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by SIMON STEPHENS

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By scaling back the number of productions and professional company dancers for the 2018-2019 season, Gretchen Bourg, managing director of Madison Ballet, is hopeful the company can regain financial stability before stepping into the future.

“We are all 100 percent in for working hard in the arts, but we can’t operate at a high alert level and expect that to be a long-term life choice,” Bourg says. “We chose to trim the production season this year so we could step back and say, ‘what do we want? What is the path that we want to take?’”

This year’s season includes two productions: the holiday tradition of *The Nutcracker* along with *Emerging Voices*, a mixed repertory piece dedicated to up-and-coming choreographers. Outside its regular season, Madison Ballet will collaborate with Capital City Theatre for Leonard Bernstein’s *On the Town*, a wartime musical set in 1944.

While the search for a full-time artistic director continues, Madison Ballet hired Sara Stewart Schumann as interim director to oversee *The Nutcracker*. W. Earle Smith, who led the company for 19 years, stepped down at the end of the 2017-2018 season to pursue the next step in his career.

Schumann works as an attorney in Chicago and travels to Madison on the weekends to oversee *Nutcracker* rehearsals. She previously served as a choreographer, solo dancer and ballet master for Lyric Opera of Chicago.

Including her time as a ballet student, professional dancer, and teacher, Schumann estimates working on 30 different productions of *The Nutcracker*. Despite working on the same piece for so many years, Schumann insists *The Nutcracker* never feels stale to her.

“It’s kind of like if you see a Shakespeare production,” Schumann explains. “These
works have been done for such a long time over and over, but when you see a different production, you catch something new about it. Actors will tell you they never play it the same way, and that goes for dancers too. You can’t dance it the same way every time.”

Schumann also credits the element of live music with maintaining the energy surrounding the traditional production. The Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra will accompany this year’s holiday extravaganza.

Madison Ballet, with four professional company members, is employing an additional 12 professionals and apprentices just for The Nutcracker. Like in years past, the Madison Nutcracker will include around 135 children and community dancers from all over the state.

“Anyone coming to see this production won’t be able to tell the advanced students from the professionals,” Schumann says. “They will be seamless.”

In order to get everyone on this equal playing field, the community members and children rehearse for 12 weeks, while the professionals join four weeks prior to the show.

“Certainly this was not always a production that had a professional company,” shares Bourg, who has been involved with Madison Ballet in various capacities since 2005. “That was a really important thing for us to develop and not to the exclusion of our community cast. We really felt it could only enhance the production quality and provide opportunities for our community dancers to aspire to and work with these professionals.”

Madison Ballet’s near-sell-out productions of The Nutcracker have become a vital source of revenue for the company. Bourg says that an estimated half of their typical Nutcracker audiences are first-timers at the Overture Center.

“We consider that a great responsibility,” Bourg says. “We want them to come back as arts patrons for us, and for other performers, so we better get it right.”
Another crucial source of revenue for the ballet is the School of Madison Ballet, with enrollment ranging between 250 – 350 families today, and 450 families at its peak. Bourg played a part in opening the school in 2005, serving as education and outreach coordinator from 2006 – 2011.

The training exposes the Madison community to the art of ballet, while also feeding talent directly into the company. For instance, Rachelle Butler began her training with Madison Ballet in 1999, and now serves as director of the school.

Bourg notes that the Madison Ballet School never turns away families who can’t afford classes, providing a $25,000 - $35,000 financial aid program.

“There certainly is a perception in the dance world that everyone comes from a certain position of affluence,” Bourg says. “We have a unique responsibility to make sure we are
keeping our doors open for everyone.”

For the past 13 years, Madison Ballet has rehearsed in its studio space located at the nearly vacant Westgate Mall. Bourg says moving into a new rehearsal space is another long-term goal for the company, in hopes of providing a new spark of enthusiasm.

“I really feel like we have the artistic challenge part down,” Bourg says. “It’s making sure we have an administrative and development support to continue these shows in a sustainable and manageable way. I’m excited about the prospects we have and the changes we can make.”

**Madison Ballet Season Details:**

*The Nutcracker* runs December 8 – 26 at Overture Hall at Overture Center for the Arts.

*Emerging Voices* runs April 12 – 13 at the Drury Stage at Bartell Theatre.

*On the Town,* in collaboration with Capital City Theatre, runs May 30 – June 2 at the Capitol Theater at Overture Center for the Arts.

Tickets for all shows, including *Emerging Voices* at Bartell Theatre, can be purchased at overture.org or by calling the box office at (608) 258-4141.
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presents
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by Simon Stephens
Directed by Laura Gordon***

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Jason Fassl**
Costume Designer
Shannon Heibler
Composer & Sound Designer
Joe Cerqua**
Props Designer
Pamela Miles
Choreographer
Wilfredo Rivera
Stage Manager
Sarah Deming-Henes*

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Steve & Jacqui Suleski

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

HEISENBERG was originally commissioned by the Manhattan Theatre Club, (Lynne Meadow, Artistic Director; Barry Grove, Executive Producer) and received its world premiere there on May 19, 2015.
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Mussorgsky’s masterpiece explores the colors of the orchestra — the correlation of an artist’s visual medium through the colors of sound and music. And its finale The Great Gate of Kiev, is one of classical music’s greatest hits. James Ehnes is a violinist who is completely to my taste. With an absolutely gorgeous sound and consummate technique, he goes to the heart of the music.

– John DeMain

FEBRUARY

FRI, FEB. 15
7:30 PM
SAT, FEB. 16
8:00 PM
SUN, FEB. 17
2:30 PM

John DeMain, Conductor
James Ehnes, Violin
Harbison: The Most Often Used Chords
Brahms: Violin Concerto, James Ehnes, Violin
Mussorgsky: Pictures at an Exhibition

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Forward Theater would like to thank the former Board and Advisory Company members that contributed to our success:

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The power of community.

By working together and helping each other we’ve made our community a great place to live. The MGE Foundation is proud to support the Forward Theater Company.
FROM THE DIRECTOR... LAURA GORDON

FTC Artistic Director Jen Uphoff Gray sent me the script for *Heisenberg* in July of 2017. I fell in love with it before I had even finished reading it. Each time I’ve revisited the text of this unconventional love story over the past year and a half I’ve been entertained by it, provoked by it, moved by it, and continually surprised by it.

The play’s title references the Uncertainty Principle formulated by German physicist Werner Heisenberg in 1927. In a nutshell it asserts that if you precisely measure the position of a particle, you’re not able to precisely measure its movement, and vice versa. Playwright Simon Stephens uses physics as a metaphor for the unpredictability of human behavior, and the uncertainty and randomness that comes with all human relationships.

My appreciation of this play has little to do with quantum physics. I’m captivated by the quirky journey of an unlikely couple and how humor, patience, and persistence can penetrate even the toughest exterior. I’m moved by the underlying loneliness that these two share. I’m heartened by their journey. I’m excited to watch this pair of exceptional actors reveal their truths. And much like the observation of sub-atomic particles has led to an understanding of the cosmos, the close examination of this particular couple can shed light on our shared experience by taking the personal and making it universal.

FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS... STEVE SULESKI

THANK YOU AUDIENCE!

This year, Forward Theater Company is celebrating its 10th Season and celebrating its 10th Anniversary — all because of YOU. Subscribers have renewed at a rate approaching 90% — a level almost unheard of among our peers. Single ticket sales have always been reliably brisk. And our audience members have increased their donations significantly year over year, helping your theater expand its season to four mainstage productions.

In Forward Theater’s nine previous seasons, your support has allowed your theater to hire 825 artists, almost all of whom are Wisconsin residents. Your support has allowed your theater to establish partnerships with 32 local non-profits and to provide 45 free performances at Dane County libraries as part of its community outreach efforts. And the ART! Your support has allowed your theater to produce two mainstage world premieres, eight mainstage regional premieres, 20 mainstage Wisconsin premieres, 11 readings of full-length new plays by Wisconsin authors, and 49 original monologues.

So, what’s next?

Because of you, the AUDIENCE, your theater has added a fourth mainstage production to the lineup for its 10th Season: *Skeleton Crew, Fun Home, Heisenberg,* and *Life Sucks.* Because of you, your theater will have one extra opportunity each year to pay its actors, technicians and other theater professionals a living wage. Because of you, your theater will have one extra opportunity each year to reach out with our non-profit partners to the community on important issues. Because of you, your theater will have one extra opportunity each year to express its art, to engage its audience, and for all of us to experience together something more about the human condition.

How can your theater ever thank you enough?
Welcome to our TENTH SEASON! This is turning out to be a sensational year for Forward Theater (FTC), and hopefully, for everyone in our audiences. Besides the ten-year milestone, we have expanded our season to four full productions and have just produced our very first musical.

I think it’s appropriate, as we hit the decade mark, to take a few moments to thank the people who have helped make FTC a success. As most of you already know, FTC started with a group of ten theater professionals sitting around a table planning and dreaming about starting a theater. One of the first things we realized is that we were going to need a whole lot of help. And so, thanks to:

• All of the wonderful folks who have served on the FTC Board of Directors. Their hard work and tireless support of FTC’s artistic vision has been amazing. With their strong direction and guidance, FTC has been “in the black” financially every year.
• All of the folks who make up the FTC staff. They are hardworking, selfless and willing to work many hours to make FTC run smoothly.
• All of the theatrical artists who have worked with FTC. Hundreds of gifted theater professionals have worked with us over the past decade. They have all left their mark, in some way, on FTC.
• All of the donors, sponsors, volunteers and audience members who have given their support and enthusiasm to help make FTC a spectacular dream come true for those ten people who first sat around the table many years ago.

Have a great time watching the shows this year! The members of the Advisory Company will see you in the lobby.

FROM THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR... JEN UPHOFF GRAY

Welcome to the second half of our 10th anniversary season celebration! I’m thrilled that we are ringing in the new year with three of my favorite Wisconsin artists – actors Colleen Madden and James Pickering, and director Laura Gordon. Over the years, they have each contributed to some of Forward Theater’s most memorable productions, so I’m over the moon to have all three of them collaborating together for the first time! Heisenberg is a surprisingly stealthy and wonderously magnetic play, and these veterans are the perfect creative trifecta for this story.

We are still buzzing from the effect of our last production, Fun Home. WOW. What a spectacular and satisfying ride that was for everyone involved. We hope you felt the same way. And what made it particularly exciting was the 2,500+ new audience members we welcomed to The Playhouse! Patrons from all across the Midwest enjoyed the Forward Theater experience for the first time, and we hope to see many of them again. For those of you who have joined us for another production, welcome back. Or better yet, welcome home. You are now a member of an extraordinary audience that is bold, curious, and invested in our exploration of contemporary theater. We are so grateful to you for sharing these stories with us. Thank you for your continued and inspiring support.

FROM THE ADVISORY COMPANY... JIM BUSKE

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• All of the donors, sponsors, volunteers and audience members who have given their support and enthusiasm to help make FTC a spectacular dream come true for those ten people who first sat around the table many years ago.

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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:

- In *Heisenberg*, Alex is faced with some choices that could dramatically change his life, without knowing what the outcome might be. When you’re faced with these sorts of decisions, do you tend to make the safe choice, or do you take a risk? Have you ever regretted the road not taken?

- It’s hard to be sure where the truth about Georgie lies, as she manipulates the facts about herself to get the reaction she wants. It could be said, though, that we all do that to some extent. Think about the ways in which you present yourself differently to different people or in different situations/environments. How is it similar or dissimilar to what Georgie does in *Heisenberg*?

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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HEISENBERG
by Simon Stephens

CAST

Georgie .......................................................................................................................... Colleen Madden*
Alex .................................................................................................................................. James Pickering*

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

The audience is asked to silence cell phones and refrain from using electronic devices in any way during the performance.

*Performers appear courtesy of Actors’ Equity Association, the union of professional actors and stage managers in the United States.

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ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES

Colleen Madden  
(Georgie) This is Colleen's sixth season with Forward Theater, where she also performed in Silent Sky, Or..., Love Stories, Going to St. Ives, and Why Torture is Wrong... Most recently, Colleen appeared at American Players Theatre, where she is a nineteen-year core company member, in Heartbreak House and in Engaging Shaw and also as Billie Dawn in Born Yesterday. Other Wisconsin stages: Milwaukee Rep (Black Pearl Sings); Chamber Theater (Doubt); Renaissance Theaterworks (The Syringa Tree); and Children's Theater of Madison (The Music Lesson). Also at Children's Theater of Madison, her adaptation of A Christmas Carol has been in production for five seasons! Thank YOU for supporting live theater!

James Pickering  
(Alex) Jim returns to Madison after two years away. During the winter of 2017 he played Tony Reilly in Forward Theater’s memorable production of John Patrick Shanley’s Outside Mullingar. He is reunited with two wonderful former colleagues, Colleen Madden, with whom he worked at American Players Theatre, and Laura Gordon, a fellow member of Milwaukee Rep’s Resident Acting Company for nearly twenty years. During their tenure at the Rep he portrayed several characters under Laura’s direction, most notably Charlie in Edward Albee’s Seascape. Ironically enough, one of his favorite collaborations with her was Michael Frayn’s Copenhagen in which they played Niels and Margarethe Bohr, opposite Torrey Hanson’s Werner Heisenberg. Jim lives in the Bay View neighborhood of Milwaukee with his wife, actress Tami Workentin, his stepson, Edan Ness, and their two canines, Joxer and Frankie.

TECHNICAL ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES

Simon Stephens  
(Playwright) Simon Stephens has written many plays that have been translated into more than 30 languages and produced all over the world. He is a professor of playwriting at Manchester Metropolitan University, an associate playwright at the Royal Court Theatre, the artistic associate at the Lyric Hammersmith in London, and the Steep Associate Playwright at Steep Theatre in Chicago.

Joe Cerqua  
(Composer/Sound Designer) 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 Skeleton Crew, Marjorie Prime, Learning to Stay, Outside Mullingar, 4000 Miles, Mr. Burns, The Flick, Silent Sky, Vanya and Sonya..., 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 Edward Tulane at First Stage; Rhinoceros at the Asolo, Alabama Story, Outside Mullingar at the Clarence Brown Theater; The City of Conversation at Northlight; Dear Elizabeth at Milwaukee Chamber Theatre; One House Over, The Foreigner, The Glass Menagerie Good People and Of Mice and Men at Milwaukee Rep; Tom Jones at Actors Theatre of Louisville; Born Yesterday, 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 Creative Director and Producer for the Music Department at Columbia College Chicago. Future projects include concerts with Cerqua Rivera, and original music and sound design for Life Sucks at Forward; She Stoops to Conquer at American Players Theater; Rhinoceros at the American Conservatory Theater; Things I Know to Be True at Milwaukee Rep and Arizona Theater Company.

Sarah Deming-Henes (Stage Manager) After nine seasons of being an enthusiastic fan of Forward Theater Co.'s work, Sarah is simply delighted to join in all the fun - which started with stage managing Skeleton Crew and Fun Home earlier this season! Since 2001 she has proudly worked 14 seasons at American Players Theatre, where her very first professional (AEA) stage management contract was Thornton Wilder's The Matchmaker - with Sarah Day and Colleen Madden. When not at APT, she has enjoyed working at many Milwaukee theater companies, including First Stage, Milwaukee Chamber Theatre and, most recently and most often, The Milwaukee Repertory Theater - where she has SMed at least 1 production a season since 2011. Many thanks to her family and friends for unfailing kindnesses!

Jason Fassl (Scenic & Lighting Designer) Heisenberg marks Jason's 8th FTC production including Fun Home, Good People, and Red. This is also his 5th collaboration with Ms. Gordon as Lighting and Scenic Designer. Over the last decade, Jason has consumed mass quantities of electricity at American Players Theatre, The Milwaukee Repertory Theater, The Milwaukee Ballet, First Stage Children's Theatre, Skylight Music Theatre, Peninsula Players, Milwaukee Chamber Theatre, Renaissance Theaterworks, Next Act Theatre, Milwaukee Opera Theatre, and many others. Jason is a member of Scenic Artists Local #829, Milwaukee Stage Employees Local #18 and a proud graduate of the University of Wisconsin at Stevens Point.

Laura Gordon (Director) happily returns to Forward where she has appeared as Margie in Good People and directed Red and Going to St. Ives. A Milwaukee based actor and director, Laura's directing credits include The Unexpected Man, An Ideal Husband, The Royal Family, Edward Albee's Seascape, Old Times (American Players Theatre); The Foreigner, Venus in Fur, Speaking in Tongues, Almost Maine, Laurel and Hardy, Gutenberg! the Musical! (Milwaukee Rep); Romeo and Juliet, Much Ado About Nothing (Santa Cruz Shakespeare); Measure for Measure, Love's Labour's Lost, The Winter's Tale (Utah Shakespeare Festival); Boeing-Boeing (Indiana Rep); In the Next Room or the vibrator play (Actors Theater of Louisville); Russian Transport, Skin Tight, Amelia, Memory House (Renaissance Theaterworks); Richard III (Notre Dame Shakespeare Festival); Eurydice (UNLV). Laura is a Lunt-Fontanne Fellow and an Associate Artist with the Milwaukee Repertory Theater. She is a member of SDC and Actors Equity Association.

Shannon Heibler (Costume Designer) is so grateful for another opportunity to work in theater, specifically with Forward Theater. She is a proud member of the FTC Advisory Company and designed the costumes for I and You as well as serving as the Wardrobe Supervisor since 2015. Shannon has designed scenery and
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costumes at theaters across Wisconsin including Children’s Theater of Madison (Tuck Everlasting), University Theatre, and Milwaukee Chamber Theatre. Love and thanks to family, friends, and especially Ben for all their love and support!

Pamela Miles (Props Designer) is delighted to return to Forward for her fifth 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 ten summer seasons as the Associate Scenic Charge Artist, as well as completed three fall shows as the Scenic Charge Artist. Other companies she has painted for include: Arizona Broadway Theatre, Children’s Theatre of Madison, Madison Ballet (Dracula) and the Summit Credit Union Inspiration Branch project. She has performed the role of Properties Designer for the Black Theatre Troupe in Phoenix, AZ and American Players Theatre for Mary’s Wedding.

Enya Nett (Assistant Stage Manager) This is Enya Nett’s first production with Forward Theater. Most of her theater background comes from her time at Ripon College where she earned a BA degree in English and Theater, and minored in Art. While completing her degree, she performed a large variety of roles for many shows ranging from Director and Stage Manager, to Designer, Board Operator and many others. The last show she worked on was the one act, What’s in a Name? by Mary Smith, in which she acted as both director and designer. Outside of work, Enya spends a lot of time with her family, which includes two very playful little cats. She has many hobbies such as writing and creating art, and hopes to one day have the opportunity to use these skills to help create a movie.

Wilfredo Rivera (Choreographer) is grateful for this opportunity. He serves as Artistic Director of the critically acclaimed Chicago performing arts collective Cerqua Rivera Dance Theatre (CRDT). Wilfredo was born in Honduras, trained with Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, and was a founding member of River North Dance Chicago. Mr. Rivera was honored with the 2009 Cliff Dwellers Arts Foundation Choreography Award, a 2001 After Dark Award and nominated for a 3ARTS Award in 2017 & 2018. Mr. Rivera’s concert work has been featured at The Auditorium Theatre, The Chicago Symphony Center (CSO Hall) with the Chicago Sinfonietta, Chicago Jazz Festival, Hyde Park Jazz Festival, Harris Theater, Ruth Page Center for the Arts, DuSable Museum, Reva and David Logan Center for the Arts, Links Hall, Old Town School of Folk Music, and Mayne Stage. Theater choreography includes productions for Goodman Theatre, Bailiwick Theatre, Metropolis Arts Center, Columbia College, American Theater Co., American Players Theatre, Porchlight Theatre and Pegasus Players. In 2016, he launched his most ambitious artistic project to date, American Catracho. This 4-year exploration of the immigrant experience has premiered in segments and will debut in celebration of CRDT’s 20th Anniversary in 2019. For more information visit: cerquarivera.org

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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Special Thanks:
Kelsey Schaid
Joan Herzing

2018 - 2019 Volunteers:
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Overture Center for the Arts and Sandra Gajic, president and CEO, announced the restoration of the Capitol Theater’s original Grand Barton Organ can commence next spring, thanks to a successful fundraising campaign with support from Madison Community Foundation. It is one of only a few historic theater organs still in its original home and one of three unaltered Barton Organs still in existence. Its majesty was recognized in 1990 by the Organ Historical Society as “an instrument of exceptional merit,” a recognition that is usually bestowed on church organs.

“What an incredible gem we have in the Capitol Theater,” said Gajic. “A treasure such as this allows Overture to provide the Madison Community with a unique artform, especially through the Duck Soup Cinema silent film series. Thanks to support from our community, our historic Grand Barton Organ can continue to entertain for generations to come.”

In late 2017, the Madison Community Foundation provided a $35,000 challenge grant to help restore the organ, and Overture’s supporters rose to the challenge, providing generous donations exceeding the restoration goal by the Spring of 2018, including a major gift from Vance and Jody Tang, in memory of Donald Dietzler and in honor of William Dietzler. “We’re thrilled to make a gift to complete the restoration of this amazing instrument—and to make the gift in the names of Jody’s father and uncle, both of whom were organists,” commented the Tangs. “We encourage others to contribute to ensure the Grand Barton Organ is properly maintained forever!”
The Grand Barton Organ has been delighting audience members in the Capitol Theater since it opened in 1928. After celebrating its 90th anniversary in January 2018, the Grand Barton Organ continues to entertain visitors at events throughout the year. Overture features the historic organ during the Duck Soup Cinema silent film series, nationally known for providing an authentic silent film experience in the historic Capitol Theater. Film showings include vaudeville entertainment with an emcee, door prizes and a classic feature film with live organ accompaniment on the Grand Barton.

Remaining Duck Soup Cinema performances in Overture’s 2018/19 season:

**Ella Cinders** (DSC debut) | Saturday, Jan. 19, 2019, 2 & 7 p.m.  
This 1926 reimagining of the Cinderella story stars Colleen Moore.

**The Wind** | Thursday, March 7, 2019, 7 p.m. (special feature film)  
This acclaimed 1928 drama was star Lillian Gish’s last of the silent era.

**Grandma’s Boy** | Saturday, April 13, 2019, 2 & 7 p.m.  
In this 1922 comedy, a timid man (Harold Lloyd) gets a valuable lesson from his grandmother.

“The Capitol Theater’s Grand Barton organ is an increasingly rare treasure today,” said Organist Clark Wilson. “It is one of a bare handful of theater organs to survive unaltered in its original home and is a tremendously important historic instrument. Its continued use in scoring silent film programs is a joy to see, and its ‘Voice of the Theater’ presence makes Capitol Theater a more unique and special place. Its restoration to full glory will be a hugely significant event for the entire organ world!”

The Organ underwent minor restoration projects in 1995 and 2003, but a comprehensive restoration is sorely needed. In March 2018, work was completed on the “toy counter”—the traps and sound effects of the organ—made possible by a grant from the American Theater Organ Society.

In the next phase, restorers will utilize only parts and materials that are as similar to the original as possible. Each stage will require careful disassembly of the mechanical units, meticulous cleaning, and then the replacement or refurbishing of the worn components.

“The Barton organ in the Capitol Theater is an important part of Madison’s musical history and culture,” said John Cornue, president of the Dairyland Theater Organ Society. “As one of the last remaining original theater organ installations in the country, it is important that it remain for future generations to enjoy.”

Photos courtesy of Overture Center for the Arts.
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January 13
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In this 1926 reimagining of the Cinderella story, Colleen Moore is a domestic worker for her stepmother and stepsisters.

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