

# **IN TANDEM THEATRE, INC.**

## **ANNUAL REPORT 2016-2017 SEASON**

### **HISTORY**

In Tandem Theatre, Inc. was formed in 1998 by co-founders, Chris and Jane Flieller. Chris received his BFA from Texas Christian University and holds an MFA from the Professional Theatre Training Program. Jane earned her BFA from Wayne State University in Detroit. Chris's acting and technical background combined with Jane's experience in stage management, marketing and business, providing a strong foundation on which to establish the company. In Tandem Theatre has operated with fiscal responsibility and strong community support in the years since its inception. In Tandem is committed to providing audiences with an eclectic mix of material including musicals and comedies to drama, classics and new works. The company is proud to utilize the talents of local actors, directors, and designers, and In Tandem has produced more than twenty works by local writers in nineteen years of operation. Programming is designed to both challenge and satisfy a broad population of current and new patrons.

### **MISSION**

In Tandem is committed to producing exciting, innovative theatre by presenting creative and eclectic stories designed to enlighten, inspire, provoke and entertain a diverse audience.

### **ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

- In Tandem has concluded seventeen out of nineteen seasons with a cash surplus, with most seasons maintaining a 65% -35% earned to unearned ratio.
- In September 2015, In Tandem expanded its staff with the addition of a part-time Marketing Manager. The result has been a significant increase in ticket sales through a stronger online presence, improved awareness and branding. In the 2016-17 season, a House Manager position was added to accommodate the larger productions (holiday show, musicals), working closely with volunteers and ensuring the smooth-running operation of the front-of-house, enhancing the visitor experience.
- Luke Farley, a resident artist with Redline Studios left his position as In Tandem's freelance Gallery Curator. His role was to identify local visual artists whose work fit the aesthetic of our productions, procuring a new exhibit in time for the opening of each new show. Luke facilitated the marketing and installation of each exhibit. A grant received by the Mary L. Nohl Fund allowed In Tandem to hire a new gallery curator, Emily Schlemowicz, who will begin her work in September 2017.
- In Tandem has hired local musicians to play the lobby piano (a gift donated by the Marcus Center for the Performing Arts) before shows, at intermissions and after shows. This opportunity allows players to gain valuable performing experience and adds greatly to the enjoyment of the theater-going experience for patrons. For the past three seasons, this project has been supported by the BMO Harris Foundation.

- In the past few years, In Tandem has increased its number of Board Members by nearly 30%. The dedicated stewards of the organization lend their time and expertise in many areas including, but not limited to, finance, business, law, and marketing/public relations.
- In Tandem Theatre has built significant relationships with neighborhood businesses and organizations including the Wisconsin Club, Marquette University and the Ambassador Hotel/Fitz Restaurant. In Tandem is firmly rooted in the neighborhood and is responsible for the beautification and revitalization of the corner on which the theater resides.
- In Tandem Theatre is a proud Affiliate Member of the United Performing Arts Fund, a member in good standing with Visit Milwaukee and a founding member group of Theatre Wisconsin: The Alliance of Professional Theatres in Wisconsin.
- In Tandem co-founders, Artistic and Managing Directors Chris and Jane Flieller, were honored with the Artist of the Year Award through the Milwaukee Arts Board.

## GOALS

Within the next year, In Tandem plans to:

- Continue to increase unearned revenue to more closely balance the earned to unearned revenue ratio. This will be accomplished through continued efforts at underwriting, sponsorships and grant writing. Earned revenue will be sought through ticket sales, advertising sources, contracted services, the sale of merchandise and concessions, and rentals.
- Create the part-time position of Administrative Assistant to help streamline routine office tasks, freeing up the time of the Artistic and Managing Directors and Marketing Manager more efficiently pursue artistic, development and audience building initiatives.
- Continue increasing awareness of In Tandem Theatre through marketing, press coverage, word of mouth and through the efforts of our Board of Directors.
- Produce four full-length productions of the highest quality, hiring seasoned performers and highly qualified staff, while increasing single and season ticket sales. The 2017-18 season will see community partnerships with Literacy Services of Milwaukee, the Hunger Task Force, and the Alzheimer's Foundation (pending). Sponsorships to date for next season include David Paris Dentistry, The Milwaukee Arts Board, and Pamela Frautschi and Richard Ippolito.
- To continue producing plays and musicals that reflect a myriad of stories that enlighten, inspire, provoke and entertain a diverse audience. The plays selected for the 2017-2018 season are an example of In Tandem's desire to create work that inspires thought and discussion through its eclectic programming, while also valuing escapism and enlightenment through live entertainment.
- Continue cultivating new board members, placing a strong emphasis on fundraising, community involvement, current and future financial sustainability, organization awareness and diversity.

## 2016 – 2017 SEASON REPORT

### **DRACULA VS. THE NAZIS by Michael Neville**

**October 7-30, 2016**

**Tenth Street Theatre, 628 N. 10<sup>th</sup> Street**

In maintaining its commitment to producing the plays of local writers, In Tandem launched its 19<sup>th</sup> season with a madcap comedy by Michael Neville of Milwaukee. Two actors play more than 20 characters in this wacky show that catapults you around the world, to an alternate universe and back again. Set in 1940's England, a world weary Count Dracula is dragged from retirement by the British government to stop Hitler from using a magical device that can make him and his armies immortal. While not a critic favorite, crowds got into the zany humor of the piece, reaching 97% of ticket revenue goal.

“No wonder, then, that this play features flight to a parallel universe – an apt metaphor for Hitler’s willingness to envision an idealized second world in conjunction with his fantasy of ultimate control.”

*Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*

“All who I saw on stage were outstanding and vital to [the show’s] success.”

*Don R., In Tandem Patron*

**DRACULA VS. THE NAZIS WAS FUNDED, IN PART, BY  
STEVE AND NANCY EINHORN, PAM FRAUTSCHI AND RICHARD IPPOLITO**

### **HOLIDAY HELL: THE CURSE OF PERRY WILLIAMS by Anthony Wood & Mondy Carter**

**December 2, 2016 – January 8, 2017**

**Tenth Street Theatre, 628 N. 10<sup>th</sup> Street**

In Tandem has become known for its top-notch alternative holiday shows (*A Cudahy Caroler Christmas*, *Scrooge In Rouge*, *Twisted Carol*). This season, In Tandem brought back an audience favorite last produced in 2005. Written by former Milwaukee native Anthony Wood and Marquette alumni Mondy Carter, *Holiday Hell: The Curse of Perry Williams* is set in the late 1950's as Perry Williams is about to sing the grand finale to his annual holiday television special. The only problem is Perry can't sing and he's just fired Benny, the man behind the scenes who provides those velvety tones! Perry sells his soul to the devil in order to sing and the result is a delightfully twisted holiday musical comedy! *Holiday Hell* was featured on Fox 6 Wake Up News

“So deliberately stupid that it’s actually funny – the ensuing hijinks grow increasingly hilarious, in a show that skewers every character and possible point of view. ... Nothing in this show is sacred.”

*Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*

“...a riotous story drenched in tinsel with no seasonal moment left unsullied by the kind of humor where you think maybe you shouldn’t laugh, just as your stomach starts to hurt from laughing.”

*Onmilwaukee.com*

“I was laughing so hard that I was crying. Amazing cast and performance!!!”

*Jean R., In Tandem Patron*

**TIME STANDS STILL by Donald Margulies**  
**February 24 - March 19, 2017**  
**Tenth Street Theatre, 628 N. 10<sup>th</sup> Street**

In Tandem’s winter drama featured award-winning playwright Donald Margulies’ story about Sarah, a photojournalist who is home recovering from an injury sustained in a war-torn country. While Sarah is eager to return to work, her partner James, a war correspondent, has grown weary of their dangerous occupation and begins to ponder a more conventional life for them. His life-changing questions are deepened when their long-time editor and friend Richard, introduces his fiancé, a decidedly younger woman who helps Richard see the world anew.

In Tandem received support from the Milwaukee Press Club Endowment Fund to underwrite a photo exhibit (In Tandem’s spacious lobby doubles as the 10<sup>th</sup> Street Gallery) featuring the work of actual photojournalist Michael Nelson. Mr. Nelson now lives in Los Angeles; his daughter resides in Milwaukee and as a patron of In Tandem Theatre took an interest in the play’s subject matter and put things in motion to have her father’s work shown. Nearly forty patrons attended a pre-show chat and post-show talk back with the actors, director and special guest Meg Jones, war correspondent for the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel on Thursday, March 16, 2017.

"Margulies’ play, which was nominated for a 2010 Tony Award, is full of smart, pointed dialogue. The play is a powerful examination of what war does to those who live in it as well as those who cover it for the media."

*Shepherd Express*

"...an overall stunning performance by all four actors and a wonderful choice of drama for In Tandem’s 2016-17 season.”

*Waukesha Freeman*

"Our first time at In Tandem. Very impressed. Thought provoking topic and exceptional cast. Highly recommend!"

*Pamela K., In Tandem Patron*

We saw this timely and important play last weekend and loved it. These actors are some of the best I’ve seen in Milwaukee. I encourage everyone to see it.”

*Mary S., In Tandem Patron*

**TIME STANDS STILL WAS FUNDED, IN PART, BY  
DAVID PARIS DENTISTRY.  
THE GALLERY EXHIBIT WAS SPONSORED BY  
THE MILWAUKEE PRESS CLUB ENDOWMENT FUND**

**CARNIVAL with Music and Lyrics by Bob Merrill; Book by Michael Stewart  
April 21 – May 14, 2017  
Tenth Street Theatre, 628 N. 10<sup>th</sup> Street**

In Tandem mounted its most ambitious production to date with a cast of fifteen and an orchestra of four. Audiences were enchanted by the beautiful story, set in 1920's France, of a young woman, Lili, who has lost her family and travels to the carnival looking for work. Lili is enraptured by her new environment and its inhabitants in particular the handsome Marco the Magnificent, a magician who targets Lili as his latest conquest. Lili is soon put to work in a puppet show, which quickly becomes the hit of the carnival. Paul, the puppeteer, is a former dancer injured in the war. Though he falls in love with Lili, his bitterness and anger keep him from expressing his true feelings, pushing her farther into the arms of Marco.

In Tandem transformed its 99-seat studio theatre to recreate a carnival big top, going so far as to create a Midway in the theatre's lobby. A local visual artist donated her time to paint murals on the wall of 1920's Midway rides, bales of hay held props for the show, a replica period-piece popcorn machine held free bags of popcorn for patrons, and a tarot-card reader was available at every performance to entertain guests with a French deck of cards. The lobby pianists were instructed to play upbeat, lively music and visitors could have their pictures taken in cut-outs. The atmosphere lent itself perfectly to getting people in the right frame of mind for the show, stepping back to a simpler time.

“Everything about this production is first-class, from Josh Robinson's four-piece orchestra to Karl Miller's ambitious choreography, delivered by an ensemble making big-stage miracles in a much smaller space.”

*Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*

“Underneath the retro candy colored costumes and beautiful voices, these characters become souls searching for their place in a world turned upside down.”

*www.BroadwayWorld.com*

“One of the most wonderful – and rare – evenings at a theater is when the show starts off on a high note and just keeps getting better and better from there until you get to an ending where your heart is lying on the floor and your eyes are clouded with tears.”

*www.onmilwaukee.com*

“What a wonderful production by a talented cast. I can't say enough about the performance. You must see it!”

*In Tandem Patron (via Facebook)*

In Tandem worked in partnership with Milwaukee Public Theatre for assistance with puppetry and local entertainer, Magician Anthony, on the magic tricks required for the show. Two female ensemble members were interns from UW-Milwaukee's Department of Theatre, Music and Dance. A Master's Class was held at the university the previous spring from which students were encouraged to audition for the two internship positions.

**CARNIVAL WAS MADE POSSIBLE, IN PART, BY A GENEROUS GRANT FROM THE MILWAUKEE ARTS BOARD. SUPPORT FOR THE PRODUCTION'S MUSICIANS WAS MADE POSSIBLE, IN PART, BY KAY-CEE CHARITABLE TRUST, LEE MARQUARDT, GREG AND BIBI ROSNER, LINDA QUARTARO AND SKIP ABBOTT.**

Funding for the 2016-2017 season was provided in part by the Wisconsin Arts Board with funds from the State of Wisconsin and the National Endowment for the Arts, the United Performing Arts Fund, CAMPAC (County Funding), the Einhorn Family Foundation, Richard Ippolito and Pamela Frautschi, David Paris Dentistry, BMO Harris Foundation, the Arden Foundation, Herb Kohl Philanthropies, and individual contributions.

### **COLLABORATIONS, EVENTS AND AWARDS**

- In Tandem produced the works of two local playwrights (out of four productions) this season.
- Making affordable space available to emerging artists is a priority for In Tandem. Reasonable and discounted rental rates have been made available to a large and growing number of emerging (and in some cases, established) arts organizations and other events.
- In Tandem collaborated with Milwaukee Public Theatre on the spring musical, *Carnival*.
- In Tandem Theatre continues its work with the UW-Milwaukee Helen Bader School of Social Welfare by providing actors for role-playing activities resulting in hands-on experience for students preparing for careers in social work. An article praising the collaboration has appeared in a nationally recognized social service industry magazine.
- In Tandem Theatre co-founders, Artistic and Managing Directors Chris and Jane Flieller, were recognized as Artists of the Year by the Milwaukee Arts Board.
- Angela Iannone received Best Supporting Actress in a Musical from the Footlights Performing Arts Awards for her work as Lady Bracknell in *Ernest In Love* (spring 2016).
- *Ernest In Love* was voted Top Ten Critics Choice by the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel

## FUNDRAISING

In addition to generous funding from the aforementioned for direct support of programming, In Tandem Theatre received assistance from the following:

- In Tandem held two fundraising events in the 2016-17 season:
  - The Eight: Reindeer Monologues by Jeff Goode. Each of the eight elite give their depositions in a sexual harassment suit against Santa Claus. A dark and disturbing comedy about the abuse of power and the risk we take by placing importance on celebrity. This is the fourth consecutive year In Tandem has produced this holiday themed show in December and the response for tickets was so overwhelming that a third (sold out) performance was added.
  - A fundraising event occurred on Saturday, June 24, 2017 when In Tandem closed down 10<sup>th</sup> Street in front of the theatre, and enjoyed the sounds of Dick Strauss Orchestra. A silent auction, food and dancing followed. As a kick off to In Tandem's upcoming 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary season, a cake, toast and special presentation was held.
- In Tandem Theatre exceeded its 2016-2017 annual campaign goal by 135%.
- In-kind support came from the law offices of Husch - Blackwell, S.C. for copy services, Brad McKendry for shop space and warehouse storage. Thomas More High School for costume storage. Paul and Erica Glysz for transportation services. Bank reconciliation and tax form preparation were donated by Charter Capitol.
- As an Affiliate Member of the United Performing Arts Fund, In Tandem Theatre actively participated in the Workplace Giving portion of the annual campaign, raising unrestricted funds to help offset operational expenses. This income is in addition to the annual grant awarded the Affiliate Member groups and recorded outside the Annual Campaign.

## AWARENESS

In Tandem Theatre will launch its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary season in fall 2017. In Tandem Theatre's inclusion in the professional arts community has been evidenced in many ways:

- A member in good standing with
  - Theatre Wisconsin: The Alliance of Professional Theatres in Wisconsin.
  - Visit Milwaukee (formerly the Greater Milwaukee Conventions and Visitors Bureau).
  - The United Performing Arts Fund
- In Tandem is driven to bringing new patrons into the theatre, and to providing the opportunity to make professional theatre affordable and accessible to all. In addition to offering the lowest regular-priced ticket in the area for professional theatre, ongoing efforts include pay-what-you-can nights, student rush seats, senior, military and group discounts and substantial savings through season subscriptions. Volunteer opportunities to usher are available at every performance and those people then see the show at no charge.

- In Tandem Theatre is fortunate to have a substantial and growing number of volunteers who assist on a myriad of projects including events, front-of-house activities, set building and deconstruction, marketing and building maintenance. These volunteers allow us to keep our administrative costs low, a savings passed along to patrons.
- In Tandem works closely with several universities (UW-Milwaukee, UW-Whitewater, UW-Stevens Point, UW-Oshkosh, and Alverno College, to date) by providing practicum and internship opportunities in production and administration. Individuals seeking an education in the arts work in the areas of production and administration with an emphasis on hands-on learning by working with a smaller organization.
- A concerted effort to increase awareness of In Tandem Theatre through distribution of promotional literature to communities beyond the greater Milwaukee area such as East Troy, Mukwonago, West Bend, Hartford, etc. Feedback and impact on ticket sales has been hugely positive.

## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND STAFF**

In Tandem Theatre employs Chris Flieller as Artistic Director and Jane Flieller as Managing Director in full-time positions. Ann Ricca is the part-time Marketing Manager. Thomas Darrow is a part-time Administrative Volunteer. Emily Schlemowitz is the freelance curator for the theatre's visual arts gallery. The Board of Directors does not receive compensation as determined through In Tandem Theatre's by-laws. In Tandem hires local actors, directors, stage managers, and technical support on a show-to-show basis each season, employing an average of 40 to 60 persons a year. In Tandem works with interns from local universities in both production and administration.

## **SUMMARY**

In Tandem Theatre is thrilled to be part of Milwaukee's vibrant theatre community. We greatly appreciate and thank all those who help keep our organization fiscally solvent: our Board of Directors, individual donors, patrons, businesses and foundations. We are especially grateful to the volunteers who assist us with activities such as set building, ushering, event planning, brochure layout, photography and administration. We look forward to many more years of producing exciting and innovative live theatre that lifts spirits, raises awareness, creates conversation, stimulates emotion, and provides respite from life's stresses.

## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Ellen Maxey, President  
Daniel Glaser, Treasurer

Dennis Kois, Vice President  
Maureen Black, Secretary

Milt Flieller, Richard Ippolito, Paul Glysz, Margaret Keehn, Greg Kliebhan, Sharveta Parker,  
Toby Peters, Deb Revolinski, Leigh Wallace Tabak

## **ADVISORY BOARD**

Dan Kattman, Reinhart Boerner Van Duren S.C.  
Claude Krawczyk, O'Neil Cannon Hollman DeJong and Laing S.C.