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AMADEUS

BY PETER SHAFFER

2025
2026
SEASON

JANUARY 23 - FEBRUARY 8, 2026

SKYLIGHT'S 66TH SEASON

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Skylight is honored to have this anniversary production directed by James Valcq, the original composer and co-book writer, bringing a unique and authentic vision to this beloved Wisconsin-born tale.

Recommended for ages 13 and up.

APR 10 - 26, 2026



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AMADEUS

by *PETER SHAFFER*

January 23 - February 8, 2026 | Cabot Theatre | Broadway Theatre Center

Directed by
Karen Estrada

Music Director
Janna Vinson

Scenic Designer
Jonathan Berg-Einhorn

Costume Designer
Kristina Sneshkoff

Lighting Designer
Noele Stollmack**

Sound Designer
John Tanner

Production Stage Manager
Kathleen Dickinson*

Assistant Stage Manager
Miranda Roberts

Amadeus is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals on behalf of Samuel French, Inc.
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Amadeus 5

A NOTE FROM THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR



Photo by Phil Kidd,
MKE Lifestyle

Welcome to *Amadeus*, the third production of our 66th season. And Happy New Year.

I had the good fortune to see the original Broadway production of *Amadeus* in the early '80's – it was a spellbinding experience. I recently had the further good fortune to meet F. Murray Abraham (who won an Academy Award for playing the role of Salieri in the film) after a recent performance on Broadway. He brought his Oscar along for a post-show fundraiser they were holding that night. His advice when I told him we were about to start rehearsals on *Amadeus* was, "It's trickier than it seems." Luckily, we have

Milwaukee-favorite Karen Estrada, who has appeared in six mainstage shows here, bringing her inestimable skills to her Skylight Music Theatre directing debut.

Amadeus is only the second play in Skylight's history. But being a beautifully crafted work of historical fiction about competing composers: Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, among the greatest of all time, and Antonio Salieri, one who might have been forgotten by history were it not for this play, it belongs here. Especially since we are giving it the "Skylight Treatment" with far more music than the script customarily calls for, plus a live chamber ensemble led by the wonderful Janna Vinson.



With F. Murray Abraham and Kristin Chenoweth after *The Queen of Versailles* on Broadway.



F. Murray Abraham with his Oscar after *The Queen of Versailles* on Broadway.

According to playwright Peter Shaffer, Salieri is tortured by his own sense of mediocrity. He was at very least a workmanlike composer and a dutiful social climber in the upper echelons of the Viennese court in the late 18th century. To borrow a phrase from Shakespeare (who will have a lot more to say later in the season), Salieri's downfall is the "green-eyed monster" of envy. Even if during his lifetime the court looked favorably upon Salieri and looked down upon the irreverent Mozart, Salieri is tormented by what he perceives as the divine gift bestowed upon his nemesis and not upon himself. Salieri's fear is obsolescence, and with good reason.

The word mediocrity, from the Latin *mediocritas*, literally means "halfway up the mountain" (*ocris* = rugged mountain) AKA: the middle. Without the middle, there is neither above nor below. And since we all cannot excel at everything, we must forgive ourselves if we find ourselves in the middle sometimes.

Constant comparison to those around us can lead to no good. With today's constant barrage of everyone else's lives paraded before our eyes with each Facebook/Insta/TikTok scroll, comparison is hard to avoid. All we can ask of ourselves is that we become the best that we can be. Everyone is born with and possesses unique gifts – we are the best at some things. When we become obsessed with chasing another's gift, we do a disservice to ourselves and the world.

Skylight's commitment to the world of Milwaukee is to present meaningful and entertaining music theatre experiences at the highest level possible – at the top of the Artistic *ocris* – where terrain is, indeed, often rugged. It is a great honor to choose which stories to bring to life for you. And there is a joyous alchemy in assembling the recipe of a season – deciding the variety of comedy to drama, facts to fiction, love and laughter to lessons learned.

Two down, two to go. We hope you will join us for them all... and consider becoming subscribers for our bold 67th season, to be announced very soon.


Michael Unger, Artistic Director

A NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR OF *AMADEUS*



In Salieri's own time, Voltaire said, "Doubt is not a pleasant condition but certainty is absurd." If only Salieri had examined that phrase. *Amadeus* explores Salieri's dark descent due to the dissolution of his belief in a rational God, a God of Bargains. He is a man of discipline but regular talent (though lauded by the populace in his time) and is pitted against Mozart, whom he perceives as an obnoxious, vulgar man but one seemingly infused with divine capabilities, whose music would prove immortal. This dissonance between Salieri's rigid certainty and insistence that his worldview is right — that he has special knowledge to allow him to correctly interpret the world and God's place in it —

and the music flowing seemingly without effort from the deeply flawed Mozart, leads to him destroying what he most reveres. A particular shame because Mozart's life and music were rooted in love, pleasure, imagination, and curiosity. If the Salieri of our play had rooted himself in those same endeavors and clung less to his certainty, perhaps he could have extended himself and Mozart the grace every human richly deserves.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Karen Estrada".

Karen Estrada, Director of *Amadeus*

A NOTE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



As we welcome a brand-new year, all of us at Skylight Music Theatre wish you a prosperous, joyful, and inspiring 2026. January is often a time for reflection, when we look ahead with renewed energy, set fresh goals, and imagine what we hope the coming year might hold. It's a season of possibility, and there are few better ways to begin than by making room in your life for the arts.

Becoming a regular theatregoer is more than a resolution; it's a habit that nourishes curiosity, empathy, and joy. When you support live theatre, you are investing not only in extraordinary performances, but in the artists, artisans, technicians, and educators who bring stories to life right here in our community. Skylight is proud to be a leader in that area, championing local artists and investing in this community we love.

The benefits of engaging with the arts are plentiful: shared experiences, meaningful conversations, moments of reflection, and the simple delight of being moved by live performance. We invite you to consider becoming a Skylight subscriber, ensuring that theatre remains a vibrant and regular part of your year. You might also consider getting involved more directly, as a sponsor, a donor, or a volunteer, helping us realize our goals and widen our circle of support.

As the story of *Amadeus* fills the Cabot Theatre, let us step into this new year together with purpose and intention, building habits that enrich our lives and sustain the art we cherish.

Cheers to a great 2026!

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Susan Varela".

Susan Varela, Executive Director

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AMADEUS

Antonio Salieri	Matt Daniels*
Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart	Zach Thomas Woods
Constanze Weber	Rachael Zientek
Emperor Joseph II	Joe Picchetti
Count Johann Kilian von Strack	Mohammad N. ElBsar
Count Franz Orsini-Rosenberg	Joel Kopischke
Baron Gottfried van Swieten	Ben George
Venticello 1	Doug Clemons
Venticello 2	Samantha Sostarich
Theresa Salieri /Ensemble	Nicole McCarty
Katherina Cavalieri /Ensemble	Brennan Martinez
Guiseppe Bonno /Ensemble	Shayne Patrick
Major-Domo /Ensemble	Alex Daspit
Ensemble	Jocelyn Dummert
Ensemble	Lexington (Lars) McKillop
Ensemble	Ailie Snyder
Ensemble	Skylar Staebler

*Appearing through an agreement between Skylight Music Theatre and Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

Amadeus has a runtime of two and a half hours and a 15 minute intermission.

UNDERSTUDIES

Understudies/Standbys never substitute for listed players unless a specific notification is made at the time of the performance.

For Salieri – Shayne Patrick; **For Amadeus** – Alex Daspit;

For Constanze – Brennan Martinez; **For Katherina** – Nicole McCarty;

For Venticello 1 & Van Swieten – Ailie Snyder;

For Venticello 2 & Rosenberg – Skylar Staebler;

For von Strack – Jocelyn Dummert;

For Joseph II – Lars McKillop

MUSICAL COMPOSITIONS

By Antonio Salieri

Overture from *La Grotta di Trofonio*
Concerto in C Major, 2nd Movement
Scherzi strumentali
La ra la from *La Grotta di Trofonio*
Concertino da Camera

By Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Adagio from Serenade for Thirteen Wind Instruments
Martern aller Arten from *The Abduction from the Seraglio*
Turkish March from *The Abduction from the Seraglio*
Batti batti from *Don Giovanni*
The Wedding March from *The Marriage of Figaro*
Symphony in A Major
Sinfonia Concertante for Violin and Viola
Concerto for Flute and Harp
Kyrie from C Minor Mass
Violin Sonata in E Minor
Rondo from Piano Concerto in A Major
Overture to *The Marriage of Figaro*
Cinque from *The Marriage of Figaro*
Non piu andrai from *The Marriage of Figaro*
Ah! Tutti contenti. Saremo Così from *The Marriage of Figaro*
Papageno's Suicide Aria from *The Magic Flute*
Das Klinget so herrlich from *The Magic Flute*
Der hölle rache from *The Magic Flute*
Papageno and Papagena Duet from *The Magic Flute*
Wie stark ist nicht dein Zauberton from *The Magic Flute*
Overture to *Don Giovanni*
Kyrie, Confutatis, and Lacrimosa from *Requiem Mass*
Masonic Funeral Music

By Jean-Philippe Rameau

Overture from *Castor et Pollux*

By Christoph Willibald Gluck

Melodie from *Orpheus and Euridice*

Compositions subject to change

MUSICIANS

Music Director / Piano Janna Vinson
Violin Pamela Simmons
Viola Olga Tuzhilkov
Cello Braden Zitoun
Flute Scott Metlicka

PRODUCTION SUPPORT

Director of Production and Facilities	Terry Harper
Head Carpenter/Fleet Manager	Islay Reed
Scenic Carpenters	Michael Boyle, Kenan Pulver, Rachel Stewart
Scenic Painters	Nora Brooks, Devin Meseke
Properties Supervisor	Amaya Rockett
Properties Artisans	Erin Lyn Chin, Aminah Rockett, Ava Rodriguez
Lighting Supervisor	Ashton Karp
Electricians	Zoe Lucas, Star Howard
Fly/Deck Crew.....	Riley McTaggart
Audio/Video Supervisor	Ev Ponder
Costume Director	Jeanne Schrank
Wardrobe Supervisor	Alexis Flaten
Wig Designer.....	Dana Rochester
Wardrobe & Wig Run Crew	Brooke Wallo, Marites Guarin
Stitchers	Brooke Wallo, Jamie Mercado, Shima Orans
Intimacy & Fight Director	Marcee Doherty
Movement Consultant	Jake Horstmeier
Violence Consultant	Jamie Cheatham
ASM Intern	Katelin Danielle Meulemans
Directing Observer	Laura Kloser
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Thanks to the Gary Sinise Foundation, Veterans Nights are back! The Gary Sinise Foundation sponsors dinner and a show for Veterans, First Responders, and their families.

Amadeus

Friday, January 30th, 2026

The Spitfire Grill

Friday, March 6th, 2026

A ROCKIN' Midsummer Night's Dream

Friday, April 24th, 2026



JOIN OUR GENERAL
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PRIDE NIGHT

Calling all fabulous friends and allies! Your Pride Night event ticket includes access to pre-show entertainment, light refreshments, and of course, admission to the show.

Subscribe to the Skylight mailing list to get notified of all upcoming events and ticket availability dates!

Amadeus

Saturday, January 24th, 2026

A ROCKIN' Midsummer Night's Dream

Saturday, April 11th, 2026



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BIOS



Doug Clemons (Venticello 1)

Ecstatic to return after directing Skylight's *Xanadu*, Doug has worked as an actor/director/writer with fantastic companies throughout Wisconsin. Regional/concert credits: NY

MT Festival, NYC's Cherry Lane Theater, Chicago MT Festival, Utah Light Opera, Norwegian Cruise Line and backup for Michael Bublé. Endless love to Matt. DougClemons.com



Matt Daniels* (Antonio Salieri)

is overjoyed to return to Skylight after appearing in *Noises Off* and *Ernest Shackleton Loves Me*. He is an actor, director, and teaching artist based in Milwaukee. Other

theaters include Milwaukee Rep, First Stage, Milwaukee Chamber, Forward, Vanguard, Door Shakespeare, Renaissance Theaterworks, In Tandem, Milwaukee Shakespeare, and several Shakespeare festivals across the country. He is working on his first album, *Welcome to Clown-town*. Training: Juilliard. More at matttydee.xyz



Alex Daspit (Major-Domo/ Ensemble) is thrilled to be making his Skylight debut with this play! Other favorite credits include Ensemble in *Dear Evan Hansen* at The Mundy and Ricky Potts in *Ride*

the Cyclone at Farmers Alley Theatre. Alex would like to thank his family, friends, and Bellamy for all of their support!



Jocelyn Dummert (Ensemble)

Jocelyn is so excited to be a part of her first Skylight production! Recent credits include Rachel Sandler's *Singer Showcase* (Green Room 42: NYC), *HMS Pinafore* (UWM/

Milwaukee Opera Theatre), *Embers* (All in Productions), *Newsies* and *Bing Crosby's Christmas on the Air* (Greendale Community Theatre).



Mohammad N. ElBsat (Count Johann Kilian von Strack)

(He/Him) This is Mohammad's Skylight debut. He has worked with several theatres including Next Act, Milwaukee Rep, Windfall, Optimist, Boulevard,

and A Red Orchid Theatre. See him next in *Barefoot in The Park* at Renaissance Theaterworks. Mohammad is also a painter; you can check out his work on Instagram: @elbsatart



Ben George (Baron Gottfried van Swieten)

returns for his sixth production at Skylight. Past roles include *Juliet and Romeo* (Capulet/Ensemble), *Candide* (Martin), *MAMMA MIA!* (Harry), and *A Day in*

Hollywood/A Night in the Ukraine (Sascha). He has also performed *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* (Pharaoh) with Brussels Light Opera Company.



Joel Kopischke (Count Franz Orsini-Rosenberg)

is happy to be back! Previous: *Spring Awakening*, *Noises Off*, *My Fair Lady*, *The Music Man*, *Dames at Sea*, *West Side Story*, etc. Also the MSO,

Milwaukee Opera, First Stage, TAP, & Melody Top. Joel wrote *Dairy Heirs* (premiere 2018 Northern Sky) and released two humorous holiday CDs. JoelVoice.com



Brennan Martinez (Ensemble/Katherina Cavaleri)

(she/her) has performed nationally on both theatre and opera stages. Regional: Anita in *West Side Story* at

Wichita Grand Opera, Aldonza in *Man of La Mancha* at Piedmont Opera, Third Nymph in *Rusalka* at Milwaukee Opera Theatre, and Lily in *The Secret Garden* at Theo Ubique (Jeff Award Nomination, Chicago).



Nicole McCarty (Ensemble/ Theresa Salieri)

is thrilled to return to Skylight where she previously appeared as Sister Mary Martin-of-Tours in *Sister Act* and in ensemble of *Spring Awakening*. Recent regional

credits include Martha Dunstock (*Heathers*, *Outskirts Theatre*), Ruth Younger (*A Raisin in the Sun*, *Fleeing Artists Theatre*), and Duppy (*Three Little Birds*, First Stage).



Lexington (Lars) McKillop (Ensemble)

Lexington is thrilled to join the Skylight stage! He is a Theatre Education student at UWM in his first year, and a Madison native. Previous credits include Shakespeare

in *Something Rotten!* and Max in *Lend Me A Tenor* with Memorial Theater Company.

BIOS CONTINUED



Shayne Patrick (Ensemble/Guiseppe Bonno) is an Indigenous actor, musician, and voice-over artist. He appeared in *Ruddigore*, earning the Lee Dougherty Ross Debut Artist Award. Credits include *All Is Calm* (Vanguard Productions), *Hypotheticals* (Kith & Kin), and *RIP - Musical Comedy of Life and Death*. He is grateful for support of his family and friends.



Joe Picchetti (Joseph II) is thrilled to return to Skylight! Previously seen as Robert Walton in *Frankenstein*. Regional: *Bachelors* at NST, *Lumberjacks In Love* at MKE Rep, *Witch and Photograph 51* at Renaissance Theaterworks, *Ainness* at Forward Theatre, and *Preludes* at MOT. Sending his love to his family, friends, Maddy, and Poe!



Ailie Snyder (Ensemble) makes their Skylight debut while completing their BFA in musical theatre and dance at UWM. Credits include *The Pigeon Gets a Big Time Holiday Extravaganza* (U/S The Pigeon, First Stage), *A Christmas Story* (Ralphie, Waukesha Civic Theatre), *Rent* (Ensemble, Outskirts Theatre). They thank their friends and family for their support!



Samantha Sostarich (Venticello 2) is thrilled to be back at Skylight for the New Year! National Tour: *Emojiland the Musical*. Regional: *Matilda* (Mrs. Wormwood), *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* (Rona Lisa Peretti), *Hairspray* (Velma Von Tussle), *Annie* (Lily St. Regis), *Spamalot* (Lady of the Lake). @SamanthaSostarich / samanthasostarich.com



Skylar Staebler (Ensemble) Skylar is a junior BFA Musical Theatre student at UW-Milwaukee and making her debut at Skylight. Her recent productions include Christopher in *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Nighttime* at PSOA Mainstage Theatre, Belle in *Beauty and the Beast* at WHS Players, and vocalist with UWM Pop Ensemble.



Zach Thomas Woods (Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart) has worked professionally in the greater Milwaukee area for more than 10 years. Past Skylight roles include Harold in *The Full Monty*, and Ensemble in *Les Misérables*, *Urinetown*, and *Hair!* Regional: *God's Spies*, *Laughter on the 23rd Floor*, *Red Herring*, *Cymbeline*, *Finding Nemo*, *Love Stings*, *Great Expectations*, and *Big Fish*.



Rachael Zientek (Constance Weber) is excited to be back at Skylight Music Theatre! Her past credits were Hope Cladwell in *Urinetown* and Katherine Plumber in *Newsies*. She is a Wisconsin actress who has worked with Forward Theater, Next Act Theater, Milwaukee Chamber Theatre, Renaissance Theaterworks, Northern Sky Theater, First Stage Children's Theater, and more!



CREATIVE TEAM BIOS

Karen Estrada (Director) is an actor, director and theater educator who calls Milwaukee home. Previous Skylight credits have been as an actor in six mainstage shows and eight seasons of *Kidswrites* under the direction of Ray Jivoff. Karen's had the pleasure of working as an actor and director at many Wisconsin theaters including First Stage, Chamber, Next Act, Renaissance, Third Avenue PlayWorks, Milwaukee Opera Theatre, Marquette University, Northern Sky and Forward.

Janna Vinson (Music Director) has worked continuously as a vocal coach, life coach and music director for over 25 years. She has performed with such houses as New Orleans Opera, Virginia Opera, Cincinnati Opera, The Florentine Opera, Milwaukee Opera Theater and Skylight Music Theatre. She has held teaching and coaching positions at Southern Methodist University, the University of Oklahoma and the University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee. She earned her certification as a Life Coach in Positive Psychology and is currently coaching individuals and couples at Lakeshore Psychology Services in Mequon, Wisconsin.

BIOS CONTINUED

Jonathan Berg-Einhorn (Scenic Designer)

(he/him) previously had the privilege of designing Skylight's 24-25 season and is very fortunate to return for the 25-26 season this year. Jonathan has worked with companies such as, Paramount Theatre, Metropolis, Porchlight Music Theatre, Kokandy Productions, American Blues Theatre, Haven Theatre, Music Theater Works, Citadel Theatre, and Redtwist Theatre, to name a few. Jonathanbergeinhorn.com.

Kristina Sneshkoff (Costume Designer)**

is excited to return to Skylight Music Theatre! Her regional design credits include Black Hills Playhouse, Cincinnati Shakespeare Company, American Shakespeare Center, Children's Theatre of Madison, FirstStage, Forward Theater Co., Renaissance Theaterworks, Milwaukee Chamber Theatre, McLeod Summer Playhouse, Ivoryton Playhouse, Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey, Barrington Stage Co, Two River Theatre Co. Currently serving as Assistant Professor of Costume Design at UW-Stevens Point. www.kristinasneshkoff.com

Noele Stollmack (Lighting Designer)

Noele's lighting has appeared onstage at The Brooklyn Academy of Music, Sydney Opera House, Carnegie Hall, The Library of Congress Theatre, Verizon Hall, and opera companies of Santa Fe, Ontario, Houston, Portland, Vancouver, Nashville, and Milwaukee. Regional design for the theatre includes Jeff Daniels Purple Rose Theatre, Baltimore Center Stage, Cincinnati Playhouse in the park, Milwaukee Rep, Chamber Theater, American Players Theatre, Forward Theatre. Member: United Scenic Artists Local 829.

John Tanner (Sound Designer) is a composer, recording engineer, and sound designer. He works in scoring, arranging, recording, and music composition for television, documentaries, radio, industrial video, and theatre. His original music has won Golden Reel Awards; Telly Awards; and National American Advertising Federation Awards. John has earned both Gold and Platinum albums for his engineering work.

Kathleen Dickinson* (Production Stage Manager)

is excited to be working with Skylight again! Previous credits: *Frankenstein, the Musical*. Based in Chicago, favorite credits include: Alex Edeleman's *Just for Us (Tour)*; Cameron Esposito's *FEAT, Sanctuary City, Tribes, The Way West (Steppenwolf)*; *Is God Is, The Moors, Traitor, Victims of Duty, Killing Game, Grey House (A Red Orchid)*; *United Flight 232* (The House Theatre of Chicago); *Little Shop of Horrors* (KAPA Rep).

Michael Unger (Artistic Director)

Artistic Director since September, 2019, Michael has directed Dennis DeYoung's *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* (nine Broadway-World Awards – including Best Director and Best Musical), the Deaf and Hard of Hearing production of *Spring Awakening*, *Fiddler on the Roof*, *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*, *Frankenstein, Oliver!*, *Juliet & Romeo*, *School of Rock*, *Noises Off*, *Little Shop of Horrors*, *A Jolly Holiday: Celebrating Disney's Broadway Hits*, the virtual *Being Ernest*, as well as *Me, Myself and I* for Skylight's Education program. He was previously the Associate Artistic Director of Off-Broadway's York Theatre where credits included *You're A Good Man Charlie Brown* and *Big*. For nine years, he was the Producing Artistic Director of NewArts, started in response to the Sandy Hook Elementary School tragedy, directing 17 productions working with over 650 area-children. Other selected directing credits include *A Christmas Carol* (McCarter Theatre - 18 years), *Two Point Oh* (NY Times Critics' Pick), *Time Stands Still* (Cape Cod Chronicle Best 2015), *My Sister in This House* (Deaf West, Ovation Recommended), and new versions of Kander and Ebb's *The Happy Time* and *The Rink*. World premiere directing credits include *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*, *Caligula*, and *A ROCKIN' Midsummer Night's Dream* (featured in the award-winning documentary film "Midsummer in Newtown"). He has directed 14 operas plus benefit concerts honoring Susan Stroman, André DeShields, Maltby and Shire, and Leslie Uggams, as well as for the communities of Sandy Hook, CT and Parkland, FL.

Terry Harper (Director of Production and Facilities)

is originally from Houston, Texas where he began his career as a Rock and Roll Lighting Designer, a Musical Theater Sound Engineer, and an Opera Technical Director. Opera has taken up most of his time, working for Texas Opera Theater, Central City Opera, Opera Omaha, Vancouver Opera, The Atlanta Opera, and most recently Houston Grand Opera. Terry spent 5 years on the road touring the world with magician David Copperfield. He also helped take Mr. Copperfield's show to Broadway for a limited, record-breaking run.

Susan Varela (Executive Director)

Susan was named a 2025 Women of Influence by the Milwaukee Business Journal. Her professional career began as a performer, which landed her in New York City for 20 years. She performed on Broadway in *Les Misérables* and at the famed Radio City Music Hall; across North America in National Tours and all the way to Hamburg, Germany.

BIOS CONTINUED

Before joining the Skylight staff, she performed here in *Sweeney Todd*, *Into the Woods*, *The Wizard of Oz*, and *Les Misérables*. Susan has produced, directed, performed and written for the stage and television alongside her husband, actor Andrew Varela. She currently serves on the board of directors for Brew City Opera and The Historic Third Ward Association and is a member of TEMPO - a group of executive women leaders in Milwaukee.

Peter Shaffer (Author) in full, Sir Peter Levin Shaffer (1926-2016), was a British playwright of considerable range who moved easily from farce to the portrayal of human anguish. Educated at St. Paul's and Trinity College, Cambridge, Shaffer first worked for a music publisher and then as a book reviewer. His first play, *Five-Finger Exercise* (1960), is a tautly constructed domestic drama that almost overnight established his reputation as a playwright. It was followed by *The Private Ear*, *The Public Eye* (both 1962), and *The Royal Hunt of the Sun* (1964), a portrayal of the conflict between the Spanish and the Inca - "hope and hopelessness, faithlessness and faith." In 1965 Shaffer's adroit farce *Black Comedy* was first performed. *Equus* (1973; filmed 1977), dealing with a mentally disturbed stableboy's obsession with horses, and *Amadeus* (1979; filmed 1984), about the rivalry between Mozart and his fellow composer Antonio Salieri, were successes with both critics and the public. Later plays include the biblical epic *Yonadab* (1985), *Lettice and Lovage* (1987) and *The Gift of the Gorgon* (1992). Shaffer was knighted in 2001 and sadly passed away in 2016.

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