

the **100TH** SINCE 1922
ANNIVERSARY
Morris
THE NEVERENDING ENCORE



WELCOME TO THE Neverending Encore

Everything has changed over the past hundred-years. The buildings. The streets. Even the artists and performers.

Not the Morris. Amidst a century of change, the Morris still anchors downtown South Bend as a timeless expression of who we are.

And if the Arts give us endless joy, the Morris gives us endless art. A century and counting.

For generations, the Morris has enlightened, inspired and lifted our souls. It's always been here. And it's never let us down.

Welcome to the Neverending Encore – the campaign to ensure this vital asset will

thrive and contribute to our community for the next hundred years.

Our goals are not lofty. They're practical. We will improve safety and expand the facility, enhance comfort for our patrons, and open the Morris in the broadest possible way to everyone and anyone in our community, regardless of who or where they are in life.

In this town, the Arts are for everyone. And the Morris will always live up to that calling.

Please accept the following pages for what they are - a humble attempt to address the very real impact that this historic theatre has had on our community over the past hundred years – and a hint at the greatness yet to come.



Let's start with a peculiar idea

In the early 1900s', the Arts were considered a self-indulgent luxury for the few who had time and money to afford it. Thus, not many.

'That's wrong,' said the architects of the Morris. 'The arts should be for everyone.'

So, they built a million-dollar palace in downtown South Bend – a theatre where anyone who entered felt like royalty regardless of their place in the life.

Today, life without art is unthinkable in this town – *whoever* you were.

The Arts give us joy. They bring us together. At the Morris, we sing and we smile. We tap our feet.

This hundred-year-old palace still lifts our souls. And a century of applause that echoes through our streets? It comes from the Morris – where the Arts are for everyone and the Morris, their home.

Center of the universe

Dazzled! That's how you felt in 1922 when entering the Palace (as the Morris was first known). The eclectic mix of architectural styles made you feel special. And while there were many great theaters in the world, there were none like this.

Millions of children and adults would be inspired for the next hundred years. Thousands would go on to successful careers in the Arts themselves.

This place was always packed – a center of the universe in town – where souls were lifted day-after-day.

Even bad weather couldn't keep us away. Ask the South Bend woman who longed for the theatre in 1948 but was too old to shovel heavy snow from her porch. Little boy Sydney who lived next door did it for her and asked nothing in return. He was

poor too! His mother had just died from alcoholism.

No saint this young man. He snuck himself into the Palace whenever he could. For Sydney, it was a desperate escape. Here he traveled to enchanted places. Here he lived the life of romance, adventure and fortune. And like all brilliant children, he thrived on the Arts.

Sydney didn't go to college. He went to the Morris. The Arts became his life. The boy with the last name Pollack, would go on to become one of the most prolific filmmakers in American history.

The fruit of his work? Films like **The Way We Were**, **Tootsie**, **Out of Africa**, 48 Academy Award nominations and 11 Oscars.

Yet, Pollack is just one of thousands of children inspired in this place over the past hundred years. There are so many more.

Echoes

If you're lucky enough to stand facing the empty house at the footlights of this century old stage, it matters not if your eyes are open, or closed. From this place on stage, you can still hear echoes of applause – generations of echoes. This is where artists of today join hands with artists of yesterday in the Neverending Encore, as they bow to the house.

The Arts became his life.

His name was Sydney Pollack. Sydney didn't go to college. **He went to the Morris.**





Ziegfeld Girls, 1930

Appointment with destiny

If time changes everything else, it has no effect on inspiration. Not at the Morris.

In the 'Roaring Twenties,' we came here for the thrill of seeing Mary Pickford, The Ziegfeld Dancers, Will Rogers and Houdini. They were the biggest stars in the world at the time.

During the Depression, we came for comfort and escape. Hollywood brought Bob Hope, Ronald Reagan and other stars for the World Premiere of Knute Rockne All-American. 2,400 people packed the theatre while more than ten thousand filled the streets outside.

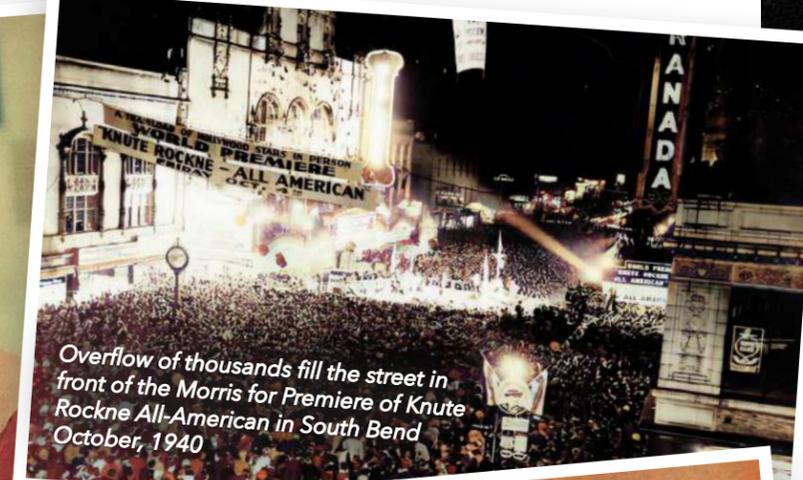
World War II? We came to this place for the confidence that new young performers like Frank Sinatra, Debbie Reynolds and Louis Armstrong so willingly shared.

It was magical. This Palace brought us together, opened minds and doors. It challenged our thinking and brought us comfort when we needed it most.

So, it's hard to believe that after the war, everything changed.



Debbie Reynolds, 1954



Overflow of thousands fill the street in front of the Morris for Premiere of Knute Rockne All-American in South Bend October, 1940



Louis Armstrong, 1947



By the mid-fifties, theatres all over the world were being torn down as people stayed home for an invention called television. By 1959, even the Palace in South Bend had an appointment with the wrecking ball.

'Not so fast,' said Ella Morris, a local philanthropist and arts lover. She knew what the theatre meant to this community.

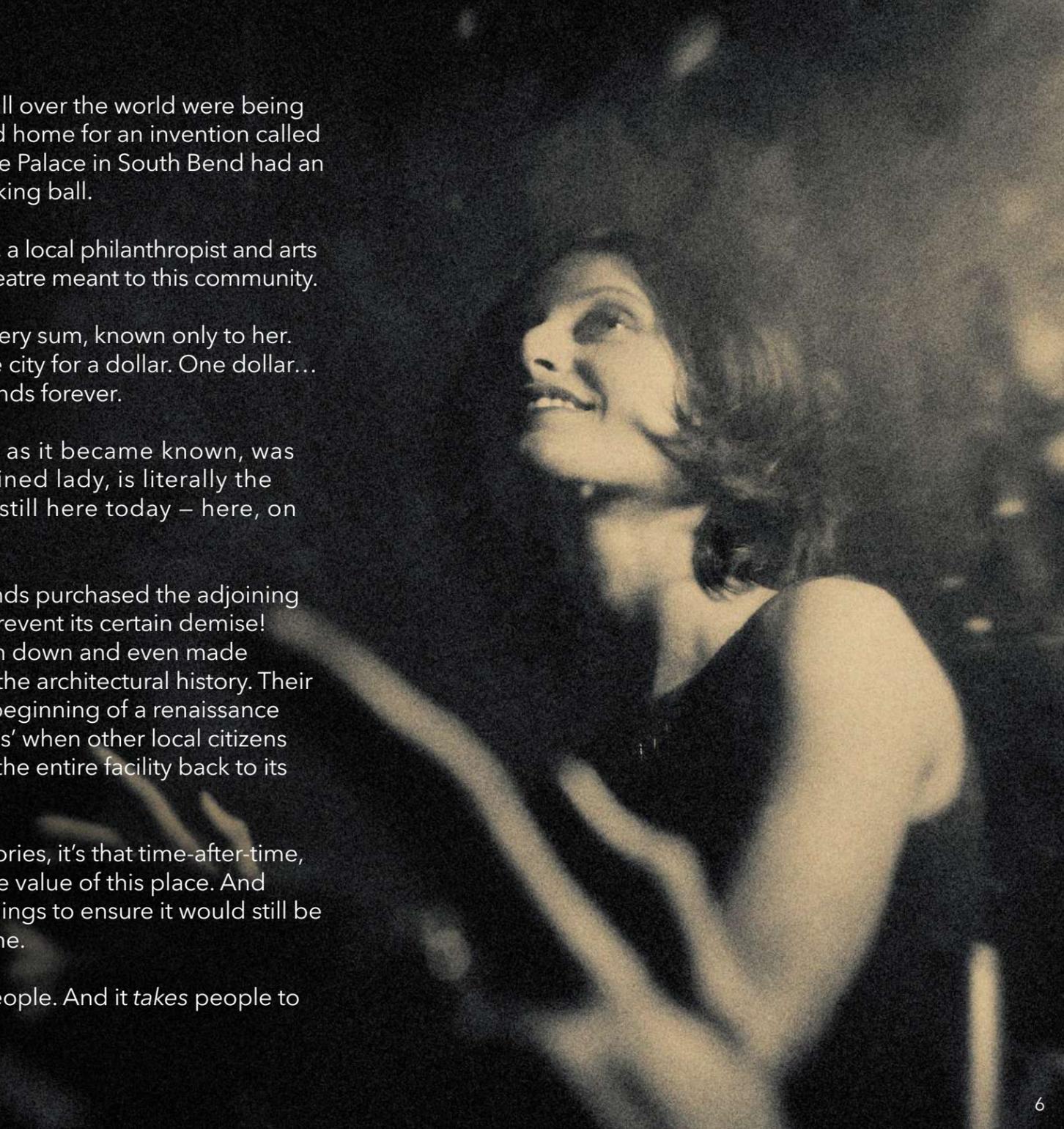
So, she bought it for a mystery sum, known only to her. And then sold it back to the city for a dollar. One dollar... to ensure it was in good hands forever.

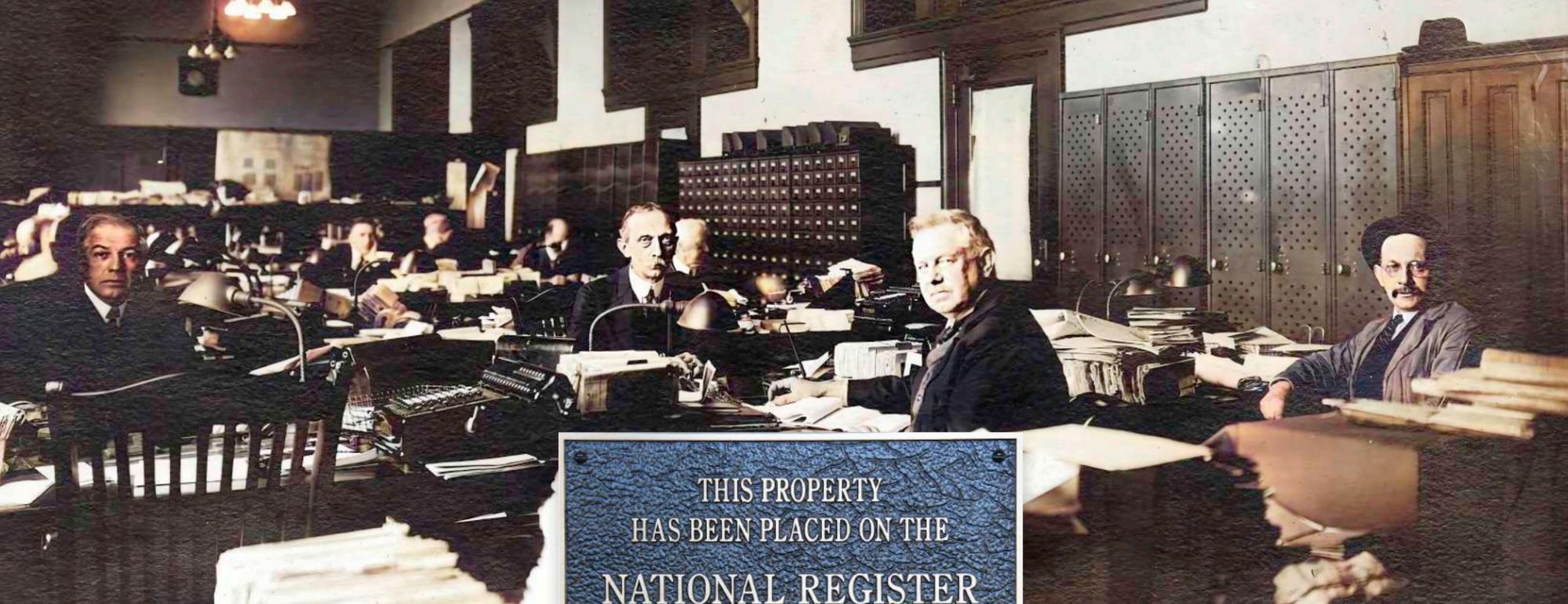
Thanks to Ella, the Morris as it became known, was here to stay. One determined lady, is literally the only reason the Morris is still here today – here, on its 100th Anniversary.

In the 80s' a handful of friends purchased the adjoining Palais Royale ballroom to prevent its certain demise! They kept it from being torn down and even made improvements to preserve the architectural history. Their commitment signaled the beginning of a renaissance that culminated in the 1990s' when other local citizens raised \$17 million to bring the entire facility back to its original 1922 grandeur.

If there's a point to these stories, it's that time-after-time, people have recognized the value of this place. And they've done remarkable things to ensure it would still be here for generations to come.

The Morris after all, is *for* people. And it *takes* people to ensure that it thrives.





THIS PROPERTY
HAS BEEN PLACED ON THE
NATIONAL REGISTER
OF HISTORIC PLACES
BY THE UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Blueprints from Heaven?

That once-peculiar idea that the Arts should be for everyone has outlived the Great Depression, World War II and every major advancement in technology to-date.

The Morris is still here. And it still makes you feel like royalty when you walk in – still leaves you spellbound through every performance.

Today, on its 100th birthday, this exquisite home for the Arts sits on the National Register of Historic Places. It's been named one of the top theaters in the

world by Pollstar Magazine. And for the quality of its programs and community impact, it's earned the Outstanding Historic Theatre Award from the League of Historic American Theatres.

Whatever they build in Heaven, the architects of the Morris must still be quite busy – still updating their resumes with accolades and awards.



TODAY,
THE MORRIS IS
AMONG THE TOP 100
THEATERS IN THE
WORLD

Pollstar Magazine

Orbit of stars

Today, a devoted group of South Bend Venues Parks & Arts staff manage the Morris on behalf of all art lovers in the region. Their tireless dedication has made the Morris increasingly profitable.

It helps that the theatre itself is substantial and grand. A place like this beckons patrons in ways that modern facilities can only dream of. Calling "Here are the Arts. Bring your imagination, because in here, anything is possible."

The artists who orbit this place? They come from down the street and across the globe.

The Morris is home to the South Bend Symphony Orchestra and some of the finest musicians in the country. It's home to the Broadway Theatre League and heart-pounding shows like Lion King, Phantom of the Opera and Stomp.



This is where local children from Southhold Dance Theater perform the Nutcracker Ballet every December. It's where Jerry Seinfeld, Elvis Presley, Bing Crosby and Sheryl Crow have mesmerized audiences time-after-time. And it's where Frank Sinatra signed autographs at the alley stage door for adoring local fans.

This is where Michael Warren, Hollywood producer and actor came for inspiration as a child. It's where Traci Johnson, co-creator of Blues Clues enjoyed Symphony... where Broadway's Melissa Tulchinsky fell in love with theater as a member of Southhold Dance Theater. And it's where Hollywood filmmaker Larry Karaszewski came for concerts and plays.

Thousands of professional actors, musicians, singers and dancers have lifted our souls at the Morris over the past hundred years. Thousands yet to come, will lift our souls over the next hundred years.



CAMPAIGN OVERVIEW

EQUITY IN THE ARTS 4%

A REIMAGINED PLAZA 17%

EXTERIOR UPGRADES 33%

INTERIOR UPGRADES 40%

ENDOWMENT 4%

CONTINGENCY 2%



No one can predict the future. But, we can look to history as a guide.

The greatest leaders in the history of civilization have always come from the margins of society. Most were poor. Others were simply different in some way. None of them were *born* to make history. Yet, all of them, somehow changed the world.

As a child, Albert Einstein played violin and developed a passion for classical music. General George Patton learned oil painting from his father. Nelson Mandela? He made paintings of hands. And the South Bend boy named Sydney whose mother died of alcoholism? He reveled in the art of performance and storytelling.

Children who experience the Arts are more likely to take advanced classes and enroll in college. They're more likely to succeed in life. And, they're much more likely to participate in shaping their community as adults.¹

It's why the Neverending Encore will expand South Bend's successful equity programs.

Free or low-cost field trips to performances at the Morris for children in South Bend Public Schools will be expanded.

Collaboration with world-class artists for educational training or behind-the-scenes experiences for local children will be enhanced.



All any kid needs is hope and the feeling he or she belongs

– Elvis Presley

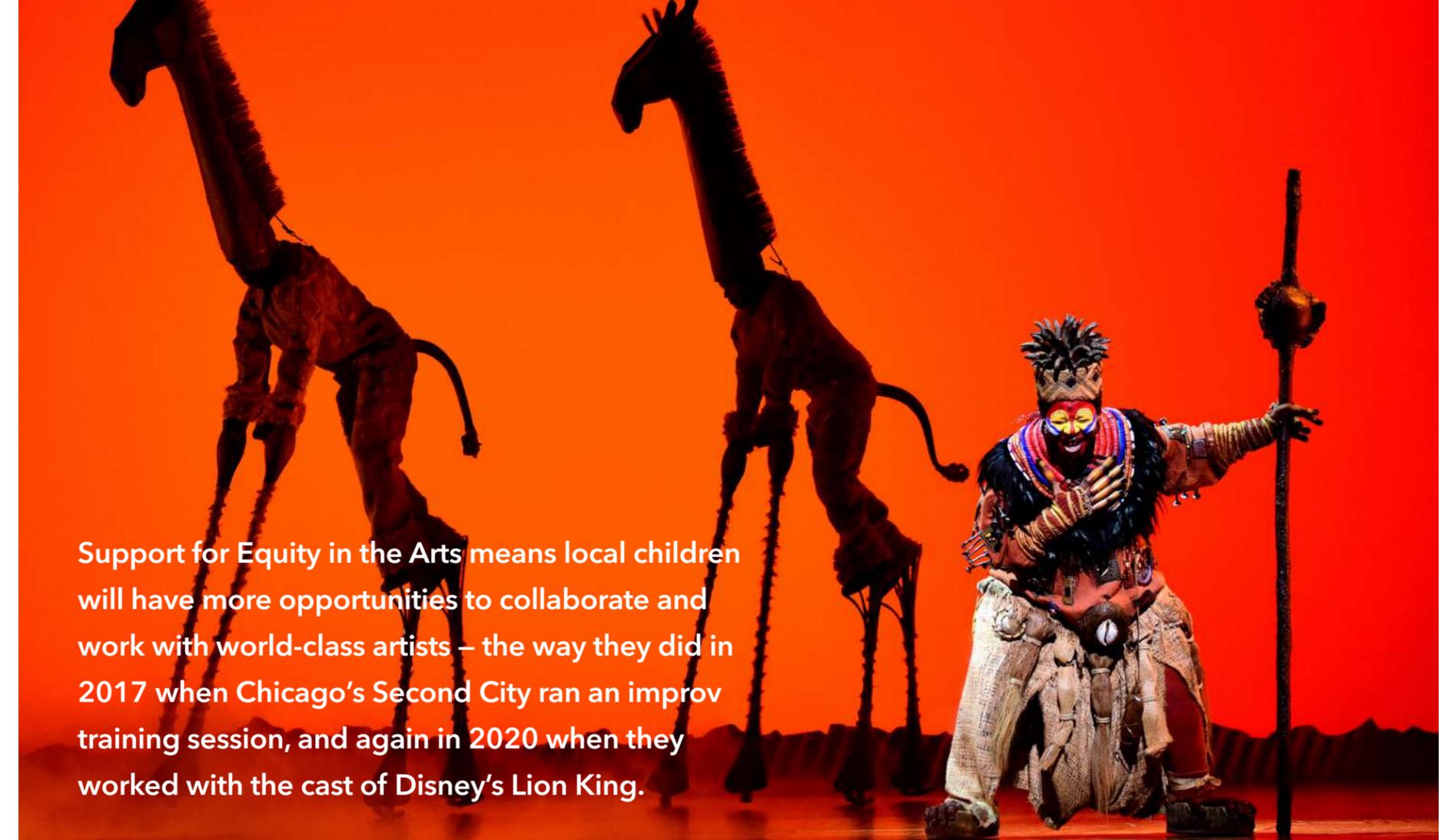
We will leverage South Bend Venues Parks and Arts to provide more paying jobs and more life skills training for local at-risk children.

Equity in the Arts will find new ways to partner with local arts-based organizations

and create residency education opportunities and programs.

And while the city's existing programs will be enhanced, we're also studying the best arts equity programs in the world to see if they too are a good fit for our community.

1. Study conducted by Americans for the Arts.



Support for Equity in the Arts means local children will have more opportunities to collaborate and work with world-class artists – the way they did in 2017 when Chicago's Second City ran an improv training session, and again in 2020 when they worked with the cast of Disney's Lion King.

Residents in low-income neighborhoods who have more access to cultural resources experience better education, security and health outcomes.

This includes a 14% decrease in cases of child abuse and neglect, an 18% decrease in serious crime and an 18% increase in the number of students scoring at the

highest level on standardized math and English tests.² This investment is not the largest percent of the Neverending Encore campaign. But, it might just offer the best return on investment we can possibly make.

This after all, is an investment in the imaginations, the ambitions and

opportunities for every child in our community, regardless of their place in life. Wherever they go from here. Whatever they do, all of us will benefit.

By ensuring there's Equity in the Arts, we're nurturing a promising future. We're nurturing the leaders of tomorrow.

2. Two-year study by researchers at the School of Public Policy & Practice at the University of Pennsylvania.

Improving access to the Arts for everyone in our community

Nestled between green space and surrounded by the downtown atmosphere, Jon R. Hunt Plaza has evolved into a cultural centerpiece for the City of South Bend. With summer concert series like Fridays by the Fountain, it has become a popular lunchtime retreat for downtown employees and residents. Through its musical performances and diverse community events, the plaza is bustling with life. Even after business hours, families and visitors, alike, can be spotted strolling through the plaza here in the heart of the city.

For the first time in decades, the plaza that welcomes visitors to downtown at the historic Morris Performing Arts Center will be updated. The reimagined plaza will include expanded gathering areas to allow more guests to attend concerts and events outside, as well as a new drop off area to enhance access to the plaza and the Morris for everyone.



An exterior performance at the plaza entertains a crowd while food trucks set up shop at the Colfax drop-off.



View at Colfax drop-off.



The plaza at night.

EXTERIOR UPGRADES



View northeast.

INTERIOR UPGRADES



Level 1 - View at feature stair.



Level 2 - View at Sky Lounge.

Improving safety and flexibility

For decades, patrons have told us that limited parking is an issue with access to the Morris. The Neverending Encore addresses this issue by adding to the building on the north side.

The addition will feature a well-lit parking garage, increased community flex space, an additional restroom facility and sorely needed elevator. This addition will be designed to complement the original 1922 façade of theatre.

Improving comfort, mechanicals and function

When the concrete floor was poured a hundred years ago, it was never imagined that this splendid theatre should last a century. To our delight, it promises at least another century of service to our community.

But, the concrete does need replacing. It's crumbling in some spots from a century of wear and tear.

Interior upgrades designed to improve patron comfort and function will include a new concrete floor, new seating, and especially new mechanical systems that provide heating and cooling year-round.

Perpetuating your values

Safeguarding the legacy and splendor of this magnificent place is vital to the future of the Arts in our community. The endowment created by the Neverending Encore campaign, will ensure it's still here for generations to come.

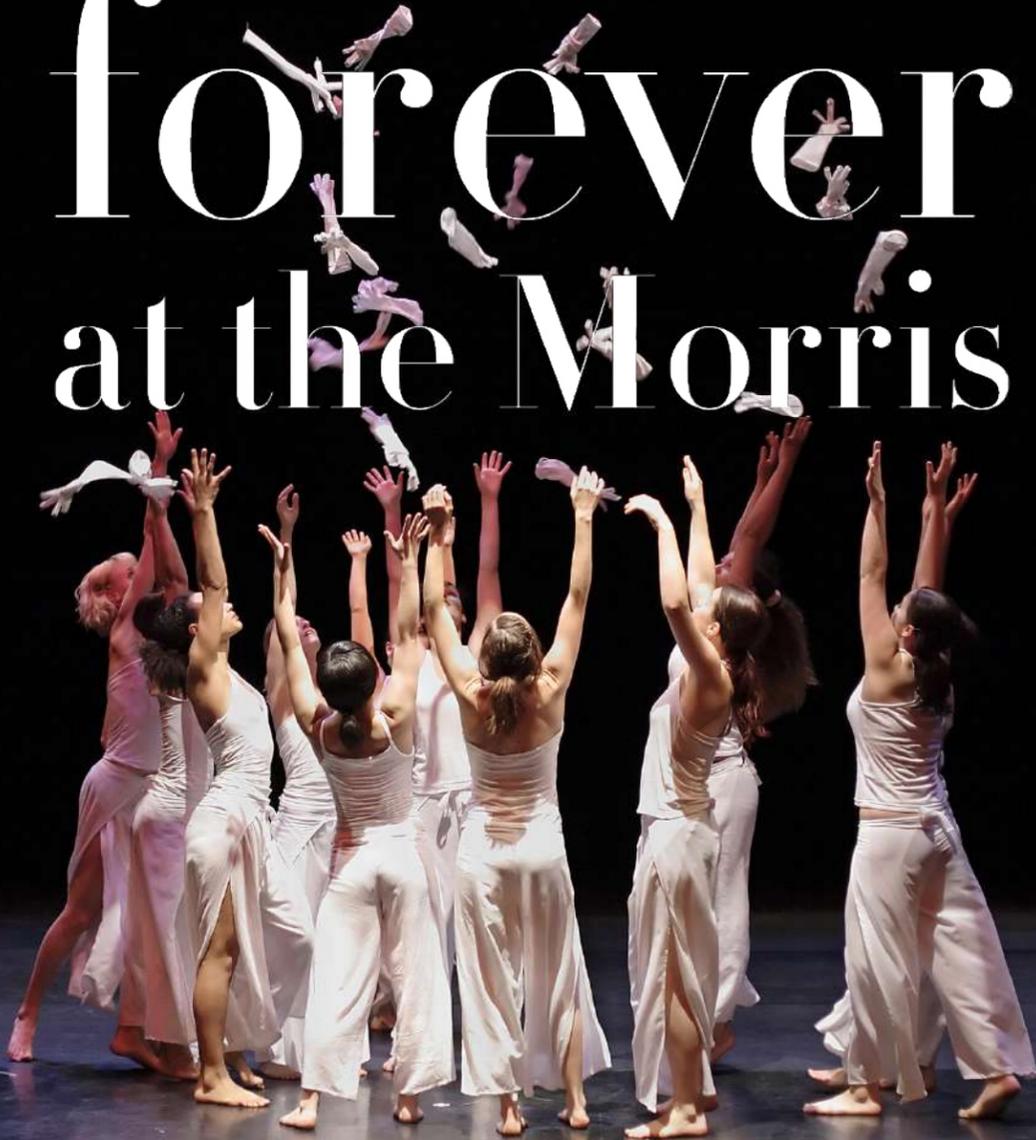
The only thing we know for sure about the future, is that there will always be lean times. An endowment will allow us to care for this marvelous facility for years to come – regardless of good times or bad.

The Arts are forever at the Morris.

For the unexpected

The Neverending Encore campaign includes a modest contingency fund to be used only for unexpected costs if they arise as the project unfolds. Any unused amount of the contingency fund will be added to the endowment at the end of the campaign.

The Arts are forever at the Morris



Why now?

Since it's reopening in 2000, the Morris has contributed \$240 million in economic impact to our community. It continues to be more profitable year-after-year. And more local citizens are experiencing the Arts in this historic anchor to downtown South Bend than ever before.

As leaders, we're committed to sustaining this success and enhancing it for generations to come. The Morris is a vital part of our community.

And as we celebrate the 100th anniversary, we also see the need to maintain and make improvements so that it continues to serve our community for the next hundred years. This too is vital.

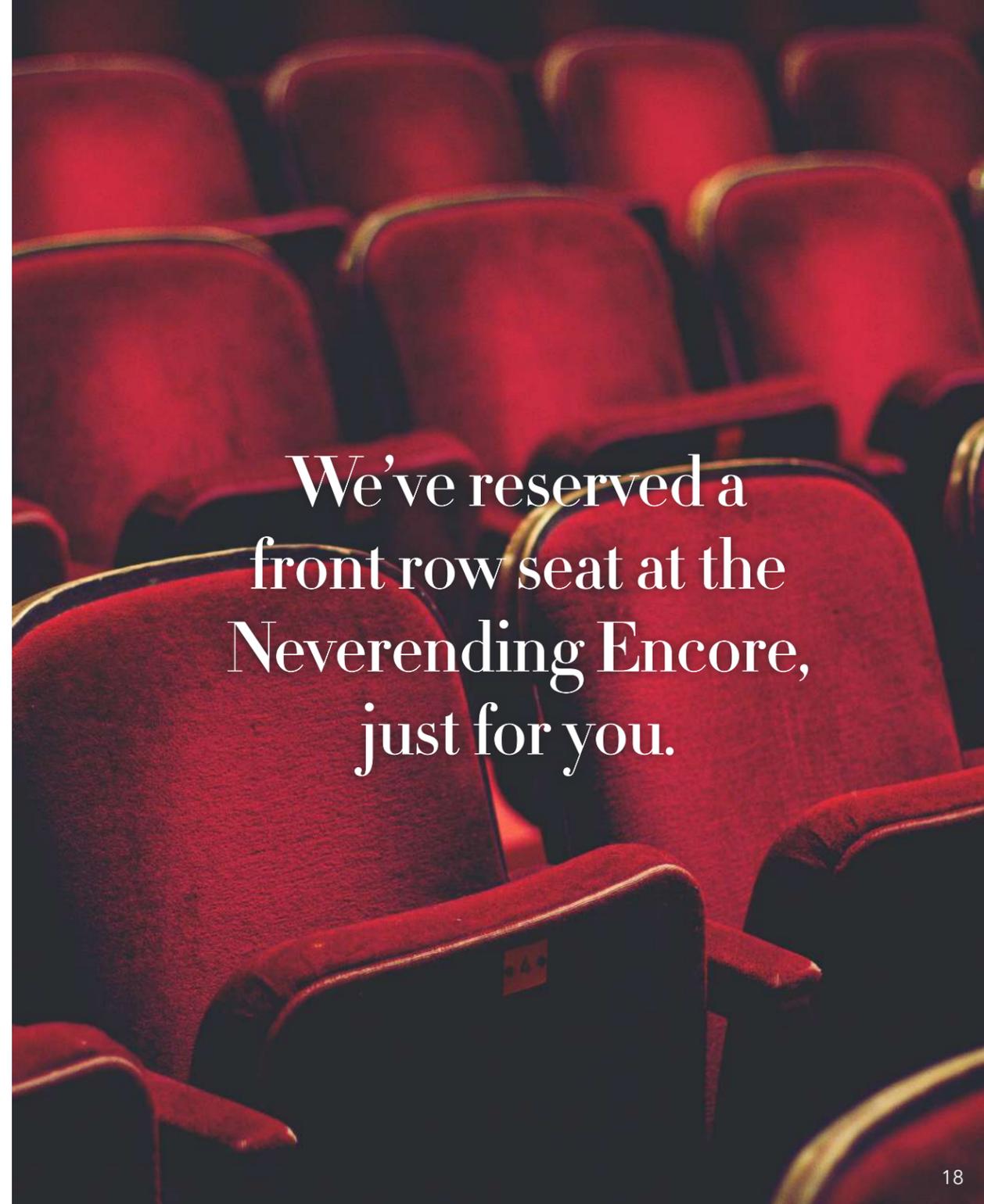
For the past hundred years we've laughed together in this remarkable place. We've cried together. We've tapped our feet and sung to the same song.

The Morris has brought us together time-after-time. It celebrates our differences. And it proves without doubt, that we're also very much the same.

The Neverending Encore is for you. It's for everyone in our community.

Your support will empower children and adults for decades to come. With your help, they will take bold leaps of faith and change the world forever.

We've reserved a front row seat at the Neverending Encore, just for you.



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A full third of our \$30+ million dollar goal will be contributed by the city of South Bend. The other two-thirds will be contributed by private donors.

This campaign will improve physical access to the theatre, expand the building to accommodate convenient new theatre parking, add a second elevator, a new restroom and community flex-space.

A re-envisioned outdoor space in front of the Morris will invite greater participation of patrons and performers in Jon Hunt Plaza. The new plaza will welcome visitors with greatly enhanced curb appeal for the entire Morris/Palais facility.

The campaign will endow our Equity in the Arts program and enable the success of our local children, promote cross-school and cross-disciplinary learning in the Arts.

Your investment will allow the Morris to stabilize deteriorated sections of our century-old theatre and to accelerate higher levels of local participation and achievement in the Arts for decades to come. It will ensure the facility is in a good position to accommodate new ideas in the Arts so that the Morris remains a powerful force in the ongoing effort to connect people and improve life in our community.