

OCTOBER 2023

# FROM THE WINGS

## ELEVATOR ACCESS COMING TO WEST HERR AUDITORIUM THEATRE

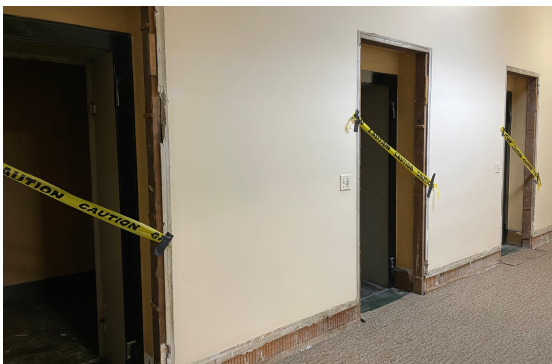
RBTL has just begun a new project as part of Phase One of our restoration efforts at the West Herr Performing Arts Center. Since it was first announced that RBTL acquired the entire complex, we have stressed the importance of accessibility and adaptability. Currently, there is no elevator access to the balcony and loge in the West Herr Auditorium Theatre. In the coming months, that's going to change!

Construction crews are working to restore an elevator that has been out of service for years, located in the side lobby of the Performing Arts Center. By fixing the elevator and knocking out some walls, patrons will be able to take the elevator to the upper level seating areas. This project will result in two working elevators with access to all the floors of the West Herr Performing Arts Center.

"Our goal is to improve the overall experience when visiting the Theater," said Pike Construction Services Project Director, Steve Savage. "This starts with accessibility and the pathway to the various areas within the theater. Once inside, we plan to further enhance the experience by exposing the original aesthetics of the venue and thoughtfully building upon that."



RBTL has partnered with Pike Construction Services and LaBella Associates to restore and renovate the complex. Daniel A. Pieters, the Director of Architecture and Vice President with LaBella Associates added "We want to help preserve the nature and character of what was initially created off of Main Street, but also enhance the overall usability of the building by creating better access points."



Work is expected to be completed in the new year. Continue to page two to see new, preliminary renderings of the elevator areas.

## UPCOMING EVENTS:

CINDERELLA BALLET

November 1

MOULIN ROUGE! THE MUSICAL

November 7-19

PATTI LABELLE

November 25

JO KOY

November 26

GUITARS AND STARS

November 29



WEST HERR  
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Second floor elevator lobby at the West Herr Performing Arts Center.  
Rendering by LaBella Associates.



Second floor elevator lobby at the West Herr Performing Arts Center & Auditorium Theatre.  
Rendering by LaBella Associates.



Second floor ramp at the West Herr Auditorium Theatre.  
Rendering by LaBella Associates.

# ENTER THE WORLD OF THE MOULIN ROUGE

When **"Moulin Rouge! The Musical"** comes to the West Herr Auditorium Theatre for an extended two-week engagement November 7-19, it will bring audiences into a world of splendor and romance, of eye-popping excess, of glitz, grandeur and glory. Before seeing the show, find out more about the world of the Moulin Rouge.

## THE STORY

Set in Paris 1899, a world of indulgent beauty and unparalleled extravagance, of Bohemians and aristocrats, of boulevardiers and reprobates, **"Moulin Rouge! The Musical"** is the story of a lovesick American writer, Christian, and Satine, the dazzling star of the Moulin Rouge nightclub. When their lives collide at the Moulin Rouge, they fall hopelessly in love, only to be thwarted by the nightclub's host and impresario, Harold Zidler, and the Duke of Monroth, the wealthy and entitled patron of the club who thinks he can buy anything he wants... including Satine.

Together with his Bohemian friends – the brilliant and starving artist Toulouse-Lautrec, and the greatest tango dancer in all of Paris, Santiago – Christian stages a musical spectacular in an attempt to save the Moulin Rouge and win the heart of Satine. **"Moulin Rouge! The Musical"** is a celebration of Truth, Beauty, Freedom, and – above all – Love!



Photo by Evan Zimmerman for MurphyMade

## THE HISTORY

With **"Moulin Rouge! The Musical,"** Baz Luhrmann's 2001 film comes to life on stage, transforming theatres across the U.S. into a theatrical interpretation of the iconic Moulin Rouge of Paris, France. The production's creators borrowed from French history to recreate the world of the Moulin Rouge for the musical. That includes the grand sets and costumes that reflect the real cultural renaissance of the late 19th century France, but with a contemporary twist.

The real Moulin Rouge opened in 1889 at the foot of Montmartre. The cabaret club's name literally translates to "red windmill," which is a nod to the red windmill that sits upon its roof. The windmill, along with the giant elephant that was once found in the club's garden, have been replicated for this production. While in **"Moulin Rouge! The Musical"** the inside of the elephant serves as Satine's dressing room, in reality, it was where the club's founders, Joseph Oller and Charles Zidler, brought patrons to be entertained in a more intimate setting. (Harold Zidler, the club's owner in the musical, gets his name from Charles Zidler.)



Photo by Matthew Murphy for MurphyMade

(continued on page four)

(continued from page three)

## THE HISTORY (CONTINUED)

People of all backgrounds came to the Moulin Rouge. The surrounding Montmartre district was heavily populated by middle-class bohemians, but the wealthy would often visit, essentially to see how the other half lived. In fact, this was the very goal of the Moulin Rouge's founders.

The cabaret became a quick success and is considered the birthplace of the French can-can, a dance the musical's creators were sure to incorporate. This rhythmic dance, while iconic now, was considered scandalous in its early days due to the often-revealing way the dancers kicked their legs in the air. Yet, it was still enchanting to the guests of the Moulin Rouge.

However, shortly after the turn of the century, the can-can was no longer considered fashionable and the Moulin Rouge became a music hall – dedicated to operetta until the beginning of World War I. Then tragically, in 1915, the Moulin Rouge burned down, but was rebuilt and reopened ten years later. In the 1930's the ballroom was transformed into an "ultra-modern" nightclub of its time. The Moulin Rouge underwent another renovation in 1951 and the dances, acts and French can-can finally returned to the cabaret. The auditorium was enlarged in 1962 and with that came the installation of a giant aquarium, and the first aquatic ballet. Fast forward to today and the Moulin Rouge in Paris is still operating as a cabaret, hosting a variety of performers. On October 6, it celebrated its 134th anniversary.



Photo by Matthew Murphy for MurphyMade

## THE ARTISTRY

"Moulin Rouge! The Musical" celebrates the artist, and the Montmartre district is known to have been home to many famous artists at certain points in their lives, including Dutch painter Vincent van Gogh and Spanish painter Pablo Picasso. So, it is only fitting that the legacy of the Moulin Rouge lives on through various works of art like paintings, films and Broadway musicals inspired by its history. Perhaps the most well-known artist to immortalize the Moulin Rouge in his works was French painter and illustrator Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, who was a frequent visitor of the club. Beginning in 1890, he created many posters for the cabaret, capturing the signature moves of the can-can dancers. The character of Toulouse-Lautrec in "Moulin Rouge! The Musical," who meets Christian soon after he arrives in Paris, is loosely based on the artist.



Nick Rashad Burroughs as Toulouse-Lautrec and Gabe Martínez as Santiago in the North American Tour of Moulin Rouge! The Musical  
Photo by Matthew Murphy for MurphyMade

## TRUTH, BEAUTY, FREEDOM, LOVE

The core values of this musical production are truth, beauty, freedom and love and it uses the rich history of the real Moulin Rouge to tell the story. Now that you've taken a look back at 19th and 20th century Paris, experience the glamour and the spectacular of "Moulin Rouge! The Musical" at the West Herr Auditorium Theatre November 7-19. New York Theatre Guide said, "[It] holds nothing back. Its characters put everything on the line for love, its director and choreographer keep the stage filled with energetic movement, and its designers turn up the color and glamour to the max. Plus, you'll hear an eclectic catalogue of pop music that will have you all but singing along the entire time." The Chicago Tribune called it "A vision of love. It's the kind of sexy fete of decadence that offers a bona fide reason to leave the house." Tickets are available now at [Ticketmaster.com](https://www.ticketmaster.com) and the Auditorium Box Office. Pop the champagne, because "Moulin Rouge!" is more than a musical – it is a state of mind.

## A LOOK AT MOULIN ROUGE! THE MUSICAL – FROM THE WINGS

While audiences always see the perspective of the stage from the house, they don't always see what the production looks like **from the wings**. Two photographers, **Avery Brunkus** and **Matthew Murphy**, were able to capture stunning moments from the Tour of "**Moulin Rouge! The Musical**" from backstage in the show's own series of "From the Wings."



### MOULIN ROUGE! BY THE NUMBERS

- There are **793** costume pieces in the musical and it took **180** artisans **36,019** hours to create all of it.
- **37** top hats appear in every performance.
- There are **9** feather headpieces donned at each performance.
- **45** wigs are worn throughout the show.
- In the musical, there are **75** songs and **160** years-worth of music represented with **165** songwriters credited.
- Harold Zidler says "can" or "can-can" **72** times throughout the production.



# SCHOOL NO. 19 RECEIVES SPECIAL VISIT FROM DISNEY'S FROZEN CAST MEMBERS

Rochester City school students at Dr. Charles T. Lunsford School No. 19 once again had an exciting opportunity after they saw a Broadway Show at the West Herr Auditorium Theatre. Back in April, after they watched a performance of Disney's "Aladdin," they received a very special visit from the Genie and other cast members. On October 6, it was Olaf's turn to make an appearance! After the students saw Disney's "FROZEN," cast members Jeremy Davis (Olaf), Dominic Dorset (Kristoff) and Kyle Lamar Mitchell (King Agnarr) paid a visit to their school.

About 50 students in grades three and four participated in a Q&A with the cast, where they learned all about each actor's background in theatre, what it's like to be in a tour on the road and what their favorite parts of the production are. They even learned how the actors who play Sven navigate their costume!

This opportunity was all part of RBTL's A.R.T.S. Partners education program, which recognizes the importance of arts integration in the classroom. The program provides curriculum based on themes from shows that are part of the M&T Bank Broadway Season. The students can then see those themes played out live on stage during a performance at the Auditorium Theatre. This Season's theme is "Finding Value: Celebrating personal strength and resilience." The remaining shows in RBTL's 2023-2024 education programming include "Moulin Rouge! The Musical," "Annie," "Ain't Too Proud – The Life and Times of the Temptations" and "TINA – The Tina Turner Musical." For more information visit [RBTL.org/arts-partners](http://RBTL.org/arts-partners) or contact Director of Education, Holly Valentine, by phone at 585-277-3338 or email [holly@rbtl.org](mailto:holly@rbtl.org).



## HALLOWEEN-WORTHY BROADWAY SHOWS THAT HAVE PLAYED AT THE AUDITORIUM THEATRE

*Beetlejuice*  
February 2023

*The Addams Family*  
February 2013

*Young Frankenstein*  
November 2010

*Jekyll and Hyde*  
May 2001

*The Phantom of the Opera*  
Oct. 1990, Oct. 1996, Nov.-Dec. 2001, Apr. 2014

*Sweeney Todd*  
March 1982