre

I stood in front of a packed room at Prairie Lights Bookstore. The people sat and waited patiently. I was not the main event. I was a bridge to be crossed. In a few minutes brilliant writers and thinkers would take the stage to headline an event at Mission Creek Festival 2018. Yet, I was not there to talk about literature, music, or art: I was there to talk about sponsorship. It's always an interesting moment, standing before an audience that hasn't come to see me. I looked into the eyes of those literature fans and wondered how long they'd endure me before their empty gazes signaled my recusal from the stage.

Indeed, sponsorship is a riveting subject. It constitutes 35-40% of Mission Creek Festival's annual budget, key portions of that support coming from our title sponsor University of Iowa Community Credit Union (UICCU) and our tireless advocates — both staff and council — at the City of Iowa City. A series of deep partnerships with various departments and programs at the University of Iowa and local businesses comprise the remainder of the support.

While we live for this work, navigating the fundraising waters of sponsorship can be dizzying: \$10,000 from an organization one year dissolves into \$1,000 the next year as a company's funding and marketing priorities shift. That kind of volatility makes fundraising for cultural programming a nerve-racking job. (Stop by our office sometime and witness us sweat under the crushing weight of spreadsheets that refuse to reconcile until we've found those last two sponsors at \$2,500 each: no dinner, no ice cream, no family time until we've closed the gap.)

From a different view, the act of seeking sponsorship also demands our staff to actively engage with the businesses and institutions that define our community. We actually have to talk to the people in our neighborhood and even if the answer is no: we have talked, we have listened, and we know each other. Spiritually speaking, \$250 from a small 500 sq ft business means as much as \$25,000 from a corporate giant. Both of those checks reflect a business' willingness to reinvest in the place where it thrives.

I recall visiting UICCU's old HQ on Mormon Trek over six years ago with Christopher Wiersema (Feed Me Weird Things, MCF programmer) and Joe Tiefenthaler (FilmScene, MCF programmer) and sharing our dreams with their staff for expansion both in the performance and literary aspects of Mission Creek. I think I was wearing khakis (I literally wear jeans 300 days/year) and it was the first time I'd ever seen Mr. Wiersema dust off a sportcoat; we must have looked like scrappy art kids sitting in that revered financial institution. But the staff heard us out and not only said they would support our effort but actively encouraged us to do the work we wanted to do, to pursue our vision, to take a chance on building an experience alongside our community. That investment helped realize some of our boldest programming: legend Philip Glass and emerging composer Oneohtrix Point Never sharing the stage at the Englert, Faust wielding a cement mixer in the dark hollow of Gabe's, and resident writers like Roxane Gay and Kiese Laymon pouring their art and labor into the heart of our community. A core fact remains unshakeable: investing in the arts reflects an investment in our collective spirit.

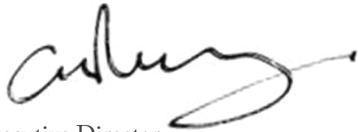
Yet, if the front yard of one's brand is for sale - in this case, Mission Creek Festival - where do we draw the line? Would anyone care if our intimate arts festival for independent voices secured Amazon as our title sponsor? How would Mission Creek Festival presented by Aflac sound? Everyone needs insurance, right? There are likely a lot of blue-leaning Upper West Side New Yorkers at odds with the political will of the Koch Brothers, yet they are not at odds with the New York City Ballet's performances that grace the stage of the David H. Koch Theater at the Lincoln Center. Each arts organization, it seems, must return to their guiding set of values and consider how each sponsorship aligns or deviates from the road map. Remember, art transcends many of the divisions that hamper us culturally. Art is the element that unites. And, for most organizations, "sustaining and preserving" are core aspects of their charge - and those two efforts require support and money.

For Mission Creek the choices so far have been easy: with each year our sponsors have increasingly become more Iowa-based and it is a point of pride to list the names of our backers: ten years of working with SCOPE Productions, media support from Iowa Public Radio and Little Village, local food, beer and spirits through Big Grove Brewery and Cedar Ridge, backing from Bread Garden Market, Iowa City Downtown District, Think Iowa City, Iowa City Area Development, and The Tuesday Agency - the list goes on.

I addressed the crowd at Prairie Lights and though I knew my time was limited, I didn't feel nervous or weird as soon as I started talking. I am excited to talk about sponsorship to the audiences whether it's at Prairie Lights, the Englert, or any other venue in our town. The contributions of varying size reflect a deep faith in our vision for the festival and our sponsors see themselves as being part of the energy the festival puts into our community.

"Thank you for being here," I said to the audience. "We literally can't do this without our sponsors and we can't do it without you." The words seemed to resonate: I think people understood that from businesses to individuals in our community, we all play a part in culture's sustained existence. I stepped aside and made way for the artists.

Sincerely,  
Andre Perry



Executive Director

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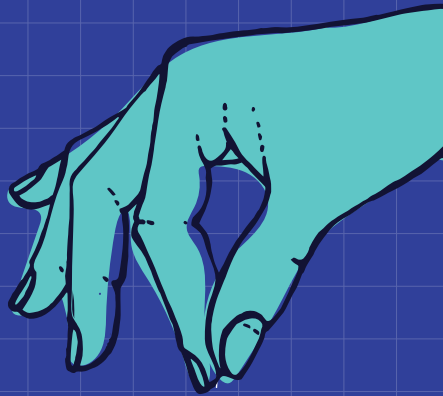
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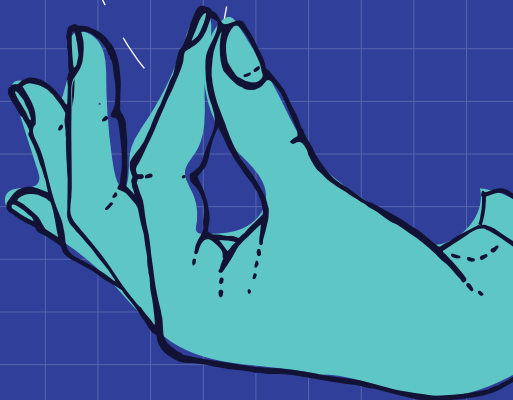
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# A Conversation with: Bridget Kearney of Lake Street Dive

DAN BOSCALJON



From left to right: Guitarist and trumpet player Mike “McDuck” Olson, bassist Bridget Kearney, vocalist Rachael Price, drummer Mike Calabrese, and keyboardist Akie Bermis.

**Lake Street Dive returns** to the Englert for a sold out show on September 3, 2018. The band has become as known for their live performances as for their unique blend of soul, pop, and jazz—training together as students at the New England Conservatory, forming in 2004. The band is touring in support of their first self-produced album, *Free Yourself Up*, released in May and featuring the talents of touring keyboardist Akie Bermis. I enjoyed the following conversation with the band’s bassist and back up vocalist, Iowa City native Bridget Kearney, on a pleasant Friday afternoon in May.

**What about having grown up in Iowa City still informs your approach to writing music? Do you have any memories of seeing music in Iowa City that you’d like to share?** I have a ton of memories of seeing music in Iowa City — some of the first five concerts I went to were the Jazz Festival or the Arts Festival. I remember seeing Shawn Colvin play, Nickel Creek at the Arts Festival — I was so inspired by the whole

presentation of that show and how I was captivated from the top of the show to the end of it. Iowa City has always had a really great rotation of a wide variety of styles of music coming through.

**What was important to you in your education/training as a musician? What did the formal education add that you think has allowed you to develop your career?** I think there’s a combination of things important in music education. One of them is passion, and love for music — it’s really hard to sustain a genuine creative flow without really loving what you’re doing. That’s fed by variety, encouragement, seeing shows, getting deep into records. I was fortunate enough to have teachers who would bring stuff my way. The second thing is discipline and learning the way that repetition and focus can train you to do new things. It’s something I still marvel at and am delighted by. I was recently doing a tour as a guitar player and singing — I’d never done that before. It was kicking me back to the lesson room as a high school student —

take it one day at a time, work on it over and over.

**What did you feel was particularly special about Lake Street Dive to the extent that you left Joy Kills Sorrow to pursue it?** Lake Street Dive, from the earliest days of playing together, the band had a nice chemistry. There’s a balance to the way that we are as people and as musicians — you can’t all do the same thing at the same time. You have to leave space for one another and complement each other in a way that’s hard to find. We found that early on, didn’t really know what to do with it, and it took a dozen years to figure out what it means. Even now, we’re still looking for new directions to take it in.

**What would you say is the core of Lake Street Dive in terms of its vision for music, art, or truth?** One of the things we each talked about focusing on is being a “song band.” Some music is focused on virtuosity, some is on production elements. We’ve tried to maintain a focus on songs — what’s the

song about, what's the story, what's the best way to tell the story (ballad or bombast), but maintaining a focus on the song.

**In what way do you think that the band provides something musically innovative and distinctive? How do your diverse backgrounds as musicians help? Or would you argue that the key to it is truly jazz?** These are related. We started as jazz musicians, and in the early days of the band we were playing closer to jazz than now — the instrumentation was just upright bass, drums, trumpet. It was a bare bones structure. But now we play rock and roll with keyboards, electric guitar — but it still has its roots in improvisation and in the sort of broader palate of harmony and melody that you're exposed to and allowed to in jazz music. We're still looking to give a song what it needs. Usually, the song isn't helped by an obtuse harmonic approach — but if you have it in your tool bag and you bring it out for just one moment, it can be quite dramatic, shocking, and excite the listener. That's where we're coming from — focus on the story, but dipping into the music theory bag.

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**“THAT'S WHERE WE'RE COMING FROM – FOCUS ON THE STORY, BUT DIPPING INTO THE MUSIC THEORY BAG.”**

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**What's your favorite part of songwriting? How has your process evolved? When you write and record a song, how much does playing it live change how you think about the song?** Song writing can be very laborious and frustrating because of not knowing whether you'll have a good idea again. You can sit and try and try and never get anything. But that's why my favorite moment in the process is getting the idea in its infancy — the chords and melody and words, and it's a world of possibilities now. After that, it's almost more like a craft again, where you're saying, “Ok — we can take it this way or that way...what if we moved this section there?” It gets more like ...being a tinkerer. That's a phase that we as a band are excited about now, because we've

started self-producing our records. Now there's a new step — looking at the kind of guitar to use, what kind of keyboard (funk, doo-wop).

**How did producing your own work allow you to find new ways of appreciating what music is, or how the process works?** I think it's almost as if someone introduced me to a new color that I'd never seen before because I didn't have a word or concept for it. It's opened up my ears to all the things you can do with producing. I've gone back to records I've loved for years and listened with a producing helmet on and I've appreciated so many things that I only had known at a subconscious level before. The producing stuff can get technical, but when used right they make for subconscious layers of enjoyment, and depth. It's really exciting. We did it collectively, which is kind of unusual. Usually there's a producer outside of the band, or an artist self-produces, but we voted on things, or we'd hand off decisions or give up spots on the producer's chair. But it worked surprisingly easily, being a band and a democracy can be difficult but we found an easy flow.

**Would you consider producing anyone else's work at some point?** I've done that recently as well — Lonely Heartstring Band. It's not out yet. They're more Americana, all acoustic. But it's a really cool role to be in, something that I'm excited about learning more about.

**Joy Kills Sorrow covered Postal Service, I know — what is it about covering other work that excites you musically? Is it related to what you enjoy in producing? To your background in jazz? How do you hear a song differently when or as you decide that you're going to cover it?** It's kind of all of those things — learning a song is so different from listening to it, and songs that, for example — like “Walking on Broken Glass.” I love the song so much, and I heard it so many times. But learning the song reveals the secrets of how it works on you as a listener. You get into the musician and the producer's heads. If I try to learn the drum part from the recording, it will illuminate something else. Playing it gets you deeper than just listening to it. I've thought about it like when you wear a

Halloween costume — you put on a Dracula costume and it feels bizarre to inhabit the persona of Dracula, but eventually you wear the pants of the costume and it feels natural. With the covers, you learn the song, you're a student of it, but then it becomes part of your language and in the future you start utilizing some of the things you learned in your own playing.

**Lake Street Dive has steadily grown in popularity in terms of venue size and album sales. From your perspective, though, what is it that makes you a successful band? How much of your sense of yourself as successful includes things like sales?** We are psyched to be able to make our own music, and have it be our job. Especially these days because we're supported by our crew and the management, the weight of logistics is off our plate, and all we have to do is play good shows and make great records. ■



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# Becoming an Active Audience Member

TAKING A TOUR THROUGH THE UNFAMILIAR

DAN BOSCALJON

One longstanding attraction of art is its ability to captivate and transport an audience, its capacity to open up new worlds that provide a break from our everyday reality. Our current, largely spectacle-driven entertainment industry is generally profitable. Like most forms of technology, entertainment has become structured on a business model of planned obsolescence — offering a cheap product as a way of driving up sales. Maximizing profit has led to an emphasis on repetition and simplicity and thus to content meant to be consumed and forgotten. The sugar rush of CGI action in lieu of thoughtful content has culminated in the impoverishment of worlds that the spectator co-creates. Movies and other art forms have gravitated toward providing audiences with distraction instead of substance, compensating audiences filled with workers exhausted from their labors, parents wearied from their kids, or the bored and listless. Offering fantasy, these forms of art are often technically superb and frequently forgettable, not rewarding further thought.

Fortunately, not all art follows the consumer model: we still seek out those stories that stick in the bones, music

with melodies that leaves an unquenchable thirst, images that linger in the mind for months, or years after they are seen. Although there's nothing inherently wrong with consumable art, just as there are moments when an Oreo is the only answer to the question one is asking, finding such art is sometimes difficult — even for the willing.

One way to distinguish among different forms of art is to think about it in terms of the world that the artist is exploring. Art designed to be consumed tends to create a sense of consolation. It often is grounded in what is familiar to us and requires little from its audience to move from the everyday world into its confines. The worlds of superheroes, like the newest summer anthem sweetening the swimming pool, have gained this sense of familiarity. The plots of such movies, like the chorus of such songs, largely reflect and repeat what has come before and increase audience appetites for what might follow after. Like airport thrillers, such art provides a glimmer of distraction before rooting us once more in our everyday existence. It becomes fodder for conversations, which themselves roll along familiar grooves. We can predict how much we will



**Audience members watch performance artist Barber perform a march from the Pentacrest to the Englert's doors as part of the fall 2017 world premiere of *Dis/Unity: A Service*. An Englert original commission, *Dis/Unity* explores racism, trauma, and transcending borders in today's America through an immersive performance installation. Photo by Zak Neumann.**

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“[RATHER] THAN PEERING THROUGH A WINDOW AT SOMETHING THAT IS SAFELY INNOVATIVE, WE ARE ENCOURAGED TO BECOME TOURISTS IN A NEW POSSIBILITY. EXPERIENCING NEW KINDS OF SOUNDS, NEW INSTRUMENTS, NEW STYLES, NEW GENRES, NEW VOICES—THESE OPPORTUNITIES ARE THE LIFEBLOOD OF ART.”

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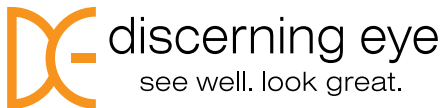
enjoy or not enjoy this kind of art with a high degree of accuracy; it becomes safe.

Art becomes more thrilling as it leaves audiences with questions instead of answers, either questioning our assumptions about reality, or what we conceive as possible, or creating a path toward a new world. One of

the most intense versions of this experience arises when encountering a performance that opens a new world from the perspective of an everyday world that is also foreign. In each of these cases, rather than peering through a window at something that is safely innovative, we are encouraged to become tourists in a new possibility. Experiencing new kinds of sounds, new instruments, new styles, new genres, new voices—these opportunities are the lifeblood of art.

The willingness to explore new forms of art — to embrace the role of taking a tour through the unfamiliar — has the additional benefit of learning how to appreciate one’s own art and culture all the more. We can learn to take the tourist’s perspective—even when re-encountering artists or performances that have been longstanding parts of our personal narratives—and find new things to observe and appreciate that our habitual orientations cause us to overlook. Presuming familiarity—in art, as with much else in life—often leads to the path of losing what had initially inspired our love and awe. And so: take chances. Be risky with art—especially with art that looks as though it takes risks. Find people whose tastes both include and diverge from your own, and follow them down paths that you may have assumed “aren’t your thing.” Find art that is strange to you, allow yourself to become a stranger to art. Delight and revel in novelties that are more than superficial beauties. Enjoy. ■

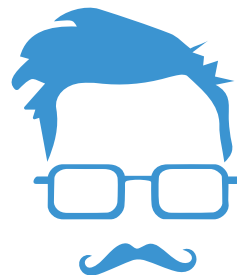
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## In Rotation: Here's to Shutting Up

*In honor of our writer featuring music of little words, we will keep this brief: for this installment of In Rotation, founder of Feed Me Weird Things listening series and programmer for Witching Hour and Mission Creek Festival Chris Wiersema reviews four recent largely-instrumental albums.*



### Khruangbin – *Con Todo El Mundo* (2018, Night Time Stories)

“World Music” is a problematic conceit, even in well-meaning hands. You either end up with a joyless academic hodgepodge; or a sound so glossed and polished of any identity it exists only to complement a choir of blow dryers in hair salons. Through the narrow eye of this needle comes Khruangbin, a Houston-based trio whose talent matches pace with its taste. Their name — “Airplane” in Thai — announces their intentions: the cuts here touching down in Iran, Thailand, the Carribean, India, and Ennio Morricone’s vision of Mexico. What anchors these disparate musics

is the trio’s smart decision to filter it through their own winding Texas psychedelia and west coast funk. The dusty guitar nimbly curls around itself, the bass woozes and wanders back and forth, and the drums are the very definition of in-the-cut. Neither novice nor head will have any trouble drifting away to this.



### Mary Lattimore – *Hundreds of Days* (2018, Ghostly International)

Frequently relegated to the recording studio corner and ably played by very few, the harp thankfully has become a more and more frequent guest on a variety of stages and records, none more so than Mary Lattimore. Lattimore — L.A. by way of Philadelphia — has been dragging her massive 46-stringed harp back and forth across the country while performing with the likes of Jeff Zeigler, Kurt Vile, and Sharon Van Etten. All the while improvising and composing the instrumental vignettes that made up her first two albums, each a snapshot of a memory or moment of

that long toured road. On *Hundreds of Days*, arranged and recorded during a two month residency, her compositions are fuller and more realized and stayed. Like Marisa Anderson, or Glenn Jones (two great solo acts), each track is a pointillism pastoral able to tell hundreds of their own stories without the player saying a word.



### Jeff Parker – *The New Breed* (2016, International Anthem)

No summer record list is complete without a cruising record, something to boom when you're coming through the block, and it has to make the trunk rattle. So let me recommend this jazz record. Not just any jazz artist, Jeff Parker has more solo and collaborative titles to his name as there are grains of sand on the beach, that is when he's not punching in at his day job as guitarist of post-rock titans Tortoise. Twisting up his post-rock riddles, traditional jazz chops, and burning lowend funk makes it as beguiling to listen to

as it is flat out fun. This record lights grills when it cruises by; it makes beer runs in the middle of the afternoon with the top down; it breaks out the brown paper bag of fireworks at dusk and never ever is it in any hurry to get anywhere in particular.



### Shells – *Shells 2* (2017, Ginkgo Records)

Summer is a treasure hunt. So is this record. Hell, so is finding this record. Bio details are scant, which is fine, Shelley Salant from Michigan playing electric guitar through enough old amps to give it enough of a warm familiar buzz, and enough delay and reverb to give it a psychedelic feel when she wants it to. The artwork for the album is a painting by her mother, Katherine, from 1980 and the entire album pulls its deep emotional inspiration from it. The music and the painting are inseparable, both struck through with a deep nostalgia. These songs sound like mixing bowls

of fresh picked berries and pricked fingers licked clean; dog-eared paperbacks swollen from saltwater breezes and faded from sun and sleep; like warm beers from a neighbor's poorly guarded garage and tongue kissing practiced with a friend; like thrown rocks at slow moving freight trains and grime rimmed arm casts, like blown curfews before cell phones and porch screen doors closed juuuust so.



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Photos by Zak Neumann

## How It All Happens Here

CELEBRATING TEN YEARS WITH ENGLERT EVENTS DIRECTOR JESSICA EGLI

DAN BOSCALJON

Perhaps calling Jessica Egli “Events Director” at the Englert follows the maxim that it is better to be concise than accurate, but it more likely is that no cohesive set of terms or roles could accurately depict the range of roles and skills that Egli deftly juggles on a daily basis. Her three basic priorities include managing the Englert’s rental calendar, serving as the production manager for the Witching Hour and Mission Creek Festivals, and managing the production team and front of house team in tandem with Sarah Shonrock, the Englert’s Operations Director. The ground of each of these roles is Egli’s ability to graciously anticipate and care for the occasionally competing needs of performers, patrons, and volunteers in a way that fosters a sense of inclusive community.

Egli grew up in Ames, Iowa and studied Theater Arts at the University of Iowa with an emphasis in acting, receiving her B.A. in 2010. Her work at the Englert started in 2008 when, to appease her parents, she responded to the Englert’s job posting for “Concessions Rock Star.” Following a brief stint in Portland, Ore., Egli returned to the town that had become her home to work with the staff who had become her family.

After mastering concessions, Egli was promoted to Front of House Manager, a position that she indicates was crucial to her personal and professional development. The winding trail leading to her present role gave Egli a wide appreciation for the range of communities that gather briefly within the space of the theater. Tori Morgensai, former Production Manager at the Englert and

one of Egli’s best friends, notes that “Jessica started low level but made a lot out of it! She’s learned a lot and keeps adding things together to build a comprehensive picture of the organization.” Indeed, Egli’s firsthand knowledge of Englert operations allows her to anticipate the needs of performers and patrons to ensure successful events.

Her unique view of the Englert also emerges from her particular aesthetic sensibilities: because Egli inclines toward jazz standards, she witnesses the effect of the Englert’s programming on fans without herself being overwhelmed by the moment. When she can, she enjoys watching the interactions between the performers and the audience from a perch in the balcony. These moments showed her that the job is (in her words):

not about loving what comes through. Art is the passion people have—whoever is there performing, and whoever is in the audience—you can feel the energy in the room. I see the audience weeping, singing along, laughing, clapping, dancing—it is community. I have learned more than anything that art makes community, and the passion that people have for it inspires me.

Her insight on the role of art and community contributes to her central role in the Englert's mission. As Shonrock puts it, "Jessica has the compassionate ability to see a production from every perspective – be it the artists, patrons, promoters, staff, or clients. Everyone is taken care of. Everyone feels valued. Jessica is a very real reason why so many people love the Englert Theatre and want to keep coming back. Jessica brings her love of performance and the arts into her work."

The love of performance is capably balanced by a life of professionalism; on a personal level, serving as the face of the Englert has invited Egli to become a more calm, confident woman. These qualities were earned through fielding from "all sorts of personalities," which eventually gave her "the vocabulary and language to speak to someone who is unhappy—or happy" and has enabled her to more effectively communicate the mission of the Englert. Her co-workers noticed her evolution. Morgensai puts it in this way: "She has learned how to get things done and make sure that they're done well. She doesn't get rolled over the way that happened when she was new at her jobs."

The sense of confidence persists in her present role and has informed Egli's approach to her growing set of responsibilities. Andre Perry, Executive Director at the Englert, credits this ability to master situations as part of why Egli is so valuable to the Englert community: "She really brings a positive and a thoughtful attitude to situations [and can] weather the storms that come through this place with poise. She's able to put aside her stress, solve things, and stay the course. You can't train [that skill]—you can nurture it, but it is a talent that she was born with."

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**"WHEN THE ARTS ARE BEING  
NEGLECTED, IT'S CRUCIAL TO SEE THAT  
THE ARTS CAN BE EDUCATIONAL."**

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Egli's understanding of the importance of art to the Corridor community has continued to expand as she has emphasized her role as educator. For example, those who rent the theater without experience holding a fundraiser appreciate Egli's expertise. She states, "I'm able to offer some assistance in [helping people realize their ideas], to train others or help them know how to make events happen because that's what we do." In addition to this, Egli has developed her job in ways that allows her to reach out to the university, collaborating with the university to promote interactions with the arts through "volunteers, internships, jobs, student organizations." Further, Egli has spearheaded the resurrection of the Englert's most recent educational program—an acting camp for fifth and sixth grade students. This is all part of Egli's understanding of the value of art: "When the arts are being neglected, it's crucial to see that the arts can be educational. And that extends to us going into the community with our expertise and our artists."



Like many on the Englert's staff, Egli appreciates how the Englert allows her to develop her career as her skills develop. She believes that the Englert's emphasis on empowering its employees is one secret to the Englert's continuity in staff. She says, "My last two titles were ones I made up with responsibilities I had gained." Also crucial to continuity is a culture that inspires a deep, caring sense of community among the staff. Egli states, "I have a deep, pure love for this place—not just what we do, but the people in it. The place wouldn't exist without the staff: without willingness to work 70 hour weeks, three weeks in a row. It has to be unique. It's the people that make this all possible. This place is my home." Fortunately, audiences are welcomed to share this home day after day, week after week, and participate in the community that the staff of the Englert enables. ■

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Englert Executive Director Andre Perry and Development Director Katie Roche give a pre-show announcement before a packed house at Mission Creek Festival 2014. Photo by Bill Adams.

## Beyond the Stage

### THE ENGLERT'S ROLE AS CULTURAL PRODUCER

DAN BOSCALJON

**The Englert is most readily recognized** as a building. Thinking about what the Englert means invites images of what the building is: perhaps the illuminated marquee extending over the sidewalk, announcing upcoming acts, the gorgeously restored interior, or perhaps the stage itself, bare brick visible beneath the proscenium arch stretching overhead. As often happens, the place of the Englert becomes synonymous with its programming—the musical acts, theater productions, or films that one has embraced since it reopened fourteen years ago. This is fair, as one of the fundamental missions of the Englert is to develop, support, and preserve a dynamic, vibrant, inviting community dedicated to the kind of enrichment and engagement offered by the arts.

Even beyond the photographs and paintings that decorate the walls, it's not incorrect to think of the Englert as a container of art, especially as the staff and crew of the Englert ensures that audiences are treated to professional quality sound and light designs. It is a

place where diverse members of the community can gather, seeing old friends or making new memories, finding a group of kindred spirits with whom one can find a moment of awe, or beauty. At the same time, no matter how positively one regards the Englert as a venue, it would be a mistake to reduce its role as an advocate for the arts in Iowa to this kind of functionality alone. In addition to serving as a container for art, the Englert also is a curator of the arts, that cultivates audience appetites for art, and actively works to promote the creation of new art in order to develop the character of the Iowa City community.

The first way that the Englert goes beyond serving as a container of art, although related to this, is its work in curating different arts experiences. In order to ensure that the community can experience a wide variety of acts, the Englert has prioritized balancing the kinds of programming it offers to ensure that offerings appeal to a variety of audiences, all of whom can feel welcomed and at home in its space. Katie Roche,

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“WHEN I MAKE CURTAIN TALKS I LIKE TO ASK FOR A SHOW OF HANDS OF THOSE WHO ARE VISITING THE ENGLERT FOR THE FIRST TIME. WE ARE ALWAYS EXCITED TO SEE PEOPLE WHO REGULARLY TAKE PART IN OUR PROGRAMMING, BUT IT’S A DIFFERENT KIND OF EXCITEMENT WHEN WE SEE THAT WE’VE ACTIVATED A NEW PERSON OR PART OF OUR COMMUNITY. EACH NEW FACE MEANS THAT WE’VE PROVIDED A NEW ACCESS POINT TO THE ARTS AND TO THE ENGLERT.”

—Katie Roche, Englert development director

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development director at the Englert, says, “When I make curtain talks I like to ask for a show of hands of those who are visiting the Englert for the first time. We are always excited to see people who regularly take part in our programming, but it’s a different kind of excitement when we see that we’ve activated a new person or part of our community. Each new face means that we’ve provided a new access point to the arts and to the Englert.” More than offering diversity for its sake alone, however, the staff of the Englert is attentive to providing acts of consistent quality. This makes the Englert an excellent place to explore kinds of music or art that might be unfamiliar. For example, although one may not be a fan of bluegrass or experimental piano, one would be hard pressed to find a better example of these genres than Bela Fleck and Abigail Washburn or Nils Frahm, respectively. Perhaps the best known time of curation is Mission Creek Festival — more than merely host shows as a venue, the Englert

is responsible for producing the festival (booking acts, scheduling times, ensuring cohesion). Because artists are explorers, moving into the unknown as they create new songs, new sounds, or new thoughts, the Englert’s role as curator requires that it balance the familiar and the unfamiliar in a way similar to the work of a museum.

As the Mission Creek Festival has worked to become different than just another music festival — developing a reputation for putting together a week of artists who have the cohesion of an old-fashioned mixtape — it also has begun to attend to helping audiences cultivate aesthetic tastes. One form that this has taken is the introduction of the Witching Hour Festival, an innovative autumnal festival that invites audiences to explore different ways of experiencing the arts and introducing audiences to artists that make art from within the margins. The festival also incorporates many workshops and curiosities, providing space both for thoughtful conversations about what art means and how to engage in it more actively. Attending these festivals becomes a way that one learns to resonate alongside forms of art that would otherwise have been overlooked.

Third, the Englert also is responsible for creating new art. Beyond the independent merits of its staff, several of whom have artistic careers in addition to their work at the Englert, the institution has also become invested in engineering opportunities for art to emerge. This has included the Iowa City Song Project album released in 2012, with new songs offered by local favorites. It led to the Artist in Residency program in 2014, featuring Nat Baldwin of the Dirty Projectors. In addition to allowing time for Baldwin to explore new ground as an artist, it also allowed the community to gain from Baldwin’s knowledge as he taught workshops on songwriting for area youth. In 2016, the Englert commissioned Sean Lewis to write and direct *The Evolution of Bruno Littlemore*, a play based on a novel by Iowa Writer’s Workshop Benjamin Hale. Finally, the Englert has been expanding its direct involvement in education, featuring a writing workshop this spring and an acting camp for children this summer.

All of this comes together to allow the Englert to become part of what defines the character of Iowa City. From fostering the development of a local music scene to featuring an art gallery on the second floor, the Englert continues to explore what a community theater can become. Beyond a space where residents can gather, the Englert continues to evolve into a space where the community can expand. ■

The mission of THE ENGLERT THEATRE is to inspire and activate positive community growth through the arts. This includes owning, maintaining, and operating the Englert - Iowa City’s last historic theater - as a vital community arts space as well as expanding the Englert’s programming vision and collaborative efforts beyond the walls of the theater through institutional efforts like Mission Creek Festival and Witching Hour and other projects that develop through vibrant partnerships. Programming seeks a balance between familiar and unknown, emerging and established, and local and far-reaching artistry.

# Become a Friend

As a nonprofit theater, ticket sales and other earned income cover only a portion of our costs, and we need the help of community members like you. Donations to the Englert help support several aspects of operations including but not limited to outreach projects in our community, programming costs for artist performances and residencies, maintenance and preservation of our historic building, and capital improvement projects.

The Friends of the Englert program is our way to say thank you, providing donors of \$35 or more with priority access to tickets for in-demand shows, free and discounted ticket prices, and other Englert insider benefits and information. Contact the Box Office or visit [bit.ly/englertfriends](http://bit.ly/englertfriends)

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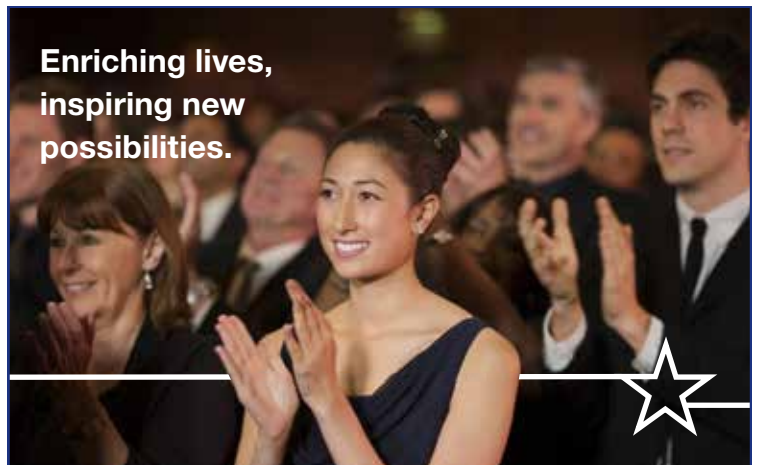
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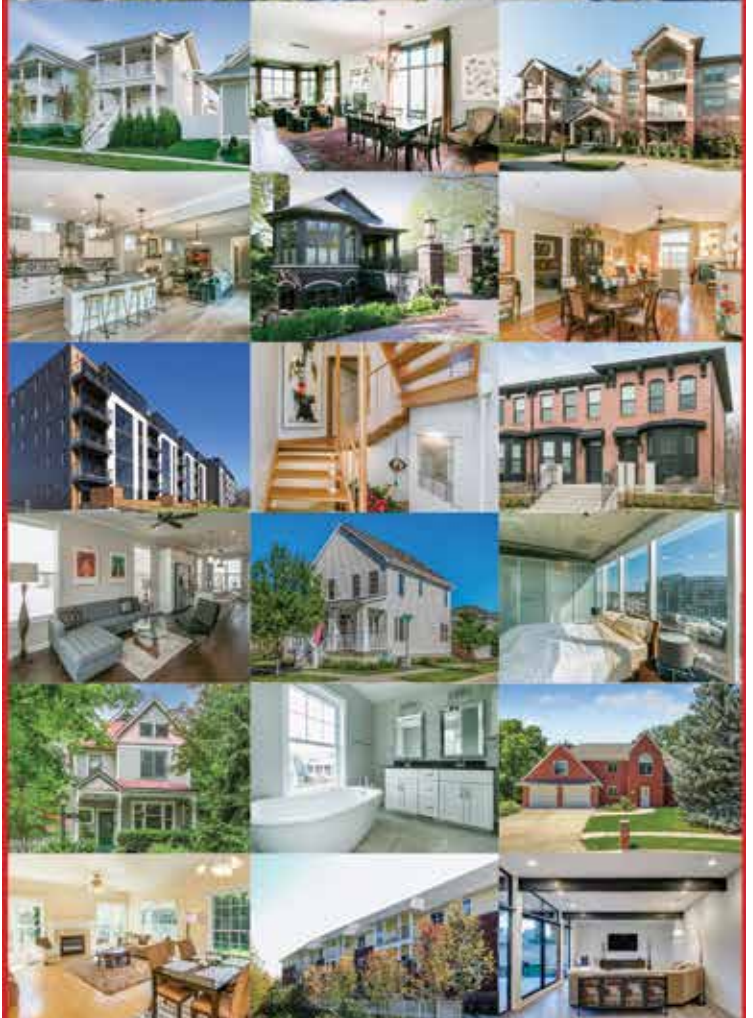
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# **Your safety and well-being is of utmost importance to us.**

## **EXITS**

Emergency exits are located throughout the theater auditorium. Please identify the emergency exit closest to your seat and note that it may not be the door you entered through.

## **WE ARE HERE TO HELP**

Our ushers are stationed at auditorium entrances. If you have any questions or concerns during your visit to The Englert Theatre please ask an usher. If they don't have the answer they will find the appropriate staff person to accommodate your needs.

## **STAY AWARE**

Please remain aware of your surroundings and notify an usher or staff member if you notice anything that appears suspicious or out of place.

Above all, the use of common sense is key to the safety of everyone!

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# Mother (Ghost)

MONTREUX ROTHOLTZ

our mothers have mouths  
like detonators have their  
mouths open tan and delicate

shoulders backed by mountains  
and with copper sun  
a woman is just another way

our mothers are transparent freckled  
with dust have  
visitors are visiting us

a woman is just another way  
of being present our mothers  
have red nails braids seasons

an explosion is a measurement  
and a woman is just another way  
damage from here to there  
with chipped teeth our mothers walk

like sugar cane  
creased with wind  
and young

leaning over the edge  
how silkily the wind functions  
to tell time

leaning over the canyon  
its bright creases  
its propellant hurtle

to an end  
are a visitation  
are a pattern

of how far out death goes  
of making light  
bent fields  
over death's skin



*Special thanks to Montreux Rotholtz and The Iowa Review for allowing us to share this piece. We are particularly honored to share the work of Montreux, a former Englert team member, who is rising in the world as an accomplished young poet. Her debut collection Unmark was released through Burnside Review Books in 2017 Her piece can be found in issue 48.1. Visit [iowareview.org](http://iowareview.org) or Prairie Lights Bookstore to get your copy today!*

# CONCESSIONS AT THE ENGLERT

## \$3 Beverages

Coke  
Diet Coke  
Sprite  
Dasani

## \$6 Wine

Henri de Richemer Piquepoul  
Dubard Sauvignon Blanc/Sémillon  
Domaine de Chantpierre Côtes du Rhône  
Porta 6 Tinto  
Dubard Merlot (coming Fall 2018)

## Beers on Tap

*Our craft beer on tap rotates frequently! Please ask a concessions attendant for a current list.*

### Regular features:

\$6  
Sutliff Cider  
ReUnion Brewery select beers  
Big Grove Brewery select beers



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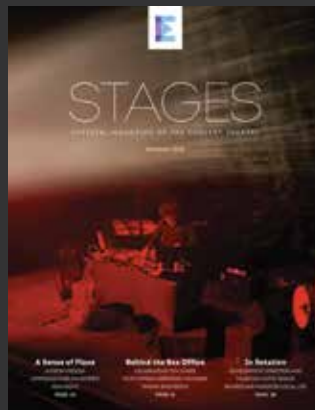
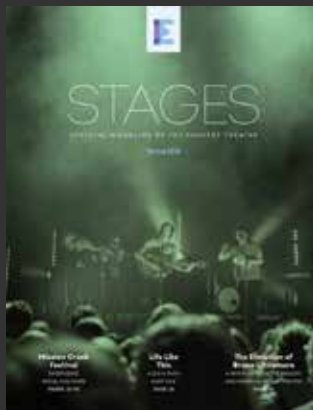
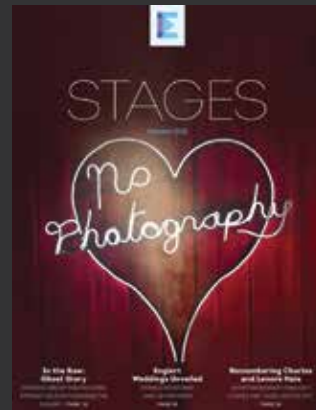
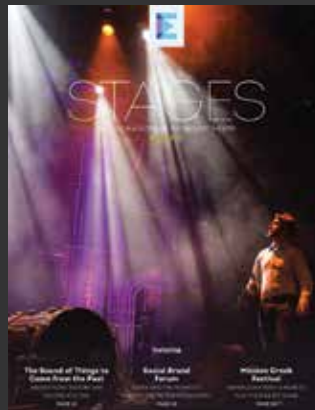


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# Upcoming Events



## ACTING OUT!

August 6 - 11  
Morning and Afternoon  
Courses available  
\$180 Morning or Afternoon  
Course Only / \$300 Full  
Day (Registration required  
and available at the Englert  
Box Office)

The Englert Theatre is proud to announce its inaugural youth acting camp ACTING OUT!, welcoming incoming 5th and 6th graders for the week of August 6th – 11th. Join instructor Cara Clonch Viner and Englert events director and University of Iowa Theatre Arts Department alumna Jessica Egli in a two-course program utilizing improvisation to explore character development.

ACTING OUT! is part of Englert Wavelength, an education series furthering youth and adult connection with the arts.



## LAKE STREET DIVE

September 3 at 7 p.m.  
Sold Out

Lake Street Dive formed in 2004 while students at New England Conservatory and have been touring non-stop ever since, growing from basement venues like The Lizard Lounge in Boston, MA to selling out Radio City Music Hall in New York City.

For their 2018 release, *Free Yourself Up*, the quartet drafted touring keyboardist Akie Bermiss to join them in the studio. Adding another player to the process freed up the band members to explore a wider range of instrumental textures, construct more full-bodied arrangements, and build on their well-known background harmonies.



## AMANDA SHIRES

September 21 at 8 p.m.  
\$25 - \$85  
Reserved Seating  
Co-presented with FPC Live

The release of *To the Sunset* brings about the fifth album for acclaimed singer-songwriter and violinist Amanda Shires. The new album is Shires' second with Grammy Award-winning producer Dave Cobb and will feature Shires' adventurous, honest, and emotive songwriting.

Ms. Shires began her career as a teenager playing fiddle with the Texas Playboys. Since then, she's toured and recorded with John Prine, Billy Joe Shaver, Todd Snider, Justin Townes Earle, Shovels & Rope, and most recently her husband Jason Isbell, as part of the 400 Unit. Shires won the Emerging Artist of the Year Award at the 2017 Americana Music Awards, and also won the Grammy for Best Americana Album in 2018 as a member of the 400 Unit.

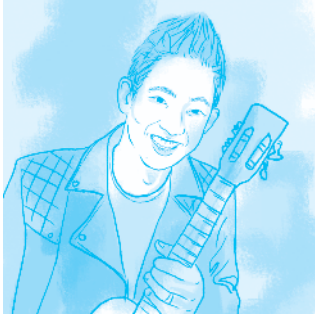


## KEB' MO'

September 26 at 8 p.m.  
\$41.50 - \$149  
Reserved Seating  
Co-presented with FPC Live

It all took off for Keb' Mo' in 1994 with the self-titled release under his newly coined Keb' Mo' moniker, and over the years, he has proven that he is a musical force that defies typical genre labels. In the past two decades, Keb' has cultivated a reputation as a modern master of American roots music through the understated excellence of his live and studio performances.

Album after album, 14 in total, have garnered him 4 Grammy awards and a producer/engineer/artist Grammy Certificate for his track on the Hank Williams Tribute – Timeless. He has received 11 Grammy nominations, in total, and most recently won the Grammy for Best Contemporary Blues Album for his collaborative album with Taj Mahal.



**JAKE SHIMABUKURO**

September 28 at 8 p.m.  
\$35 Reserved Seating  
Co-Presented with FPC Live

Jake Shimabukuro is an American ukulele virtuoso and composer known for his fast and intricate and skilled finger work. His first brush with the ukulele took place in Honolulu, Hawai'i, when his mother sat him down at age four and taught him to strum. Shimabukuro hasn't stopped since. The ukulele, with its humble four strings and modest two-octave range, is an instrument limited only by the imagination and creativity of the person playing it.

With a career stretching over 30 years, his music combines elements of jazz, blues, funk, rock, bluegrass, classical, folk, and flamenco. His most recent CD, *Nashville Sessions*, is one of his most adventurous, multifaceted and engaging records to date, blending elements of jazz virtuosity with heartfelt melodicism.



**RANDY BACHMAN**

September 29 at 8 p.m.  
\$65 - \$125  
Reserved Seating

In a rare and intimate setting, Randy Bachman weaves together the iconic hits of the Guess Who and Bachman-Turner Overdrive with the often-humorous stories that brought the songs to life. Inspired by his award-winning radio program "Vinyl Tap", Randy takes his master storytelling and voluminous musical knowledge on the road and takes fans on a retrospective of his career. A visual backdrop illustrating Randy's legendary rock n' roll journey will accompany each song, giving viewers a historical glimpse into one of Canada's greatest musical ambassadors. Randy Bachman's *Every Song Tells a Story* is a guided journey through the last 30 years of popular music presented by one of the greatest rock legends of our time.



**WITCHING HOUR**

October 12 - 13  
Lineup and passes coming Summer 2018  
Co-presented with Little Village Magazine

Witching Hour, a festival dedicated to exploring the unknown, discussing creative process, and presenting new work, will return to Downtown Iowa City on October 12 - 13. Each fall, the two-day event blends daring artists and thinkers who are pushing the boundaries of their respective crafts. Through performances, readings, discussions, workshops, and screenings, we engage what it means to be human in today's world and how we can build a greater society. Lineup, passes, and schedule will be released in Summer 2018. More information at [witchinghourfestival.com](http://witchinghourfestival.com) or find us on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.



**THE CAPITOL STEPS**

October 16 at 7:00 p.m.  
\$36.50 - \$48.50  
Reserved Seating

The Capitol Steps are gracing the stage with this year's biggest stars—Mike Pence, Hillary Clinton, Vladimir Putin, Bernie Sanders, and those who were gone too soon—Sean Spicer, Tom Price, Rex Tillerson, and, of course, the Mooch. Everyone's under suspicion when these former Congressional staffers poke fun at both sides of the aisle, cracking you up with song parodies like "How Do You Solve A Problem Like Korea" and "Wake Me Up In Mar-a-Lago." Sharing new songs from *Orange Is the New Barack*, get ready to enjoy politics being funny again. ■

*\*Ticket purchases may incur additional fees. For more information, please go to: [englert.org/about/understanding-ticket-fees](http://englert.org/about/understanding-ticket-fees)*

# Englert Commissions

*The amount of creativity contained within the Iowa City area is astounding. Musicians, artists, writers, photographers, and more are abundant within the Corridor, adding to the flavor of this Midwest oasis of art and culture. The Englert Theatre wanted to highlight this talent and began offering collaborative opportunities to local artists, commissioning projects to commemorate Englert milestones, our ever-supportive community, and the city we call home.*

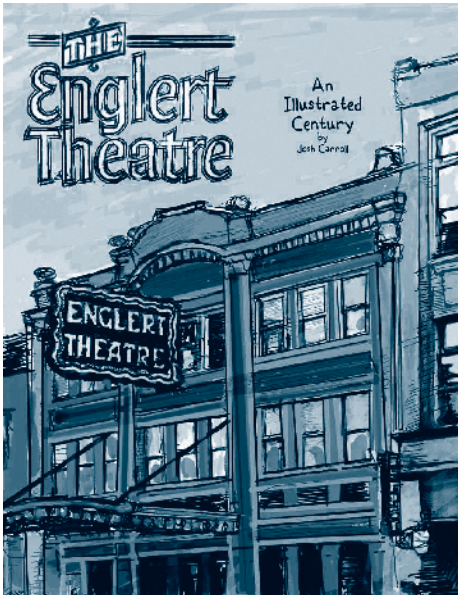


## Iowa City Song Project

In celebration of its 100th birthday in 2012, The Englert Theatre commissioned 31 Iowan musicians and bands to write and record songs inspired by Iowa City. The result is the *Iowa City Song Project*, an album as diverse and cutting edge as the city itself. The album contains a spectrum of music from roots-rock to the avant-garde, bringing together a community of artists in a unique musical experience. Give it a listen at <https://soundcloud.com/englert>. CDs and LPs are available for purchase at the box office.

## Englert at 100

*Englert at 100* showcases Iowa City-based photographer Sandy Dyas' celebration of the Englert's centennial year. Her photos document Englert show days from bus arrivals to post-performance loadouts. Dyas was given full access behind the scenes, capturing performers warming up in the dressing rooms and Englert staff working their offstage magic, creating an artistic documentation of the theater's identity.



## An Illustrated Century by Josh Carroll

Local artist Josh Carroll was commissioned to create a comic book documenting a century of Englert Theatre history including its 1912 Vaudeville origins, movie theatre heyday, and performing arts center reincarnation. This richly-illustrated timeline provides an engaging way to connect with the past and trace the journey of Iowa City's last remaining historic theater.

## Poetry by Dora Malech

In 2014, the Englert celebrated its 10-year anniversary as a nonprofit. Celebrations included special performances, dinners, and commissioned work from poet and former Iowa City resident Dora Malech. The Englert commissioned Malech to write original poetry for the anniversary, celebrating the theme of gratitude. Without the efforts and continuing support of the community, the Englert wouldn't exist as it is today, and we are forever grateful to our donors, sponsors, patrons, and volunteers.



## ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE 2014: Nat Baldwin

The Englert believes in supporting emerging and working artists and has created an Artist-in-Residence Program to allow artists time to work on their projects while experiencing and engaging with the Iowa Creative Corridor. Bassist/composer Nat Baldwin of the rock band Dirty Projectors was the first resident hosted in February 2014. Baldwin's residency included substantial time for him to work on new compositions as well as to engage with the Corridor community by conducting a songwriting workshop with students



IOWA CITY SONG PROJECT CDS AND LPS, ILLUSTRATED CENTURY BOOKS, AND PHOTOGRAPHY ARE AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE AT THE BOX OFFICE AND AT SELECT SHOWS.

from Tate High School and visiting area cultural institutions with local artists.

## Englert Beer Series

From Fall 2015 to Spring 2016, the Englert partnered with three local breweries to brew three original beers for the Englert Beer Series. Inspired by our past, present, and future, the original beers poured from the minds of brewers at Backpocket Brewing Company, Lion Bridge Brewing Company, and Big Grove Brewery. Backpocket's Riot of '84 Pre-Prohibition Lager was reminiscent of the beer likely made by John Englert at Iowa City's first brewery, and inspired by his hand in inciting the Beer Riots of 1884. Lion Bridge's Local Talent Robust Porter shines a spotlight on our mission of serving as a conduit between local and national scenes. Finally, Big Grove's Quantum Finish Hybrid-Style Double IPA is a funky beer aged in Cedar Ridge barrels with season citrus fruits, a true Corridor collaboration. Englert Beer Series beer may be available for purchase again in the future.

## The Evolution of Bruno Littlemore

The Englert's first-ever, commissioned original stage play, *The Evolution of Bruno Littlemore*, premiered in Spring 2016. It's a story of evolution, biological and lingual. It's a story of love, across boundaries and species. It's a story of oppression, of inequality and colonialism. It's the story of Bruno Littlemore, an unusually intelligent chimpanzee. Presented in partnership with Working Group Theatre and New Territory Dance Company, the piece is based on the novel from recent Iowa Writers' Workshop graduate Benjamin Hale.

## ARTISTS-IN-RESIDENCE 2016/2017: *Dis/Unity: A Service*

The Englert's Artist-in-Residence program hosted a group of artists for a week in Summer 2016 to workshop an in-the-making performance-based installation, *Dis/Unity: A Service*, which premiered before a live audience at the Deadwood Tavern, addressing trauma, liberation, and transcendence through sculptural installations and audience interaction. The final work premiered at the Englert in Fall 2017, and featured an ensemble of artists: Barber, Boubacar Djiga, Courtney D. Jones, Esther Baker-Tarpaga, Heidi Wiren Bartlett, Raquel Monroe, and Wendell Gray II. ■



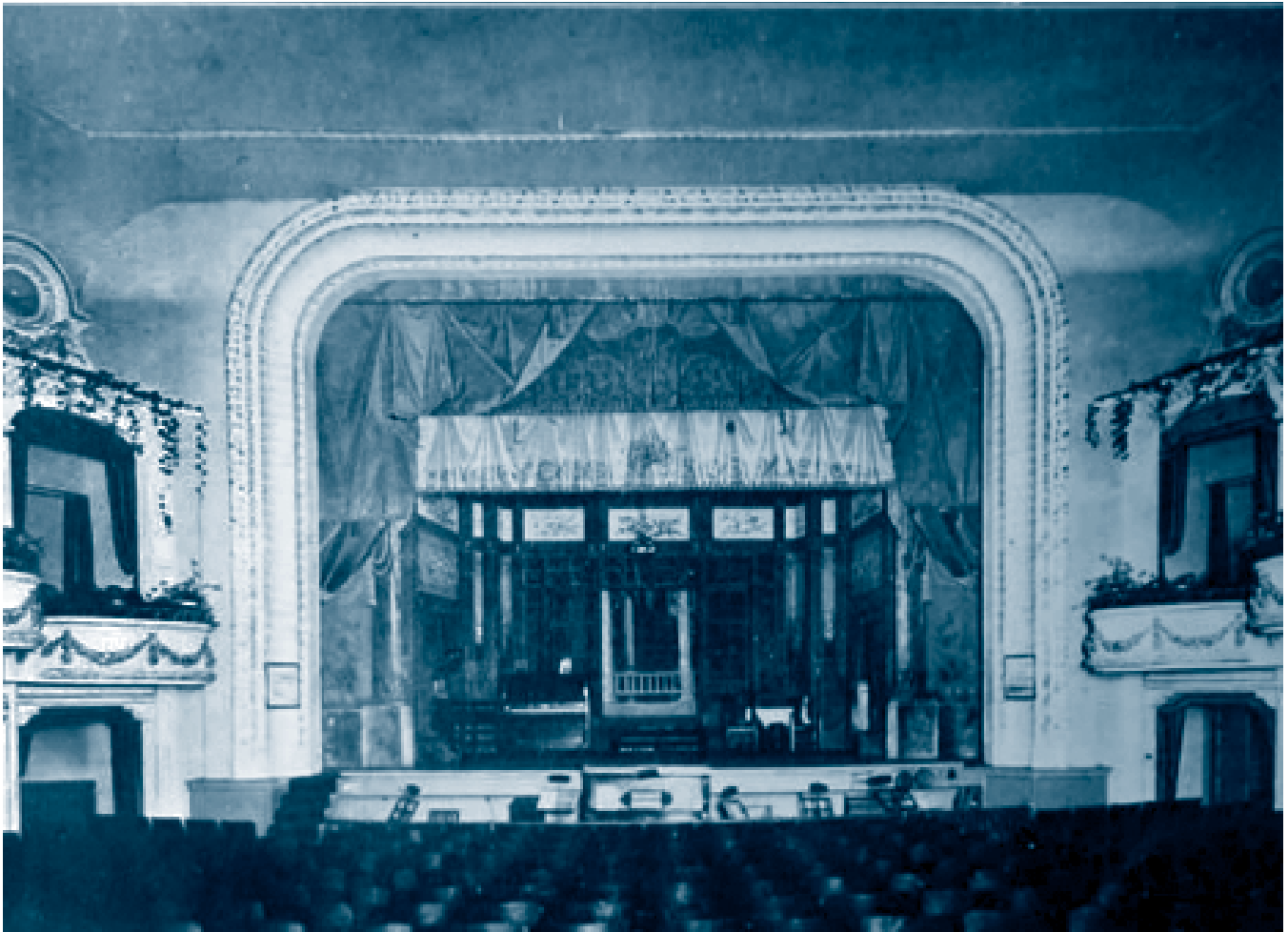


The face of the Englert circa 1912

## The History of the Englert

**THE ENGLERT THEATRE** debuted September 26, 1912, transforming a livery stable into a space that would host touring Vaudeville acts and movies for Iowa City citizens and students. Driven by the vision of William and Etta Englert, the space initially held 1,071 seats, a candy store, and a barbershop. The second floor was also the home of the Englert family, while the third floor housed touring performers.

William Englert died in his home in 1920, at the age of 46. Etta invited A.H. Blank and Nate Chapman to oversee the theatre's operations. Chapman died five years later but his wife Dora remained active in the Englert's management (along with her brother, Al Davis, and her son Ansel). Both Dora and Etta were present on February 13, 1926 for the fire that blazed through the Englert's roof, ultimately resulting in \$125,000 worth of damage to a property that had required only \$60,000 to build 14 years before. Etta Englert – along with her new husband James Hanlon, A.H. Blank, and Dora Chapman – immediately began working to restore the building with an eye to the ornate aesthetic tendencies of the twenties.



In the 1980's, Blank and Central States of Des Moines (A.H. Blank's company) – in partnership with the Chapman family – decided to transform the Englert into two small-screen movie theaters. The screens operated until 1999 when the managers of the Englert family finally decided to relinquish their claim on the property. It was snapped up by a bar owner with wishes to transform it into a nightclub, but a group of concerned citizens convinced the City of Iowa City to purchase the theater and hold the property in trust until funds could be raised to purchase the space outright.

Over the next five years, this group worked diligently to rebuild the Englert as a premier arts venue and a hub in the Iowa City cultural scene. In part – under the banner of “Save the Englert” – the group diligently raised funds to restore the Englert to its 1920's glory. The names of contributors are memorialized throughout the building, including on in the Capital Campaign plaque in the Englert lobby, on plaques throughout the theatre, as well as on the backs of the seats of the theatre.

The Englert was reintroduced to the Iowa City community on December 4, 2004, when the doors were opened to its first live performance in over 40 years. Since that time, the Englert has become an increasingly prominent part of the arts scene in the Midwest, not only through its role in organizing the Mission Creek and Witching Hour festivals, but also as it commissions new artistic works (such as “The Evolution of Bruno Littlemore”) and features new work from artists-in-residence (Nat Baldwin, composer, and the Dis/Unity performance art collective) ■

**BY SEAN GRENNAN • AUGUST 2-26**

New from the playwright of last year's fan favorite "Making God Laugh," this equally poignant and hilarious comedy reminds us that when one thing ends, something new begins. When Joy receives the unexpected gift of a new heart, she searches for meaning in her life and reminds us all of the importance of listening to what's inside of you.

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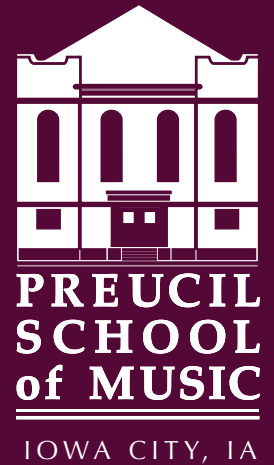
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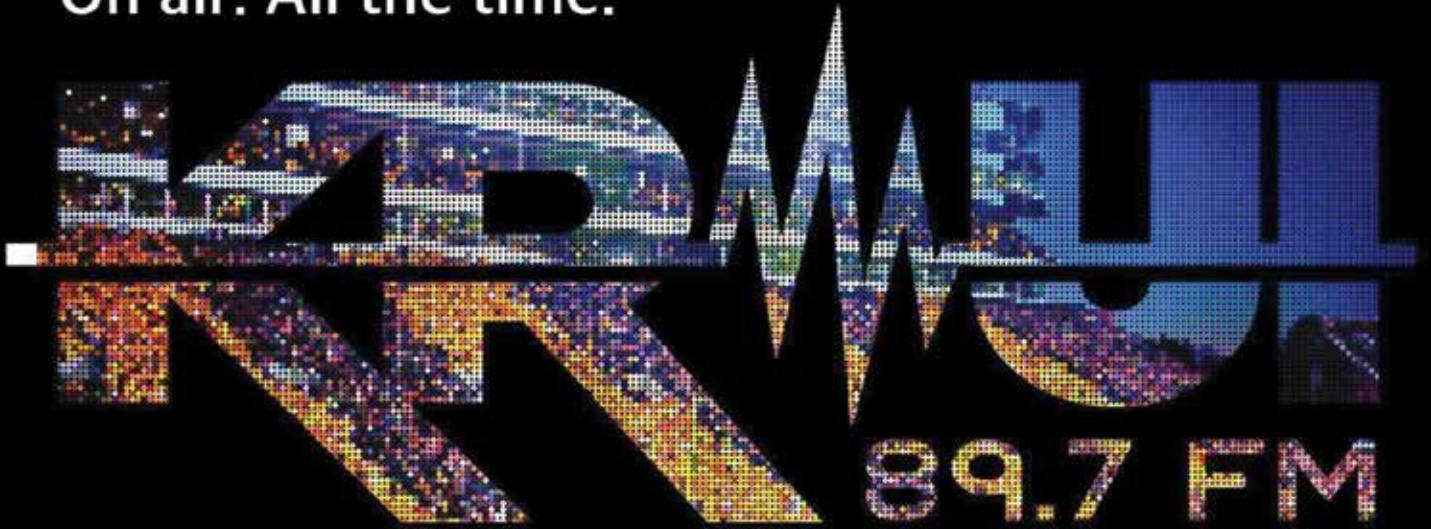
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City Circle Acting Company
  - Oct 4 **Glenn Miller Orchestra**  
Presented by the CCPA
  - Oct 19-21 **Sleepy Hollow, a Musical Tale**  
Young Footliters Youth Theatre
  - Dec 7-9 & 14-16 **Beauty & the Beast**  
City Circle Acting Company
  - Feb 15-17 **The Who's TOMMY**  
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# Audience Guidelines

In the age of lightning-fast entertainment that allows movies, music, and more to be downloaded in an instant to a smartphone, consumers may not be aware of how their technology and behavior can affect the concert-going experience for fellow audience members and for the performers themselves. The following guidelines need to be respected in order for all patrons and artists to have an enjoyable and safe experience. Please be courteous to those around you.

**If you need assistance during the show, please go to your nearest volunteer usher.** If additional assistance is needed, the usher will find the appropriate person to help you further.

**Please arrive on time.** We know parking downtown can be a hassle and our will-call lines can be long. Please allow extra time for travel, parking, and finding your seats. If you arrive late, we may ask you to wait until an appropriate break in the show to get you to your seats.

**Do not have conversations,** even whispering, during the concert or event. This will distract performers as well as fellow audience members. If your child becomes restless, frightened, or loud, please take him or her to the lobby.

**Silence all cell phones,** pagers, watches, and other devices. Don't text, tweet, blog, or surf the web. The glow from your device is distracting. You are here to enjoy the show, so please give the show your attention!

**Keep feet, bags, and children out of the aisles.** Blocking the aisles is against the fire code.

**Pay attention to venue rules and posted notices.** Many shows do not allow photography or recording. Flash photography is never allowed. If we ask you to stop, please do so.

**Pay attention to the vibe of the show.** If the crowd gets up and starts dancing, join them. Please don't try to do a one-person show for your own entertainment. We will ask you to sit down.

**Respect the supporting act:** You never know where they are going in the future. If you really dislike the music, take a walk or check out our current gallery exhibit on the second floor. Please be polite.

**Patrons are never allowed on stage.** Not before the show, during the show, or after the show.

**Grounds for removal:** If our staff finds you are not adhering to the above guidelines, we will give one verbal warning requesting that you change your behavior. If you continue to disregard the guidelines, we will request that you leave the premises. Being removed from more than one event will result in being banned from Englert-presented events for at least one calendar year. ■



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