

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE ENGLERT THEATRE

Spring 2019



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Thanks to their generous support, the Englert is able to bring the best locally and nationally known performers to the Iowa City/Coralville area.







Welcome to The Englert Theatre

A dazed crowd stood on the narrow sidewalk of East 4th Street just outside of the New York Theatre Workshop. A few people walked back and forth in jagged circular motions, figuring out their next steps. Some simply looked stunned, others viscerally upset. I walked, with purpose, towards 2nd Avenue and hailed a taxi. I opened the door and ushered in my colleagues. We sat in silence for a few moments as the cab headed southeast towards Dumbo.

We had just seen *Slave Play*, a remarkable new work by rising playwright Jeremy O'Harris. It analyzes the trauma of racial violence and its intersections with gender and sexuality in 21st Century America. The play was an absolute powerhouse. We should have been headed

to a café where we would sit for hours and dissect the various threads of discussion and emotion the play elicited. Yet, we were en route to St. Ann's Warehouse to see *The Jungle*, a new play about the refugee camp crisis in Calais, France. Our approach was certainly aggressive, but given our limited amount of time in the city it seemed necessary.

As a programmer, I am always looking for new work, trying to find the next performance to invite to Iowa City. Almost every year I explore the stages at Winter Jazzfest in the Village and Lower East Side of New York and I frequently see artists whose work ends up in our community (both Jaimie Branch and Mark Guiliana are past Winter Jazzfest performers who will make their way to Mission Creek 2019). The process isn't always so direct. Sometimes, the search isn't for the next artist to invite to Iowa City but rather the kind of conversation to bring to Iowa City.

Slave Play had a sold out run at NYTW. It was one of the most talked about new plays this season. It's probably not coming to Iowa City for a variety of industry-related reasons but mostly: money. Then why see it? Why invest two hours in such an experience that doesn't even have an opportunity to appear in our community?

One of our goals at the Englert is to progressively advance how we might tackle issues of our time through the work on our stage. Slave Play reaffirmed for me how well rendered a work must be to successfully navigate the difficult channels of race and gender in America and to also bring the entire audience into the performance with honesty and care. I left the theater not only amazed but with a series of notes on how we might attempt such a discourse in Iowa City venues.

We found our seats in St. Ann's Warehouse. The venue had been reinstalled as a makeshift café within a refugee camp. The audience sat on uncomfortable benches for three hours in sections that had been marked by nationality: Afghanistan, Sudan, Syria. We were in Afghanistan. The actors moved around and through us as they performed the work, several scenes happening concurrently on different sides of the cafe. We were enthralled, moved, and ultimately — as the play sought for us to be — displaced.

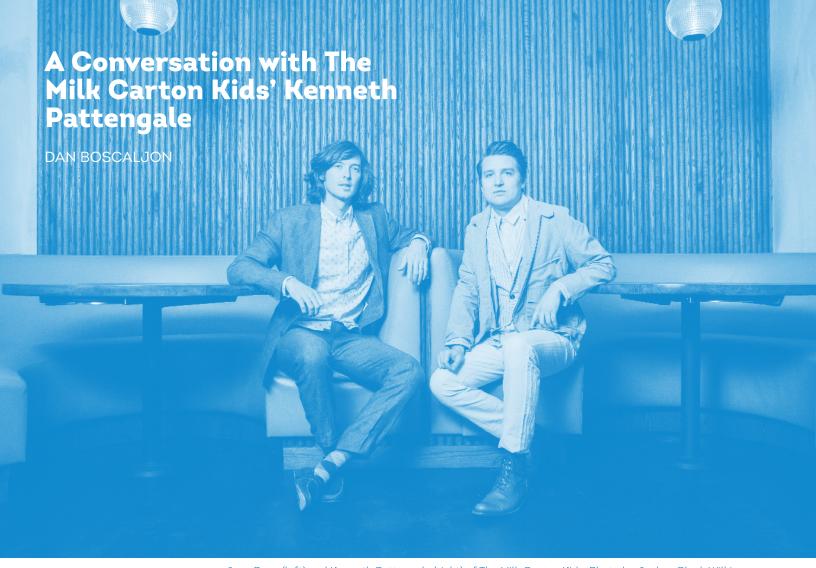
The Jungle also likely won't make it to Iowa City, but elements of this kind of theater — full immersion, split-narratives addressing human rights transgressions in the era of global capitalism, that creative and sociopolitical bravery — will make it to this town, whether as drama, music, literature, or all of the above; and it will happen at Riverside, Hancher, the Englert, or somewhere else closeby.

The presenter's work is to always seek out these kinds of conversations. It is part of our journey towards developing stronger empathy with the many voices in our community. Sometimes, yes, there is a specific show or artist that just makes sense and we can bring them to our town - to our concert halls and black box stages. Yet at other times we are simply looking for ways to open our minds to new ideas and figuring out how those ideas might engage with the place where we live.

Sincerely, Andre Perry **CONTACT US**

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Executive Director



Joey Ryan (left) and Kenneth Pattengale (right) of The Milk Carton Kids. Photo by Joshua Black Wilkins

The Milk Carton Kids return to the Englert on March 4, 2019 as they tour on their new album All the Things That I Did and All The Things That I Didn't Do, the first time that singer-songwriters and guitarists Kenneth Pattengale and Joey Ryan ventured beyond their known identity as a duo. Accordingly, unlike their previous two performances at the Englert, they'll bring along a band to support them. I spoke with Kenneth Pattengale, one half of the group's founding duo, while he was in NYC a few months before they performed - Dan Boscaljon

You've played at the Englert twice before.

The first time we came was opening for Over the Rhine in 2013, and that was right when our ship was taking off — the end of 2013, and when everything good was moving for us. I remember when we walked into the back of the Englert and looked past Over the Rhine's setup and saw the theater—it was one of those days

that we were happy to stand in the kind of concert hall where we were hoping to play. Until then, we'd had a mixture of dive bars and rock clubs and other locations that weren't perfect for our music. I remember distinctly that show at the Englert and how wonderful it was. We came back in 2016 — I remember that during our concert, tornado sirens were going off and we wondered if we should be alarmed — and the audience didn't do a thing. We thought: "Boy, should we seek shelter" and nobody really cared. I dated a woman from Iowa for a long time, and I have a secondhand knowledge of tornadoes and warnings thereof and if I heard them as often as you do I'd be desensitized as well.

The new album, which features more than voice and guitar, has become famous for its departure from your previous take on music — both the inclusion of other musicians and recording what essentially

was an improvisational jam for the first single, "One More for the Road." Can you talk a bit about what it was to think about songs without the kinds of restrictions that you'd placed on them before?

From the beginning, this whole thing was always envisioned with just the two of us. Necessarily, when writing songs or doing arrangements it was with the idea in mind that as long as Joey and I rolled up our sleeves we could get to what we were saying in a complete way. Everything was between the two of us, and knowable. If one of us has an idea, and it falls flat on its face, the two of us as we rehearse in a bedroom can tinker with it until it has the emotional impact we were going for.

When you write songs and you also know that you'll have a band — you don't have that kind of time, but need a faith and trust in other players that you'll get to it as the clock is running.

The primary difference was rather than following our natural progression — a song like "Michigan" would be something that before the song was finished, we'd look at shifting the harmonies or verses — we did it as it came up and felt natural. On this album, we had to table that and assume it'd be addressed during recording. Addressing the fundamentals of songwriting — a compelling melody, a simple and direct enough song, one you could sit down with one guitar and play and everyone would understand its identity—we needed to see that was achieved before going to the studio and stylizing it.

It expresses two paths toward the same end goal. Our earlier songs didn't miss out on anything, but this time we came to the material in a more direct way. It makes an evolution in our songwriting, as there are bolder statements and more primary colors — and that's a positive thing if it is that much more identifiable or relatable to an audience.

You've mentioned telling your musicians to avoid playing an A or A flat on "One More for the Road" to avoid clarifying whether it was in a major or minor key — how often do you work to bridge the space between such things?

I'd never really thought about it that way. This song, quite literally — you'll call bullshit or laugh — that instruction is because we were in F and playing an A or A flat would take it out of modal. I couldn't be trusted in a long solo to stick to one or another because I'm not a good enough guitar player. If I [were to choose major or minor], then [they could] do it — but if you do it, I'll fuck it up. That was specific for that song.

There's never been another declaration like that in our history, but the idea of working between major and minor is an idea that forms one of our unique qualities to the beginning. Less so than in the improvisational space in "One More for the Road" but in a more conscious space like

in "Michigan, or "Monterey," I play with accidentals in my lead guitar playing (the space filling I do while Joey and I sing — it's a misnomer). There are accidentals in my playing that create and release tension and create confusion over the more clear chord choices Joey uses as a skeleton for our songs. Our harmony choices and my guitar choices confuses what those lines or boundaries are. It isn't a heady musical process, but the pursuit of making this music feel like we want it to feel. It's purely a musical exercise, something done out of instinct or sheer expression.

The clearest example is in the chorus of our song "Michigan": the main harmony is a flat five...if you go on YouTube and look at covers, they sing a wrong note. The one I sing is not natural to the voice. We started it normal, but as we worked up the song, I told Joey to go back and I dropped it a half note. It was weird, but not enough that you had to think about it. A lot of music made today is

THIS WORK OF BLURRING THE LINES OF
MAJOR AND MINOR – IF THERE'S ANYTHING
THAT MAKES OUR BAND UNIQUE, IT'S THESE

written to be understood on an intellectual level, and I've always hated it because it makes me use the part of my brain that I wanted to turn off. When I flat that note, it's different and unsettling, but close enough that people feel it, rather than think about it. This work of blurring the lines of major and minor — if there's anything that makes our band unique, it's these movements to be felt and heard.

MOVEMENTS TO BE FELT AND HEARD.

You've mentioned that some of the songs on this album are more personal — more intimate, more vulnerable — than ones in the past. How do you think that does (or doesn't) relate to your decision to bring in other musicians? And how has that affected performing the songs live?

There's one difference, and it is fundamental — it goes in the opposite direction that the question asserts. It's not that them being there influences the idea to be more clear, more personal, or more on the line. The fact that they're there requires that you do so. For those songs, done up with a band, means that the songs need to be compelling whether one voice and guitar or with a band and backup singers. Before, the songs — you could write the chords and the notes, and if we didn't record it, someone else could play the song. If you're endeavoring to write that song and the lyrics that accompany the song, you need to go a little deeper, write in more primary colors, and lean into that side.

Because that was the context, we needed songs with that much more of an identity. I don't think that it's better or worse, just different. That, in combination with the time period in which we wrote the songs: life changed in a way that we wrote more

personally. I had a cancer diagnosis—thankfully everything now is okay—which fundamentally changed how I look at life and myself, and Joey had a second kid which flipped his world upside down, and obviously there's a lot going on in our world. We're both 37 this year. And this is a different scenario in which we write songs.

How has that changed your performance? Does the band play exclusively on the new songs, or do they fill in through some of your previous work?

We do a mixture of both. A lot of the old material is re-envisioned through the band, and it's been delightful to reinterpret the songs in a different way. It changes how they're performed.e can tap into something more fundamental about those older songs. I find personally that I step to the mic and sing them in a different way, a more direct way, a way that feels like you can rely on the lyrical content more than relying on me and Joey, two guitars, voices doing all the work. It casts the songs in a new light — not better or worse, just a different one.

Culturally speaking, what do you think the role of music — particularly folk music — is relative to discussing the truth of human relationships? Do you see it as exposing problems, as providing solace, opening new opportunities? Can the same song do things in multiple ways for different people at different times?

Folk music is such an interesting term because it encompasses so much. By definition, folk music pre-exists anybody ever thinking about music in this way. It's a musical representation of common folk and community, and an expression that isn't even musical — it comes from other personal and societal music. Music predates any other modern language. If you look at it anthropologically, cavemen grunted. Communication was inflection and music, prior to words. Here we are, so many years later, and there's still a necessity to communicate in that way.

It's taken a lot of iterations throughout human history. In recent history, it's become "Folk Music" with capital letters, and the Great American Folk Revival of the 60's and 70's with Dylan in the center. If you go before that, the progenitor was Guthrie and what was happening a few decades earlier, how it intersects with society and popular culture. If that isn't clear, you can fast forward to the aughts with Old Crow Medicine Show, Mumford and Sons, the Avett Brothers. It gets woven in differently than Dylan and Baez.

The one that Joey and I tap into as a band is folk music as a place where you can write from you heart, an honest place, a world view with a personal narrative in a way that sometimes is preachy, sometimes not. For us, it isn't meant to be that. We don't write rallying cries the way that social protest music from another era did. But it is personal, and serious, and is meant to be taken seriously. The way that society understands folk music as a space protects that — it's the context that lets us write songs that people will take seriously.

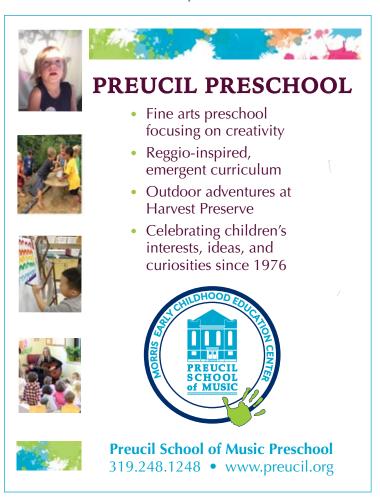
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Photo courtesy of Dan Cronin

Staff Spotlight: Dan Cronin

DAN BOSCALJON

Our inaugural Englert Theatre Nonfiction
Fellow is Dan Cronin, a third-year MFA
Candidate in the UI Nonfiction Writing
Program. Before Iowa, Dan worked in online
media, TV, and documentary film in New York
and Los Angeles. As a student, he was elected
Student Ambassador of the Nonfiction Writing
Program and he co-hosts Anthology, a reading
series featuring writers from the NWP, Iowa
Writers' Workshop, and Literary Translation
program. A gay Eagle Scout from the suburbs
of Chicago, Dan writes about the American
culture wars and Midwestern angst. His work
has been published by South Side Weekly and
The Rumpus.

The Englert Theatre Nonfiction Fellowship provides you with the space and opportunity to watch performances at the Englert and reflect on what you've witnessed. What is one of your favorite past Englert events?

Definitely when I saw John Waters there
— that was in 2016. I've always appreciated
him and his sense of humor and how weird

he is. I saw him in NYC and was excited when he was coming to Iowa City.

You have a diverse background in other art forms already — including online media, television, and documentary film. How do you anticipate that this generous background will frame how you engage with the music, dance, and other performances that the Englert offers?

I am from the Midwest and I've pretty much been here except a brief jaunt in New York and L.A. The Midwest artistic identity isn't discussed. I'm interested to see if there is a way to characterize the Midwestern aesthetic — I want to understand what we like here, what our identity is here.

I'm also excited about my own writing and to be more multi-modal in my own writing. I've been in this program for the past three years, thinking about texts, and it'll be cool to think about music, film, comedy, performance and how that can be integrated into my work going forward.

In general, how much do you think your writing benefits from engaging in other forms of art in addition to literature? Do you have any specific examples of how your prose has been influenced by other kinds of performance?

When you're trying to recreate a past event in writing, [documentary] film is a good go-to. Old footage helps you know how to paint a scene, and how to bring things I wasn't present for back to life. I think about how to describe things the way that a camera pans the room: if I were a camera panning around, what would that look like?

Also, improv: I taught a community master class on how to use improv to help writing. It helps get out of your head: saying yes to things, chasing ideas in the spirit of exploration, even if it isn't productive, just to see if it can elevate your work. I also used to do stand-up comedy — it's essayistic, the way that it moves or functions from one idea to the next. Essays also follow associative orders, not just narrative orders.

The fellowship provides the opportunity to create prose that responds to other sorts of artistic performance—what do you think that nonfiction adds to a reader's ability to appreciate other forms of art?

Nonfiction is super-accessible, it has been around for a long time, and we use it all the time — it appears to be straightforward prose. People also trust nonfiction — it's testimony, usually fact-based. It's something that is not too intimidating for people. Memoirs are the best selling genre of books. There's something to attesting to experience.

This is true for a lot of writing — language is something we interact with everyday. It's on your cereal box. Different kinds of art, the language can be informed by what you're writing about, and you can create different experiences for your reader, with your prose. The content can be explanatory, but the pacing of an essay, the build up, maybe a bunch of long sentences

like Virginia Woolf's prose where it all suddenly comes to an end: being able to do that with your prose, with staccato prose, with starting and stopping — we usually associate that with music or theater. But I think there's a good way to manipulate prose, content aside, in terms of its structure to replicate different experiences. People can get it, but writing can make your heart race. It can play with tempo, and the experience of what's going on beneath the language processing.

Given your interest in writing about American culture wars and general Midwestern angst, what kinds of Englert programming are you looking forward to seeing this spring, and how do you anticipate it affecting you?

I'm definitely interested in The Second City coming again — I had some experience with them when I was living in Chicago. They're a Midwestern institution, they

created improv. The tragedy of the Midwest is that they get training here, and they get poached. I think it has to do with how we talk here, using innuendo to express dislike — comedy picks up on that and uses it elsewhere. The improv tradition is Midwestern.

I am also interested in David Sedaris. I see him as someone who almost has the dream job as a gay writer. I've never seen him read, but I've seen the range he has so I'm interested to see the Sedaris we get in Iowa.

You've spent some time in some of America's biggest cities — Chicago, L.A., and NYC. How have you found your time in Iowa City? How do you think it compares?

When I first arrived, I was a bit mortified, mostly by my assumptions about Iowa City. I went to Chicago most weekends and figured that's how I'd stay sane. But I gradually started to go to events and make

friends. But I've stayed here most of my breaks. I enjoy Iowa City, I think there's something interesting about it, and I don't think I'll ever find another place like this. The community is small, but in a nice way. You can bump into people at performances or readings, you'll see them around. You have the lit walk on the streets — it's part of the town. I'll visit whenever I can after I'm done with the program, and it makes sense that the writing programs are here. It's an interesting slice of America.

Being able to be in a city like Iowa City is supportive — I've never not felt safe here — but you can't ignore the larger state or region. I don't feel like I'm in a bubble. It feels real here. Chicago, New York, L.A. lets you feel more insulated. You get a diversity of values and perspectives. Teaching, too. My students and I are talking and thinking about these things. It's not an echo chamber, there are a lot of different voices.

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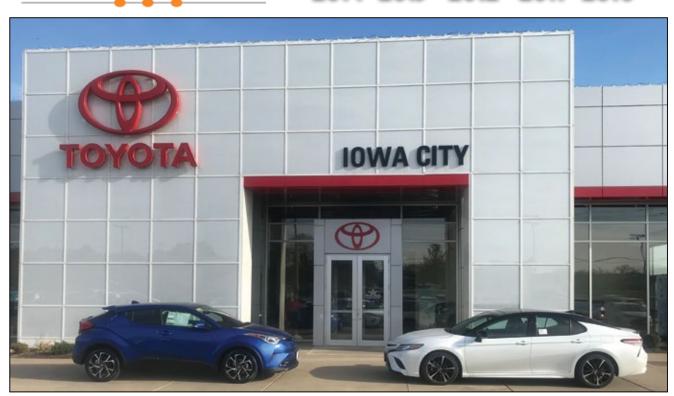


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Gregory Alan Isakov. Photo by Rebecca Caridad



Kamasi Washington at the Englert on October 31, 2018.

Photo by Zak Neumann

Active Audiences IV: Conceiving Cultural Contexts

DAN BOSCALJON

In each volume of Stages, staff writer and critic Dan Boscaljon shares insights and tips from his seat.

For one shining week in the fall of 2018, the

Englert featured three very different performances: jazz-saxophonist Kamasi Washington, singer-songwriter Gregory Alan Isakov, and modern dance company Ailey II. Each of these events was masterful in its own way. Having occurred within a single week, it allowed a unique opportunity to view them as a set, and to compare differences beyond genre.

Our awareness of the world around us is inevitably shaped and modified by our environment and our experiences. What we have invested our time and energy in in our past provides the platform from which we experience our present, and additionally frames what we find in our future. These narrowed limitations are natural: they help us to move through our days with competence, without being overwhelmed, but also allow a deep and informed way to experience an artistic performance.

One way to expand awareness of what a performance involves is to attend performances with different kinds of people. There is a vast difference between seeing a show alongside someone who has a deep knowledge of a band's back catalogue versus someone who is a first time listener. Each introduce a viable perspective, as the knowledge an individual has of the artist informs what kinds of experiences are available. Beyond a deep familiarity with an artist, one gleans a different perspective from discussing a performance with a drummer, pianist, vocalist, dancer, with someone who has done light design, or with someone who has knowledge of film. Each of these perspectives allows different, but familiar elements to be brought into the foreground.

Artists, of course, are just as contextualized by their pasts and environments as audiences. Just as a philosopher or theologian can attempt to speak abstractly about art, so also can artists focus on having an abstracted relationship with an art form, or the truth that an art work expresses. Although all art is anchored in something that can be shared from human experience, some art is more successful

at providing experiences that can be appreciated by humans of all ages, of all languages, and from all backgrounds.

This, to me, was the beauty of watching the dancers of Ailey II, whose bodies depicted human experiences of grief and joy in ways that everyone could appreciate. The cost of this was a suppression of each dancer's individuality in a way that allowed for something more universal to be expressed. In other words, the performer's personal background was made invisible so that the movement of the group would be maximally open to any one person in the audience.

The experience of Kamasi Washington and his band was quite different. Performing five days before Ailey II, on Halloween, the band began by wearing costumes. The nature of the jazz music, generated from the technical skill and isolated wizardry of the performers allowed for a far more idiosyncratic sense of art. Anchored by Washington's physically formidable frame, the band performed songs that seemed to open to the audience from a very specific point of view. The highlight came at the night's close, with their performance of "Fists of Fury," an apocalyptic cry for justice that was simultaneously beautifully executed and historically contextualized. It is difficult to imagine that song being written and performed outside of the historical contexts of American jazz and racial oppression.



Ailey II at the Englert on November 4, 2018.

Photo by Zak Neumann

Put very concretely, it is almost impossible to think of Gregory Alan Isakov, the beautiful balladeer from Colorado, as being capable of covering that particular song. Isakov, a transplant from South Africa, cultivates an Americana based in beautiful, dreamy soundscapes. Featuring a contingent of all white men from Colorado, there's a sense of something utopic and melancholic in the tonality of the songs, and their Saturday night performance at the Englert — softly lit, softly sung — was spellbinding. Their world was one void of any problem that could induce fury, with no space for fists: it was calm, peaceful, lovely.

The contrasts among the performers did much to highlight the different contexts that allowed their art to shine, as well as the different ways that race and politics implicitly inform — sometimes by different forms of omission — the kinds of art made by Americans today. The caliber of the artists and their skill at creating worlds in which audience members could enter, had much to do with being able to reflect on the kinds of historical conditions that allow certain performers to make certain kinds of art, the ways that artists can exaggerate or hide their individual idiosyncrasies in service to their art, and ways that these artworks, or worlds, invited me as an audience member to join with them.

In order to actively engage in this type of audience appreciation, consider some of the following questions as a way to prepare yourself for art:

- 1: What sorts of assumptions, cares, and values characterize the world that you typically occupy? What kinds of experiences do you assume about others in this world? What kind of art do you enjoy that supports this world?
- 2: Good performances tend to be good in different ways, and the best are always expositions of what particular values an individual performer—or a collective—hold. Musicians might express these values lyrically, choosing reference points that matter, but also will express values through musical choices—whether a composition shows a desire for improvisation or for the kind of virtuoso presentation that requires discipline and precision, for example.
- 3: Experience ways that the performance invites you to engage with it: some groups prefer to be watched as they perform, others actively solicit audience engagement and invite others to be collaborators. Each is a form of sharing: the different approaches contextualize how artists open and close the world of music they wish to share.
- 4: A good performance often invites you to return back to your world having briefly occupied a different vision for how to live. Sometimes, it is worth thinking about—or discussing, even—what kind of vision and values seemed to collect in the performance. Sometimes, art is powerful enough to encourage you to change your life—and learning to appreciate the worlds that inform an artist, as well as the world invited in a performance, can empower you to respond in this way. What did you think about what was witnessed?









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MITSKI, JENNY LEWIS, HURRAY FOR THE RIFF RAFF, BLACK MOTH SUPER RAINBOW JOHN MORELAND, KEVIN YOUNG, JERICHO BROWN, R.O. KWON, KWEKU COLLINS MOOR MOTHER . JAY SOM . MARK GUILIANA SPACE HEROES + BEAT MUSIC STEPHANIE BURT . SABRINA ORAH MARK . NOURA MINT SEYMALI . PETE DOMINICK GUERILLA TOSS . LILLY HIATT . BECCA MANCARI . MIDDLE WESTERN THE CACTUS BLOSSOMS. JAIMIE BRANCH, MAKAYA MCCRAVEN, MOCK IDENTITY MICHAEL MARTONE, DANIEL GUMBINER, RATBOYS, HIDE, ELIZABETH MOEN MESHA MAREN, CHEF PZ X THE CUBIST, GOOD MORNING MIDNIGHT, YOUNGER CRYSTAL CITY . MARIA KUZNETSOVA . ABRAHAM SMITH . JENNIFER CHENG VISUAL POETRY SYNTHESIZER WITH MAXWELL NEELY-COHEN. THE BELIEVER THE IOWA REVIEW . CONTAINER PRESS . TWO DOLLAR RADIO . MONSTERS OF POETRY THE MISSOURI REVIEW. NINTH LETTER. FONOGRAF EDITIONS ICE CREAM COMICS + ZINE FAIR . LIT WALK UNDERGROUND SHOWCASE, LITERARY MAGAZINE & SMALL PRESS BOOK FAIR BIG FREE SHOW + VINYL MARKET AT BIG GROVE BREWERY & TAPROOM AND MORE

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Mitski / Jenny Lewis / Hurray for the Riff Raff/Black Moth Super Rainbow / John Moreland / Kevin Young Jericho Brown / R.O. Kwon / Kweku Collins / Glory Edim / Moor Mother / Jay Som / Mark Guiliana SPACE HEROES + BEAT MUSIC / Stephanie Burt / Brandon Alexander Williams / Sabrina Orah Mark Noura Mint Seymali / Pete Dominick / Guerilla Toss / Lilly Hiatt / Becca Mancari / Middle Western The Cactus Blossoms / Jaimie Branch / Makaya McCraven / Mock Identity / Ratboys / and many more...

Presented by The Englert Theatre. Schedule and tickets at the Englert Box Office or missioncreekfestival.com.



JENNY LEWIS WITH TBA

April 2 at 7 p.m. Included with festival pass OR \$39.50 G.A. OR \$89.50 with Goosetown Kick-off Party

One of the most celebrated and respected performers of her generation, Jenny Lewis got her start as the dynamic frontwoman of influential LA group Rilo Kiley in 1998. She has since released three albums under her name, most recently 2014's *The Voyager*. In addition to her solo work, she was a member of The Postal Service, part of the duo, Jenny and Johnny, as well as the lead

vocalist for Nice As Fuck. Lewis has collaborated with Beck, Elvis Costello, Ryan Adams and M. Ward, among others. She has also written music for films such as the musical/drama, *Song One*, starring Anne Hathaway and *Very Good Girls* starring Dakota Fanning and Elizabeth Olsen. Her forthcoming album *On the Line* will be released on March 22.



MITSKI WITH JAY SOM AND GOOD MORNING MIDNIGHT

April 5 at 7 p.m. Included with festival pass OR \$22 G.A. Co-presented with SCOPE Productions Sponsored by OPN Architects

Mitski Miyawaki has always been wary of being turned a symbol, knowing we're quick to put women on pedestals and even quicker to knock them down. Nonetheless, after the breakout success of 2016's *Puberty 2*, she was hailed as the new vanguard of indie rock, the one who would save the genre from the

white dudes who've historically dominated it. Her carefully crafted songs have often been portrayed as emotionally raw, overflowing confessionals from a fevered chosen girl, but in her fifth album, *Be The Cowboy*, Mitski introduces a persona who has been teased but never so fully present until now — a woman in control.



HURRAY FOR THE RIFF RAFF WITH ELIZABETH MOEN AND NADALANDS

April 6 at 7 p.m. Included with festival pass OR \$20 G.A.

As far as Bronx native Alynda Segarra had come with her band, Hurray for the Riff Raff, there was still a missing link to her story. Segarra realized she is a Puerto Rican kid from the Bronx with a different story to tell and to find her way back home, Segarra became the vessel for a character she calls, "The Navigator." Through The Navigator, Segarra's voice speaks with a

husky weariness that coexists with a naïve curiosity. Long-time Riff Raff fans should feel at home in The Navigator's world. It's the voice of a rebel who wanted everyone to think she was so tough, and nobody could take her down, but at the same time was yearning for love and magic, some kind of an awakening.

MAKAYA MCCRAVEN with Black Moth Super Rainbow and The Only Ion

Gabe's Sat,, April 6 @ 9 p.m



JAIMIE BRANCH (MCF 2019 ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE) with Mark Guiliana Space Heroes

The Mill Thurs., April 4 @ 8 p.m.



RATBOYS with Pink Neighbor and Halfloves

The Mill Wed., April 3 @ 7:30 p.m.



MARK GUILIANA SPACE HEROES with Jaimie Branch (MCF artist-in-residence)

The Mill Thurs., April 4 @8 p.m.



GOOD MORNING MIDNIGHT with Mitski and Jay Som

The Englert Theatre Fri., April 5 @ 7 p.m.



NOURA MINT SEYMALI with Black Stork

The Mill Tues., April 2 @ 8:30 p.m.



MCF Staff Picks

BY MCF & ENGLERT STAFF

Want the insiders' view of this year's lineup? Staff of The Englert Theatre and Mission Creek Festival share their 2019 recommendations.

ANDRE PERRY

Executive Director

Makaya McCraven, Jaimie Branch (artist-in-residence), and Mark Guiliana (Space Heroes + Beat Music) are the hidden (or known) gems of this year's festival. Together they represent the ever-riveting landscape of jazz in the 21st Century — a form that has been re-energized by avant-garde, electronic, hip-hop influences.

SARAH SHONROCK

Operations Director

Jaimie Branch was awesome at Witching Hour and is going to be awesome at Mission Creek.

BRIAN JOHANNESEN

MCF Community Programming Director

Every year there are bands at MCF that I have not heard before and end up becoming a favorite. Last year one was Counterfeit Madison, this year it has been Ratboys. I had never heard of them until they entered the MCF lineup and their latest record *GN* has been in constant rotation since. They're one of those great indie rock bands that remind you of like 10 bands you love but still have a unique and fresh vibe. I'll be there and I will be smiling.

CONNOR WADE

Development Associate

I'm anxiously counting down the days until Mark Guiliana comes to Iowa City to perform with Space Heroes and Beat Music. Mark consistently pushes the boundaries of creativity in jazz, electronic music, and his approach to the drumset.

I've been quietly engulfed in the music of Good Morning Midnight through the winter and I'm drawn to the group's raw indie-rock power and rich lyrical content. Sharing the bill with powerhouses Mitski and Jay Som will make this a special show.

KATIE ROCHE

Development Director

Noura Mint Seymali is my number one pick this year. I'm so excited for the opportunity to see one of Mauritania's most important musicians in the intimate space of The Mill.

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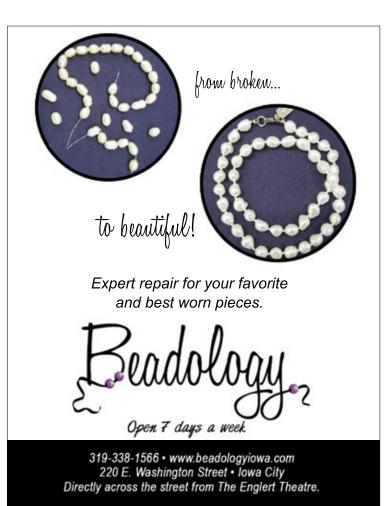


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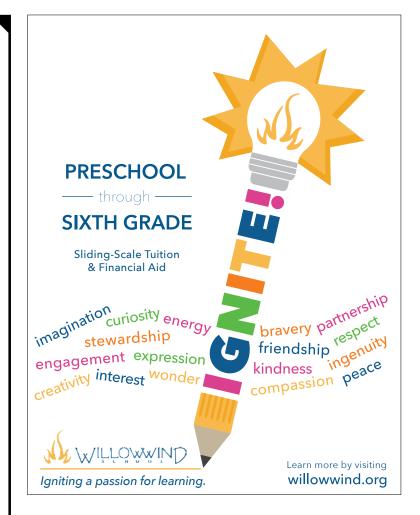






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Upcoming Events



ST. PAUL & THE BROKEN BONES

Tues., March 26 at 7:30 p.m. \$44.50 Reserved Seating Sponsored by Hothouse Yoga & Rylan & Ross DeValois of MidAmerica Securities Mgt Co

St. Paul & The Broken Bones formed in 2012, quickly rising on the national scene, and the band worked hard to prove they were no mere retro-soul band—from touring the world relentlessly, including opening for The Rolling Stones, to appearing on every talk show imaginable. Paul Janeway's fearless showmanship, thoughtful lyrics, and dedication to his performance has become the band's calling card. Paired with a full eight-man roster comprised of some of the best young instrumentalists in the South, they are a must-see event. With his band's new album, *Young Sick Camellia*, Janeway has created a space for St. Paul & The Broken Bones to rival any forward-thinking band making music today, based on a concept all-too familiar to him: family, and how we love them despite our differences.





PATRICIA MARX & ROZ CHAST

In Conversation with Lauren Haldeman Tues., April 9 at 7 p.m. \$25 Reserved Seating Presented by Prairie Lights Bookstore

Patty Marx has never been able to shake her mother's one-line witticisms from her brain, so she's collected them into Why Don't You Write My Eulogy Now So I Can Correct It?: A Mother's Suggestions, accompanied by full color illustrations by cartoonist Roz Chast. Patty Marx has been contributing to The New Yorker since 1989. She is a former writer for Saturday Night Live and Rugrats, and is the author of several books. After graduating from the Rhode Island School of Design in 1977, Roz Chast returned to New York City, where she quickly established her cartooning career. In addition to her New Yorker cartoons, Chast has written and illustrated a range of books. Her memoir, Can't We Talk About Something More Pleasant? won a National Book Critics Circle Award and was shortlisted for a National Book Award.

AN EVENING WITH LEO KOTTKE

Sponsored by Artifacts Sat., April 13 at 8 p.m. \$33.50 - \$53.50 Reserved Seating

In his nearly four decades of recording and performing, Leo Kottke has set the highest standard for acoustic finger-picked guitar. Kottke wows with his dexterity and musicianship, which are just as sharp as his well-maintained sense of humor. Known for his compelling original compositions as well as his arrangements of cover songs, Kottke has recorded an extensive catalog over 50 years. In 1968, he made his recording debut LP *Twelve String Blues* which led him to Capitol Records, where he flourished with records like 1972's "\ *Greenhouse* and 1973's live *My Feet Are Smiling*. In addition to his own work, Kottke gained attention for his collaboration with Phish's Mike Gordon, with whom he's recorded two albums, 2002's *Clone* and 2005's *Sixty Six Steps*.



NEKO CASE

With Shannon Shaw of Shannon and The Clams Mon., April 29 at 8 p.m. \$42.50 Reserved Seating

It's been five years since the last solo release from singer-songwriter Neko Case, with a New Pornographers album and case/lang/viers, her lauded supergroup with k.d. lang and Laura Viers, in between. As with her previous albums, her latest, *Hell-On*, spins away from conventions of story, slipping into real life, with its fierce mess and blind catastrophes. The new songs are lyrically rich, telling stories that walk a line between fables and true life. It's a forceful and confident performance from an artist who digs deep to explore history and myth, nature and fate — bringing forth songs to show us new ways of looking at the world and ourselves.



THE TALLEST MAN ON EARTH

Sponsored by Goosetown Cafe & The Tuesday Agency Thurs., May 2 at 8:30 p.m. \$35 - \$55 Reserved Seating

Performing as The Tallest Man on Earth, Swedish folk singer-songwriter Kristian Matsson has commanded stages in front of tens of thousands of fans at a time, often backed by no one at all. The Tallest Man on Earth will perform this May in support of his five-part series, When The Bird Sees The Solid Ground. Released in installments throughout the year, this project is both unique and very in sync with Mattson's style. Each performance is a melancholic journey that holds an unimaginable amount of sincerity and beauty to it. From being absent in one's own life to the self-doubt that lingers in all of our minds, Mattson is at his most personal, and the payoff is extraordinary.



DAVID BROMBERG QUINTET & LOUDON WAINWRIGHT III

Sat., May 18 at 7:30 p.m. \$36.50 - \$56.50 Reserved Seating

Two American music greats David Bromberg Quintet and Loudon Wainwright III are coming to the Englert stage. A godfather of Americana and accomplished blues guitarist and multi-instrumentalist, Bromberg is renowned for his unparalleled playing and gift for interpretation. His career spans more than 45 years, with collaborators such as Bob Dylan, George Harrison, Jerry Garcia, Carly Simon, Emmylou Harris, and The Eagles. Songwriter and folk-guitarist Loudon Wainwright III came to fame when *Dead Skunk* became a Top 20 hit in 1972. His songs have since been recorded by Bonnie Raitt, Johnny Cash, Earl Scruggs, Kate & Anna McGarrigle, his son Rufus Wainwright, and Mose Allison, among others.

^{*}Ticket purchases may incur additional fees. For more information, please go to: englert.org/about/understanding-ticket-fees

To the Naked Mole Rats at the National Zoo

STEPHANIE BURT

Buck-toothed and semitransparent, pretty to no one, butt of a joke and protagonist of a cartoon, you make ridicule seem inescapable, not at home anywhere sunlight might penetrate the circuitous air, or else at home only on paper, a mockup of a colony on the moon.

What with the light fixtures' shadows and the (exhale, inhale, exhale) water vapor, your tunnels look almost opaque, their entrance strobing like a zoetrope:

some unambitious, sheltering version of heaven, or mild first level of hell. Alexander Pope with his grotto and chronic pain, might have had a lot to say about your lot, so eager to immure one another, yet always on view to the grade-schoolers whose eyes, below woven caps and sun hats, make a meal of you. They could see you as unfinished, or as a mistake. One compared you to severed toes. Another called all of you "skin tubes," which seems apropos, if rude; it describes us all, though your motives are pure, your will therefore harder to break.



A special thanks to the Iowa Review and Stephanie Burt for allowing us this poem. Burt's piece can be found in issue 44.2. Visit iowareview.org or Prairie Light's Bookstore to get your copy today!

Stephanie Burt is Professor of English at Harvard and the author of several books of poetry and literary criticism, among them Advice from the Lights (Graywolf, 2017), a National Endowment for the Arts Big Read Selection. Her next critical book, Don't Read Poetry: A Book About How to Read Poems, will be published by Basic Books in May 2019.

Stephanie Burt, will read at Maxwell Neely-Cohen's the Visual Poetry Synthesizer as The Iowa Review's Featured Visitor

Sat., April 6 at 4 p.m. Venue TBA Details at: missioncreekfestival.com

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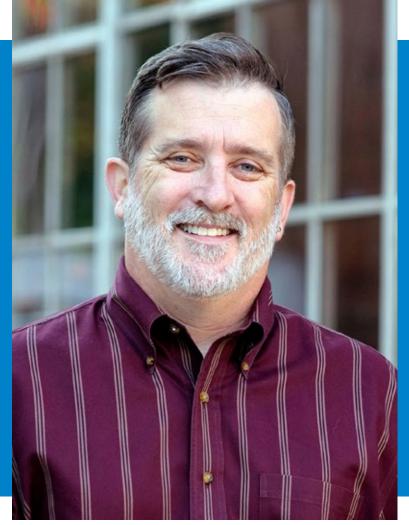
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Kurt Michael Friese, a long time Friend of the Englert and sponsor of The Englert Theatre passed away unexpectedly in the fall of 2018. The Englert extends our sympathy to Kurt's family and friends and remembers him fondly.

"There was never a time when Kurt said no to a request to support the Englert with his beautiful food. Instead he said, 'Let me see how to make that work.' Many fundraising events were made successful due to the Friese family's generous, community minded spirit," said Katie Roche, Englert Development Director. "I'll never forget Kurt laughing, telling stories, and thoughtfully explaining each dish from his station at the table we'd set up in the orchestra pit. Wherever you found Kurt and his food, it felt warm and inviting, like you were in his kitchen."

Thank you for everything Kurt. We're going to miss you.

Thank you to the following community members for their gifts given in memory of Kurt: Lisa Baum, Rose Marie Friedrich, Bill & Kristin Gerth, Michael & Gail Hensch, Iowa City Area Development Group, Melvin Sager & Agnes Corgin, Paul & Gerianne Schaefer, Rod Sullivan & Melissa Fath, Dick & Joyce Summerwill, an anonymous donor, and The Nowak Family Fund.



Our Volunteers

OUR VOLUNTEERS HAVE DONATED OVER 60,000 HOURS OF THEIR TIME

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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!

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY

You will be directed to leave the building by the sounding alarm or by theatre personnel. When exiting, please proceed in an orderly and prompt fashion to a safe area away from the building. We request you convene at the pedestrian mall located west of the building. Theatre staff will announce updates on if and when it is safe to re-enter the building.



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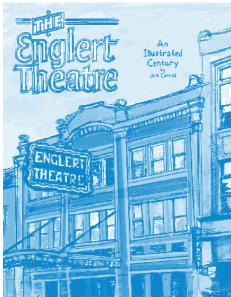
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Englert Commissions







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

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

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 reminiscient 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 Hyrbrid-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 inthemaking 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.







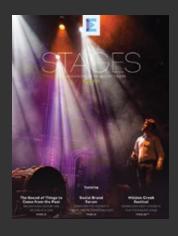
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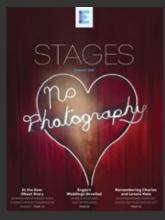
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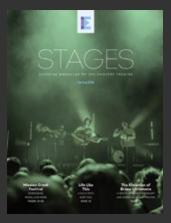
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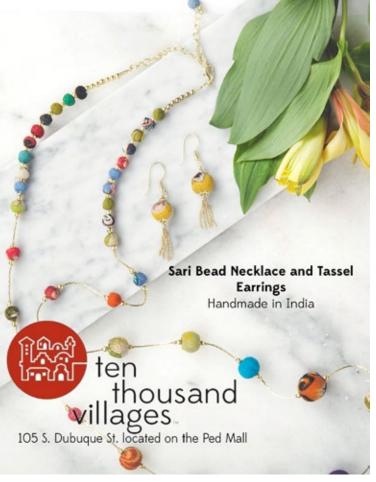
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The face of The Englert circa 1912

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.



The original interior of The Englert Theatre circa 1917

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) ■

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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