



STAGES

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE ENGLERT THEATRE

Spring 2016



Mission Creek Festival

INTERVIEWS,
PICKS, AND MORE

PAGES 15-30

Life Like This

A Q & A WITH
KURT VILE

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LAGOS

MY LAGOS MY WAY

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Welcome to The Englert Theatre



We are looking into a deep, deep lake.

We tell ourselves that we will not take too much on, that we won't be as bold (or foolhardy) as we were in the past, that we'll give ourselves more time and space the next time around, but we always seem to find ourselves with so much to do in such a small amount of time. And here we are again, in the middle of our spring season at The Englert Theatre and we can't seem to find our breath.

By the time you read this, our production manager and her crew will be sleeping under the balcony or on the side of the stage catching what little rest they can in between the artist who just left and the artist who is on their way. Our marketing director will be writing emails, putting up posters, and hounding the press in earnest attempts to get everyone to pay attention. Our Box Office and front of house will be welcoming customers, navigating fearlessly a list of behind-the-scenes showtime problems that you will never know about, and making sure that somehow, someway, you get tickets to that concert that sold out three weeks ago. And our development director will be talking to you about why the work on our stage is so important and about what we need to do, collectively, to ensure that the arts are sustained and grow into the future. I will be counting attendance, sweating out numbers, collapsing revenue and expense statements into unwieldy spreadsheets, looking for black, cursing red, and slipping between the cracks like a ghost when our staff asks me why there is so much work to do. And all along, I will quietly be planning to send us back into this beautiful vortex just about six months down the line.

This particular spring's moment of hubris presents itself in April. At the top of the month we launch the eleventh installment of the Englert-produced Mission Creek Festival, a weeklong arts and culture romp across Iowa City, and at the end of the month we present the world premiere of our very first Englert-produced play—*The Evolution of Bruno Littlemore*—in collaboration with Working Group Theatre. The festival, running April 5 - 10, brings musicians, comedians, filmmakers, and writers to our venues, restaurants, stores, and public library. Following a loose theme of storytelling within and beyond the page, artists like graphic memoirist Alison Bechdel, spoken word poet Saul Williams, comedian Marc Maron, filmmaker/comic book writer Kevin Smith, and electro-pop band YACHT will pull our spirits closer to revelation, good times, and late-night dance parties in Iowa City. As the festival wraps, we will already be moving onto the task of mounting the production of *Bruno*.

Adapted from Writers' Workshop graduate Benjamin Hale's 2011 novel, *Bruno* follows the trials of the world's first speaking chimpanzee. Directed by Working Group Theatre's Sean Lewis, the play charges head-on and without apology into collisions of race, class, and gender politics—the most enduring issues and conflicts of our era—and blends elements of theater and dance.

The notion of taking on these two massive projects amidst our regular ongoing programming makes us dizzy if we think too much about it. So why do we do this to ourselves—push ourselves towards the white light, the white heat, the brink of exhaustion? Because we love it. We love making things and we love helping other people show you the things that they have made. We are here to serve you, to do our small part in keeping local cultural vibrant and thriving, to keep the people saying, "I really like living here."

Good luck this spring—there is so much out there to engage with onstage—and we hope you come out the other side as refreshed as us.

Sincerely,
Andre Perry

Executive Director

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THE ENGLERT THEATRE

IT ALL HAPPENS HERE.

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Cover photo by Bill Adams

Thank you to our 2011 Capital Campaign supporters

Since reopening in 2004 after a massive renovation and a grassroots fundraising effort, The Englert Theatre has welcomed over 365,000 attendees.

A true success story, the renovated Englert has hosted over 2,500 performances over the past decade, including local and nationally-known live music, comedy, theater, dance, movies, readings, and community endeavors. All of this unfolds in our beautiful venue, located in the heart of downtown Iowa City's cultural district. In preparation for the centennial of this national historic landmark, we conducted a capital campaign to consolidate our mortgage and better secure a stable future. We would like to honor our major donors below.

Please contact us if you are interested in supporting
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Katie Roche, Development Director

katie@englert.org or call 319-688-2653 x107



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Douglas & Linda Paul Gallery



This inviting space is home to exhibits from local artists. Photo by Bill Adams

*The gallery is open
Tues, Wed, Fri
12:30 - 5 p.m.*

Looking for a venue to host a private party, reception, meet-and-greet, corporate gathering, staff appreciation, or other special event? The second floor Douglas & Linda Paul Gallery is an inviting space featuring art exhibits from local artists that can accommodate groups of up to 50 people.

For more information, pricing, and availability, contact Production Manager Tori Morgensai at tori@englert.org



Our new addition to the gallery space. The Englert bar is open during most ticketed events. Photo by Bill Adams.



We love our **volunteers**

**All of the ushers for tonight's performance
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contact sarah@englert.org for more information.

Down In The Dressing Room

Eco Lips' lip balm is handcrafted in Cedar Rapids. It's a family business that uses organic and fair trade ingredients. Its lip balms can be customized, from the base ingredients to the flavors to the color of the tube itself. Sounds pretty great already, doesn't it?

But here's the thing you probably don't know about Eco Lips. Its CEO, Chloey Shriver? She's 11. As in, 11 years old. Her dad, Steve, used to be Eco Lips' CEO. (Now he's just the president.)

Chloey earned her corner office with an idea: My Eco Lips, the world's first create-your-own customizable lip balm. Chloey believes we were all born creative, and should never, ever stop creating.

Why shouldn't that apply to lip balm, too? At the Englert, we agree that creativity is pretty special—and we like to share it with the people we love.

That's you. The Englert runs on sharing, on heart, on community. In 2010, the community came together to save our historic theater. We honor that gift onstage by bringing you art that speaks to you, moves you, and connects you with others in your community.

We honor your gift offstage by partnering with local people and businesses that we know run on sharing, on heart, and on community, too. Like Eco Lips. In the past three years, Chloey's family's company has generously provided natural, organic Eco Lips balm for every performer that crosses the Englert stage.

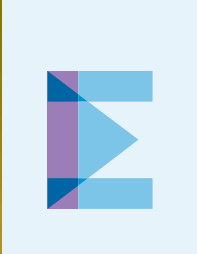
Like Chloey says: We should never, ever stop creating. Eco Lips creates fantastic lip balm. Our performers create exceptional art. And our community creates connections. We just try to provide the space to let it all happen.



Stop by our new bar!

Located in the 2nd Floor Douglas & Linda Paul Gallery.
Open during most ticketed events!





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The Evolution of Bruno Littlemore

BY NORA HEATON AND ALY HIGH

Like so many great ideas, the project was born as a casual conversation between three friends, who happen to be active in the local arts scene: Englert Executive Director Andre Perry, Working Group Theater playwright and actor Sean Lewis, and FilmScene Director Joe Tiefenthaler.

The idea: to have a local theater group adapt a book written by a Writers' Workshop graduate into a play commissioned and produced by the Englert as part of Mission Creek Festival. They particularly wanted to showcase works by more recent Workshop grads.

"SEAN, IT'S ABOUT COLONIZATION. EVERYTHING HE'S SAYING. IT'S HOW THEY WERE LOOKING AT ME IN CHICAGO."

Now, years later, Englert patrons will experience *The Evolution of Bruno Littlemore*, adapted into a play by Working Group Theater's artistic director Sean Lewis. The book's author, Benjamin Hale, wrote the book in Iowa City while attending the Writers' Workshop.

To hear Lewis describe the book is in itself an experience:

"You have the memoirs of the world's first talking chimp who falls in love with the woman who teaches him to speak," he said. "You have elements of classic plays like *Woyzeck* and *The Tempest* smashing up against evolutionary science and existential philosophy and locations that span from inside the Chicago Zoo to a nature preserve in Colorado, a theater in NYC and many, many more! It's a nightmare from a traditional theater stand point, which makes it great

theater."

Author Benjamin Hale said he can't wait to see how the story looks onstage — however different it may appear.

"I think the thing about adapting any story from one narrative medium to another is that any notion of 'faithfulness' to the source material is kind of misguided and silly," Hale said. "The best adaptations are 'faithful' in spirit, but acknowledge that an adaptation, like a translation, is its own, original work of art."

So what will it be like to watch a play where the main character is a chimp?

"Well, seeing that the Englert first asked if I wanted a real chimp for the show, it will be at least a little cleaner than that option," Lewis said.

Whatever it looks like, it'll be "pretty awesome," Perry said. "Knowing Sean, it will be done well. I think it's asking a different kind of disbelief from the audience, which is fun."

Letter from Sean Lewis

"I need to play this role."

I have been working with Barrington Vaxter for ten years. The play I wrote in grad school that was my first national exposure, Barry was the lead. When Hancher gave me my first commission to create Mayberry, Barry was the first actor I cast. From the

outside, someone might identify us solely as a white director and a black actor. But work is tricky that way: we've done plays together about race, sure, but also we've done plays about war and bullying and school systems and so on. We are friends and collaborators, occasional roommates and mutual activists. And yet, a funny thing happened in October while workshopping this play—I knew I was going to cast Barry in the ensemble—I always cast Barry but during the first workshop we were working with the dancers and he said, "I'm going to play Bruno, right?"

And I thought, and then said,

"No?"

"Why?"

"Because there's no way I can cast you as that."

See, there is an unwritten rule. It is a good one. If you are white and you are directing or writing a play you do not under any circumstances cast an African American in an animalized role. If you're doing *Sylvia* by AR Gurney—which Sarah Jessica Parker acted in the cute little movie of—you do not cast a black actor as *Sylvia*, the talking family dog. You don't do this because history in our country is really fucked up. Because blacks have been dehumanized for basically their entire time on the continent. So much so that we can't make up for it, we can't talk about it, at best we can be sensitive and not do things like that.

And I am not mocking, this is a rule I agree with. In fact, I never thought of anyone of color playing Bruno. The book isn't about race. I was concerned trying to find an actor who was charismatic, handled text well, was brought alive by big ideas and could move incredibly well since (in a realization of how problematic the book was to stage with tons of locations, violence, sex and more so) I had decided to make the entire event a dance theater piece.

Safe to say, the book was dangerous enough without me inviting everyone to throw rocks at me for breaking the aforementioned rule. I don't like controversy for the sake of controversy. I don't like making people mad. I really don't like people not liking me. Yet.

"Sean, it's about colonization. Everything he's saying. It's how they were looking at me in Chicago."

Barry had just gotten back from Chicago and I think he would be happy to tell you he did not like it very much. He was working with theater groups protesting the shootings of unarmed black men by police officers—groups that the Chicago press and theater community basically ignored.

Which is not weird, after all. Did you know, there are no regional theaters in the United States doing plays about “Black Lives Matter?” Pro or Con? None. Not just big theaters who are scared to do it, but small theaters as well. None. If theaters are the artistic town halls of our country then this subject is just not on the docket.

And the plays exist.

Me, I was not looking to stage a Black Lives Matter piece with Bruno. Full disclosure I wanted to do the book because it’s completely insane and I really saw it as a director’s challenge. How can I stage something impossible to stage.

I told Barry, “I can’t do it. Casting you in the role of a talking chimpanzee, is way beyond a bad look and I don’t really want to upset everyone that much.”

“He’s the smartest person on stage. The most interesting. The most soulful. And no one even acknowledges him. No one sees him. I’m just saying I really want to play the role.”

Barrington said, “let me play him in one workshop.” I said fine. Because our workshops are democratic. Before I cast a play and while we are still working on it I let everyone, man or woman (and usually any race), play every role. We had women reading Bruno. Men. But I had actively kept Barrington away from the role.

Now, Barry is one of the most charismatic people I know. He also moves incredibly well. Putting him with the dance company was amazing. What was more amazing was hearing him read the lines.

From the book:

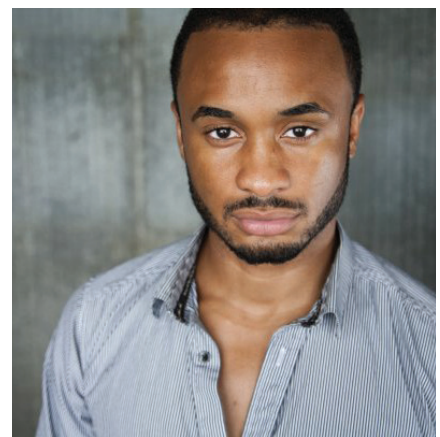
“The child’s first word is not a symbol. It is not representation. No, before a word becomes any of these things it is inevitably an ACT. A beginning action. It is not the naming of the world. It is the creation of it.”

Suddenly, I saw him trying to retake the symbols, the tropes, the language—the horrible language—used to define his existence to the world around him as well as himself.

I do not pretend to know anything



THE EVOLUTION OF BRUNO LITTLEMORE



about the black experience. Or “Black Lives Matter.” I don’t see this as a talking point for that movement or any others. I do know that when Barrington finally said, “I have to do this.” I thought, “Who am I to say no?” If we were just a white director and black actor what would it mean if I were to assume I just naturally knew better than him? I know my friend. I have seen him with that script in his hand in hotel rooms and theaters every day since I reluctantly gave in.

I know it means something big to him. And he wants it. And I know when I’m in the room directing and he’s acting the piece something fascinating is happening.

We are not here tonight for propaganda but for exploration. Exploration is about pushing limits so that you get better. You progress. Barrington is my friend and he told me this will make him better in a number of ways –

“I have to do it,” he said.

And so I go into this with him as my guide. A minefield with our eyes open. But if no one is going to talk about anything I guess I’m okay to blow myself up for him.

Letter from Barrington Vaxter

My name is Barrington Vaxter Jr. and I am Bruno Littlemore.

When I first received the script for Sean Lewis’ adaptation of Benjamin Hale’s book, I did what actors do: I tried to make sense of it all. When we talk about the work that actors do, the process begins during that first contact with the words. “The script,” we call it. And, the formation of general ideas involving the piece as a whole and the characters’ journeys. We talk about seeing the words for what they are at face value and identifying the basic narrative of who, what, where, etc. In the beginning, the actor in me said that this was a piece about a disenfranchised primate. That this was a piece that challenged the constructs and fluidity of evolution. A piece that examines the history of thought; the moment where a need fosters ambiguous babble to become an intuition and gives birth to language. These are the themes that came to my mind as an actor initially.

I wondered then about the character of Bruno. I wondered about his inner struggle and what his deep seeded needs were. And,

how they coincided or collided with the world in which he lived; in which he was caged in? The actor in me knew that on the surface, Bruno wanted to be human. But, what does it mean to be human? To be more than Ape, supposedly? At its core, in my opinion, to be human is to connect. It is to forge meaningful relationships through communication, to share experience through language, and expression through art. Harmoniously, it is to reciprocate and understand the complexities of emotion and to exercise that. To Grieve. To Empathize. To Respect. To Envy. To Love. To be in Love. To experience a life worth living. “These are things Bruno wants”, my actor self said. And, these are the things every decent human being wants to some degree.

At that moment I could of stopped but there seemed, to me, something missing. Something so obvious that it felt familiar. Like a relationship without Love. I found myself examining my own alignment with these seemingly human needs and, in turn, how I fit into the context of my own world. How did others connect with me, a black man, in today’s world? How did they engage, or disengage? What were the expectations of a black man in this world? Then, later, with more aggression “Why am I treated differently? Why does my life matter less? Why are blacks killed with such frequency? Why are the oppressed alienated economically? Why are the oppressed malnourished and isolated? Why do we kill each other? Why is this to be expected? And, how did this come to be?”

The fictional world of *Bruno* is not that dissimilar from mine. It’s especially not that dissimilar to that of my ancestors. And whether one believes time does heal things, it is assailable that time, at the very least, gives you an idea of how things in the present came to pass; the bread crumbs of humanity from monkey to man and back.

My mind—not the actor in me this time—but my inextricably black mind, had drifted back to Bruno in a more visceral way. How his cages reminded me of slave ship corridors. How he was stripped from his family and auctioned away for the sake of science and kept alive for practicality. Dealt with from a distance like some worker you don’t respect enough to ask his story; don’t care enough about him to let him preserve it. Even when Bruno evolves past

humans and is succeeded in every way one could argue as human, he is still alienated and still alone and still, somehow, less. The allusions to colonization and resulting institutional racism were face-smacking. Yes, on the surface, the piece was about some very challenging aspects of the generality of human experience, but I couldn’t deny the underlying, inextricable, nods to black and brown suffering. The piece proved to be an opportunity to acknowledge this problem in my world—that black lives don’t matter as much and to examine what could have started the mess.

I became insistent that this story about a chimp who ascends to intellectual levels far beyond any human, despite worldly expectations, was the perfect platform to examine any dehumanization; that I’d be proud to use his poetry and his progressive thoughts on language and emotion to analyze social constructs that have been flawed since the dawn of slavery. It would be moronic not to examine the black and brown experience in the context of Bruno’s in some small capacity. This idea that, when you steal a human being from their home, treat them as a second class citizen, attempt to colonize their mind and body, and then set them “free” into a system that they were never meant to succeed in, you lay the groundwork for an entire race to never to recover. More importantly, when black and brown lives are given the opportunity and when any human is given the respect and the love that they so superbly deserve, they often excel in ways that shift the paradigm for the better.

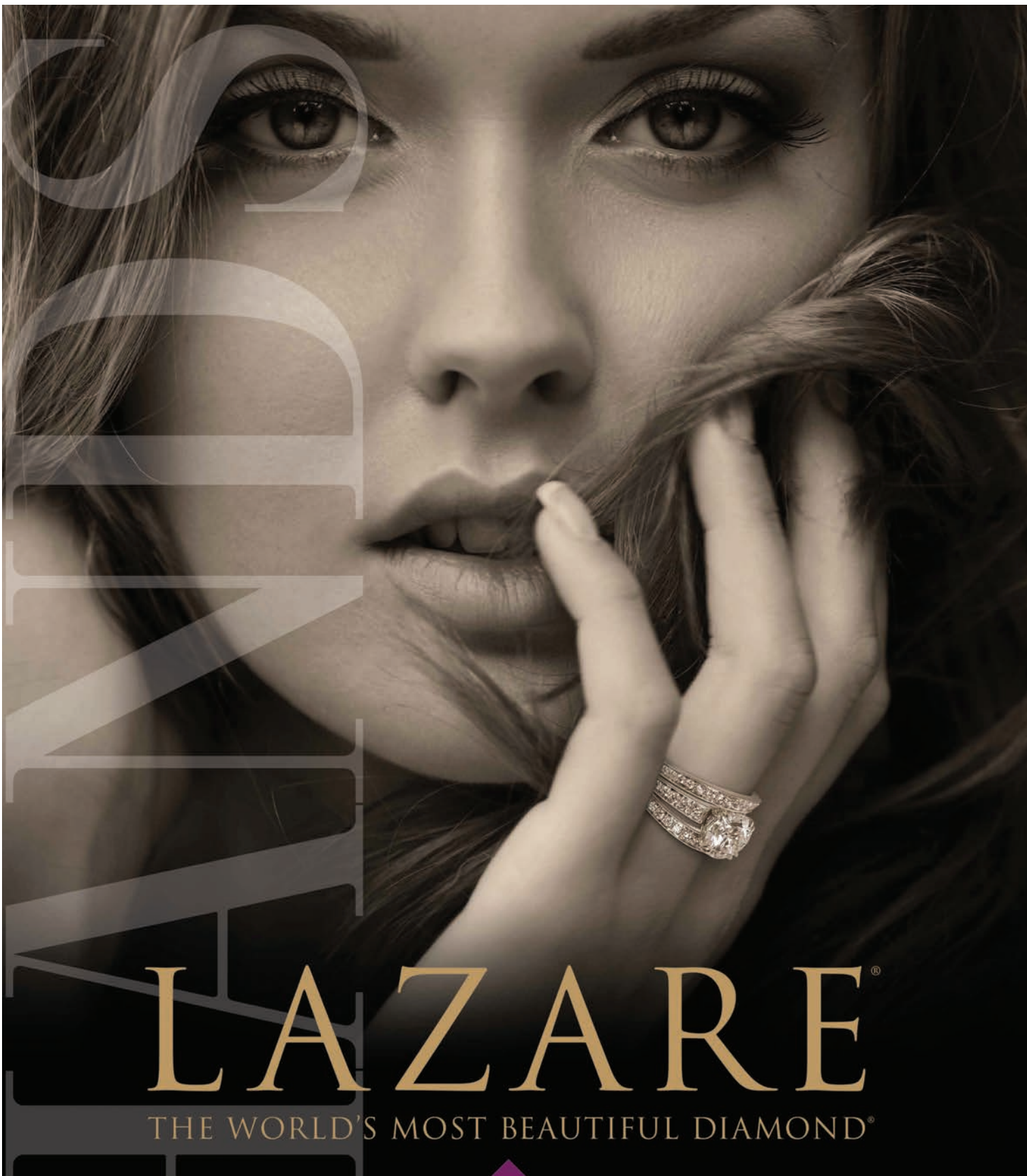
I am Bruno Littlemore, a black man, and I want to shift the paradigm.

With Diligence,
Barrington Vaxter Jr. ■

*The Evolution of Bruno Littlemore
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Bechdel Testing

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Kurt Vile - Page 18

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Get the scoop on staff recommendations for this year's lineup - Page 24

see missionfreak.com for full lineup

Music
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Drawing Gender, Sexuality, and Family Together

BY BY NORA HEATON

Alison Bechdel was originally known for her long-running comic strip, “Dykes to Watch Out For,” which began in 1983. Since 2006, she has become best known for her graphic memoir *Fun Home: A Tragicomic*, which was widely praised in the literary world and was made into a Broadway musical last year. The autobiographical narrative explores her sexuality and gender non-conformity and chronicles her relationship with her father, a closeted gay man, from childhood until his death.

“I think that Bechdel’s work has this amazing ability to create a sense of intimacy between the reader and the text,” said Emily Brown, an MFA candidate in the Iowa Writers’ Workshop and an instructor in the Department of English at the University of Iowa. “Bechdel’s themes of family and identity are so universal, but the perspectives of her characters are still sadly unrepresented in a lot of literature.”

One underrepresented identity Bechdel captures in her work is that of the butch lesbian. In an August interview with NPR, Bechdel said one of her first memories is fighting with her father about her desire to wear boys’ clothes. Describing the first time she saw a butch lesbian in real life, at age 9, she told NPR: “I was spellbound. My jaw dropped. My father saw me looking at this woman and he whipped his head around and said, ‘Is that how you want to look?’ In that moment, I recognized that woman: I identified with her; I wanted her; I wanted to be her. And I knew that that was completely unacceptable.”

Rachel Williams, associate professor in the UI School of Art & Art History and the Department of Gender, Women’s and Sexuality Studies, taught both of Bechdel’s graphic memoirs in her “Women in Comics” class.

“Her work in memoir has deeply affected other people,” Williams said, adding that at the time Bechdel’s work began, people who heard the word “comics” would have thought of Batman or Sandman. Bechdel’s themes — women, gender identity, sexuality, psychoanalysis, family dynamics — were a far cry from the superhero genre comics were known for.

Bechdel’s comics also tell stories directly to the women reading them, Williams said. With many popular comics targeted toward men, the fact that Bechdel creates without regard for the male gaze is significant.

“I think she has really opened the door for a whole genre of comics, one that really existed in the shadows until she brought it forward,” Williams said. ■

Alison Bechdel

Mission Creek Festival 2016

Presented in partnership with the University of Iowa Lecture Committee and Humanities Iowa

April 5 @ 7:30 p.m. / FREE and open to the public

Alison Bechdel is also known for the “Bechdel Test,” a set of three criteria meant to detect gender bias in film. The test originates in “The Rule,” a 1985 comic strip from the series “Dykes to Watch Out For.” In it, a woman tells her friend a film must satisfy “the rule” before she’ll watch it: The film must have two named female characters, who talk to each other about something other than a man.

Lauren Rabinovitz, professor in the University of Iowa Department of Cinematic Arts, said it’s more a conversation starter than a true “test”— but as far as conversation starters go, it’s a good one.

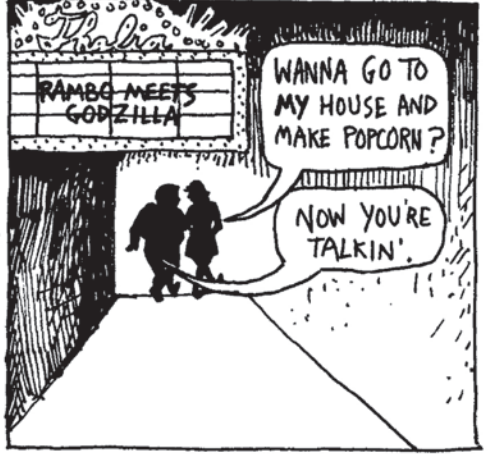
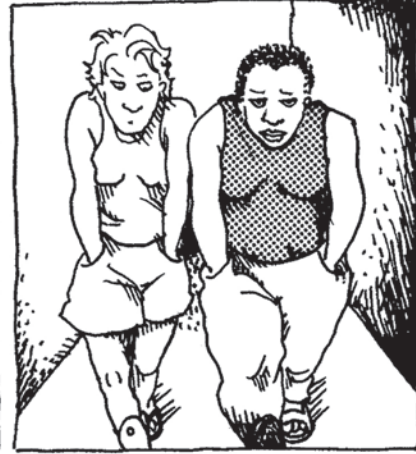
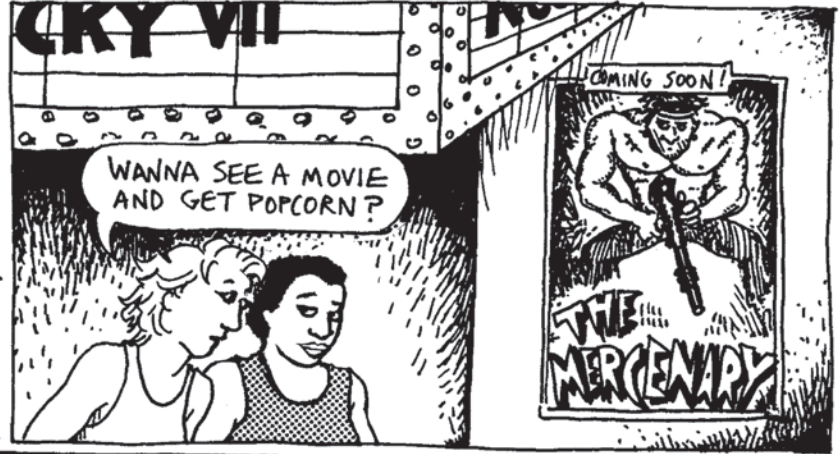
Many popular films fail the test, Rabinovitz said. More pass technically, but fail in spirit: a film would pass if the only two female characters had a two-line exchange about something stereotypically female, like shopping or gossip. Others pass dubiously, with two female characters pausing during a conversation about a man to briefly discuss another topic, then quickly shifting back to talking about the male character.

“Is it a substitute for a more considered analysis?” Rabinovitz said. “No, but in a Twitter world where we like a lot of things in shorthand or in short sound bites, I think it is very helpful as a way for calling attention to an ongoing Hollywood problem regarding the depiction of women.”

With the help of bechdeltest.com and Bechdel-test.silk.co, the Englert collected the verdicts for a sampling of the Academy Awards’ “Best Picture” winners from 1935 to 2014.

2014: Birdman	PASS
2005: Crash	PASS
1995: Braveheart	FAIL
1985: Out of Africa	PASS
1975: One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest	FAIL
1965: The Sound of Music	PASS
1955: Marty	PASS
1945: The Lost Weekend	FAIL
1935: Mutiny on the Bounty	FAIL

Dylan to Watch Out For
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Life Like This: Q&A with Kurt Vile

BY NORA HEATON

The Englert caught indie rocker and Mission Creek Festival headliner Kurt Vile on the phone, somewhere in rural Australia on tour, ahead of his April performance. Former member of The War on Drugs, Vile has become a household name with his critically-acclaimed album, b'lieve i'm goin' down, a collection of 12 chill songs that evoke daydreaming on a breezy summer Saturday, a beam of sun breaking your winter into spring.

ENGLERT: What is it like being on tour, now that you have two kids at home?

VILE: Well, you know I'm lucky 'cause, like, I play music, which is what I love, and I have a family. So, I have two things so I can sort of... Sure I'll miss my family, but I'll get lost in the music and then when I come home, when I'm around I'm around 24/7 more or less. It's trade off as opposed to being gone 9 to 5 every day or something like that.

What's it like to be able to do what you love for a living?

I think it's pretty awesome. It's a payoff to have gigs, especially when they go good and have adoring fans, or just encouraging fans. Also, I feel like playing music, being forced to play guitar every night, it's like dominoes into being inspired and writing songs. I could

be hanging out with friends or family or otherwise and be writing songs in my head and thinking about making my next record. I could be like present and in the clouds simultaneously because I've been doing it forever. I could be at two places at once, at all times.

What do you think is the most inspiring thing in your life musically?

I can't think of one thing. Basically, just being able to do what I'm obsessed with. I'm obsessed with tons of artists, I'm full-time obsessive, really. It's like a big package. It's not like you can single one part out. It's all like a psychedelic swamp of good and weird times.

I read in other interviews that you feel

"Wheelhouse" is the best song you've recorded. Is that true?

I felt like that at the time, because it was unexpected. I didn't even think [the song] was done, and it was just performed live with my good friends and everyone was feeling it in the moment. So it was a milestone. It is one of my best songs, but the album as a whole is an accomplishment. At the time, there was something special about it.

What was it about that moment that felt truest to you?

I think it felt true because it's a kind of hypnotic, melodic song, but it was also performed live, you know? It's not like you sat around overthinking it or overdubbing it. It was just a moment captured.

You said something in an interview with the A.V. Club a few months ago about recording: "There's a million nice mics and four assistants around waiting for me to capture that song that I wrote on my couch while I was feeling up or down." I'm also curious how that relates to performance — the songs you've now performed hundreds of times once came from a place of raw emotion. Do you try to tap into this emotion again every time you play live?

I think that things take on a life of their own when you play live. For instance that song—if you want to talk about “Wheelhouse”—I wrote it and I was really feeling it in the moment, and then I wasn’t even sure. In a way, I was still vulnerable. It was a different kind of nervous, because you’re still showing people the song and you

MY HEAD COULD MAYBE NOT BE IN IT ONE NIGHT—THERE’S NO GUARANTEE THAT EVERY SINGLE NIGHT WILL CONJURE UP THE SAME KIND OF MAGIC—BUT OFTEN IT DOES.

don’t know how they feel about it, and then you hear it back and it’s awesome. So then you’re proud of it, you listen to the recording a bunch and then it comes time to perform it again and I almost have to relearn it—you know, it’s not like I play it every day—and then it starts out kind of raw when you play it live. And playing it night after night, it gets a little tighter every night. There’s also little ways you can change the song, or better the riffs, or add other notes in there that make it work.

I guess if it was a karaoke thing where you’re playing it exactly the same every night and singing it with the same exact inflection, that would get totally boring. There’s plenty of open space in there for a song to take a life of its own and come a little bit more alive every night. Certain nights it might not come off well, but I think that especially if you have a good crowd, you can feel if it’s their favorite song, and even that feels different. It’s not like Groundhog Day. Even if you delivered a slightly shitty version one night, I feel like it’s the power of live music. My head could maybe not be in it one night—there’s no guarantee that every single night will conjure up the same kind of magic—but often, it does.

What do you think is the very best thing about being able to play on stage?

The best thing? The loud electricity.

Is there a best moment or highlight that you’ve had in your career so far?

I think anytime I hear a recording back, you get the feeling in your chest if it works. I’ve made a lot of albums now, so I think the reward is always sort of hearing it back. It gives you that feeling in your chest, knowing you’re going to put it on the album. I’m not saying all my music is perfect, but still, I wouldn’t put it on my album if I wasn’t feeling it. ■

*Kurt Vile & the Violators
Mission Creek Festival 2016
Co-presented with SCOPE Productions
At The Englert Theatre, April 10 at 7 p.m.
Tickets: \$22 G.A. In Advance / \$25 Day of Show*



IowaMusic PROJECT

If you’re sitting in this seat right now, here at the Englert, it’s likely no secret to you that Iowa is home to numerous talented musicians. But our friends at the Iowa Music Project are giving artists a chance to reach an even-wider audience through the statewide IMP songwriting showcase.

A new endeavor from the James Gang -- who brought us the Iowa Youth Writing Project, Antelope Lending Library, and more -- the showcase will discover a new Iowa sound.

From now through March 15, 2016, Iowa-connected artists of all genres may submit one original song at www.iowamusicproject.com. On April 1, 25 will have the opportunity to have a half-day recording session at Flat Black Studios, and a chance to be included in a vinyl pressing released by Maximum Ames Records. Twenty-three of these will be IMP jury-selected, and two will be chosen by fans through Little Village’s IMP Listeners’ Choice voting page. ■

For more information, or to submit or vote for a song, go to www.iowamusicproject.com.





MISSION CREEK FESTIVAL

AT THE ENGLERT



Alison Bechdel

APRIL 5 @ 7:30 P.M.
FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

American cartoonist Alison Bechdel is best known for her long-running, award-winning comic strip, *Dykes to Watch Out For*, which was first published in 1983. The comic strip became a countercultural institution among lesbians and discerning non-lesbians all over the world. *Ms. Magazine* dubbed this generational chronicle “one of the pre-eminent oeuvres in the comics genre, period.”

Time magazine named her book *Fun Home: A Family Tragicomic* the Best Book of 2006, describing the tightly architected investigation into her closeted bisexual father’s suicide as “a masterpiece about two people who live in the same house but different worlds, and their mysterious debts to each other.” *Fun Home* was adapted into a musical in 2015 and was nominated for five Tony Awards including “Best Musical.”

Presented in partnership with University of Iowa Lecture Committee



Tyondai Braxton & Dawn of Midi

APRIL 6 @ 7 P.M.
\$10 / \$15 GENERAL ADMISSION (PLUS FEES)

The evening will see two original avant garde composing outfits—Dawn of Midi and Tyondai Braxton.

Dawn of Midi is a trio composed of musicians from India, Morocco, and Pakistan, who recently released their critically-acclaimed album, *Dysnomia*. *Rolling Stone* writes that their sound is “brain-bending, seemingly impossible,” and the *New York Times* called it “perverse in a good way.” With *Dysnomia*, Dawn of Midi abandons their traditional mode of improvisation in favor of incorporating North and Western African folk rhythms into modern trance grooves.

Tyondai Braxton—praised by the *Washington Post* as “one of the most acclaimed experimental musicians of the last decade,”—is the former frontman of Battles who has found his voice solo. He has focused on composing music for HIVE, Braxton’s multimedia experience, and performing his orchestral work with the likes of the Los Angeles Philharmonic and the London Sinfonietta.





The Joy Formidable with Everything Everything

APRIL 7 @ 8 P.M.
\$22 / \$25 GENERAL ADMISSION (PLUS FEES)

The demise of the English punk band Sidecar Kisses led to frontwoman Ritzy Bryan forming The Joy Formidable with bandmate and bassist Rhydian Dafydd. They relocated to London shortly after and added drummer Matt Thomas to the trio. Under the guitar and vocal leadership of Bryan, the band started developing the noisy alt-rock sound that led to the release of the 8-track mini album *A Balloon Called Moaning* in 2009. Their reputation in the UK eventually had them touring with Passion Pit and later signing to Black Bell Records run by Ayad AlAdhamy.

A Balloon Called Moaning was released Stateside and the band released their full length debut *The Big Roar* in 2011. With heavy-hitting singles “Whirring” and “A Heavy Abacus”, the trio found themselves on tour with rock giants Muse through most of 2012. While on the road, they wrote material for the sophomore release of *Wolf’s Law*, continuing with the massive shoegaze sound that garnered the band’s early attention.



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Marc Maron

APRIL 8 @ 7 P.M.
\$37.50 GENERAL ADMISSION (PLUS FEES)

For more than twenty years, Marc Maron has been writing and performing raw, honest, and thought-provoking comedy for print, stage, radio, and television. A legend in the stand-up community, Maron has appeared on numerous late-night television shows and two Comedy Central Presents specials.

Maron's podcast "WTF with Marc Maron" features compelling monologues and interviews with iconic personalities such as Conan O'Brien, Louis CK, Robin Williams, Anthony Bourdain, and President Barack Obama. "WTF" regularly hits #1 on iTunes charts, and was named the #1 Comedy Podcast by *LA Weekly* as well as The AV Club. It has also been called a "must-listen" by *Vanity Fair* and *The New York Times*, among many others.



Kevin Smith

APRIL 9 @ 7 P.M.
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Kevin Smith is a modern day renaissance man. He is an actor, filmmaker, comic book writer, comedian and podcaster. He wrote, directed, and

coproduced 1994's *Clerks*, and played the role of Silent Bob. He has written and directed various other movies since, including *Chasing Amy*, *Zack and Miri Make a Porno*, and *Cop Out*. He is the subject of reality TV show *Comic Book Men*, and has written mini-series for Marvel. Smith co-hosts several podcasts for SModcast.com, including "Fatman on Batman". ■

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MCF Staff Picks

Want the insiders' view of this year's lineup? Staff of The Englert Theatre and Mission Creek Festival share their 2016 recommendations.



Sarah Shonrock

Englert Patron Services Manager

I want to “Geek Out” and see that fat guy that got thrown off the plane (**Kevin Smith**).

Tori Morgensai

Englert Production Manager

I'm excited for **Kevin Smith**. It is the obvious choice but I've been a Silent Bob fan for a long long time. I've always loved Kevin's style of comedy when he's in movies just as much as I have been a fan of the movies he makes!

SEE: Kevin Smith at The Englert Theatre, April 9th at 7 p.m.

Katie Roche



Englert Development Director

I have always wanted to see the krautrock band **Faust** live, and now I get to see them up close at Gabes, communicating with each other, twisting dials, and playing instruments to make this music that I've



loved since high school. I'm also really excited about seeing **Saul Williams**. I can't stop listening to his 2008 album *The Inevitable Rise and Liberation of NiggyTardust!*. It still feels like an album that everyone should be listening to right now.

SEE: Faust at Gabe's, April 5th at 8 p.m.; Saul Williams at The Mill, April 9th at 8:30 p.m.

Bree Glenn

Englert Box Office employee



Waxahatchee's talented and beautiful **Katie Crutchfield** has my heart and soul. I cannot wait to experience her raw, emotional honesty during this year's Mission Creek Festival.

SEE: Waxahatchee (solo) at The Mill, April 8th at 7 p.m.

Jen Knights

Mission Creek Festival Marketing Director



This year's festival is all about voices for me. From Monica Martin's soulful warble fronting **PHOX**, to the intensely vulnerable vocals of **Son Lux's** Ryan Lott, to the all-out across-the-spectrum range of **San Fermin's** many band members, they're going to sing their hearts out.

SEE: PHOX at The Mill, April 7th at 9 p.m.; Son Lux at Gabe's, April 6th at 8 p.m.; San Fermin at Gabe's, April 8th at 9 p.m.

Courtenay Bouvier

Mission Creek Festival Food Curator



The Joy Formidable's brand-new video—"The Last Thing on My Mind"—has reinforced my excitement about their show; they're totally badass. I also can't wait to see Iowa City darlings **The Wandering Bears**, together again, and to eat the fantastic dinner at Leaf Kitchen.



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SEE: The Joy Formidable at The Englert Theatre, April 7th at 8 p.m.; The Wandering Bears at The Mill, April 7th at 9 p.m.; Dinner at Leaf Kitchen, April 5th at 5 p.m.

Jessica Egli



Associate Patron Services Manager

I am most excited to welcome **Marc Maron** into our house. In my experience, comedians always turn out to be the most fascinating people. They are never what you expect, but the surprise is always delightful. They are low maintenance, gracious, and almost always want to check out our local stomping grounds. It's never a dull time when we host a comedian and (fingers crossed) the night of Marc Maron's performance will be no exception.

SEE: Marc Maron at The Englert Theatre, April 8th at 7 p.m.

Aly High

Englert Marketing Director



I'm jazzed to see experimental guitarist **Yonatan Gat** again. I had the opportunity to see him live at The Mercury Lounge in the Lower East Side this winter, and I swear, there are still pieces of my melted face on that bar floor.

SEE: Yonatan Gat at Iowa City Yacht Club, April 7th at 8 p.m. ■

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In Rotation: Spring Music

BY ANDRE PERRY

The programming at Mission Creek is vast. Across multiple forms and genres, how do you pinpoint your list of must-see artists? Taking an afternoon to dig into the website and Little Village insert can get you far, though, recommendations never hurt. Here are my five picks of festival activities to indulge in. This isn't the end-all list, just one way to approach your week.



TUESDAY, APRIL 5:

Dinner at Leaf Kitchen

FIRST SEATING AT 5 P.M. /
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Begin the festival with an amazing meal to power you through the week. Leaf Kitchen, open year-round for breakfast and lunch, rarely serves up dinner. When it happens, it should be considered a high culinary priority. Chef Masae Judge's aptitude for a number of global cuisines is remarkable and for this special dinner she presents her version of a Japanese small plates dinner.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 6:

Dawn of Midi at The Englert Theatre

WITH TYONDAI BRAXTON
7 P.M. / \$10 - \$15 (PLUS FEES)

An acoustic trio steeped in jazz roots, Dawn of Midi now takes its cues from the repetition and precision of music more akin to techno. Their live performance centers around their masterpiece, 2013's *Dysnomia*—an album that reenvisioned electronic music's place in a world of acoustic instruments—and the effect is mesmerizing, a sound and a sight that your ears and eyes will be unable to avert from for the better part of an hour.

THURSDAY, APRIL 7:

Terry Zwigoff at FilmScene

IN CONVERSATION WITH
ANDY BRODIE 7 P.M. / \$35

Terry Zwigoff's films are weird, beautiful, and hilarious slices of true Americana. He worked with documentary in 1995's *Crumb*, adapted Daniel Clowes' cult comic series in 2001's *Ghost World*, and inverted our collective childhood fairytale into an adorable monster in 2003's *Bad Santa*. Yet, he also endured Hollywood's silence after his commercial flop, *Art School Confidential*. At this intimate discussion, with FilmScene's co-founder and programming director, Zwigoff opens up about his singular vision as a filmmaker, his break from filmmaking, and his long-awaited return to the screen with two new projects in the works.



FRIDAY, APRIL 8:

Annual Lit Crawl at various venues across Iowa City

5 - 8 P.M. / FREE

A festival within itself, the annual Lit Crawl features roughly 60 writers at nine venues in three hours. The readings will cross genres—fiction, poetry, nonfiction—and expose an array of the best emerging writers in the country, some hailing from the coasts and abroad, and others living here in Iowa City as MFAs, post-MFAs, college students, or just great writers who never gave a damn about writing programs. Chase the readings across town, grabbing handstitched chapbooks, drinking beer, wine or pop, and writing down the names of your new favorite authors. And if you don't like who's reading, don't stress it—the rapid-fire flow of the Lit Crawl ensures that the next writer will be up within five to eight minutes.



SATURDAY, APRIL 9:

Saul Williams at The Mill

WITH PSALM ONE, AKWI NJI, LOVAR DAVIS KIDD / 8:30 P.M. / \$15 - \$20

The first time I saw Saul Williams, I was standing next to about 10,000 other people in the middle of the desert in Palm Springs at Coachella, and he was doing a spoken word piece and he read from this 30-foot scroll of paper and there was a loud rock band playing the next stage over and everyone just stopped and shut the hell up and forgot about that rock band as Saul went on and on captivating the living ghost within all of us as he considered the failure of man, the failure of all nations, the failure of our own country and yet still the lingering possibility of hope. During Mission Creek, he will be doing this at The Mill.



SUNDAY, APRIL 10:

Kurt Vile & The Violators at The Englert Theatre

WITH PURLING HISS (SOLO) CO-PRESENTED WITH SCOPE PRODUCTIONS / 7 P.M. / \$22 - \$25 (PLUS FEES)

Kurt Vile's elliptical guitar figures will turn you around in circles for days, perpetually having you walk five miles only to end up back where you started. His music isn't all dreamy—he can terrorize the stereoscope with vicious licks and inspired psyched-out solos. He's the heir to any number of classic rock gods—Neil, Keith, Jimi—but just too chill to let the lineage get to his head. ■

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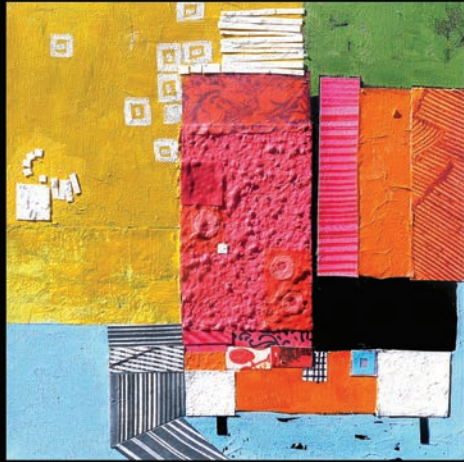
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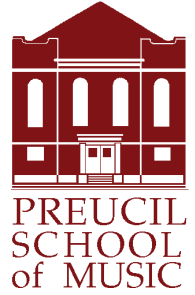


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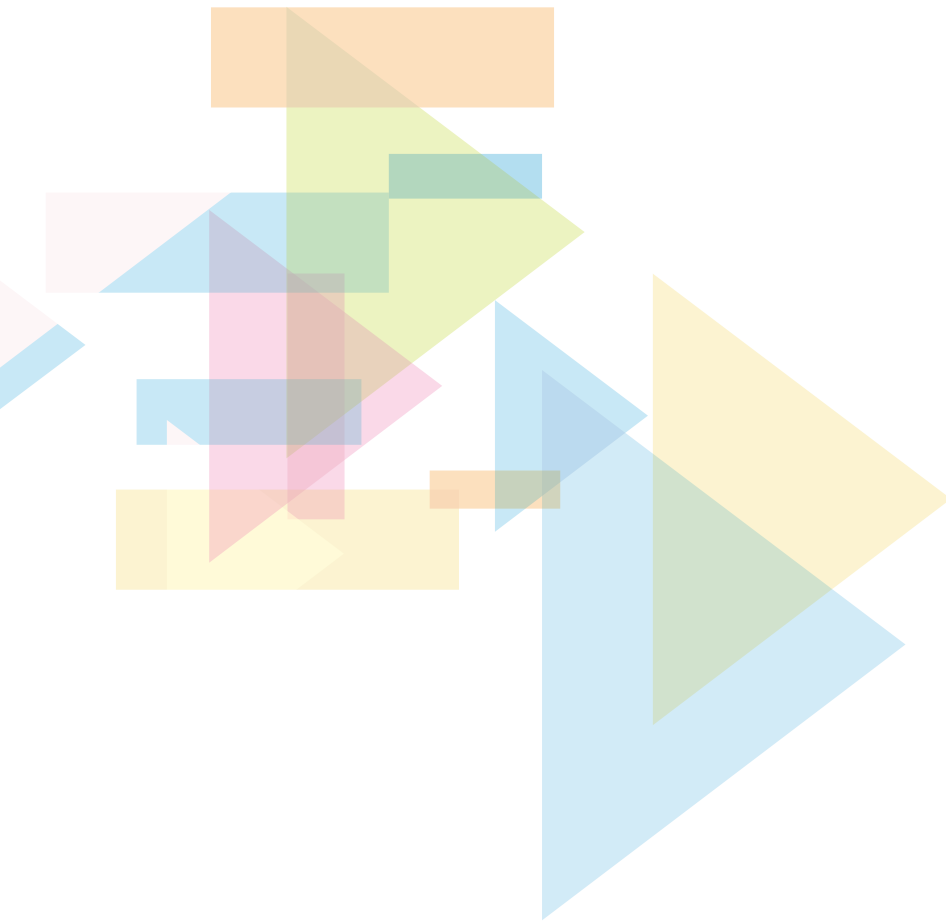
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Literacy Narrative

BY KIKI PETROSINO

As a poet of color, I work to make my art a worthy thing. Because I'm not worthy, just lucky. Born in freedom, walking across campus and into my day's labors. I borrow any book I wish from the library, and I buy more books with the money I earn. When I sit down to write, I can choose any theme among themes. I don't always write about my blackness; sometimes I talk about spaceships, or breakfast. I write what pleases me. Still, my blackness is there, in the very language that threads itself across the screen. It's in my literacy and how I feel it: a gift of threads.

How does it feel to write my blackness in a poem? Like practice. Like mashing the pads of my fingers against guitar strings, making the shape for G until G hurts. And often, it feels bright and huge, a room without walls I step into. My listening room. My library. Where I can be with other poets who speak the many languages of blackness. I've found my way into this room, at last, and I want to share these discoveries with my students now, while they're young enough to make these names part of their personal canon. For my students, I fill my arms with books.

For them, I turn page after page. At school, I teach Evie Shockley's *The New Black*, Thomas Sayers Ellis's *Skin Inc.: Identity Repair Poems*, Camille Dungy's *Suck on the Marrow*, Natasha Trethewey's *Native Guard*, Shane McCrae's *Mule*. I tell my students, I tell myself: Pay attention to what these poets are doing with the sonnet. Look how they break open received forms. Listen to the music they make, how a poem that demands social change can be beautiful at the same time. How it should be beautiful at the same time.

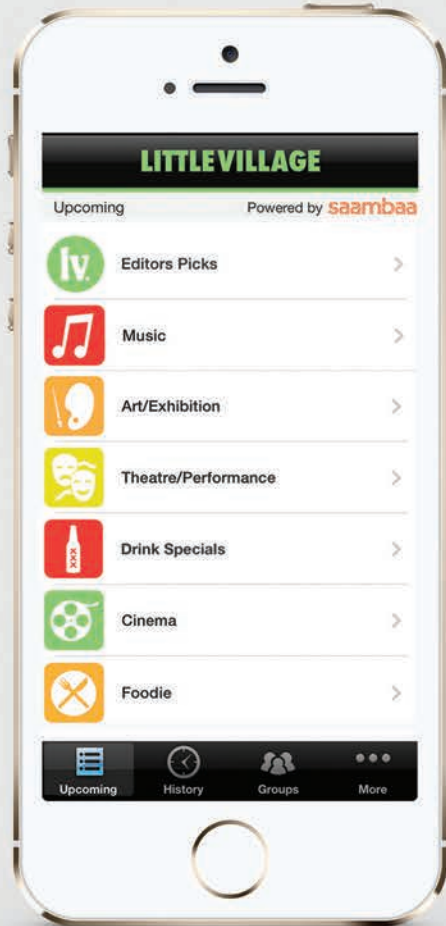
I'm no master of order, of music, of blackness. But I'm learning to hum in millions of intimate keys. In my poems, I wish to share my blackness with the world, but it's personal, too. When I write, my great-grandma, Alverta, enters the room with her sadness and her cat-eye glasses. Her name sounds like a hairpin bent back on itself. She tells me about the big-city dreams she failed to catch. I want to say that her voice resembles mine, but it doesn't. Alverta is Alverta. I pour her a cup of coffee, but she won't take off her coat. So that's the beginning.

Write about me.

Special thanks to Kiki Petrosino and *The Iowa*



Review for allowing us this excerpt. Petrosino's essay can be read in its entirety in issue 45.3. Visit iowareview.org or *Prairie Lights* Bookstore to get your copy today! ■



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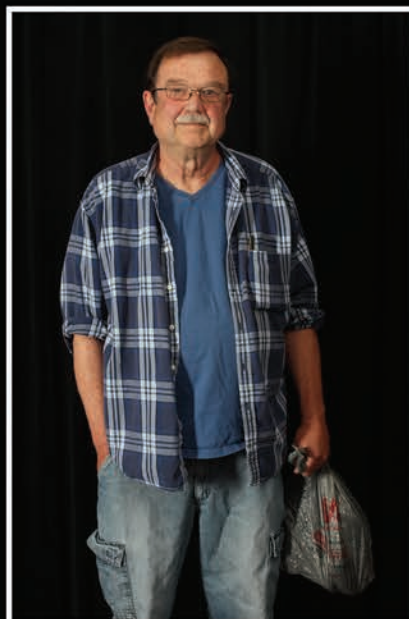
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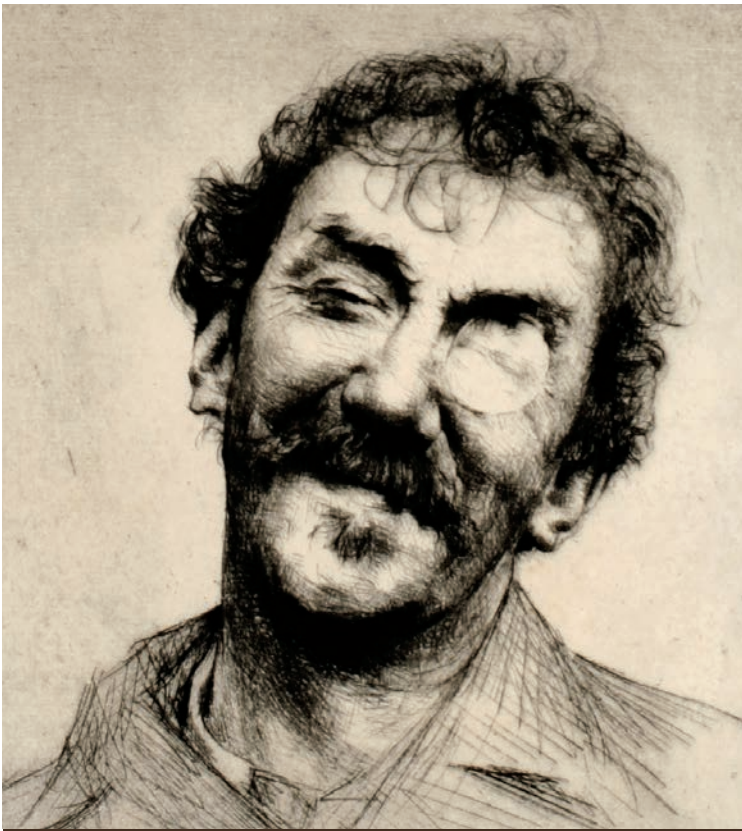
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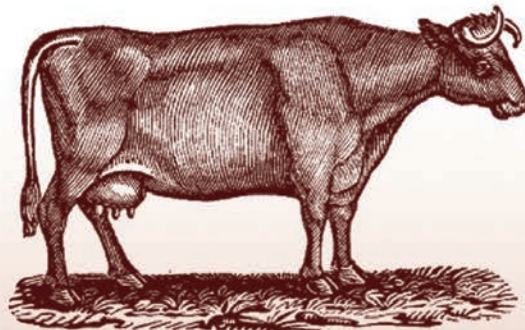
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The Friends of the Englert program is our way to say thank you, providing donors of \$30 or more with priority access to tickets for in-demand shows, free and discounted ticket prices, and other Englert insider benefits and information. Contact the Box Office or visit our website to sign up!

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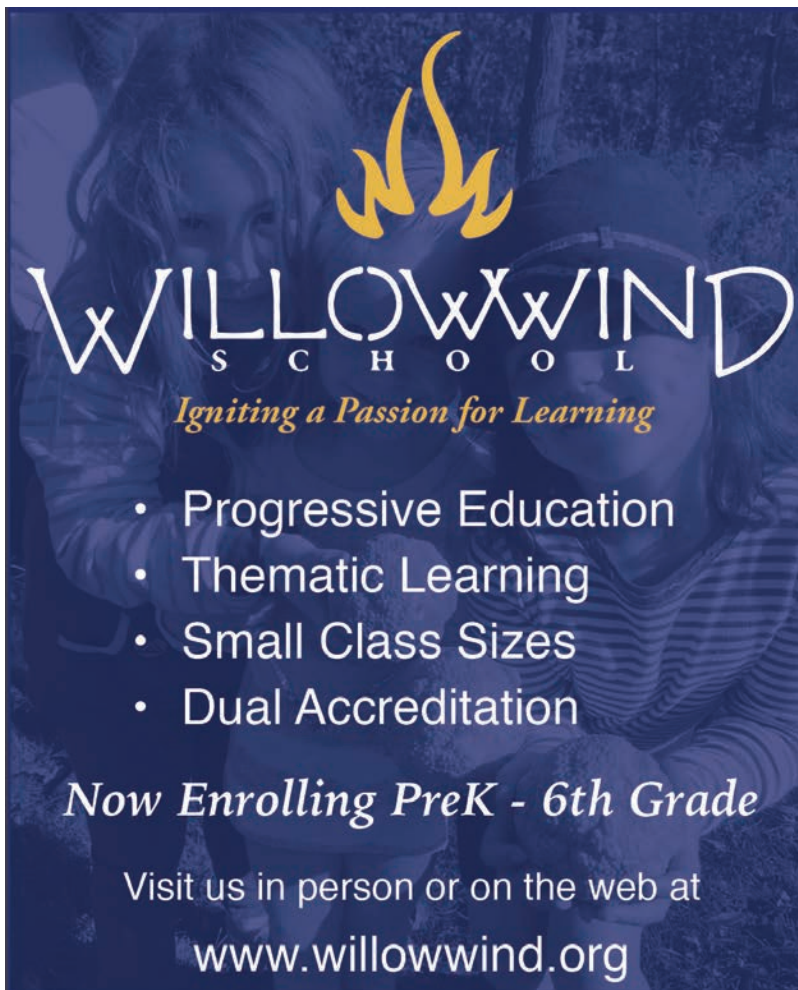
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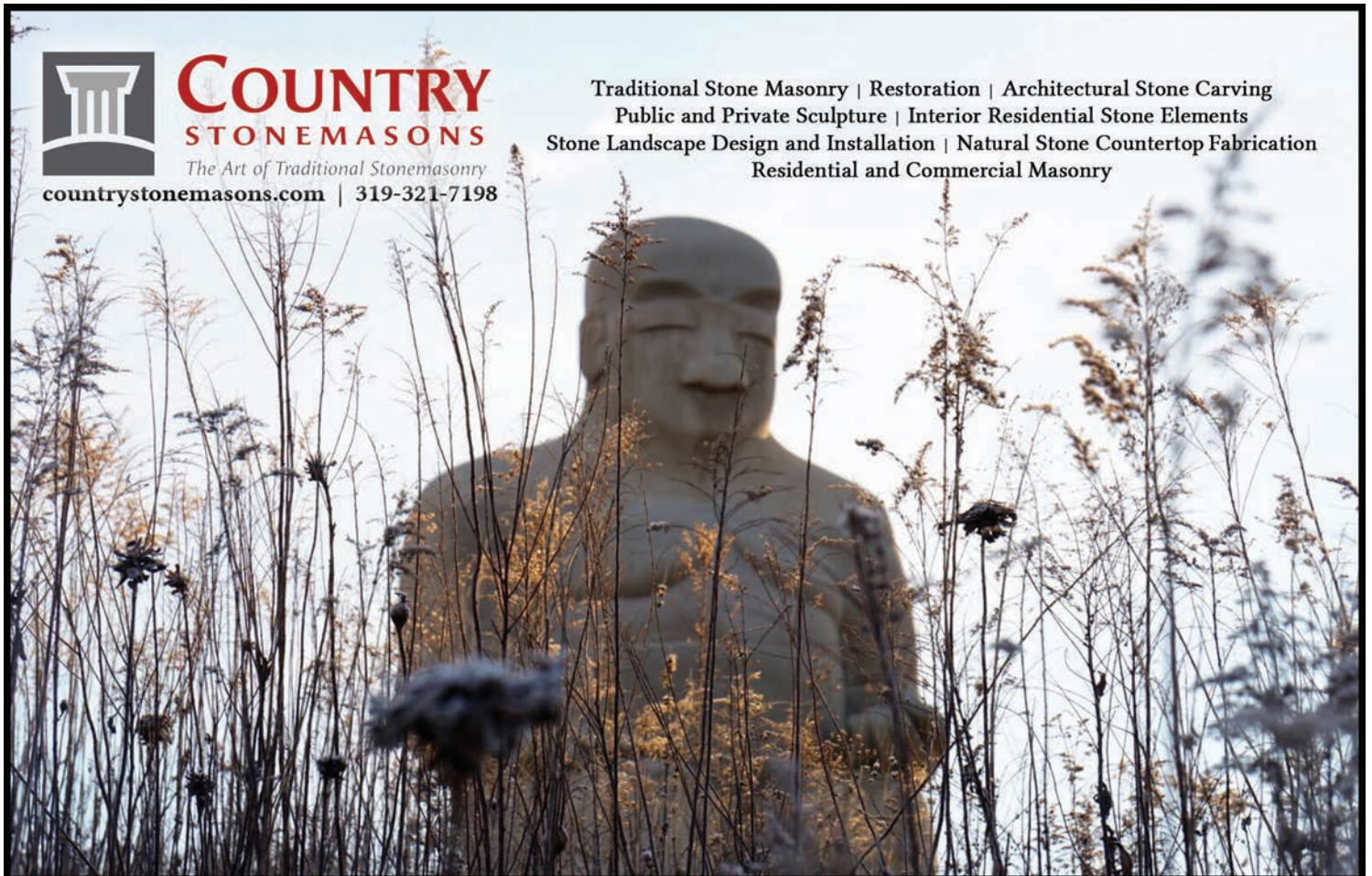
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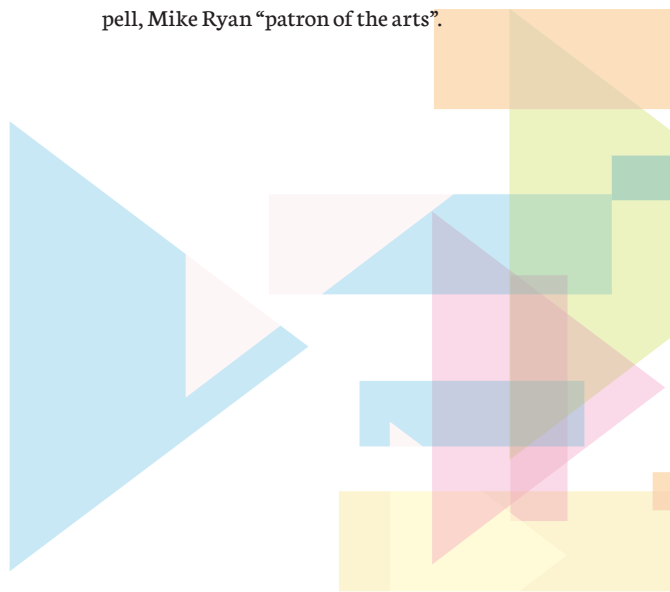
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Gifts were given in honor of Wally Chap-
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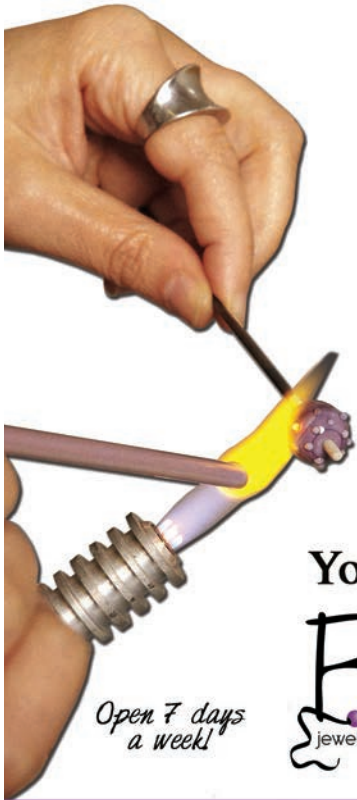
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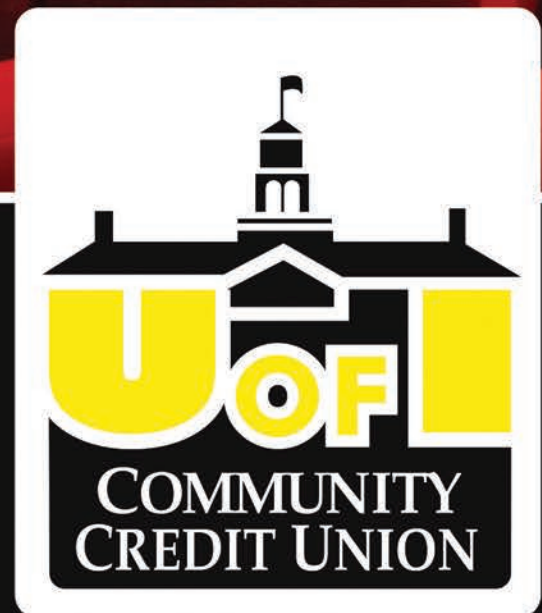
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Englert Commissions

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.

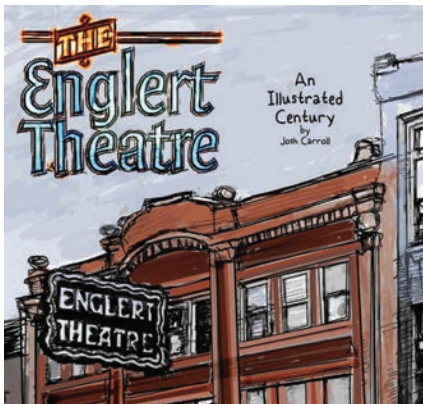


◀ Iowa City Song Project

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. ■

CDs, LPs, Illustrated Century books, and photography are available for purchase at the box office and at select shows.

“The thing I love about music is all the different people I get to meet. It’s great to talk to the lifelong musician or the kid just picking up guitar. No matter how long you’ve been playing, we’re all in the same community. We all share a

PASSION FOR CREATING MUSIC

Who knows, that kid with the new guitar might just be the next Hendrix.”

ANDREW STEWART

COMBO SALES ASSOCIATE



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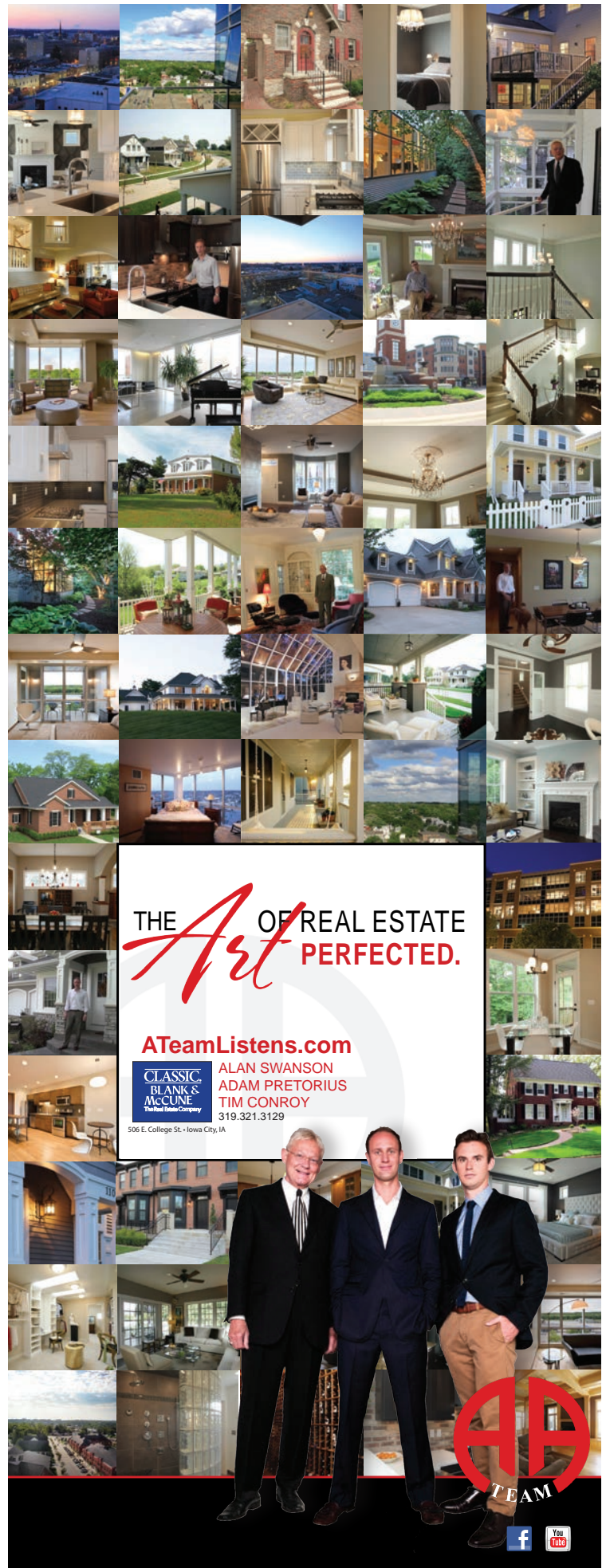
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Margo Abbott
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 Linda Schreiber
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 Virginia Stamler
 Janet Stephan
 Peggy Stokes
 Bruce Tarwater
 Mary Vasey
 Helen Wilson
 Ron Wright
 Sherri Zastrow

Over 50 Hours

Emily Anderson
 Meggie Aube
 Jill Beardsley
 Bob Boelman
 Hyla Boelman
 Heather Brunner
 Ian Corbin
 Donald Denis
 Aimee Donnelly
 Ann Drop
 Katherine Drop
 Jon Eberlin
 Natalie Ehalt
 Alan Frank
 Jim Gulland
 Rita Holm
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 Harriet Woodford
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Upcoming Events



The Lone Bellow

March 29 / 8 p.m. / \$20 G.A. advance / \$22 day of show (plus fees)

In the vein of contemporaries Mumford & Sons, Edward Sharpe & the Magnetic Zeroes, and the Lumineers, the Lone Bellow has electrified indie folk. Working with producer Aaron

Dessner of the National, the Lone Bellow has created a sound that mixes folk sincerity, gospel fervor, even heavy metal thunder, but the heart of the band is harmony: three voices united in a lone bellow.



The Pines

April 1 / 7 p.m. / \$20 G.A. advance / \$22 day of show (plus fees)

Rising out of the prairies of the Midwest, The Pines are one of the most distinct and powerful indie-rock/Americana groups to hit

the national scene in years. Emerging from the same Minneapolis music world that spawned such notable acts as The Jayhawks, The Replacements and Bob Dylan, The Pines have gathered a stunning lineup of musical talent, in both their live shows and on record, that has gained them a faithful and growing following.

Mission Creek Festival

April 5 - 10

The eleventh-annual Mission Creek Festival will bring to our stage artists including graphic novel artist Alison Bechdel, musicians The Joy Formidable and Kurt Vile & the Violators, and comedian Marc Maron. For a complete

lineup and pass information, go to www.missionfreak.com.



Home Free

May 3 / 8 p.m. / \$32 Reserved Seating In Advance / \$35 Day of Show / \$102 VIP Package (plus fees)

Since being crowned NBC's "The Sing-Off" victors, Home Free has made their mark on the music scene selling more than 200,000 albums, racking

up more than 50-million YouTube views, and entertaining more than 100,000 people live in concert. The country vocal quintet brings their high-energy and quick-witted performance peppering Nashville standards with country-dipped pop hits to town as a part of the Don't It Feel Good: Spring Tour.



Tommy Emmanuel

May 14 / 8 p.m. / \$39.50 Reserved Seating (plus fees)

A master technician, Emmanuel started professionally at age 6, rising through the ranks as a studio player and member of several Australian rock bands before he set off on a solo career.

One of only five musicians handpicked by his mentor, Chet Atkins, as a Certified Guitar Player (CGP), he's piled up numerous accolades, including two Grammy nominations and two ARIA Awards from the Australian Recording Industry Association. His latest album, *It's Never Too Late*, is his first solo release since 2000, allowing the listener to savor one of today's great guitarists.



The Jayhawks

May 22 / 7 p.m. / \$30 Reserved Seating (plus fees)

The Jayhawks and their rootsy sound were definitely swimming against the tide when they emerged from a crowded Minnesota music scene in 1985. Over the course of two decades,

9 albums, countless memorable live shows and enough personal drama to fill a couple of "Behind the Music" episodes, this beloved band soared to heights few ever achieve while winning the hearts and minds of numerous critics, fans and peers in the process.



The Milk Carton Kids

May 27 / 8 p.m. / \$25 Reserved Seating / \$40 Golden Circle (plus fees)

Grammy-nominated harmony duo The Milk Carton Kids released their third album, *Monterey*, on May 19, 2015. A refreshing alternative to the foot-stomping grandeur of the so-

called "folk revival," an understated virtuosity defines The Milk Carton Kids and their new album. The two years since the release of their last album, *The Ash & Clay*, have been significant ones for the group. In addition to a Grammy nomination for Best Folk Album, The Milk Carton Kids won Duo/Group of the Year at the Americana Music Awards in 2014.



Paula Poundstone

June 10 / 8 p.m. / \$36.50 Reserved Seating / \$55 Golden Circle (plus fees)

25 years ago Paula Poundstone climbed on a Greyhound bus and traveled across the country — stopping in at open mic nights at comedy clubs as she went. A high school drop-out,

she went on to become one of the great humorists of our time. You can see her perform live, or hear her through your laughter as a regular panelist on NPR's popular rascal of a weekly news quiz show, "Wait Wait, Don't Tell Me." ■

 Follow us on Facebook for show

announcements, ticket giveaways, and more!

The History of the Englert



The face of the Englert circa 1912

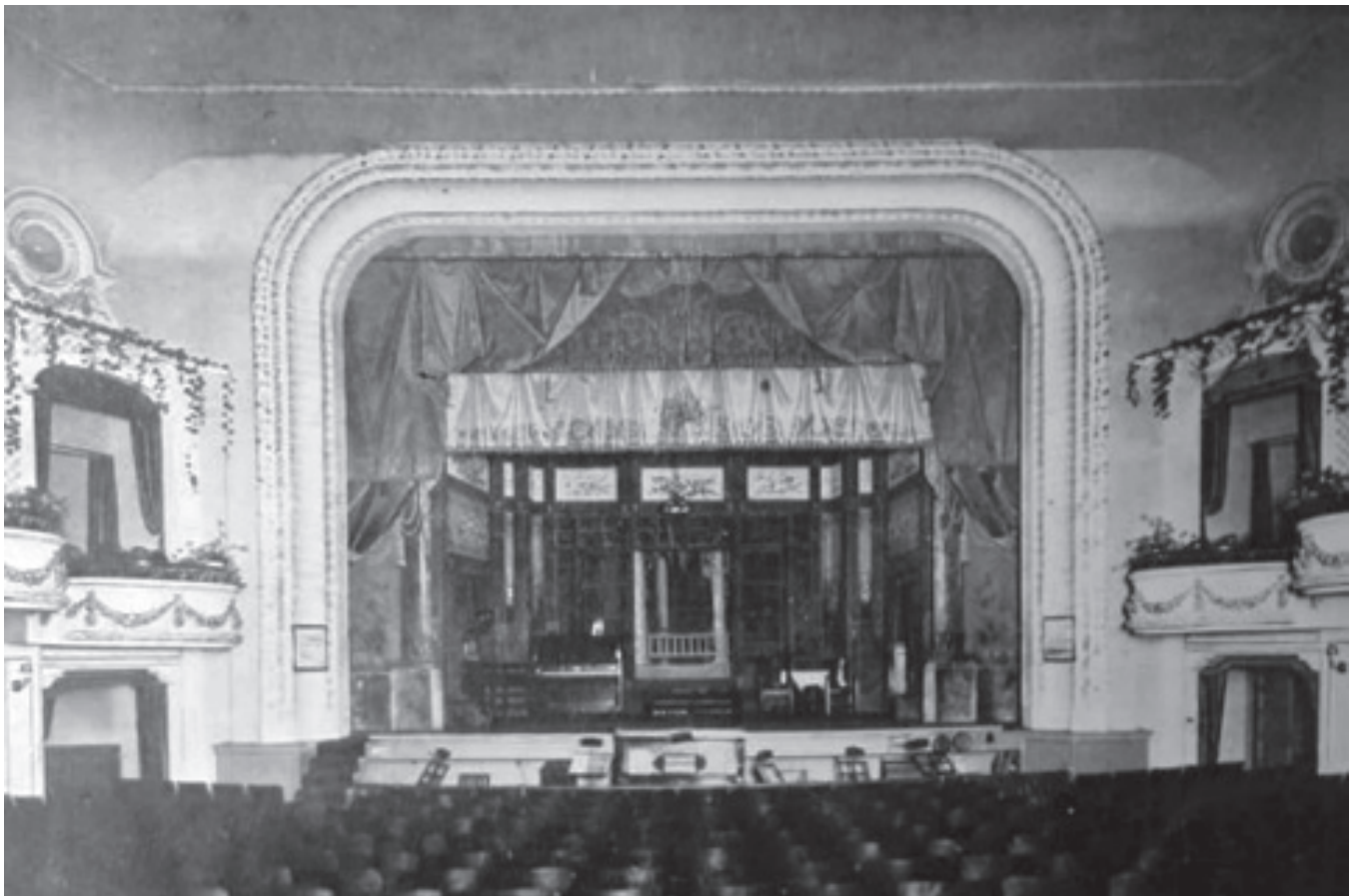
The Englert Theatre first opened its doors on September 26, 1912. William Englert and his wife Etta built the theater to rival the finest stages and movie houses throughout the Midwest. Replacing a livery stable that originally stood in the location, the Englert brought Vaudeville touring acts to Iowa City, where townspeople and students filled its 1,071 seats. In addition to live stage acts, the Englert also boasted high quality projection equipment for showing three-reel films.

Two storefronts were originally housed in the building: a barbershop where the elevator is now and a candy store in the area that is now the box office. The Englert family lived on the second floor of the theater building and provided rooms for the performers on the third floor. In 1920, William Englert died of a cerebral hemorrhage in his bedroom, now the Englert offices, at only 46 years old

Following William's death, Etta enlisted A.H. Blank (Central States of Des Moines)

and his partner Nate Chapman to oversee operation of the Englert, but Nate died in 1925, leaving his wife Dora with two small children, Ansel, age 10 (destined to be a local District Court Judge and later involved in the Englert's management) and Marvin, age four. Dora retained a partnership with Blank, and her brother, Al Davis, became manager of the Englert, a position he held until he retired. A woman ahead of her time, Dora was always involved in the operation of the theater.

In later days, Dora's great-grandchildren Nathan, Katherine, and Barbara Chapman, would hear Dora tell the story of witnessing the massive February 13, 1926 fire that nearly destroyed the Englert. Historical accounts place both Dora and Etta at the scene, watching in horror and barking instructions at firemen as the blaze tore through the roof. The fire caused \$125,000 of damage to a building that cost \$60,000 to build in 1912. Etta Englert and her new husband, James Hanlon, in cooperation



with A.H. Blank and Dora Chapman, immediately worked to rebuild the Englert, tapping into the prevailing tastes of the 1920s. During this era, large and ornate movie palaces were being built in cities across the United States, and Iowa City would not be surpassed.

The new Englert operated for decades as a joint venture. Etta Englert Hanlon and her second husband continued to reside in the building, while Dora Chapman and Al Davis managed the theater in conjunction with A. H. Blank. Years later, Blank and Central States of Des Moines, in partnership with the Chapman family, operated the theater and supervised its division into two small-screen theater spaces in the 1980s.

By 1999, the managers of the Englert finally decided to close the theater and sell the aging building. It was purchased by a bar owner who had plans to turn it into a nightclub. Not wanting to see the theater disappear, a group of concerned citizens persuaded the City of Iowa City to purchase the theater and hold it in trust until funds could be raised.

For the next five years, this group of citizens mobilized to purchase the theater

from the City of Iowa City and rebuild the Englert as a community cultural center. They began the “Save the Englert” campaign to raise the funds necessary to renovate the theater to its former grandeur.

Hundreds of local businesses and individuals contributed countless hours and millions of dollars to bring the theater back to life. Their contributions are forever recognized on the large Capital Campaign plaque in the Englert lobby, on the nameplates on the seats of the theater, and on numerous plaques around the building.

Finally, on December 3, 2004, a community’s dream became a reality when The Englert Theatre reopened for its first live performance in more than 60 years. Today, The Englert Theatre stands as a testament to all who believed in its recreation. ■



Nate & Dora Chapman
around 1920



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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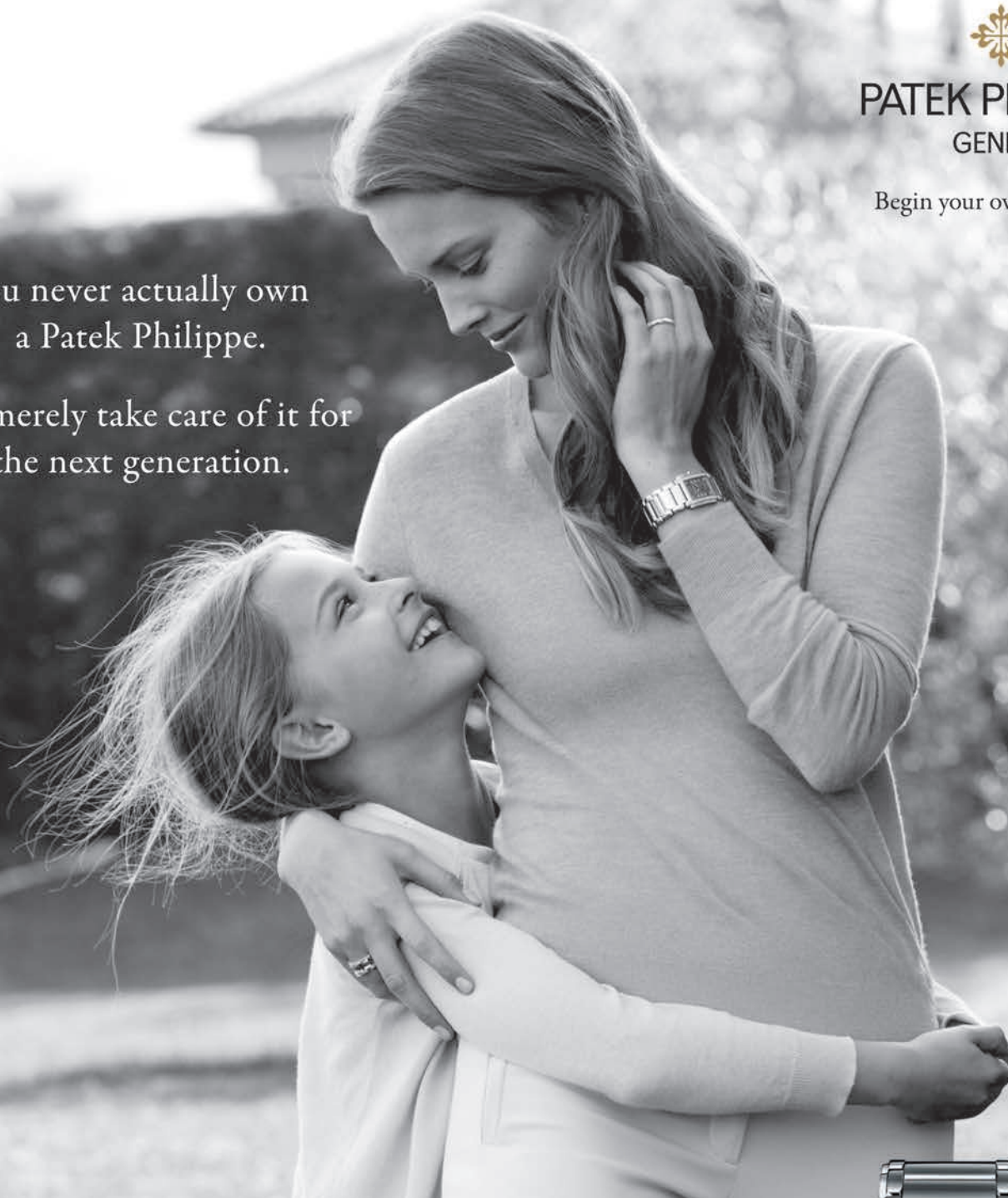


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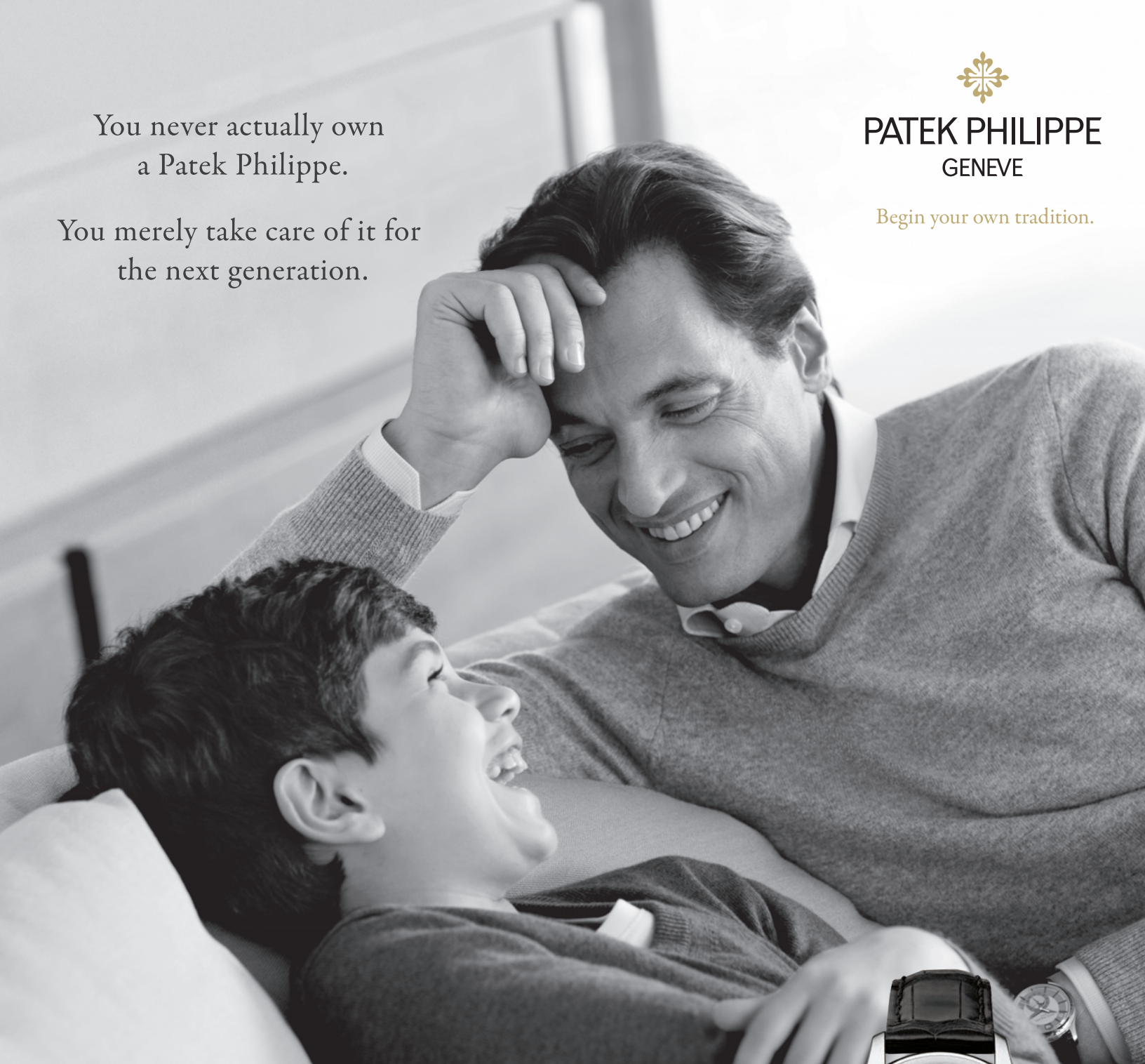
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