FORWARD THEATER COMPANY
presents

I AND YOU
By Lauren Gunderson
Directed by Jennifer Uphoff Gray

Scenic & Lighting Designer
Noele Stollmack

Costume Designer
Shannon Heibler

Props Designer
Pamela Miles

Composer/Sound Designer
Joe Cerqua**

Associate Director
Jake Penner

Stage Manager
Laura Karavitis*

I and You is generously sponsored by:

This play was supported in part by a grant from the Wisconsin Arts Board with funds from the State of Wisconsin and the National Endowment for the Arts, and The Evjue Foundation, Inc., the charitable arm of The Capital Times.

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We are so proud to be a continued supporter of Forward Theater Company and this year’s production of *I And You*. 
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Welcome to Forward Theater! We are thrilled to be kicking off our ninth season of sharing stories with Wisconsin audiences. Our 10th anniversary season is just around the corner -- can you believe it? As we approach this milestone for FTC, we’ve thought long and hard about growing into our full potential as a company. What do we want to be doing more of and better than before, both for our community of artists and our community in the audience?

In other words, What’s Next?

We were inspired by this season’s three plays that all explore that very question. It’s going to be a compelling progression throughout the year, as each piece expands the scope from the “micro” to the “macro.” And there is no more exciting way to begin than with the intimate and magical I and You by Lauren Gunderson. I dare not give anything away, but I hope you are as moved by the unexpected journey taken by Caroline and Anthony as we are.

As for Forward Theater, we have a surprising twist of our own. For us, the answer to What’s Next? is something that we’ve been working toward for quite some time. Next year, we will be expanding to a four play season!

We are deeply grateful to have an audience that is so bold, curious, and invested in our exploration of contemporary theater. Thank you for asking us for more – we are looking forward to bringing you even more stories, more emotion, more food for thought and more impactful offstage engagement.

Onward. Upward. And FORWARD!

Number Nine! Wow, how can it be Forward Theater’s ninth season already? The "little theater that could" has, seemingly and suddenly, transformed to an inspiring mainstay of the Wisconsin theater scene.

Signs of Forward’s advancing maturity are everywhere. We recently hired a new Managing Director, Julie Swenson, to fill out our excellent staff with additional experience and skill sets. Julie is a phenomenally talented theater pro and we welcome her enthusiasm and kind spirit to the Forward family. In October, the American Theater Wing (the folks behind the Tony Awards) recognized FTC as one of 12 recipients of its prestigious 2017 National Theater Company grants (along with a check for $10,000). This is a really big deal! And the 2017-2018 Season marks the final year that Forward produces just three plays. Next year, our 10th Anniversary Season, we move to the first of many four production seasons.

This great progress is only possible because of you, our audience:

· Your well-considered thoughts about our plays shared through our post-performance talkbacks
· Your enthusiastic participation in our many community outreach programs
· Your generous financial support through your subscriptions and donations
Throughout our existence, you have propelled us Forward, enabling us to pursue our mission of creating a home base for Wisconsin theater professionals and audiences that expands the cultural and economic life of the great Madison area. This season will be no different and we are grateful.

So, as you prepare to watch *I and You, Exit Strategy, and Marjorie Prime*, sit back (or lean Forward) and enjoy the show!

Forward Theater’s Advisory Company (AC) welcomes you to our ninth season! The season consists of three plays that we wanted to share with you, our friends. We hope that you find watching these plays as fun and challenging as we did when we read them.

The role that the AC fills for FTC is unique. Reading and discussing plays for inclusion in our mainstage season is one of the most important duties that the AC performs for Forward Theater.

Every professional theater has a staff and a Board of Directors. When it was founded, FTC felt that a group of theater professionals that would help oversee and provide input in the artistic areas of the theater was needed. So, the AC was formed. It meets monthly to discuss plays, listen to staff updates and discuss all aspects of Forward Theater.

In addition to reading and discussing plays, the AC is active in many other areas of FTC. The members of the AC are actors, writers, directors and designers. Their work has been seen and enjoyed in numerous FTC productions, as well as productions in Milwaukee and Spring Green.

You can meet members of the AC before each performance of an FTC show. They are there to greet you, our audience members. We are always happy to answer questions about FTC and the show or to listen to comments, ideas or suggestions that our audience members might have.

AC members also attend FTC Board meetings, help with mailings, attend the annual FTC retreat and participate in outreach and educational programs, such as the Play Clubs held at various libraries around Dane County.

All this work is done in coordination with staff and the Board of Directors. FTC has an amazing group of dedicated professionals filling its staff positions and serving on its Board. Together with the AC, these three “legs of a stool” have worked together to make FTC an integral part of the Madison (and Wisconsin) arts scene in eight short years.

As FTC starts preparing for its 10th anniversary season, we want you to know that our main focus remains on presenting the best possible professional theater to you, our audience and friends. All the activities described above (and many more) are undertaken to make sure that our audience has a positive experience each time there is a contact with any part of FTC.

We love putting on plays that our audience enjoys and that, hopefully, make them look at the world we all live in a little differently. Your support and participation in our first eight seasons has filled us with so much happiness. Thanks for all you’ve given to FTC! Here’s to many more years of shared memories.
FROM THE PLAYWRIGHT….LAUREN GUNDERSON

I and You is a play about connection. But how do we connect with a play about two teenagers doing homework? (I wrote the thing and that sounds like a terrible premise.) We start by acknowledging that there is always more going on than the obvious; that everyone is living with contradiction, challenge, mystery and accessible joy if we care to look. We would also be smart to remember who we were as teenagers; hopeful, spiteful, wistful, wise. We might also start with generous hearts that recognize the communal hopes of people who do not at first seem to be anything like us. That’s the spirit of Whitman that these two characters gradually unpack and then embody during the course of the play you are about to watch, the spirit of strange unity and surprising kinship.

The following poem lives on the title page of later editions of Whitman’s Leaves of Grass. Whitman seems to be writing a requiem to his own writing, a hymn to the powerful buoyancy of verse to skip across time and defy death. Hold it in your mind as you watch and perhaps read it again after the play. But don’t think of it as homework :) 

Come, said my soul, Such verses for my Body let us write, (for we are one,) That should I after return, Or, long, long hence, in other spheres, There to some group of mates the chants resuming, (Tallying Earth’s soil, trees, winds, tumultuous waves,) Ever with pleas’d smile I may keep on, Ever and ever yet the verses owning—as, first, I here and now Signing for Soul and Body, set to them my name,

Walt Whitman

Thank you for being here, for adding your story to these two characters, and for exploring the connected life that we are living in this unique and mysterious present.

Yawp, Lauren
March, 2015

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“Walt Whitman: Power and Performance”

Whitman envisioned his poetry as a creative force that would empower his readers. Electrified by the “charges” left by his texts, they would tap into their hidden potential—a reservoir of physical and spiritual energy that would help them to actualize the promise of American democracy. Whitman located this energy in the masses—Americans of all races, classes, and social stratus. In his eyes, every person in the country possessed a divine identity. Seeing God in the face of every person he met, he believed that everyone (including criminals, the outcast, and recent immigrants) was a necessary part of America’s potential as a new kind of nation, founded upon the principle of equality.

A key aspect of Whitman’s democratic acceptance was his affirmation of the human body. In his eyes, no aspect of the body was unclean or dirty. He affirmed the beauty of sex, praised the strong and healthy, and even accepted the infirm and diseased. Growing up in a family scarred by disease (alcoholism, mental illness, TB, syphilis, and epilepsy), Whitman understood the value of health. His poetry celebrated the physical strength of what he believed would become a new race of American men and women. At times, he suggested that one of his goals was to transmit this physical vitality to his readers. His poems would itch in their ears, unloosen their tongues, and even circulate with the blood in their veins.

Such affirmations remind us of the performative quality of Whitman’s poetry, which he likened to music and, especially, his favorite art form—opera. Like a musical score waiting to be performed, his poems come alive each time they are read, as the voice of Whitman reverberates inside of receptive readers. Indeed, it is not a stretch to imagine Whitman’s poems as dramatic scripts, merely words on a page until they are staged and given new life through performance. At that moment, his audience inhabits a new world, charged by an energy that has entered their minds and bodies, inviting them to an enlarged sense of being.
GOING FORWARD – A CONVERSATION

We invite you to consider the topics below and discuss them with your fellow audience members. We also hope you will join the cast at a talkback after each performance, as audience and artists meet to discuss these and any other issues brought to light by today’s show. And please keep the conversation going – on the drive home, at work, with friends, or by sharing your thoughts on our Facebook page.

Let’s start the conversation:

• Like many teens (and adults) of today, Caroline spends a lot of time on her phone, computer, Facebook, etc. Do you think her dependence on technology and social media leaves her more isolated, or more connected to her world? Would your answer be the same for someone who wasn’t housebound?

• How familiar are you with Walt Whitman’s Leaves of Grass? What role does it play in I and You? Can you think of other plays that center around famous works of art or literature? How did the multiple references to this poem affect your understanding of the play and its characters?

• While the play is still fresh in your mind, take a moment and see if you can remember and identify places where the playwright gave clues to the audience. Did you notice them at the time?

To learn even more about the play, playwright, and Forward Theater’s production, please join us at our pre-show talks, one hour before every Thursday evening and Sunday afternoon performance, at the Playhouse Rotunda stage. Pre-show talks are free, and open to the public.

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CAST

**Caroline** .......................................................................................................................................................... Chantae Miller
**Anthony** .......................................................................................................................................................... Alistair Sewell

PLACE:
Here

TIME:
Present

The play will be performed **without** an intermission.

*Please Note:* The audience is asked to silence cell phones and refrain from using electronic devices in any way during the performance. The video and/or audio recording of this performance by any means whatsoever is strictly prohibited.

**ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES**

**Chantae Miller**
(Caroline) is a junior at Lake Country Lutheran High School, is humbled and honored to be making her Forward Theater debut in such a beautiful production. Chantae has worked with many theatre companies in the Midwest, including Milwaukee Rep, First Stage, Milwaukee Chamber Theatre, Lights, Camera, Soul!, and Bronzeville Arts Ensemble. You can see her as Janelle in First Stage’s world premiere of *Antarctica, WI* this spring. Chantae is also a member of First Stage’s Young Company, and would like to thank John Maclay, Matt Daniels, and Marcella Kearns for everything they’ve done to help get to this place. All my love in the world to Jen, Jake, Karen, and Alistair. Huge thanks for all they, as well as the entire production team, have poured into this production. 1 Peter 4:10-11.

**Alistair Sewell**
(Anthony) Alistair Sewell is delighted to work with Forward again. Past productions include *The Farnsworth Invention, Someone’s Gotta Do It, From Up Here,* and *The Flick.* Other theater credits include *Arcadia* (Writers Theatre) A *Streetcar Named Desire* (American Players Theatre), *The Bed* (Theatre LILA), and *Lost in Yonkers* (Northlight Theatre). Film credits include *For the Glory, Into the Wake, The Half of Me That’s Him, The Mourning Hour* and *Blame.* He is thankful for the unending support from his friends and family in Madison.
Ashton LaReau (Assistant Stage Manager) is thrilled to be joining Forward Theater Company this season. He has previously Assistant Stage Managed at American Players Theatre and is a proud graduate of Edgewood College.

Joe Cerqua (Composition/Sound Design) is a freelance composer, producer, vocalist and sound designer. He is thrilled to be working with Forward Theater again where he has previously composed and designed sound for Learning to Stay, Outside Mullingar, 4000 Miles, Mr. Burns, The Flick, Silent Sky, Vanya and Sonia... The Other Place, From Up Here, Or, Red, Sons of the Prophet, Good People, 44 Plays for 44 Presidents, Love Stories, In the Next Room..., Going to St. Ives, Why Torture is Wrong..., and The Farnsworth Invention. He has composed music and/or designed sound for over 250 productions in Chicago, nationally, and internationally. Recent projects include original music and sound design for The Foreigner and The Glass Menagerie, Outside Mullingar at the Clarence Brown Theater, The City of Conversation at Northlight, Dear Elizabeth at Milwaukee Chamber Theatre, Good People and Of Mice and Men at Milwaukee Rep, Tom Jones at Actors Theatre of Louisville, The Unexpected Man, Seascape, Private Lives, The Ideal Husband and The African Company Presents Richard the III at American Players Theatre, American Buffalo at Deaf West in LA, Rainmaker at American Blues, Wedding Band, The School of Lies, and The Time of Our Lives at the Artistic Home, and El Nogalar at the Goodman Theatre. Joe is the Producing Director/Composer in residence for the Cerqua Rivera Dance Theatre, a critically acclaimed 13-piece jazz orchestra and 10-member dance company. He is the Director of Production for the Music Department at Columbia College Chicago. Future projects include concerts with Cerqua Rivera, and original music and sound design for Alabama Story at the Clarence Brown Theater, One House Over at Milwaukee Rep, Edward Tulane at First Stage, and Rhinoceros at the Asolo.

Lauren M. Gunderson (Playwright) is the most produced playwright in America of 2017, the winner of the Lanford Wilson Award, the Steinberg/ATCA New Play Award and the Otis Guernsey New Voices Award, she is also a finalist for the Susan Smith Blackburn Prize and John Gassner Award for Playwriting, and a recipient of the Mellon Foundation’s 3-Year Residency with Marin Theatre Company. She studied Southern Literature and Drama at Emory University, and Dramatic Writing at NYU’s Tisch School where she was a Reynolds Fellow in Social Entrepreneurship. Her work has been commissioned, produced and developed at companies across the US including South Cost Rep (Emilie, Silent Sky), The Kennedy Center (The Amazing Adventures of Dr. Wonderful And Her Dog!), Oregon Shakespeare Festival, The O’Neill, The Denver Center, San Francisco Playhouse, Marin Theatre, Synchronicity, Berkeley Rep, Shotgun Players, TheatreWorks, Crowded Fire and more. She co-authored Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley with Margot Melcon, which was one of the most produced plays in America in 2017. Her work is published at Playscripts (I and You, Exit Pursued By A Bear, The Taming, and Toil And Trouble), Dramatists (The Revolutionists, The Book of Will, Silent Sky, Bauer, Miss Bennet) and Samuel French (Emilie). Her picture book Dr Wonderful: Blast Off to the Moon was be released from Two Lions / Amazon in May 2017. LaurenGunderson.com and @ LalaTellsAStory

Shannon Heibler (Costume Designer) is elated to write this bio which indicates this theatre thing is working out all right. She’s lucky to have done lots of things at many great places including
Forward Theater Company (dramaturgy, wardrobe), American Players Theatre (wardrobe), Children’s Theater of Madison (costume design, costume supervisor), and Milwaukee Chamber Theatre (scenic design). She studied her craft at UW-Madison and hopes to keep learning. Love and gratitude to Ben for all the hikes and laughter. Shannon is a proud member of the Forward Theater Advisory Company.

Noele Stollmack (Scenery and Lighting Designer) Noele is happy to be returning to Forward Theater for another season. Her lighting has appeared onstage at The Brooklyn Academy of Music, Sydney Opera House and the Library of Congress, as well as the opera companies of Ontario, Costa Mesa, Portland, Vancouver, New Orleans, Nashville, and Milwaukee’s Florentine Opera. Regional design for the theatre includes the Milwaukee Rep, Chamber Theatre, Renaissance Theaterworks, Skylight Music Theatre, American Players Theatre and Jeff Daniel’s Purple Rose Theater. Lighting and Scenic Realization includes Meredith Monk’s international tours of mercy & impermanence. As Lighting Director for the 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, Aida and the world premiers of Harvey Milk, Desert of Roses and Dracula Diary.

Pamela Miles (Props Designer) Pam is delighted to return to Forward for her fourth season. She is so proud to be a part of this generous and courageous company. Pam lives in Spring Green, WI where she has worked at American Players Theatre for nine summer seasons as the Assistant Charge Artist, as well as completed two Fall shows as the Scenic Charge Artist. Other companies she has painted for include: Arizona Broadway Theatre, Children’s Theater of Madison, Madison Ballet (Dracula) and the Summit Credit Union Inspiration Branch project. She has performed the role of Properties Designer with the Black Theatre Troupe in Phoenix, AZ and American Players Theatre for Mary’s Wedding last season.

Laura Karavitis (Production Stage Manager) is enjoying her third season at Forward Theater. A native of the Pacific Northwest, she began her career in Las Vegas as an illusion specialist for magician David Copperfield and joined him on international tour. Since then she has stage managed at several regional and fringe theatres across the country. Favorite credits include August: Osage County with Balagan Theatre of Seattle; Hotel on the Corner of Bitter and Sweet with Book-It Repertory of Seattle; Violet, The Full Monty, Dead Man’s Cell Phone with Barter Theatre in Virginia. Her favorite FTC credit thus far has been Silent Sky. She lives in Madison with her two favorite pups Yoshi and Ruby, and her favorite person, Tony. She is a proud member of Actor’s Equity, but an even prouder alumna of Washington State University.

Jake Penner (Associate Director) is an associate/assistant director and Advisory Company member at Forward Theater Company. FTC credits include No Wake (Wisconsin Wrights New Play Development Festival), Learning To Stay, 4000 Miles, Someone’s Gotta Do It, Silent Sky, and From Up Here. Other Credits include The Agony and the Ecstasy of Steve Jobs (Left of Left Center) and Rose Gold (First Wave UW). As always, thank you to Jen Uphoff Gray and the entire FTC organization for their artistic guidance and support, and to Patty and David for just about everything else. For Jenna.
Jennifer Uphoff Gray (Director) is the artistic director of Forward Theater Company, where she directed Learning to Stay, 4000 Miles, Mr. Burns (a post-electric play), Silent Sky, Vanya & Sonia & Masha & Spike, From Up Here, Or, Sons of the Prophet, Good People, 44 Plays for 44 Presidents, A Thousand Words, The Farnsworth Invention, Moonlight & Magnolias, In the Next Room..., Why Torture is Wrong, and the People Who Love Them, and All About Eve. Regionally, she has directed for Madison Rep and Milwaukee Shakespeare. Also: National Tour of Copenhagen, and Associate Director on Broadway of Copenhagen, Cabaret, The Blue Room (starring Nicole Kidman) and The Life. Jen grew up in the Madison area, holds a degree in Dramatic Literature & Stage History from Harvard College, and with her husband Peter is raising her family on Madison’s west side. This one is for the two teenagers currently living in her house, with love.

Kevin Zimmer (Technical Director) has worked with Forward Theater since the 2009-2010 season, first as master carpenter and as Technical Director for the past two years. In addition he worked as a Master Carpenter for Madison Rep, Master Carpenter for CTM, and Shop Foreman and Carpenter for American Players Theatre. Additional credits include professional work in the theatre community in St. Louis and as a Welder at the St. Louis City Museum.
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This summer, we were profoundly moved to learn of Dr. Linda Garrity’s strong belief in sustaining the Madison-area arts organizations she cherished. In her estate plan, she made a bequest to support the long-term health of Forward Theater Company, and her extraordinary contribution will become the inaugural leadership gift in an eventual endowment campaign to secure our future. We celebrate Linda’s philanthropic commitment with the launch of our Legacy Giving Guild named in her honor.

Linda passed away earlier this year, and will be greatly missed by all of those who shared their lives with her. She was a devoted, loyal and close companion to her friends, and treasured her deep one-on-one conversations with them. A dedicated, empathetic psychologist and psychoanalyst, she was deeply committed to helping those in emotional distress overcome the barriers to leading happy and successful lives.

We wholeheartedly thank Dr. Garrity and others who have already made a commitment to preserve Forward Theater Company’s significant impact on the lives we touch both in the Playhouse and in the community we serve.

If you have named Forward Theater as a beneficiary in your will or estate plan, or if this is something you would like to consider, we would relish talking with you about what you’d like to achieve with your gift – the legacy you’d like to leave for audiences, artists, and our community for generations to come.

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INDIVIDUAL GIVING

Your donations give the gift of professional theater to the greater Madison area. Thank you!

Ticket sales are strong, but cover only half of our total costs. Each year, we rely on donor support to create exceptional productions of compelling and thought-provoking work, hire outstanding Wisconsin artists for both onstage and backstage roles, and actively engage with our community.

We are pleased to recognize contributions received October 1, 2016 – October 5, 2017. If you notice any errors in acknowledgement or have questions about donation options, please contact Julia Nicholas at 608-234-5001 or jnicholas@forwardtheater.com. To make a tax-deductible donation to Forward Theater online or learn about donor benefits, visit our website at forwardtheater.com. To mail in a contribution, please use the following address: Forward Theater, P.O. Box 14574, Madison, WI 53708.
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Unfortunately, one of our original collaborators is no longer with us – the inimitable Colleen Burns. A professional actress for more than 30 years, Colleen was instrumental in the creation of Forward Theater Company. Proceeds from this fund underwrite the salary for one actress per season as a tribute to Colleen. To make your own contribution to continue to celebrate Colleen's legacy, please contact Julia Nicholas at 608-234-5001 or jnicholas@forwardtheater.com.
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