

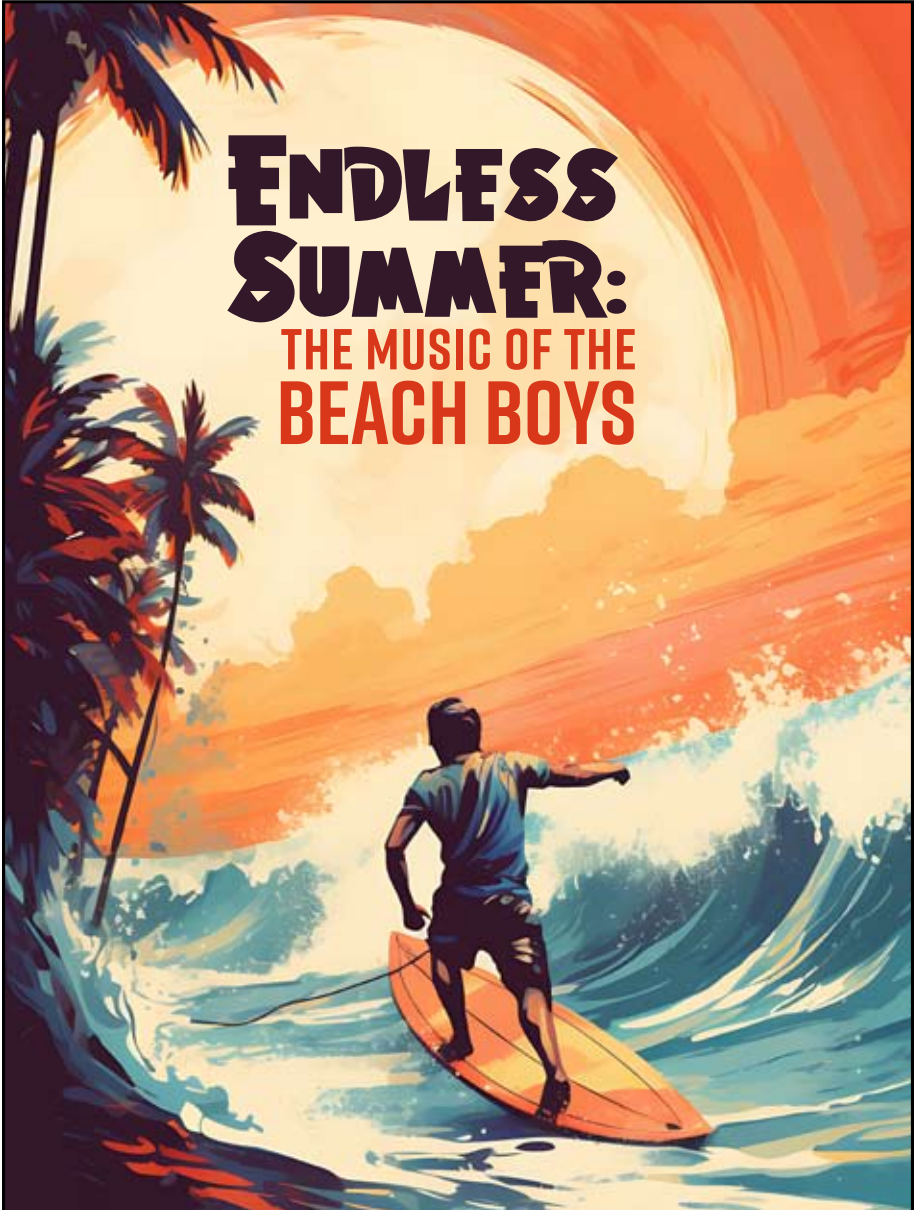
2024-2025 PERFORMING ARTS SEASON

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PLAYBILL

JANUARY 18, 2025
WILCOX THEATER



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UP COMING EVENTS

**Big Top Chautauqua presents:
Anishinaabe Dibaajimowin:
An Ojibwe Story**

Thursday, January 23, 2025

7pm | *The Reif: Wilcox Theater*

ABBAFAB

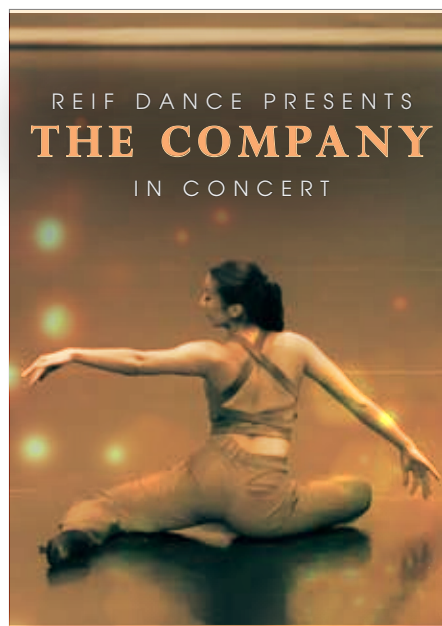
Saturday, February 8, 2025

7pm | *The Reif: Wilcox Theater*

Broadway's Next Hit Musical

Thursday, February 20, 2025

7pm | *The Reif: Wilcox Theater*



**FRIDAY & SATURDAY
FEBRUARY 28
& MARCH 1**

7pm | *The Reif: Wilcox Theater*

ADVANCE PRICE \$22 adult/senior | \$11 student

DOOR PRICE \$27 adult/senior | \$11 student

**The Flying Karamazov
Brothers**

Sunday, March 2, 2025

7pm | *The Reif: Wilcox Theater*

**Reif Theater Arts Presents:
Disney's Newsies Jr.**

Fri-Sun, March 21-23, 2025

7pm & 2pm | *The Reif: Wilcox Theater*

The Bellamy Brothers

Friday, April 4, 2025

7pm | *The Reif: Wilcox Theater*

**Transit Authority -
The Music of Chicago**

Saturday, April 26, 2025

2pm | *The Reif: Wilcox Theater*

Kathy Mattea

Thursday, May 1, 2025

7pm | *The Reif: Wilcox Theater*

Hairball:

Silver Anniversary Tour

Friday, May 16, 2025

Doors: 5:30pm

Northwood's Band: 7:15pm

Hairball: 8:30pm

Yanmar Arena, Grand Rapids

Reif Dance: Spring Show

Fri-Sun, June 6-8, 2025

7pm & 2pm | *The Reif: Wilcox Theater*



TICKETS

TheReif.org | 218-327-5780

AT THE BOX OFFICE: 11AM - 4PM



Vocal Perspective presents thought-provoking songs and pleasing harmonies. Their repertoire includes original and cover songs, '60s folk music, a cappella songs, and children's favorites.

Wayne has been singing, playing acoustic guitar, and writing music for most of his life. Laurie joined him 20 years ago on vocals and harmonica. Vocal Perspective has performed at various Minnesota venues including County Fairs, Reif Center Fireside, Grand Rapids Summer Concert Series, Itasca Children's Fair, coffee shops, and house concerts.

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Anishinaabe Dibaajimowin: An Ojibwe Story

Behind the Scenes – January 2025
by: John Miller, Technical Director



Technical Director
John Miller

“Did I tell you what happened at the play? We were at the back of the theater, standing there in the dark, all of a sudden I feel one of ’em tug my sleeve, whispers, “Trudy, look.” I said, “Yeah, goose bumps. You definitely got goose bumps. You really like the play that much?” They said it wasn’t the play gave ’em goose bumps, it was the audience.

I forgot to tell ’em to watch the play; they’d been watching the audience! Yeah, to see a group of strangers sitting together in the dark, laughing and crying about the same things...that just knocked ’em out.”

– Jane Wagner & Lily Tomlin, *The Search for Intelligent Life in the Universe*

Throughout the years as I sit in my little spot in the tech booth I’ve seen some amazing shows! But I often find myself watching the audience. Student Matinees are the best, whether they are laughing at Pete the Cat or screaming when the T-Rex lumbers on stage! Adult audiences are different, sometimes it’s just the silence you feel as they are absorbed by an emotional moment on stage. Sometimes it’s an audience of parents each with a cell phone out recording their child’s Christmas program.

Attending live theater is a shared social experience that entertains us. Live theater also creates connections and a deeper understanding of other people’s experiences. Theater, at its heart, is storytelling. During the 2020 pandemic Singer/Storyteller Michael Laughing Fox Charette set out to share 20,000 years of Anishinaabe culture through “heartfelt stories that have guided our people for countless generations.”

MPRnews

MPRNEWS.ORG | 91.3 FM



**MINNESOTA NOW
WITH CATHY WURZER
WEEKDAYS AT NOON.**

**MPR NEWS
WITH ANGELA DAVIS
WEEKDAYS AT 9:00 A.M.**

Approached by Lake Superior Big Top Chautauqua to create a show about the local indigenous culture Charette approached dozens of his fellow artists to share the culture and history of the Anishinaabe people. Anishinaabe Dibaajimowin: An Ojibwe Story brings together storytelling, music, dance and artwork in what Winona Laduke calls, “One of the most extraordinary plays I have seen. The play lifted hearts and stories in a time of immense change and uncertainty in our world.”



Michael Laughing Fox Charette

Storytelling is the traditional means by which the Ojibwe have passed their stories and tribal history down through the generations. Charette makes use of age-old and modern techniques to tell diverse stories of Creation and the Flood, land treaties, and Indian boarding schools. Many stories use song, such as the true name of the Apostle Islands, Wenabozho ominisan, which translates to “the islands of Wenabozho”. No two performances of An Ojibwe Story are alike, as the storytellers and the stories often change.

Music is an integral part of Ojibwe culture, and An Ojibwe Story makes use of traditional Ojibwe instruments; flute, drums and rattles, providing underscoring and accompanying singers and dancers. Charette co-wrote the non-traditional music for the production with Severin Behnen, musical director of Lake Superior Big Top Chautauqua. They are long time collaborators and last year released the album “Butterfly Moon”, which has received a nomination by the Native American



Singer and storyteller, Kevin Soulier.



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Agatha Christie's
**MURDER ON THE
ORIENT EXPRESS**

*adapted for the
stage by Ken Ludwig*

FEB 21-MAR 2

FRI-SAT 7PM | SUN 2PM

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Music Awards. The musical score for *An Ojibwe Story* makes use of music from the album.

An Ojibwe Story travels with traditional dancers, but also invites local dancers to join the production at each of its performances. While today's audiences are more familiar with stories told through ballet, tap or jazz dancing, Ojibwe traditional dance is a rich source of storytelling. One example is the Jingle Dress dance. Originating during the influenza pandemic of 1918, the dance tells the story of a sick girl healed by dancing in a dress covered in silver cones. One tradition says that the girl's grandfather, an Ojibwe medicine man, dreamed of the dance, dress and music before teaching his granddaughter the dance.



Traditional Ojibwe Jingle Dress in the Wisconsin Historical Museum.

The most theatrical and modern of the storytelling devices in *An Ojibwe Story* is the use of projections, including photos, artwork, film and live interviews. Many of the images were created by Rabbett Before Horses Strickland, often called “The Michelangelo of the Ojibwe.” He combines his study in European Renaissance and Baroque masters with subject matter deeply rooted in Anishinaabe culture. According to his website Strickland has dreams of his painting which, “feature moments from Ojibwe stories...there are lessons in the stories, and thus lessons in Strickland’s paintings.”



Rabbett Before Horses Strickland, source Rabbett Strickland Online Store



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Anishinaabe Dibaajimowin: An Ojibwe Story cast. (Orchestra not included)

Perhaps, most importantly, *An Ojibwe Story* is about the healing nature of telling ones story. As Winona Laduke described in her review, the audience could sense and understand the healing, spiritual nature of the performance. As quoted in her review Martin Curry says, “It was pretty healing for me, there were several times when I teared up... when I cried, and it felt right... Native men, we have to be different things to different people, it’s kind of like acting. That’s where identity, and the identity of these stories, is so profound. You are a storyteller. You are someone who cries, who is angry... You can be all of these things and it’s acceptable. That’s the great thing about theater.”

From everything I’ve seen and read about *Anishinaabe Dibaajimowin: An Ojibwe Story* be prepared for a moving and entertaining evening of storytelling through voice, music, dance and artwork. And, just maybe, get a seat in the back with me and watch the audience!

Big Top Chautauqua presents:
Anishinaabe Dibaajimowin: An Ojibwe Story
Thursday, January 23, 2025

7pm | The Reif: Wilcox Theater

GENERAL INFORMATION

BUY TICKETS... NO FEES!



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To stimulate arts in Northern Minnesota.

Underlying principles that guide this mission include the Reif Arts Council's responsibility to provide a healthy organization and a well-managed facility in which a wide variety of visual and performing arts may be experienced, exhibited, and taught.

2024 - 2025

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