

Conceived by **Murray Horwitz & Richard Maltby, Jr.**
Musical Adaptations by **Luther Henderson**
Vocal & Musical Concepts by **Jeffrey Gutcheon**
Vocal Arrangements by **Jeffrey Gutcheon & William Elliot**
Director & Music Director, **Dan Kazemi**
Greg and Rhonda Oberland, Executive Producers
David and Camille Kundert, Associate Producers

Ain't Misbehavin'

PLAY GUIDE

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Milwaukee, WI • 53202

Tickets: 414-224-9490
www.MilwaukeeRep.com

Milwaukee Repertory Theater presents



March 14 – May 18

Stackner Cabaret

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MARK'S TAKE

"Anyone who enjoyed last season's *Blues in the Night* will love this good-time musical revue featuring quadruple-threat performers doing what they do best. Add together this talented array of singer/dancer/actor/instrumentalists and a smoking songbook drawn from the legendary music of Fats Waller, and you'll get a not-to-be-missed musical evening that will blow you away!"

-Mark Clements, Artistic Director

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AIN'T MISBEHAVIN'

Get ready for two spirited hours of rowdy, rollicking music straight out of the height of the Harlem Renaissance! This Tony Award-winning tour through the legendary Fats Waller songbook will have you jumpin' and jivin' with the infectious energy and the cheeky humor of classic Waller hits like "Loungin' at the Waldorf" and "I Can't Give You Anything but Love." One of the most popular, well-crafted musical revues of all time, *Ain't Misbehavin'* is simply unforgettable and will be performed in the now-signature Rep style, with a group of five "Quadruple Threat" actor/singer/dancer/musicians.

**"No one to talk with,
all by myself.**

**No one to walk with,
I'm happy on the shelf.**

**Ain't misbehavin',
savin' my love for you"**

- Lyrics to the song "Ain't Misbehavin'"



Fats Waller on CBS Radio, 1938.

Are you an educator or interested in the education programs at The Rep? We recently launched the Facebook page INSIDE REP EDUCATION. Stop by, like the page, and get news feeds, photos, and classroom materials for Rep Programming. We're on the web @ www.facebook.com/InsideRepEducation.

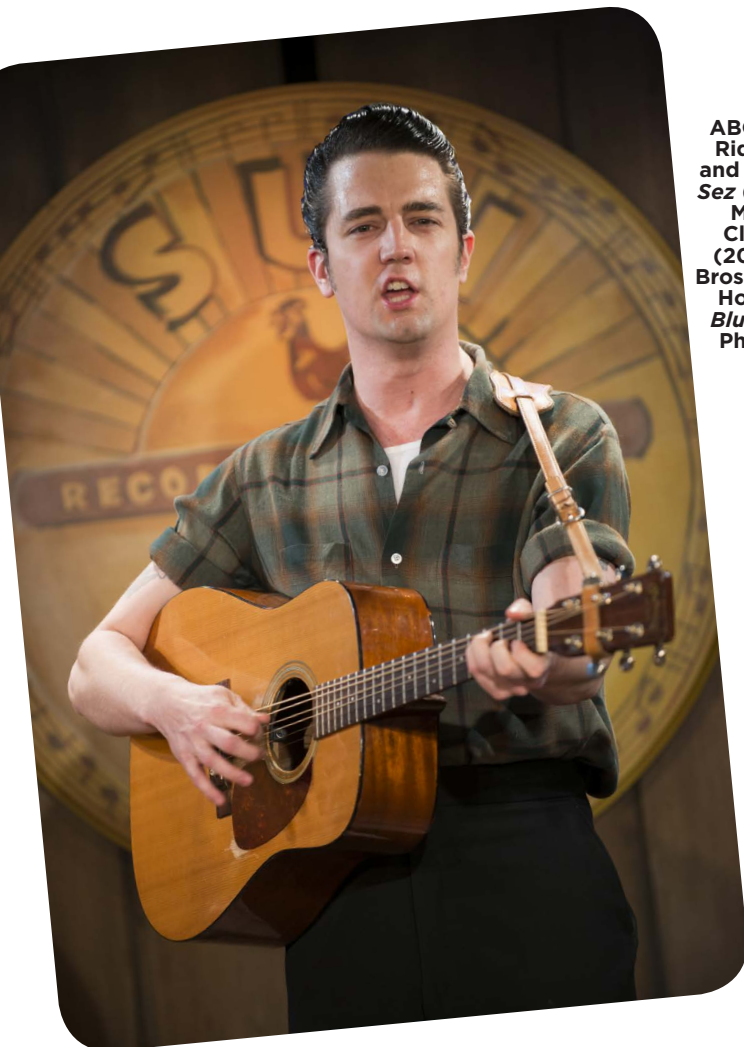


OUR PRODUCTION

In what has become a Stackner Cabaret signature style, our version of *Ain't Misbehavin'* uses "quadruple threat" performers to create our production. Like *Blues in the Night*, *Ring of Fire*, and *Woody Sez*, performers act, sing, dance, and play various musical instruments, often at the same time! The script of many musical reviews, such as *Ain't Misbehavin'*, is mostly a songbook, which allows each production team the freedom to tell the story in many ways. In this particular take on the musical, Director/Music Director Dan Kazemi envisions these songs being performed at a rent party late in the evening. The people who inhabit this apartment are performers, who upon returning from their gigs on the stages of various clubs around Harlem, need to stay up late working to make ends meet, but also having fun in the process.



ABOVE: David Finch, Leenya Rideout, Helen Jean Russell and David M. Lutken in *Woody Sez* (2013/14). Photo by Roger Mastroianni. LEFT: Eddie Clendenen in *Ring of Fire* (2012/13). Photo by Michael Brosilow. RIGHT: Carl Clemons-Hopkins and Halle Morse in *Blues in the Night* (2012/13). Photo by Michael Brosilow.



THOMAS “FATS” WALLER BIOGRAPHY



Fats Waller, 1938. Alan Fischer, Library of Congress.

Fats Waller Awards and Recognitions

- 1970** – Songwriters Hall of Fame
- 1984** – Grammy Hall of Fame for “Ain’t Misbehavin’” (recorded 1929)
- 1989** – Big Band and Jazz Hall of Fame
- 1993** – Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award
- 1998** – Grammy Hall of Fame for “Honeysuckle Rose” (recorded 1934)
- 2005** – Jazz at Lincoln Center: Nesuhi Ertegun Jazz Hall of Fame
- 2008** – Gennett Records Walk of Fame

Born Thomas Wright Waller, in Harlem on May 21, 1904, Fats Waller was a prolific jazz pianist, composer, organist, comedic performer, singer, and bandleader. Thomas, who gained the nickname “Fats” due to his size and boisterous personality, began learning piano at the age of six from his mother and played the organ in his father’s church by age ten. Against the protests of his father, Thomas became a professional musician at the age of 15 when he began playing organ for the Lincoln Theater. Upon his mother’s death in 1920, he moved out of the family home and met James P. Johnson, a master stride pianist, who became his tutor. He introduced Waller to many of Harlem’s acclaimed musicians. At the age of 17, he married Edith Hatchett and had a son, Thomas, Jr. In 1922, at the age of 18, Fats made his recording debut for Okeh Records with “Muscle Shoals Blues” and “Birmingham Blues.” The next year, he published “Squeeze Me” which established his reputation as a composer. Fats and Edith also divorced that same year. Waller made much of his living at this time by playing at Harlem’s famous rent parties, as an organist at movie theaters, and as an accompanist for vaudeville acts.

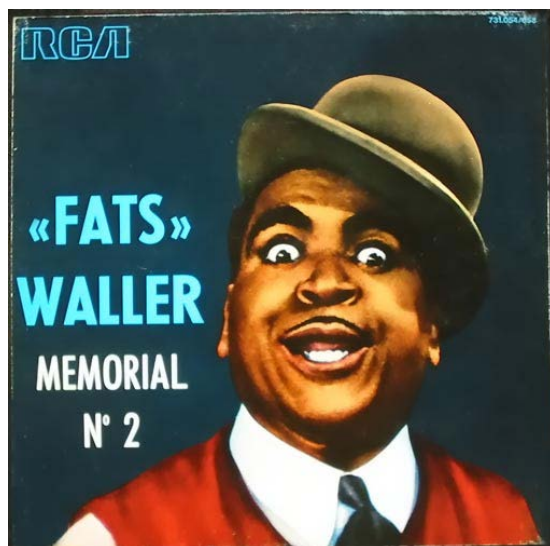
In 1926, he began making records for RCA Victor, who remained his principal recording company for the rest of his career. He also married Anita Rutherford that year, and they had two sons: Maurice and Ronald. Two years later, Waller made his Carnegie Hall debut. In the 1930s, Fats frequently appeared on radio and in two films: *Hooray for Love!* and *King of Burlesque*. He undertook two European tours. Over the course of his career, Waller wrote over 450 songs and made more than 500 records. He played, led, and/or recorded with several bands including Morris’ Hot Babes, Fats Waller’s Buddies, McKinney’s Cotton Pickers, and his famous Fats Waller and his Rhythm. He collaborated with Andy Razaf to produce songs and scores for Broadway musicals, including *Keep Shufflin’* and *Hot Chocolates*, which included the song “Ain’t Misbehavin’.” Since Fats Waller sold many of his songs to others over the course of his career, it is difficult to quantify his contribution to the American Songbook. In 1943, he made the film *Stormy Weather* with Lena Horn and Bill Robinson. Amidst the heavy touring schedule following the release of that film, Fats Waller, suffering from pneumonia, died on December 15, 1943 while traveling by train from the West Coast to New York. He was only 39 years old.

SOLO DISCOGRAPHY OF FATS WALLER



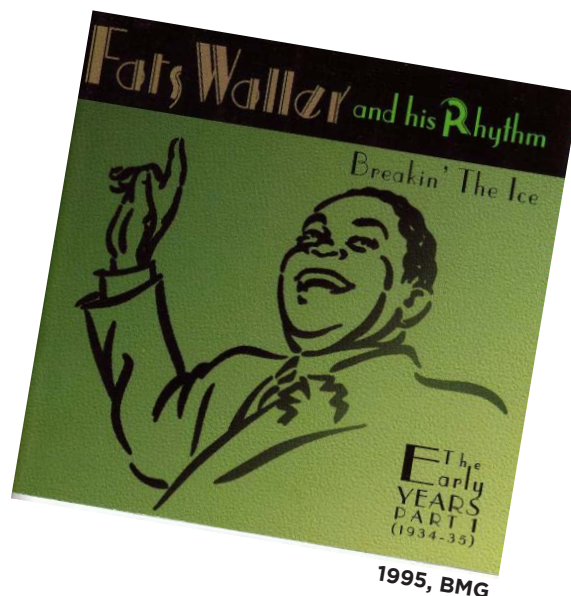
African Ripples
 After You've Gone
 A Handful Of Keys
 Ain't Misbehavin'
 All God's Chillun Got Wings
 Alligator Crawl
 Baby Brown
 Baby, Oh! Where Can You Be? (1)
 Baby, Oh! Where Can You Be? (2)
 Baby, Oh! Where Can You Be? (3)
 Basin Street Blues
 Because Of Once Upon a Time
 Believe It, Beloved
 Birmingham Blues
 Blue Black Bottom
 Blue Turning Gray Over You
 Bye Bye Florence
 California, Here I Come
 Carolina Shout (1)
 Carolina Shout (2)
 Clothes Line Ballet
 Deep River
 Dinah
 Do Me a Favor
 Down Home Blues
 Draggin' My Poor Heart Around
 E-Flat Blues
 Florence
 Georgia On My Mind
 Goin' About (1)
 Goin' About (2)
 Gladys (1)
 Gladys (2)
 Go Down, Moses

Hallelujah (Things Look Rosey)
 Handful Of Keys
 Hog Maw Stomp (1)
 Hog Maw Stomp (2)
 Honeysuckle Rose
 How Can You Face Me?
 I Ain't Got Nobody
 I Can't Give You Anything But Love
 I'm Crazy 'Bout My Baby
 I've Got A Feeling I'm Falling (1)
 I've Got A Feeling I'm Falling (2)
 Keeping Out Of Mischief Now
 Lennox Avenue Blues
 London Suite - Picadilly
 London Suite - Chelsea
 London Suite - Soho
 London Suite - Bond Street
 London Suite - Limehouse
 London Suite - Whitechapel
 Lonesome Road
 Loveless Love
 Love Me Or Leave Me (1)
 Love Me Or Leave Me (2)
 Love Me Or Leave Me (3)
 Minor Drag
 Messin' Around With The Blues Blues (2)
 Messin' Around With The Blues Blues (3)
 Muscle Shoals Blues
 My Fate Is In Your Hands
 My Feelin's Are Hurt
 Night Wind
 Numb Fumblin'
 Ring Dem Bells
 Rockin' Chair
 Russian Fantasy



Original Recording 1934-35, Re-release, RCA

Solitude
 Somebody Stole My Gal
 Sweet Sue
 Soothin' Syrup Stomp (1)
 Soothin' Syrup Stomp (2)
 Sloppy Water Blues (1)
 Sloppy Water Blues (3)
 Smashing Thirds
 Smoke Rings Of You
 Stardust
 St. Louis Blues
 Sugar



1995, BMG

Sweet Savannah Sue
 Swing Low, Sweet Chariot
 Tanglefoot (1)
 Tanglefoot (2)
 Tea For Two
 The Rusty Pail (1)
 The Rusty Pail (3)
 That Old Feeling
 That's All
 Turn On The Heat
 Valentine Stomp (1)
 Valentine Stomp (2)
 Vipers Drag
 Waiting At The End Of The Road(1)
 Waiting At The End Of The Road(2)
 Waterboy (Convict Song)
 Where Were You On the Night of June 3rd?
 You Can't Have Your Cake And Eat It
 You're The Top
 Zonky

HARLEM STRIDE

Harlem stride is a piano style first made popular by James P. Johnson. Growing out of ragtime and sending music evolution on its way to modern jazz music, Stride pianists like Johnson's protégé Fats Waller, began with the "oompah" rhythm of ragtime and added more swing and complexity to the base line. The style is marked by a great deal of improvisation in the melody line. Both hands need a lot of space on the keyboard and are said to "stride" across the piano. Other well-known performers of this style include Willie "The Lion" Smith, Art Tatum, Dick Hyman, and Ralph Sutton.



ABOVE RIGHT - James P. Johnson (1894 - 1955): The Father of Harlem Stride

LEFT - Art Tatum (1909 - 1956)

RIGHT - Willie "The Lion" Smith (1893 - 1973)

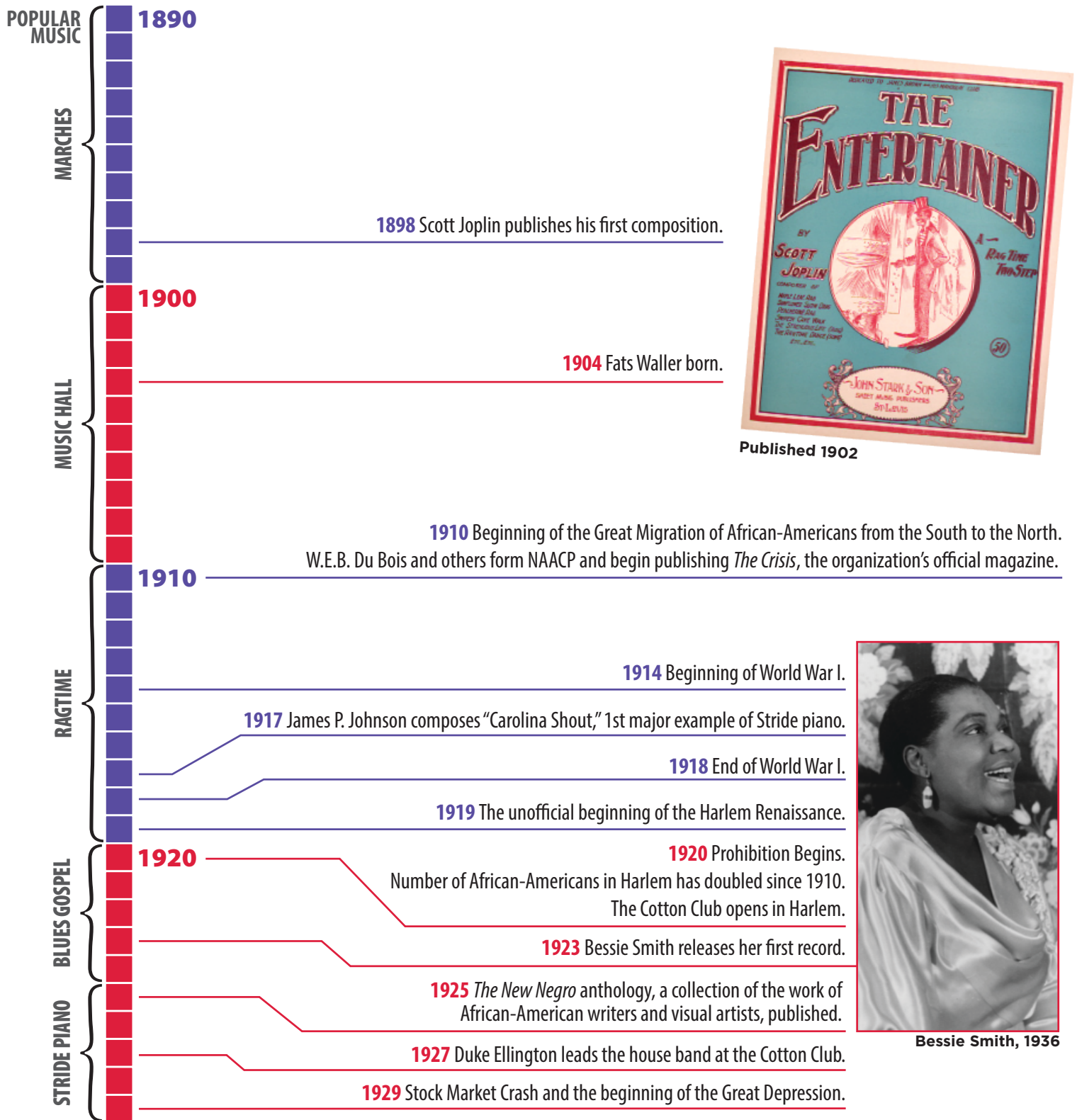


Al Capone (1899-1947), American gangster, 17 June 1931.

KIDNAPPED BY AL CAPONE?

Legend has it that Al Capone's henchmen kidnapped Fats Waller for a few days in 1926. Leaving the building after a performance, four men bundled Fats Waller into a car and drove him to the Hawthorne Inn, owned by Al Capone. They ordered Fats into the building, pushed him at gunpoint toward a piano, and instructed him to play. Apparently, his "surprise" appearance was a gift from "the boys" to Al Capone for his birthday party. Previously that year, Capone had consolidated Chicago under his control. The 21-year-old Fats stayed for three days playing and drinking with the guests. Though the invitation was a bit insistent, Fats left with several thousand dollars in tips and a pretty mean headache.

THE HARLEM RENAISSANCE



Bessie Smith, 1936

RENT PARTIES

Originating in Harlem in the 1920s, tenants would hire a musician to play in their apartments and pass the hat or collect admission at the door in order to pay the rent. Rent parties played an integral role in the development of jazz.

1930

1933 Prohibition repealed.

Lena Horne joins the chorus at The Cotton Club at the age of 16.

1934 Ella Fitzgerald makes her singing debut at the Apollo Theater in Harlem.

1935 Harlem Riot sparked by rumors of a black shoplifter being beaten.

1936 The Cotton Club closes in Harlem and re-opens on Broadway.

1939 Hitler invades Poland.

1940

1940 The Cotton Club closes for good.

1941 Bombing of Pearl Harbor: US enters World War II.

1943 Fats Waller dies.

1945 End of World War II.

JAZZ

PRE-SWING

SWING

1950



THE COTTON CLUB was one of the most famous speakeasies in Harlem. It opened originally in 1920 under the name Club De Luxe but changed its name in 1923 when prominent bootlegger and gangster Owney Madden took over the club while still imprisoned in Sing Sing. He used the club to sell his beer to the prohibition crowd. Styling itself in the fashion of a Southern plantation, it had a whites-only clientele and all African-American performers. Though the club had its roots in the minstrel culture, many of the great African-American musicians of the time performed or got their start at the Cotton Club including Lena Horne, Duke Ellington, Count Basie, Bessie Smith, Cab Calloway, Ella Fitzgerald, Fats Waller, Louis Armstrong, Nat King Cole, Billie Holiday, and Ethel Waters.



Duke Ellington, c. 1940



Ella Fitzgerald, 1946



Lena Horne, 1955



Apollo marquee, 1947

VISITING THE REP

Milwaukee Repertory Theater's Patty and Jay Baker Theater Complex is located in the Milwaukee Center, downtown at the corner of Wells and Water Streets. The building was formerly the home of the Electric Railway and Light Company.



Milwaukee Repertory Theater. Photo by Michael Brosilow.

The Ticket Office is visible on the left upon entering the Wells Street doors. The Stackner Cabaret is located on the second level and can be accessed via the escalator or elevator.

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