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FORWARD THEATER COMPANY

presents

PRIMARY TRUST

by **Eboni Booth**

Directed by Mikael Burke

Scenic Designer **Chris Dunham**

Lighting Designer Maaz Ahmed

Costume Designer Karen Brown-Larimore Composer & Sound Designer Joe Cerqua**

Props Designer Jolie Sarajian

Stage Manager Abbi Hess*

Primary Trust 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.

Foundation & In-Kind Supporters: Madison Community Foundation, The Evjue Foundation, Inc., Distillery Design, The Madison Concourse Hotel, The Shubert Foundation, Wisconsin Public Radio, PBS Wisconsin



* Member of Actors' Equity Association, the union of professional actors and stage managers.



** Member of United Scenic Artists Local 829

PRIMARY TRUST was developed at the 2021 Ojai Playwrights Conference: Robert Egan, Artistic Director/Producer Developed By Victory Gardens Theater, Chicago, Illinois Ken-Matt Martin, Artistic Director Roxanna Conner, Acting Managing Director, as part of IGNITE CHICAGO Festival of New Plays 2021 Originally Produced in New York City by Roundabout Theatre Company at the Harold and Miriam Steinberg Center for Theatre / Laura Pels Theatre on May 4th, 2023



FORWARD THEATER COMPANY STAFF

ARTISTIC

ADMINISTRATIVE

Managing Director	Julie Swenson
Director of Development	Sarah Milestone
	Scott Haden
	erBri Collins
	Celia A. Klehr
	Alex Moskoff

PRODUCTION

Stage Manager	Abbi Hess*
	Mayson Knipp
	Aaron Sewell, Steve Watson
Scenic Charge	Carri Dahl
Sound Technician	Benjamin Krueger
Wardrobe Supervisor	Reina Werth
	Brad Toberman**

Set Construction/Build by Spotlight Construction - Adam Hastings, Owner

- * Member of Actors' Equity Association, the union of professional actors and stage managers in the United States.
- ** Forward Theater is proud to work with the members of the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees (IATSE).

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*On sabbatical

How We Work

Forward Theater's unique, three branch organizational structure reflects our commitments to transparent communication and preserving the balance between the artistic choices and financial health of the company.

The first branch is the administrative staff, executing the daily operations of our theater. The second branch is the Board of Directors, responsible for financial and operational oversight. The third branch is the Advisory Company, made up of local professional theater artists, overseeing FTC's short- and long-term artistic plans.

Our bylaws have mandated paths of communication among these three branches and a system of checks and balances to keep FTC strong, focused on our artistic role in the community, and fiscally responsible.

FROM THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR...JEN UPHOFF GRAY

Welcome to Forward Theater's 17th season, and our Wisconsin Premiere production of Eboni Booth's Pulitzer-winning play *Primary Trust*. Sometimes we read a script and know immediately that we **must** produce it. This was one of those scripts and we hope you will be as delighted and moved by it as we were.

I look forward to hearing what you think about Kenneth and the people in his life, through your questions at our talkbacks, your social media posts (we're always grateful when you help spread the word about our productions!), and your emails to us about your experience here in the Playhouse.

As we launch this season, I want to offer a special welcome from all of us at Forward to two groups in our audience, beginning with our hundreds of "First-Timers" who've signed up for your first season as a subscriber. We hope you'll enjoy all the benefits of this new relationship with us! Secondly, I want to shout out the more than 100 subscribers who have become "Champions" this season by paying the full, unsubsidized cost of your professional theater experience. Your generosity helps us to keep ticket prices more accessible for others and we are so very grateful.

And to **everyone** here in the Playhouse right now, we thank you for choosing to spend this time with us. Enjoy the show!



FROM THE DIRECTOR ... MIKAEL BURKE

Growing up,
They tell us
When life gives you lemons, make lemonade.
But when the moment comes
(As it does for us all)
When life swaps lemons for a switchblade
And cuts us so deep and true

That our primary trust in life is shattered, And the ground is pulled from beneath us,

We reach for the lemonade. Sweet and refreshing.

And we drink. And we feel better.

For a while.

Rut

What happens when our bodies grow thirsty?
When our souls crave the water of life
Beyond the sugary sweet safety of lemonade?
How do we learn to trust life again
That we might finally quench that thirst for living?
The good news is,
Our friends are waiting, Cups overflowing, Ready to share,

If only we're willing To try something new.



A CLOSER LOOK...ADVISORY COMPANY MEMBER MIKE FISCHER

The Edge of Sadness

By Mike Fischer

Listen closely and you'll hear echoes of Thornton Wilder's *Our Town* as Kenneth, narrator and main character in Eboni Booth's *Primary Trust*, tells us about the sleepy suburb where he's lived all his life.

But as with Wilder's great play, there's more and much darker here than initially meets the eye, in a piece that has a lot to say about the price we pay when we don't pay attention to the lives of others.

The fictional town of Cranberry, New York (population 15,000) might initially seem to resemble Mayberry. But it's also afflicted by racism and poverty, airbrushing both through gentrification even as social services decline.

Kenneth – Black, orphaned at 10, bullied as a child, and living on the margins – is among those at risk of falling between the cracks. He lives alone and gets drunk each night. Depressed, intermittently angry, unsure of how to move forward and seemingly sliding backward, he worries – with reason – that he'll soon be unhoused.

But for all the darkness creeping in from the edge of town, *Primary Trust* is ultimately less about getting lost than being found when we actively choose hope rather than despair and love rather than indifference.

Yes: As Kenneth notes, people can get so used to what's awful in life that "they step over human beings sleeping in the street and act like it's normal."

But it isn't normal, and if we focus on connection rather than alienation – everything binding us together rather than the forces driving us apart – we'll not only see all we ignore but also reach out instead of pulling back.

Hence Booth's title. *Primary Trust* isn't just the name of a bank featuring in her play, or a reference to what Kenneth loses when his beloved mother dies of cancer while he's still a boy. Most fundamentally, Booth's title is also a plea to actively extend and build such trust with others.

In a world consumed by fear and hate, fostering such connections might seem like a tall order. But as Wilder asked long ago, what's the alternative?

We can island ourselves from each other, leading lonely lives in broken communities leaving us unhappy and unsafe. Or we can champion the primacy of trust and build a better tomorrow –

taking back the night, one day at a time.

For Carla Hayden

Milwaukee, August 2025

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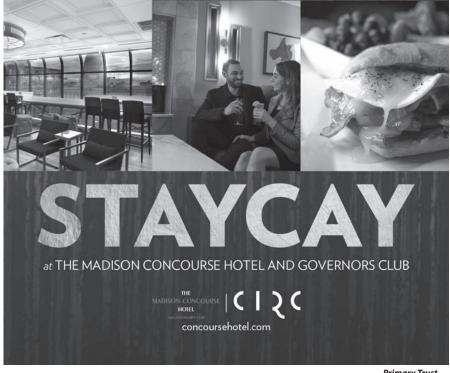


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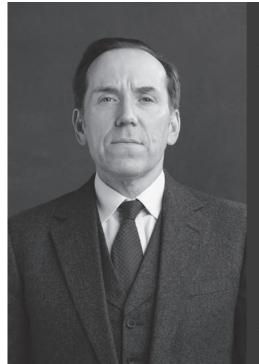




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WE TALK THEATER.

The official Forward Theater podcast featuring Jen Uphoff Gray, Julie Swenson, & Mike Fischer.

Insightful and timely conversations about theater on a local, regional, and national level.

AVAILABLE EVERYWHERE

ACCESSIBILITY AT FORWARD THEATER

Forward Theater's mission is to expand the cultural life for Madison-area audiences, which means inviting *all* of our community in to access and enjoy live, professional theater. Forward is proud to provide:

- Assistive Listening Devices, which amplify sound through either a receiver and headphones, or a T-coil/Induction Loop (for those with compatible hearing aids or cochlear implants).
 - Tip: Come early to sit and test your device, and keep your phone away from the device to avoid interference.
- ASL-interpreted performances, offered on the third Saturday matinee of each production. Designated seating that offers an unobstructed view of the ASL interpreter is available as a ticket option.
- <u>Audio Description</u> Audio Description is offered on the third Saturday matinee of each production. A Tactile Tour is available upon request.
- Large print programs.
- Courtesy wheelchairs.
- Family Assist/Gender Neutral Restrooms.

You can pick up devices at the Accessibility Station in the Playhouse.

We are continuing to add services to enhance the experience of live theater for guests with disabilities, through realistic action steps and authentic relationship building. Would you like to utilize or learn more about these services? Have feedback or suggestions? Contact us: Audience Services 608-234-5001 x1 | Email: bcollins@forwardtheater.com

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Acknowledging Ho-Chunk Nation's ancestral lands, Forward Theater and Overture Center for the Arts celebrate the rich traditions, heritage, and culture that thrived long before our arrival. We respectfully recognize this Ho-Chunk land and affirm that we are better when we stand together.

We encourage you to visit ho-chunknation.com to learn more.

FTC'S 2025-2026 SEASON BUDGET

Thank you for purchasing a ticket to this production!

We are grateful to everyone who supports our work through ticket sales and other financial gifts. Key among our founding values is transparency. To that end, we share with you our annual budget, as an organization's budget is its clearest expression of its priorities. Producing professional theater is not inexpensive, but we consider carefully how we spend each dollar. And we are proud that such a significant amount of our spending is done locally, in support of local artists and local businesses. Thank you for your part in making it all possible!

People		Theater rental	\$73,508
Artistic personnel & benefits	\$301,461	Rehearsal space rental	\$16,375
(actors, directors, designers)		Venue equipment rental	\$5,100
Production personnel	\$164,990	Security fees	\$8,400
(crew and technical support)		Box office fees	\$158,648
Staff, benefits, payroll taxes	\$583,494	(includes sales taxes)	
Accounting staff & consultants	\$33,805		
Community Connections	\$16,750	Company Expenses	
(La Follette HS teaching artists;		Artist housing	\$26,700
Engagement & Accessibility; other		Hospitality	\$ 6,670
Engagement Programming)		COVID-19 Safety expenses	\$760
Playwright Royalties	\$104,471		
		Operations	
Productions		Office space rental	\$49,526
Sets	\$18,500	Operational expenses	\$20,320
Costumes	\$10,250	(copier, internet, phone,	
Lighting	\$3,250	database, supplies)	
Props	\$10,450	Insurance	\$15,600
Sound	\$1,410	Payroll & Audit services	\$20,700
Playbills	\$12,200	Banking	\$9,825
Storage space	\$4,440	(incl. credit card processing fees)	
Miscellaneous	\$13,950	Organizational memberships	\$5,165
(scripts, auditions, transportation	n)		
		Marketing/Development	
		Marketing	\$89,355
		(advertising, graphic design, etc.)	
		Development/Donor	
		Engagement	\$41,000
Venue			

Total 2025-2026 Operating Budget: \$1,827,374

PRIMARY TRUST

by Eboni Booth

CAST

Kenneth	James Carrington*
Bert	Terry Bell*
Corrina/Wally's Waiter/Bank Customers	
Clay/Sam/Le Pousselet Bartender	•

Understudies: William Bolz (Clay et al), Yasmine Traore (Corrina et al)
Standby: Sherrick Robinson (Kenneth, Bert)

*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



Terry Bell (Bert) is overjoyed to be making his Forward Theater debut! Previous credits include: Broadway: *The Skin of Our Teeth* (Lincoln Center Theater). Regional: *Inherit The*

Wind, A Christmas Carol (Goodman Theatre); Berlin (Court Theatre); Peter and The Starcatcher (Paramount Theatre); Routes, Love Song (Remy Bumppo Theater); The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time (Steppenwolf Theater). Television credits include: Elementary, Emperor of Ocean Park, The Chi, Chicago Fire.



James Carrington (Kenneth) is ecstatic to be back at one of his favorite theaters in a dream play and role! James is an actor and singer based in Milwaukee and a

graduate of UW-Madison's Acting Specialist B.A. program. Some favorite roles include Matt in Mr Burns: A Post Electric Play, Man 3 in The Ballad of Emmett Till. The Lion in The Wiz. William Barfèe in The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee, Dun in Pipeline, Golden Thunder in Airness, Cuddy in Witch and most recently the Narrator in Every Brilliant Thing. James has been fortunate to work with many Wisconsin theaters, to name a few: Milwaukee Chamber Theatre, Renaissance Theaterworks, First Stage, Skylight Music Theatre and Northern Sky Theater. Up next James will be back at First Stage with the world premiere of The Pigeon Gets a Big Time Holiday Extravaganza! Take care of yourself and each other.



Lachrisa Grandberry (Corrina/Wally's Waiter/Bank Customers) is excited to return to the Forward Theater stage (last seen in Exit Strategy).

REGIONAL: The Color

Purple (Goodman Theatre); As You Like It

(Chicago Shakespeare Theater); She The People (The Second City) and roles with Northern Sky Theater, Milwaukee Repertory Theater, First Stage, Skylight Music Theatre, Theatre LILA, Black Arts Milwaukee, Children's Theater of Madison.

PLAYWRIGHT: Girls On Sand, a new musical (Northern Sky Theater, 2024); Sunflowered, a new musical (Northern Sky Theater, 2022); Eeny Meeny Miny NO! (MKE Black Theatre Festival 2021). Dramatists Guild Foundation National Fellow (2024) FILM: The Thing About Harry. TELEVISION: Chicago PD (NBC); The CHI (Showtime). COMMERCIAL: Jobs Ohio, Steinhafels Furniture. Many thanks to my amazing support system!



Sam D. White (Clay/ Sam/Le Pousselet Bartender) is a veteran actor, director and playwright in the Wisconsin theater community. Some of Sam's acting gigs

include Much Ado About Nothing, APT; For Peter Pan on Her 70th Birthday, From Up Here. and numerous monologue festivals at Forward Theater Company; King Lear, Optimist Theatre: The Cake, Renaissance Theaterworks; The Light in the Piazza and Guvs and Dolls, Four Seasons Theatre: and The Tempest, Edgewood College Theatre. Recent directing credits include Henry the Fifth, Madison Shakespeare Company: An Inspector Calls, Summerstage of Delafield; and he's scheduled to direct Shakespeare in Love for the Stoughton Village Players this fall. As a playwright, Sam's won two Wisconsin Wrights awards, and his play Hush the Waves was staged by Strollers Theatre as a part of the World Premiere Wisconsin in 2023. Sam is a founder of both Forward Theater Company and Madison's Playwrights Ink. His biggest claim to fame, however, is being Mr. Celia Klehr.

UNDERSTUDY BIOGRAPHIES

William Bolz (US/Clay et al) most recently played the Inspector in An Inspector Calls at SummerStage in Delafield, directed by Sam White. He has worked with Forward Theater several times, appearing in Life Sucks!, The Farnsworth Invention and The Other Place. He's worked with American Players Theatre, Madison Rep, and Door Shakespeare.

Sherrick Robinson (Standby/Kenneth, Bert) is a native of Milwaukee, WI. He has appeared for many stages in Milwaukee (but would love to appear for more). His appearances include *The Island*, Milwaukee Chamber Theatre; *Watsons Go To Birmingham - 1963*, Luchadora, Holes, First Stage; *Skeleton Crew, Feeding Beatrice*, Forward Theater. He is also a CRIT (Creator Recognition in TTRPGs) Award Finalist in

2025 in the Dungeons and Dragons player category. So many thanks to his friends & family for their support. Love to Stephanie. www.sherrickrobinson.com.

Yasmine Traore (US/Corrina et al) is thrilled to return to the stage in *Primary Trust* as Corrina's understudy. A proud alumna of the University of Wisconsin-Madison's Theater Program and the American Conservatory Theater (A.C.T.) in San Francisco, she trained intensively at A.C.T., earning her STC Certificate and STC Shakespeare Intensive
Certificate (2015). Trained in classical rigor and contemporary versatility, she brings intelligence, passion, and a fresh perspective to every role. The stage has missed her – welcome back!

PRODUCTION ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES

Maaz Ahmed (Lighting Designer)

works as both a lighting designer and served as the Lighting Supervisor at the Williamstown Theatre Festival last summer. Recent designs include Topdog/ Underdog, Milwaukee Chamber Theatre; The Last Five Years, Milwaukee Repertory Theater: and The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity, Next Act Theatre. Maaz also served as Assistant Lighting Designer on Come From Away, Milwaukee Repertory Theater, des. Jason Fassl: Fat Ham, Goodman Theatre, des. Jason Lynch: and The Da Vinci Code, Drury Lane Productions, des. Lee Fiskness. Upcoming designs include Ain't Misbehavin', Milwaukee Repertory Theater; I Am My Own Wife, Milwaukee Chamber Theatre; and Dinner With The Dutchess, Next Act Theatre. They are thrilled to share this beautiful show with you all. www.maazahmedLX.com.

Eboni Booth (Playwright) Eboni Booth is a writer and actor from New York City. Her plays include Primary Trust (Roundabout Theatre, Pulitzer Prize for Drama, Outer Critics Circle Award) and Paris (Atlantic Theater). For television, she has written for Hulu's We Were the Lucky Ones and HBO Max's Julia. As an actor, Eboni has appeared in productions at Playwrights Horizons, LCT3, Manhattan Theater Club, Ars Nova, WP Theater, Page 73, Soho Rep., Clubbed Thumb, and more. Eboni is a resident playwright at New Dramatists, and the recipient of a Dramatists Guild Horton Foote Award, a Steinberg Playwright Award, a Helen Merrill Award for Playwriting, and a John Gassner Award. She is a graduate of Juilliard's playwriting program and the University of Vermont.

Karen Brown-Larimore (Costume Designer) Karen's work with Forward
Theater includes costume design for *King James, The Garbologists* and *The Wanderers*.

PRODUCTION ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES CONT.

Her costumes have also graced the stages of Northern Sky Theater, Capital City Theater, Milwaukee Rep, Madison Opera, Madison Ballet, Madison Savoyards, Opera for the Young, Skylight Music Theater, Madison Rep and Children's Theater of Madison. Her recent designs include Something in the Water for Northern Sky Theater; Lumberjacks in Love for the Milwaukee Rep; MariaDe Buenos Aires for Madison Opera; and It's a Wonderful Life, The Musical for Capital City Theater. Her upcoming designs can be seen in The Fisherman's Daughters at the Milwaukee Rep and The Everlasting Faint for Madison Opera. She is a proud member of the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees in Madison (IATSE 251). Her design work may also be found in your own home as she is the designer of original Molly, Samantha, and Kirsten doll clothes for the American Girl Doll Collection.

Mikael Burke (Director) is a Black, queer director and educator based in Chicago. A Princess Grace Award-winner and Jeff Award-winning director, he was last seen at Forward directing Rajiv Joseph's King James and Anna Ziegler's The Wanderers. Other recent credits include: At the Wake of a Dead Drag Queen by Terry Guest, The Story Theatre; A Tale of Two Cities, adapted by Brendan Pelsue, Shattered Globe Theatre; Milo Imagines the World by Guest, Magby, and Albright, Children's Theatre Company & Chicago Children's Theatre, World Premiere; Short Shakes! Romeo & Juliet, Chicago Shakespeare Theater; Notes from the Field by Anna Deveare Smith, TimeLine Theatre; The Salvagers by Harrison David Rivers, Yale Rep, World Premiere; Tambo & Bones by Dave Harris, Refracted Theatre Company, winner of 8 Jeff Awards. He is an Assistant Professor of Theatre, Acting in the CCPA at Roosevelt University. MFA, The Theatre School at DePaul University mklburke.com

producer, vocalist and sound designer. He is thrilled to be the Resident Composer and Sound Designer at Forward Theater where he has previously composed and designed sound for 34 productions, most recently Clyde's, What The Constitution Means To Me, Murder Girl, Summer, 1976, and A Case for the Existence of God. He has composed music and/or designed sound for over 350 productions in Chicago, nationally, and internationally. Recent projects include

original music and sound design for 2

Crows Theater, Next Act Theatre, American

and Milwaukee Rep. 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

Players Theatre, The Clarence Brown Theater,

Creative Director and Producer for the Music Department at Columbia College Chicago.

Joe Cerqua (Composer & Sound

Designer) is a freelance composer,

Chris Dunham (Scenic Designer) is an Associate Professor and the Technical Director at Edgewood College. He earned his BFA in Theatrical Design and Technology from UW-Stevens Point and his MFA in Scenic Design from Purdue University. In addition to his work at Edgewood and Forward Theater Company he has collaborated with Children's Theater of Madison (CTM), Theatre LILA, and Four Seasons Theatre, among others. Forward Theater Company regulars will know his work from productions including Outside Mullingar, Every Brilliant Thing, Artemisia, and The Flying Lovers of Vitebsk. He would like to thank his wife Kat and daughter Emerson for their continued love and support.

Adam Hastings (Technical Director) is delighted to be working with Forward Theater this season! As the proud owner of *Spotlight Construction Co.* - collaborating with Next Act, Milwaukee Chamber, Forward, The Fireside, Black Arts Milwaukee,

PRODUCTION ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES CONT.

among others throughout theatre and entertainment industries – he would like to thank the highly talented production and creative team behind *Primary Trust* and hopes you enjoy the show.

Abbi Hess (Stage Manager) is grateful to be back for a sixth season with Forward Theater Company and as the season's stage manager! Past favorite credits include: Bare & The Amish Project, Outskirts Theatre Co.; Mamma Mia, Lake Country Playhouse; Next to Normal & Hamlet: A Cover, Carroll University; 2 Pianos 4 Hands & The Legend of Georgia McBride, Milwaukee Rep; Every Brilliant Thing, Imbroglio, Much Ado About Nothing, The Comedy of Errors, Great River Shakespeare Festival; Airness, Artemisia, The Flying Lovers of Vitebsk, King James, Forward Theater. Thank you to family, friends, and the supportive people at Forward Theater!

Mayson Knipp (Assistant Stage Manager) is thrilled to be working her first season with Forward Theater Company!

Her previous credits from other theaters include *Hair, Inherit the Wind, Kinky Boots, and Trouble in Mind,* The Clarence Brown Theatre; *Hamlet and Comedy of Errors,* Great River Shakespeare Festival; *Assassins,* Darkhorse Theatre; *The Moors, How To Defend Yourself,* The Lab Theatre. She would like to thank her family and friends for always supporting her, and a special thanks to Abbi Hess for bringing her onto the team!

Jolie Sarajian (Props Director) is a recent graduate of UW-Madison with various theater specializations. Recent credits include props design for *King James* and *Murder Girl*, Forward Theater; *The Wiz*, Children's Theater of Madison; costume design for *Peter and the Starcatcher*, University Theatre (UW-Madison); as well as lighting design for *Classroom Ain't Enough*, Broom Street Theater. Jolie is excited for their fifth production with Forward Theater and hopes that you enjoy the show.

FORWARD THEATER STAFF BIOGRAPHIES

Bri Collins (Audience & Donor Relations Manager) manages audience services and donor relations for Forward Theater. She has been born and raised mostly in the Madison area. She graduated from UW Stevens Point with a BFA in Theater Design and Technology in Stage Management. After graduation she moved to the Twin Cities to work in the Regional Theater scene. Bri is excited to experience her third season here at Forward. She is passionate about making theater accessible to everyone with the high quality of work that Forward Theater produces.

Scott Haden (Director of Marketing)
has been Forward Theater's Director of
Marketing since 2013. He previously
served as Managing Director of the Rocky

Mountain Repertory Theatre in Grand Lake, CO, and has enjoyed acting at various regional theaters across the country, including American Players Theatre, Utah Shakespeare Festival, Chicago Shakespeare Theatre, Writers' Theatre, Madison Repertory Theatre, Milwaukee Chamber Theatre, and Theatre at the Center. For FTC, Scott appeared in the Two Steps Forward Monologue Festival and Russian Troll Farm. Scott is a proud member of Actors' Equity, and holds a BFA in Musical Theatre from the Webster University Conservatory of Theatre Arts.

Marcella Kearns (Artistic Associate) is a Milwaukee-based artist and administrator. A member of Actors' Equity Association and former Fulbright Fellow (Austria), she

FORWARD THEATER STAFF BIOGRAPHIES CONT.

also serves on the faculty of First Stage's Young Company, Marquette University, and the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. Her directing credits include the world premieres of Fighting For Home: Stories of Women Who Serve and Alice Austen's Girls in the Boat. As an actor, she has most often split her time between Madison and Milwaukee; at Forward, she appeared in 44 Plays for 44 Presidents, Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike, Life Sucks, and Forward's inaugural Monologue Festival, The Love That Changed My Life, where she originated one of a pair of Christopher Durang pieces. She holds an MFA in Acting from the University of South Carolina and a BA in English from Canisius University, and she completed a TCG Observership in approaches to Shakespeare training.

Celia Klehr (Company Manager) cofounded FTC by bringing together professional theater artists around her dining table when the Madison Repertory Theatre closed in 2009. Because she believes that theater is most relevant when it is for, by, and of a community, Celia has made Madison her home, both professionally and personally. She was a founding member of Madison Rep's Acting Company. During her 14 years with the Madison Rep she appeared in more than 20 productions, served as company manager for three years, and earned her Equity card. As the Company Manager for FTC, she hosts Advisory Company meetings, staff retreats, family picnics, and fundraising events at her home on Madison's east side. Along with finding homes for our visiting artists, Celia works to help all our artists feel at home and able to do their best work. You will find her in the lobby greeting our audience.

Sarah Milestone (Director of Development) joined the Forward staff in 2021. Sarah previously led development, strategic planning and special events for

several arts organizations including the Guggenheim Museum, Whitney Museum, American Ballet Theatre, Wisconsin Historical Foundation, and Taliesin Preservation. In addition, she serves on the Board of Visitors of the UW Madison Art Department and Briarpatch Youth Services. She holds a degree in Art History and Women's Studies from the University of Wisconsin, Madison. She grew up in Madison, and now lives just steps from Overture Center with her sweet pup, Pearl.

Alex Moskoff (Business Manager) has been Forward's Business Manager since 2012. He started as a part time employee, then continued to work with Forward through an outside accounting firm, and more recently continued his work with Forward through his own small accounting business, Counting On the Arts, in order to focus on non-profit arts organizations. Alex serves several other arts organizations in the area. He has a Bachelor's degree in legal studies (and studied film and television) at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, After college Alex worked as a production accountant at Warner Bros. Television in Los Angeles. A native Madisonian. Alex lives on the east side with his wife (a professional chef/baker), and their daughter Olivia.

Julie Swenson (Managing Director)

joined Forward as Managing Director after 17 seasons as Producing Director for Renaissance Theaterworks in Milwaukee. Julie received a BA in theater from Illinois Wesleyan University and became a member of Actors' Equity Association while living in New York City. Julie fell in love with the Forward family when she worked as an actor in Forward's production of Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike in the role of Masha. Outside of theater she served on the Village of Nashotah board serving as President for two terms and was the host of New Home Building Today on WTMJ-4

FORWARD THEATER STAFF BIOGRAPHIES CONT.

in Milwaukee. She is a member of the Downtown Rotary Madison and Co-chair of the Mentor/Scholar committee.

Jen Uphoff Gray (Artistic Director) is a co-founder of FTC, serving as Artistic Director since 2009. She has directed 32 mainstage productions for Forward. Regionally, Jen has directed for Madison Rep and Milwaukee Shakespeare. She has directed national tours (*Copenhagen*) and was the Associate Director on Broadway of Copenhagen, Cabaret, The Blue Room (starring Nicole Kidman) and The Life. Jen founded World Premiere Wisconsin, and is now serving as President of WPW's Board of Directors. She also conceived and led the first-ever Wisconsin Directors Lab in January 2025. Jen grew up in the Madison area, holds a degree in Dramatic Literature & Stage History from Harvard College, and with her husband Peter has raised their three kids (Jamie, Seeger, and Arden) on Madison's west side.

FORWARD THEATER'S ANNUAL CONTRIBUTORS

We extend our deepest appreciation to the following individuals and organizations for their generous support of our annual operations.

We are pleased to recognize annual fund contributions and event contributions that were received between August 1, 2024 - August 1, 2025. If you notice any discrepancies or have questions, please contact Sarah Milestone at 608-234-5001 or smilestone@forwardtheater.com.

In a typical year, ticket revenue covers only 50% of the full cost of presenting live theater. Accumulated support from donors over the last year bridges the gap and enables Forward to provide exceptional theater experiences.

Whether you have made a first-time gift or you have faithfully supported Forward Theater throughout the years, you are part of our theater community and Forward's history. Thank you.

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Special thanks to:

Joan Herzig, Kristopher Reimann, Julia Steege-Reimann, Lynda Sharpe - for gathering chocolates for our Opening Night Chocolate Toast, and a standing ovation for Nathan Mergen, Leo Kropywiansky, and everyone at 107 State - for generously providing the Opening Night Party.



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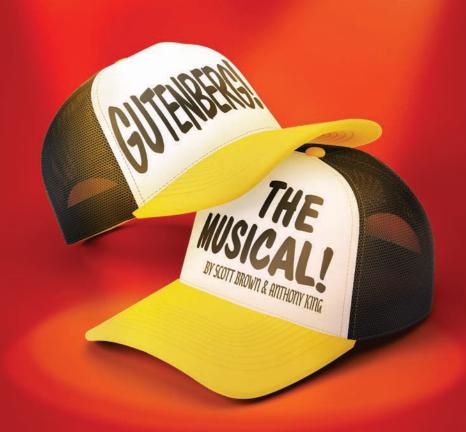
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