

NOVEMBER 2024

FROM THE WINGS

ROCHESTER BROADWAY THEATRE LEAGUE UNVEILS "PROJECT RESTOURATION"



PROJECT RESTOURATION

Transforming West Herr Performing Arts Center
for **OUR** Greater Rochester Community

RBTL is excited to officially launch PROJECT RESTOURATION, a five-year, \$65 million initiative dedicated to restoring and revitalizing the historic West Herr Performing Arts Center (WHPAC). The project aims to secure a dynamic future for the arts in the Rochester region, creating a cultural legacy and inspiring generations to come.

PROJECT RESTOURATION will transform the venue, also home to the West Herr Auditorium Theatre, into a multistage, beautifully restored 1920s-era complex, showcasing exceptional quality and craftsmanship. Through this effort, RBTL promises to deliver a renowned entertainment venue for the entire Rochester community and beyond.

"Years ago in Syracuse, community leaders gathered and decided to replace an old football stadium with the Carrier Dome, which redefined the city. In Buffalo, leaders saved an old movie theater, now called Shea's, changing the future of entertainment there," said RBTL CEO and Board Chairman, Arnie Rothschild. "Now in Rochester, by restoring and upgrading the West Herr Performing Arts Center, we're creating a premier venue that will serve our community for years to come."

"The West Herr Performing Arts Center is an important cornerstone of Rochester's arts and cultural landscape," said Rochester Mayor Malik D. Evans. "This beautiful and historic structure is worthy of restoring its original brilliance, and I encourage everyone in the community to contribute to its transformation so that it can continue its dynamic cultural legacy for generations to come."

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UPCOMING EVENTS:

DR. SEUSS' HOW THE GRINCH
STOLE CHRISTMAS!
THE MUSICAL
December 3-8

MJ THE MUSICAL
December 17-22

AN EVENING WITH CHEVY CHASE
NATIONAL LAMPOON'S
CHRISTMAS VACATION
December 29

RPO: THE WIZARD OF OZ
January 15



WEST HERR
PERFORMING ARTS CENTER
875 EAST MAIN STREET
ROCHESTER, NY 14605
RBTL.ORG



@RBTLAUD

(continued from page one)

As Auditorium Theatre patrons have seen, Phase One of PROJECT RESTOURATION, which focuses on expanding accessibility, adaptability and amenities, is already underway. Key improvements include enhancing the rear/West side entrance (which will serve as the building's accessible entry point), reconfiguring the parking lot, adding a patron drop-off area, widening the hallway leading to the WHPAC lobby and opening the Floreano Room as an additional gathering space.

In celebration of the official launch of this ambitious project, RBTL has revealed a brand-new LED sign in front of the East Main Street entrance, symbolizing the first step in this transformative journey. The complex now has a distinct identity, labeling it the West Herr Performing Arts Center & Auditorium Theatre, as it embarks on a new chapter of community-driven arts and entertainment.

"I am truly excited and moved by the progress in the West Herr Performing Arts Center renovation project," said President & CEO of West Herr Automotive Group, Scott Bieler. "All of us at West Herr are extremely proud to be a part of this restoration. Our partnership with this historic theatre has exceeded all our expectations. Our commitment to the West Herr Performing Arts Center and Auditorium Theatre would not have been possible without the support of the people of the Rochester community who have so graciously supported West Herr for over a decade."



Looking ahead, the summer of 2025 will bring the restoration of the East Main Street exterior steps and redesign of artist dressing rooms. RBTL also plans to restore multiple historic spaces within the building, including Cathedral Hall, to provide versatile performance opportunities. Once completed, the West Herr Performing Arts Center will fill a critical need for a multi-stage entertainment venue in the Greater Rochester area and Finger Lakes region.

RBTL has launched social media pages and a website, dedicated to the West Herr Performing Arts Center, designed to keep the community up to date on PROJECT RESTOURATION's progress and provide information on tax-deductible contributions. The website will also highlight resident organizations, which currently includes RBTL/West Herr Auditorium Theatre, A Magical Journey Thru Stages, the Rochester Theater Organ Society and the Rochester Musician's Association.

The West Herr Performing Arts Center logo is displayed at the top, featuring the text "WEST HERR NEW YORK PERFORMING ARTS CENTER". Below the logo are four social media icons: Facebook, Instagram, X, and LinkedIn. At the bottom of the block, the website URL "WestHerrPAC.org" is written in a yellow font.

\$12.5 million in funding from both private and public sources has been committed towards PROJECT RESTOURATION's estimated \$65 million cost. RBTL's Fundraising Committee, consisting of prominent and influential community leaders, is dedicated to ensuring a vibrant and sustainable future for the arts in Rochester. It is co-chaired by Dan Burns (M&T Bank) and Trish Nilsen (NYSEG/RG&E).

"The future of the arts in Rochester is energizing," said Trish Nilsen, President and CEO of NYSEG and RG&E. "The restoration of the historic West Herr Performing Arts Center will enhance the rich arts culture the city already has. We look forward to supporting this project, giving the community a front-row seat and the opportunity to access the arts at the highest level."

In partnering with Pike Construction Services, LaBella Associates and other community advisors, RBTL is committed to restoring WHPAC in an optimal way, while prioritizing the experience of both patrons and performers. Originally the Masonic Temple of Rochester, RBTL has owned the Auditorium Theatre portion of the building since 2004 and purchased the remainder of the Performing Arts Center in March of 2023. The completed restoration, slated for the building's 100th anniversary in 2030, will preserve its historical grandeur, while allowing for the expansion of RBTL's nationally-recognized and award-winning education programs, as well as additional live entertainment opportunities.

JUST IN TIME FOR THE HOLIDAYS: FOUR MORE BROADWAY SHOWS GO ON SALE DECEMBER 13

Give the gift of Broadway this holiday season! Individual tickets for three shows in the 2024-2025 M&T Bank Broadway Season, plus a previously announced Special Engagement, will go on sale December 13. Tickets for **THE WIZ**, **RIVERDANCE**, **SOME LIKE IT HOT** and **BACK TO THE FUTURE: THE MUSICAL** will be available at [Ticketmaster.com](https://www.ticketmaster.com) and the West Herr Auditorium Theatre Box Office beginning at 10:00 a.m. Learn more about the shows:

The Tony® Award-winning Best Musical that took the world by storm is back February 22-28. **THE WIZ** returns “home” to stages across America in an all-new Broadway tour, the first one in 40 years. Baltimore Sun raves, “Powerhouse performances. Stunning choreography. Visionary sets” and Chicago Tribune proclaims **THE WIZ** is “an eye-popping and high-intensity revival! This groundbreaking twist on The Wizard of Oz changed the face of Broadway – from its iconic score packed with soul, gospel, rock, and 70s funk to its stirring tale of Dorothy’s journey to find her place in a contemporary world. Everybody rejoice – this dynamite infusion of ballet, jazz, and modern pop brings a whole new groove to easing on down the road!



Since **RIVERDANCE** first emerged on the world stage, its fusion of Irish and international dance and music has captured the hearts of millions worldwide. The GRAMMY® Award-winning music and the infectious energy of its mesmerizing choreography and breathtaking performances have left audiences in awe and established **RIVERDANCE** as a global cultural sensation. To celebrate this incredible 30th-year milestone, **RIVERDANCE** will embark on a special anniversary tour, bringing its magic to audiences around the world, including Rochester March 25-26. This spectacular production rejuvenates the much-loved original show with new innovative choreography and costumes and state-of-the-art lighting, projection, and motion graphics. And for the first time, **RIVERDANCE** welcomes “The New Generation” of performers, all of whom were not born when the show began 30 years ago.



Winner of 4 Tony Awards®, including Best Choreography and Best Costumes, and the GRAMMY® Award for Best Musical Theater Album, **SOME LIKE IT HOT** is “A Super-Sized, All-Out Song-And-Dance Spectacular!” (The New York Times). Set in Chicago when Prohibition has everyone thirsty for a little excitement, **SOME LIKE IT HOT** is the “glorious, big, high kicking” (Associated Press) story of two musicians forced to flee the Windy City after witnessing a mob hit. With gangsters hot on their heels, they catch a cross-country train for the life-chasing, life-changing trip of a lifetime, May 13-18.



Great Scott! **BACK TO THE FUTURE**, the beloved, cinematic classic is now a Broadway musical with its destination set for Rochester June 17-22. When Marty McFly finds himself transported back to 1955 in a time machine built by the eccentric scientist Doc Brown, he accidentally changes the course of history. Now he’s in a race against time to fix the present, escape the past, and send himself... back to the future. Winner of the 2022 Olivier Award for Best New Musical, when **BACK TO THE FUTURE** hits 88mph, it’ll change musical theater history forever.



Give the gift of more than just Broadway this holiday season. Gift certificates are also available at [RBTL.org/gift-certificates](https://www.rbt1.org/gift-certificates) and by calling 585-222-5000.

HE'S A MEAN ONE: THE GRINCH TO RETURN TO ROCHESTER FOR SPECIAL ENGAGEMENT

DR. SEUSS' HOW THE GRINCH STOLE CHRISTMAS! THE MUSICAL is bringing the Grinch back to Rochester December 3-8, and great seats are still available! Tickets may be purchased at [Ticketmaster.com](https://www.ticketmaster.com) or the Auditorium Box Office. To get you ready for the show, here are some fun facts you might not have known:

- The book debuted in 1957. At the time, Dr. Seuss was 53 years old, the same age as the Grinch.
- Dr. Seuss was not an actual doctor. He briefly studied English literature at Oxford after graduating from Dartmouth, but then decided to become a cartoonist. He was awarded an honorary doctorate in 1955 by Dartmouth College.
- The Grinch didn't turn green until he was animated in 1966. When the book was published, he was black and white with pink eyes. Rumor has it that the TV special's animator, Chuck Jones, was inspired to give the Grinch his recognizable coloring after he rented a car that was painted a unique shade of green.
- Max, The Grinch's dog, has only two lines in the entire 1966 TV special: "Yipee!" and "Raaaahh!". In this musical, however, he is a leading dog!
- Dr. Seuss wrote all the lyrics to the songs in the TV special of "How the Grinch Stole Christmas."

The Grinch made a special advance trip to Rochester and he was busy! In an effort to get the community in the holiday spirit, he made a stop at the **FOX Rochester studios**, before heading over to the Blue Cross Arena to cheer on the Rochester Americans during their November 8th game against the Hartford Wolf Pack. While there, he did the faceoff at the start of the game, hung out with Moose, played some games with kids and, of course, visited with fans around the Arena.



The following day, those who attended "Nutcracker! Magical Christmas Ballet" at the West Herr Auditorium Theatre were able to meet the Grinch and take pictures with him prior to the performance. He even learned a little ballet before sneaking on stage (click the image below to watch the video).



Check out more pictures and videos from the Grinch's visit in our Highlights on [Instagram](#).

Missed him at these events? Catch the Grinch again on Saturday, November 30 from 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. when you come to the West Herr Auditorium Theatre to buy a ticket. Also – the Theatre is a drop off location for the [Pirate Toy Fund](#). When you donate a toy, you'll get \$10 off your ticket to the December 3rd or 4th performances of DR. SEUSS' HOW THE GRINCH STOLE CHRISTMAS! THE MUSICAL.



MJ IS STARTIN' SOMETHIN' IN ROCHESTER THIS DECEMBER

Michael Jackson took the world by storm in 1992 and 1993 during his "Dangerous World Tour." Now, audiences are getting a look at his creative process developing that tour when MJ THE MUSICAL comes to Rochester December 17-22. MJ takes place during rehearsals for the tour, which played 69 concerts across three continents. It's a deep dive into MJ's artistry and collaborative spirit that catapulted him to legendary status.

MJ was nominated for 10 Tony Awards® – winning four.

- **WINNER:** Best Sound Design of a Musical
- **WINNER:** Best Lighting Design of a Musical
- **WINNER:** Best Choreography
- **WINNER:** Best Actor in a Musical
- **NOMINATED:** Best Musical
- **NOMINATED:** Best Director of a Musical
- **NOMINATED:** Best Book of a Musical
- **NOMINATED:** Best Orchestrations
- **NOMINATED:** Best Costume Design of a Musical
- **NOMINATED:** Best Scenic Design of a Musical

Get your tickets to MJ now before they sell out at [Ticketmaster.com](https://www.ticketmaster.com) or the Auditorium Box Office. Great seats are still available at select performances.



Jamaal Fields-Green as 'MJ' and the cast of the MJ First National Tour.
Photo by Matthew Murphy



Jamaal Fields-Green as 'MJ' in the MJ First National Tour.
Photo by Matthew Murphy



TRACK LIST

ACT I

Beat It
Tabloid Junkie / Price of Fame
Shout / Papa's Got a Brand New Bag
Climb Ev'ry Mountain
The Love You Save / I Want You Back /
ABC
I'll Be There
Don't Stop 'Til You Get Enough / Blame It
on the Boogie / Dancing Machine
Stranger in Moscow
You Can't Win
I Can't Help It
Keep the Faith
Wanna Be Startin' Somethin'
Earth Song / They Don't Care About Us

ACT II

Billie Jean
Smooth Criminal
For the Love of Money / Can You Feel It
Money
Keep the Faith (Reprise)
She's Out of My Life
Jam
Human Nature
Bad / 2 Bad
Price of Fame (Reprise)
Thriller
Man in the Mirror
Jam (Reprise) / Black or White / Wanna
Be Startin' Somethin' (Reprise)
Working Day and Night

MAMMA MIA! AT WEST HERR AUDITORIUM THEATRE BREAKS BOX OFFICE RECORDS WITH SOLD-OUT RUN

MAMMA MIA! broke RBTL Box Office records with a sold-out run during its November 19-24 engagement. It played to more than 19,000 people across eight performances. This places MAMMA MIA! among the most successful one-week Broadway runs in RBTL's history.

RBTL and longtime presenter Albert Nocciolino have presented MAMMA MIA! five times at the Auditorium Theatre over two decades. This 25th Anniversary production was the first time the show has been to Rochester in 14 years. Before it went on sale to the general public, 62% of tickets were sold through Season ticket packages and presales – another Box Office record.

"We are thrilled to have been able to bring MAMMA MIA! back for Rochester audiences. It's always a joy to see patrons' infectious energy following a performance," said Nocciolino. "It's because of those patrons that the engagement ended up being an incredible success – that includes providing a boost to the local economy through hotels, restaurants and parking."

MAMMA MIA! is produced by Judy Craymer, Richard East & Björn Ulvaeus for Littlestar in association with Universal. Amy Jacobs of Bespoke Theatricals is the Executive Producer in association with Work Light Productions.

"On behalf of Judy Craymer and Littlestar, we are overjoyed with the response from Rochester audiences for the 25th Anniversary tour of MAMMA MIA!," said Executive Producer Amy Jacobs. "Rochester first welcomed our show in November 2002, and we're thrilled to see generations old and new embracing this production."



Since premiering in London in 1999 and on Broadway in 2001, the irresistible musical has captured the hearts of millions around the globe. The sunny, funny tale of a mother, a daughter and three possible dads on a Greek island paradise, all unfolding to the storytelling magic of ABBA's timeless songs, has now been seen live on stage by 70 million people across the world and turned into two record-breaking movies – MAMMA MIA! The Movie and MAMMA MIA! Here We Go Again.

To date, MAMMA MIA! has been seen in 50 productions in 16 different languages grossing more than \$4.5 billion at the box office.

ROC THE DAY FOR RBTL AND LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

On December 3, the Greater Rochester community will come together to ROC the Day. It's a chance to make a real difference right here in the region. Donations to RBTL will go towards **PROJECT RESTOURATION**, to help transform the historic Auditorium Complex into a multi-stage Performing Arts Center for the Rochester community.

Join us in supporting our community and ROC the Day!
Find out more and get ready to ROC at ROCtheDay.org.