

PLAYBILL



For Everyone

Presents

NEAT

By Charlayne Woodard March 19 — April 11, 2021

Streaming On Demand

Directed by Suzan Fete

A play for one actor featuring Marti Gobel*

STAGE MANAGER	Bailey Wegner*
TECHNICAL DIRECTOR	Tony Lyons
LIGHTING DESIGNER	
SCENIC DESIGNER	Lisa Schlenker~
SOUND DESIGNER	Chris Guse
COSTUME DESIGNER	Amy Horst
CHOREOGRAPHER & MOVEMENT DIRECTOR	

* Member of Actors' Equity Association ~Member of United Scenic Artists

This play will run approximately 90 minutes with no intermission

NEAT was originally produced by the Seattle Repertory Theatre, Seattle, Washington, and the Mark Taper Forum/Center Theatre Group, Los Angeles, California.

NEAT is presented by special arrangement with Dramatists Play Service, Inc., New York.

LYRICS

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NEAT by Charlayne Woodard

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HOW "NEAT" CAME INTO BEING

Before she was an award-winning playwright, Charlayne Woodard was a successful actress living in New York City, where she received a Tony for her performance in AIN'T MISBEHAVIN', among many theatrical accomplishments. But when she moved to Los Angeles, Woodard found herself less than satisfied with acting opportunities. She took inspiration from a quote by Maya Angelou, however: "If you don't like something, change it. If you can't change it, then change the way you think about it." The Angelou quote inspired her to "stop complaining". Instead, Woodard says, she started "telling stories" to her friends. "The result was my first play, PRETTY FIRE, and it changed my life." A one-woman play performed by Woodard, PRETTY FIRE was produced in Los Angeles and received the LA Drama Critics and NAACP awards for best play and best playwright. It went on to be produced at prestigious theaters across the country.

One day as she was performing PRETTY FIRE, the actress/playwright remembers thinking, "This is absolute madness... Never again.!" Talking with her director, she shared the story of her Aunt Neat who had moved north from Savannah to live with her family. His reaction: "That's the play I want you to write... We'll workshop it next spring." Woodard began exploring her memories and after a few months, called her director, saying, "I've got the story. It's called NEAT and I know the four actors I'll need for the workshop: Angela Bassett, Mary Alice –". He cut her off with "Charlayne, not four actors, only you. You're the only one who does what you do."

That's how Woodard's second play, NEAT came into being. Developed at Seattle Repertory Theatre, it was produced there, as well as the Manhattan Theatre Club and Mark Taper Forum. Along the way it garnered the Irving and Blanche Laurie Theatre Vision Award and Outer Critics Circle Award nomination.

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CAST

MARTI GOBEL*	Charl	ayne and	d 23	other	character	rs
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DIRECTOR'S NOTES

Bringing back NEAT, a 2012 audience favorite followed by a successful South African tour, had always been my dream. Most importantly, because the story captivated me immediately. Woodard's writing is lyrical and her characters are so full of life! I'm sure Marti would agree – there is an awful lot of action in the script's thirty-nine pages! Back in 2012, NEAT was the second offering in our Diversity Series, which ran for three seasons. For each of them, fifty percent of our productions were written by playwrights of color. I believe we were the first professional theater company in town to make that kind of tangible commitment to diversity.

For our 2020-21 season we had other plans. Like most performing arts organizations, we were forced to reimagine our season more than once. Being a one-actor play, NEAT would be much safer to perform than a larger cast production, so this was the perfect time to bring it back. And I couldn't be more excited to work with Marti again! Her beautiful versatility as she plays twenty-four different characters is just priceless and something to be admired more than once. Like a fine work of art.

So, last October, I called Marti. I said, "Hey, I wanna do NEAT again. Are you..." Before I could finish, Marti said, "YES! Wait, when is it? Never mind, I'll cancel everything else!" I adore working with her! She is everything I love in an actor – immensely talented, brave, and a lot of fun. Marti and I have worked together in different productions for the last ten years, if not more. Even though I am so proud of our 2012 production of NEAT, this time around it's subtler, more nuanced, more complex.

When we started rehearsing, it all just felt right, like coming back home to old friends and family...

Safely creating work, however, is a challenge, but it has presented opportunities that we all have welcomed. Learning what's possible, working with cameras, finding new ways to bring the story to life, have been exciting challenges and have proven how creative and resilient we all are. I'm so fortunate to be working with such a brilliant production team! Lighting designer Noele Stollmack, set designer Lisa Schlenker, the experts at Studio Gear, and the editing skills of Kathy Wittman, made NEAT come to virtual life.

We are also fortunate to have Jayne Pink as choreographer and movement director. Trained at the Royal Ballet School, Jayne is considered one of the finest dramatic dancers of her generation. Having her wealth of talent and experience is beyond what I ever imagined. And she's so much fun! Her movement suggestions bring each character to life in ways that bring us closer to the stage...even from the distance.

I assure you - NEAT will stay in your heart for a long time.

Sunan Fete

BIOGRAPHIES



Charlayne Woodard (Playwright) Ms. Woodard's first play, PRETTY FIRE, was produced at Manhattan Theatre Club. It received L.A. Drama Critics and NAACP awards for

best play and best playwright. Her second play, NEAT, was developed at Seattle Repertory Theatre. At Manhattan Theatre Club, it received the Irving and Blanche Laurie Theatre Vision Award and an Outer Critics Circle Award nomination. Her third play, IN REAL LIFE, was commissioned by Center Theatre Group and Seattle Repertory Theatre, and was developed at the Sundance Theatre Lab. At Manhattan Theatre Club, Ms. Woodard was nominated for Drama Desk and Outer Critics Circle awards for best solo performance. The play received an Audelco Award, Backstage West Garland Award, and NAACP awards for best playwright and actor. Her fourth play, FLIGHT, was commissioned by P.L.A.Y. at Center Theatre Group. It was produced by Center Theatre Group in the inaugural season of the Kirk Douglas Theatre in Los Angeles. Ms. Woodard completed a TCG/PEW Charitable Trust National Theatre Artist Residency Program Fellowship at Center Theatre Group. As an actress, Ms. Woodard's theatre credits include IN THE BLOOD by Suzan-Lori Parks, for which she received an Obie Award, and FABULATION by Lynn Nottage. She was nominated for Tony and Drama Desk awards for her role in the original company of AIN'T MISBEHAVIN' on Broadway. Ms. Woodard's film credits include John Sayle's "Sunshine State"; M. Night Shyamalan's "Unbreakable"; Wim Wender's "Million Dollar Hotel"; Arthur Miller's "The Crucible"; and John Schlesinger's "Eye for an Eye." Currently, Ms. Woodard has a recurring role as "Sister Peg" on "Law

& Order SVU." Ms. Woodard was trained at Goodman School of Drama in Chicago and is a member of The Actors Studio.



Suzan Fete (Director)A graduate of
University of Illinois,

Suzan co-founded
Renaissance
Theaterworks in 1993.
Favorite Renaissance
Theaterworks projects
include: directing TOP

GIRLS, THE SHAPE OF THINGS, BLACKBIRD and THE ROAD TO MECCA, touring NEAT to Port Elizabeth South Africa in 2013 and finishing as a finalist twice with LUCKY NUMBERS and ALL OF THE EVERYTHING in the Samuel French Off Off Broadway Short Play Festival, 2015 and 2019. She is especially proud that Renaissance Theaterworks won the prestigious 50/50 in 2020 International Applause Award for the 2015-16 season. The Applause Award is given to theaters in recognition of their commitment to women playwrights.



Marti Gobel (Actor)

Marti Gobel is an actor, director and teaching artist. Her career on the stage, in television and film and in the director's seat has led to many opportunities around

the globe. No matter where her career has taken her, she is always thrilled to return to Renaissance Theaterworks where she directed THE BALLAD OF EMMETT TILL and NATIVE GARDENS. As an actor, Ms. Gobel has performed on the Renaissance Theaterworks stage in many productions. In addition to the staged readings of EL NAGULAR and THE

BIOGRAPHIES (cont.)

GRIOT, she performed in the full productions of THE PERSIANS, CRUMBS FROM THE TABLE OF JOY, THE VIOLET HOUR, STILL, SEX WITH STRANGERS and THE ROOMMATE. And, of course, NEAT. To date, NEAT is Ms. Gobel's most cherished production experience as a performer. She is humbled to have the opportunity to revisit this beautiful coming-of-age tale. Ms. Marti Gobel is represented by Paonessa Talent in Chicago.



Bailey Wegner (Stage Manager) is also Renaissance Theaterworks' Production Manager. Her Stage Manager credits with Renaissance

Theaterworks include

BELONGING, ACTUALLY, THE ROOMMATE, ANNIE JUMP AND THE LIBRARY OF HEAVEN, & PHOTOGRAPH 51, as well as four Br!NK New Play Festivals. Assistant Stage Manager credits include HAPPY DAYS, TOP GIRLS, & RUSSIAN TRANSPORT. Bailey has also worked with Milwaukee Chamber Theater, Wildspace Dance, and Kohl's Wild Theater. She holds a BFA from University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee.

Tony Lyons (Technical Director) This season marks Anthony's fifteenth year as Technical Director for Renaissance Theaterworks. In all, he has worked in various capacities on more than forty Renaissance productions over the last twenty-seven years. Anthony is also technical director for Wild Space Dance Company and Luminous Theatre. He has worked for Alverno Presents (R.I.P.), Skylight Music Theatre, Milwaukee Chamber Theatre, and Bialystock & Bloom (R.I.P.). In a parallel universe, Anthony is a partner in a small custom carpentry firm.

Noele Stollmack (Lighting Designer Noele is incredibly happy to be back in the theater with Renaissance Theaterworks having designed the lighting for PHOTOGRAPH 51, NATIVE GARDENS, THE VIOLET HOUR, THE KREUTZER SONATA and THE BALLAD OF EMMETT TILL. Her scenery and lighting design includes, FLYING DUTCHMAN, GIULIO CESARE IN EGITTO, ALBERT HERRING, DIDO AND AENEAS, VENUS AND ADONIS, RIO DE SANGRE, MACBETH, TRISTAN UND ISOLDE and MAGIC FLUTE (Florentine Opera), RAPE OF LUCRETIa (Toledo Opera), PAGLIACCI (Opera Columbus), MIRANDOLINA (Milwaukee Rep), lighting and scenic realization for Meredith Monk's international tours of MERCY & IMPERMANENCE. Noele's lighting has appeared onstage at Carnegie Hall, The Brooklyn Academy of Music, Sydney Opera House, The Library of Congress, Opera Ontario, Opera Pacific, Portland Opera, Vancouver Opera, Madison Opera, Nashville Opera, First Stage, American Players' Theatre, Jeff Daniel's Purple Rose Theater and Skylight Music Theatre. As Lighting Director for Houston Grand Opera, she supervised lighting for over 50 operas and designed such productions as Andrei Serban's ELEKTRA, Dr. Jonathan Miller's DER ROSENKAVALIER and AIDA and the world premieres of HARVEY MILK, DESERT OF ROSES and THE DRACULA DIARY.

Lisa Schlenker (Scenic Designer) is overjoyed to return to Renaissance and reprise the NEAT project. Lisa enjoys a diverse professional life with a variety of Wisconsin-based theatres as a scenic designer, and also serves as Florentine Opera Company's Production Manager. Avocationally, Lisa can be found giving care to Wisconsin's native bats at Wisconsin Humane Society Wildlife Center, where she is an active wildlife rehabilitator. Lisa's book with co-author Sandra Strawn, *The Properties Director's Tool Kit* is available on

BIOGRAPHIES (cont.)

Amazon.com. Recent design work: THE BLACKSMITH (Opera Lafayette debut); THE TRAGEDY OF CARMEN (Florentine Opera); LEONA LIONHEART (Kohl's Wild Theater); DOC DANGER (Milwaukee Opera Theatre); WINDJAMMERS, DAIRY HEIRS, WE LIKE IT WHERE, DAD'S SEASON TICKETS (Northern Sky); MARY JANE (Forward); FIRES IN THE MIRROR (Milwaukee Chamber Theatre); NUNSENSE (Milwaukee Rep); HAPPY DAYS (Renaissance Theaterworks); THE NICETIES (Forward Theater). Thank you for supporting local Milwaukee theatre!

Chris Guse (Sound Designer) Past sound designs for Renaissance Theaterworks include the original production of NEAT along with CRUMBS FROM THE TABLE OF JOY (collaboration with Uprooted) and THE BELLE OF AMHERST. Other recent design projects include sound for THE FEW, LEND ME A TENOR, OCTOBER, BEFORE I WAS BORN, COLLECTED STORIES, HEROES, JEEVES INTERVENES, DUET FOR ONE, and sound and video for MASTER CLASS and THE DETECTIVE'S WIFE with Milwaukee Chamber Theatre. Chris designed and created the interactive multimedia content for THE MONARCH, TRASH OR TUNES and THE CONGO CODE (a 2015 Milwaukee Business Journal Eureka Award winner) with Kohl's Wild Theatre and created the video content for Shorewood High School's groundbreaking, 2016 Tommy Award sweeping AMERICAN IDIOT. Chris writes music and plays guitar for three-time WAMI nominated Milwaukee based pop-rock band Rocket Cat and performs with the 80's New Wave tribute act MixtapeMKE. An associate professor at UWM for over 20 years, Chris teaches in the areas of sound design/ technology and technical direction and has designed sound, video and/or composed music for over 50 shows, including highlight productions of CORKTOWN, OEDIPUS REX. MR. MELANCHOLY and FROM THESE GREEN HEIGHTS.

Amy Horst (Costume Designer) She/her Previously at Renaissance Theaterworks: ACTUALLY, THE ROOMMATE, LUNA GALE, TOP GIRLS, THE TROJAN WOMEN, STOP KISS, SPINNING INTO BUTTER, A DIFFERENT MOON. Other recent projects include: THE GOSPEL AT COLONUS (Skylight Music Theatre), LAUGHTER ON THE 23RD FLOOR (Next Act Theatre), DAD'S SEASON TICKETS (Northern Sky Theatre). Upcoming: THE LIFESPAN OF A FACT (Forward Theater). Thank you to the NEAT team – it is an honor to work with you!

Jayne Regan-Pink (Coreographer & Movement Director) is honored to join the fine people of Renaissance Theaterworks for NEAT after coaching Laura Gordon and Todd Denning in last season's HAPPY DAYS. Jayne recently choreographed CHITTY CHITTY BANG BANG, MATILDA, ELEPHANT AND PIGGIE and URINETOWN (First Stage). Jayne has also assisted on dialect for HAPPY NOW, THE NORMAN CONQUESTS and A CHRISTMAS CAROL (Milwaukee Rep). Trained at the Royal Ballet School, Jayne is considered one of the finest dramatic dancers of her generation. She is best known for her created roles and close collaboration with Christopher Gable and Michael Pink. Jayne has since acted as répétiteur and coach for Milwaukee Ballet, Boston Ballet, Royal New Zealand Ballet, Norwegian National Ballet and Colorado Ballet Companies. She is currently the Pilates program director at Milwaukee Ballet. Thanks and respect to Suzan Fete and Marti Gobel. "This one's for the ladies". You know who you are.



Lisa Rasmussen (Managing Director) started as Renaissance Theaterworks' first Development Director in 2008. In December 2017, Lisa was promoted to

BIOGRAPHIES (cont.)

the position of Managing Director. She is proud to be a driving force in maintaining Renaissance Theaterworks' debt-free history and dedication to gender equity while expanding its regional and national impact through excellent, poignant theater. Lisa received her BA in Theater and Psychology from Cardinal Stritch University. She loves living in Bay View with husband Jake and daughter Anna.



Lucia Lozano (Marketing & PR Director) grew up in Colombia, where she received her degree in Communications and worked as TV and documentary film editor for six years. She

was also creative writer, branding strategist and graphic designer at an advertising agency, and marketing director at a corporation. Soon after moving to Milwaukee twenty years ago, Lucia started a Marketing Communications firm specialized in nonprofits. She was First Stage's Community Engagement Manager for four years before joining Renaissance Theaterworks and is excited to continue her involvement with Milwaukee theater. She's particularly thrilled about the company's dedication to gender equity and its commitment to diversity and inclusion. Lucia is also a fine artist and photographer and, besides theater, she enjoys hiking, Latin dance, foreign films, cooking, and dining with friends.



Dana Dossett (Development Manager) holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Theater from Drake University and a Master of Science in Nonprofit Management and Leadership from University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee. Prior to joining RTW in January 2018, Dana served as the Grants and Communications Coordinator for The Women's Center in Waukesha. She loves exploring Milwaukee with her husband, Corey and their children, Micah and Norah.



Alea McHatten (Education Coordinator) joined Renaissance Theaterworks in fall of 2019. Alea is a Black, Non-binary, Milwaukee native, poet, facilitator, and

student of life. Their writings have granted them performances across the nation, have appeared online and have made room for her in local headlines and international poetry competitions. Alea began their career in late 2010 and has yet to put down the pen. Later this year, Alea will release her latest work "Garden of Ghosts." Striving to shine a light on the gray areas of the human experience, Alea uses her art as a platform to spark dialogue. As an educator, she guides others through discussion and creative rhetoric in effort to build dignity in community while gaining further understanding of self in relation to the world. It is their mission to bring people together to share in the commonwealth of knowledge and resources. Alea furthers her service through storytelling and theater with Ex Fabula and Renaissance Theaterworks.

"If you wanna break a glass ceiling, you better bring a hammer."

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George Affeldt in memory of Nancy Tabor Fellenz Affeldt Elizabeth Amato in honor of Beth Amato Michael Anderson in honor of Brandy Kline Arthur & Anne Brooks in honor of Danni Gendelman Neil Brookshire in honor of Marjorie Turner Neil Brookshire in memory of Cathleen Conley Mary Belle & Thomas Chatton in honor of Belle Danforth Mary Belle & Thomas Chatton in honor of Mildred Chatton Alexander Coddington in honor of Elyse Edelman Tanya Dhein in honor of Abby Haak Marcee Doherty-Elst & Christopher Elst in honor of Stacee Slerret Marcee Doherty-Elst & Christopher Elst in honor of Liz Christman Elyse Edelman in honor of Nancy Gorens Edelman Matthew Fete in honor of Suzan Fete Suzan Fete in memory of Hazel Leukaufe Suzan Fete in honor of Sandy Laedtke David Flores in honor of Pam Kriger, Dolores Lenore, Marlee Sabo and Barbara Gensler Kathy Friend in honor of Lynde Uihlein Kathy Friend in honor of Sue Frautschi, Lola Loepfe, Julie Tolan, Maureen Oster & Mary Reed Liz Furse in honor of Judy Zwirlein John Gielow in honor of Dianna Dentino Avery Goodrich, Jr in honor of Julie Swenson Jennifer Gray in honor of Celia Klehr

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Jennifer Gray in honor of Celia Klehr
Nicholas Harazin in honor of Karen Estrada
Nicholas Harazin in honor of Eleni Pappageorge
Sarah & Milt Hwang in honor of Pam Kriger
Milt Hwang in honor of Sarah Hwang
Marcella Kearns in honor of Sharon Kearns
Suzanne Kelley in honor of Judy Zwirlein
Randy Klumb in honor of Sarah Ford
Julilly Kohler in honor of Marie Kohler
Marie Kohler in honor of Julilly Waller Kohler
Marie Kohler in memory of Julilly House Kohler

Sandy Laedtke in memory of Barbara Lawrence Schultz

Arlene & Jeff Larson in honor of Tessa Larson

Bonnie Lewis in honor of Shana Lewis

Shana Lewis in honor of Bonnie Lewis

Sherry Lyons in honor of Cassandra Bissell

Lee Marquardt in honor of Kay Allmand

Kelly McBurnette-Andronicos in honor of Alejandra Gonzalez Avina

LaVerne McCoy in honor of Martha McCoy

Rebecca McMillion in honor of Maria Perrot

Georganne McNichol in honor of Karen Ozark

Sara Miller in honor of Donna Jordahl

Michael Minter in honor of Barb Minter

Kate & Ken Muth in honor of Lisa Rasmussen.

Michael Necroto in honor of Helen Necroto

Susan and John Nicholson in honor of Jennifer Rupp

Deborah & Jamshed Patel in honor of Cynthia Peterson

Maria Pretzl in honor of Hildegard Stringenz

Herbert Quigley in honor of Christine Radiske

Sarah Ross in honor of Marty Ross

Dan Schley in honor of Imy Schley

Mary Anne Siderits in memory of Anita Caravagnaro Been

Mary Anne Siderits in memory of Anna Elonen

Mary Anne Siderits in memory of Roberta Dieden

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Patricia & Jerome Styberg in memory of David Lloyd

Angela Topetzes Strelka in honor of Suzan Fete, Marie Kohler, Julie Swenson & Jennifer Rupp

Dawn Swartz & Aaron Szopinski in honor of Carol Justin

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Kim Whitmore in honor of Erica Andres

Sue & Brian Yee in honor of Madelyn Yee

Janet Yuhas in honor of Mallory Metoxen

Judy Zwirlein in honor of Julie Swenson

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Managing Director	Lisa Rasmussen
Marketing & PR Director	Lucia Lozano
Production Manager	Bailey Wegner
Development Manager	Dana Dossett
Education Coordinator	Alea McHatten

"NEAT" ARTISTIC TEAM

Director	Suzan Fete
Stage Manager	Bailey Wegner
Technical Director	Tony Lyons
Lighting Designer	Noele Stollmack
Scenic Designer	Lisa Schlenker
Sound Designer	Chris Guse
Costume Designer	
Choreographer & Movement Director	JaynePink
Scenery construction	Anthony Lyons, Timothy Linn
Scenic Painting	Carri Dahl
Studio Gear Production Services	Kimberlee Beggs
Master Electrician	Mike Van Dresser
Film Consultation	Kathy Whittman
Film Editing Assistant	Hannah Jope
Deck Chief & Covid Compliance Officer	Eli Walker

SPECIAL THANKS

Renaissance Theaterworks' Board of Directors, Dean Wegner, Josie Gobel, Timothy Linn, Joel Penegor, Next Act Theatre staff, Studio Gear, Ross E. Zentner.



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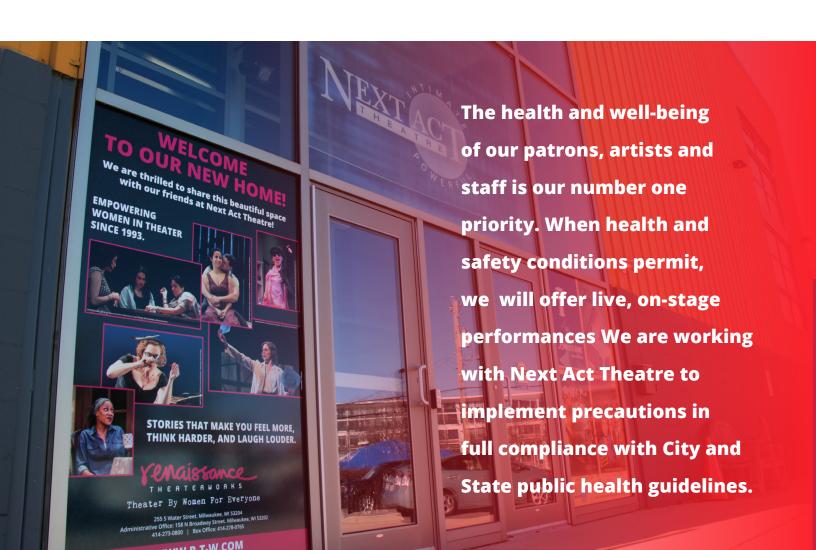
Renaissance Theaterworks is a member of the National New Play Network, Theater Wisconsin, Milwaukee Theater Alliance, Samuel French's Playwrights Welcome, Hispanic Professionals of Greater Milwaukee, Visit Milwaukee, and the Historic Third Ward Association. They receive support from the United Performing Arts Fund, Brico Fund, CAMPAC, the Evinrude Foundation, The Greater Milwaukee Foundation, the Richard & Ethel Herzfeld Foundation, Jane Bradley Pettit Foundation, Milwaukee Arts Board, Sempercor Foundation, the Shubert Foundation, the Bert L. and Patricia S. Steigleder Charitable Trust, Wisconsin Arts Board, and private donors and foundations.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Renaissance Theaterworks, "Theater by Women for Everyone", is Milwaukee's only womenfounded, women-run professional theater company. Dedicated to promoting the work of women onstage and off, Renaissance Theaterworks creates theater that connects with all people – and what it means to be human – through vibrant, visceral storytelling. Founded in 1993 by Suzan Fete, Marie Kohler, Raeleen McMillion, Jennifer Rupp and Michele Traband, Renaissance Theaterworks is the nation's second oldest theater company with a mission to promote gender equity in theater. Renaissance Theaterworks produces outstanding, artistically unsurpassed theater that makes audiences feel more, think harder, and laugh louder.

NEW ARTISTIC HOME FOR 2020-2021 SEASON

Renaissance theaterworks has permanently moved its productions as a resident theater at 255 S. Water Street — also home to Next Act Theatre. This move will allow us to continue in a positive trajectory for many years to come. Administrative offices will remain on the 5th floor of the Broadway Theatre Center.



THERTEIR WORKS

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EMPOWERING WOMEN IN THEATER







We tell stories that will make you feel more, think harder, laugh louder — stories you won't hear anywhere else.



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