

# THE CURTAIN RAISER



**I LOVE A PIANO**

Music and Lyrics by Irving Berlin  
 Conceived by Ray Roderick and Michael Berkeley  
 Musical Arrangements by Michael Berkeley  
 World Premiere Production Produced by Tri-Arts, Sharon, CT

**January 11 – February 4**

**SPONSORED BY: Ocala Style Magazine**

## There's no business like show business!

*I Love a Piano* is a rousing revue of the songs of legendary composer Irving Berlin. This wonderfully nostalgic musical features 60 of Berlin's best songs, including such golden classics as "White Christmas," "Easter Parade," "God Bless America," "Puttin' on the Ritz," and "Blue Skies," among many other timeless favorites.

Beginning in Tin Pan Alley in 1910, we join six versatile performers – Alex (Gregg Bleam), Eileen (Kelsey Plante), George (Joshua Plante), Ginger (Faith Morales), Jim (Deion Bruce Howard), and Sadie (Lynda Marie Fagan) – as they follow the journey of a piano over 50 years. We visit a speakeasy in the Roaring Twenties, then escape the hard times of the Depression with a night at the movies. When World War Two breaks out, we join the Army in a stage-door canteen. And once peacetime returns, we celebrate with a grand finale set at a summer stock theatre in the 1950s. It's a glorious good time!

*I Love a Piano* is directed by Lourelene Snedeker. Music director is Ryan Pagels. Choreographer is Kim Wise. Stage manager is Faith Pruitt. Set design is by Carlos Francisco Asse. Costume design is by Eryn Brooks Brewer. Lighting design is by Jeffrey M. Davis. Sound design is by Justin Lewis.

There will be 20 public performances of *I Love a Piano* from January 11 – February 4, 2018. Tickets are \$25 for adults and \$12 for full-time students (school ID required for college students). Group rates are available. For more information, call (352) 236-2274 or go to [www.ocalacivictheatre.com](http://www.ocalacivictheatre.com).

## Opening night Reception!

Reserve your tickets for opening night and join us on Thursday, January 11 at 7:00 p.m. for a reception before the premiere performance of *I Love a Piano*. Delicious refreshments are catered by HoneyBaked Ham, plus beer and wine are available for purchase. Come celebrate the excitement of opening night!

## Coming Events

***I Love a Piano***  
 Irving Berlin Musical Revue  
 January 11 – February 4

***The Giver***  
 Thought-Provoking Drama  
 February 15-25

***The Foreigner***  
 Hysterical Comedy  
 March 15 – April 8

***The Legendary Bobby Darin: A Tribute***  
 Theatrical Concert  
 April 12-15

The student production of  
***The Love of Three Oranges***  
 One-Act Fairytale Comedy  
 On the outdoor stage  
 April 28-29

***Mamma Mia!***  
 Smash-Hit Musical Comedy  
 May 17 – June 17

## Auditions

***The Giver***  
 Thought-Provoking Drama  
 Directed by Chris Jorle  
 January 2-3

***The Foreigner***  
 Hysterical Comedy  
 Directed by Chip Morris  
 January 29-30

The student production of  
***The Love of Three Oranges***  
 One-Act Fairytale Comedy  
 March 5-6

***Mamma Mia!***  
 Smash-Hit Musical Comedy  
 March 26-27

## Auditions for *The Giver*



**January 2-3  
at 7:00 p.m.**

A play by Eric Coble  
Based on the book by Lois Lowry

Jonas lives in an isolated, seemingly perfect community, where everyone is assigned a lifetime role and all is "Sameness." When Jonas turns 12, he is trained by The Giver to become the one person who holds the collective memories of humanity's past – and discovers a shocking reality. This haunting, thought-provoking drama is adapted from the best-selling young-adult novel.

Auditions are Tuesday, January 2 and Wednesday, January 3 at 7:00 p.m. It is only necessary to attend one night of auditions. Full details are available in the December 2017 *Cue Sheet* which can be found at [www.ocalacivictheatre.com/TheSeason/Auditions](http://www.ocalacivictheatre.com/TheSeason/Auditions).

*The Giver* is directed by Chris Jorie. Stage manager is Ginny Riley. There will be 11 public performances from February 15-25, 2018. For more information, call (352) 236-2274 or go to [www.ocalacivictheatre.com](http://www.ocalacivictheatre.com).

## Auditions for *The Foreigner*



**January 29-30  
at 7:00 p.m.**

By Larry Shue

In this hilarious comedy, two British gentlemen, Froggy and Charlie, arrive for a weekend at a fishing lodge in rural Georgia. Poor Charlie is painfully shy and too depressed to talk to strangers – so Froggy tells everyone that Charlie is a foreigner who doesn't know a word of English. But when Charlie overhears some scandalous news and sinister plans, does he confess or keep up the charade?

Auditions are Monday, January 29 and Tuesday, January 30 at 7:00 p.m. It is only necessary to attend one night of auditions. Full details are available in the December 2017 *Cue Sheet*, which can be found at [www.ocalacivictheatre.com/TheSeason/Auditions](http://www.ocalacivictheatre.com/TheSeason/Auditions).

*The Foreigner* is directed by Chip Morris. Stage manager is Patti Cole. There will be 20 public performances from March 15 – April 8, 2018. For more information, call (352) 236-2274 or go to [www.ocalacivictheatre.com](http://www.ocalacivictheatre.com).

## A New Year, A New Look!

"Coming soon to a theatre near you..." Exciting changes are coming to Ocala Civic Theatre in the new year! Be sure to read the insert included in this newsletter for all the details about the comfortable new seats to be installed in the auditorium this summer – and how YOU can be a part of it!



## 2017-2018 SEASON

### I Love a Piano

January 11 – February 4, 2018

### The Giver

February 15-25, 2018

### The Foreigner

March 15 – April 8, 2018

### The Legendary

Bobby Darin: A Tribute

April 12-15, 2018

### Mamma Mia!

May 17 – June 17, 2018

## Tickets On Sale Now

- ACT 4 Casino
- I Love a Piano

## Tickets Go On Sale

- January 15 *The Giver*
- February 19 *The Foreigner*

# Volunteer Spotlight

## Faith & Emma Pruitt



It doesn't take long for some volunteers to become a vital part of an organization – like sisters Faith Pruitt and Emma Pruitt. The Pruitt sisters joined us in 2016 for *9 to 5: The Musical* and between them have volunteered more than a thousand hours since then!

While a student at the College of Central Florida, Faith began her OCT volunteer career with the philosophy of “Go big or go home,” serving as stage manager for the run of the show. She adds, “Emma and I do everything together, and she decided this was the perfect time to take the leap and finally start doing things at OCT, which is something we had always wanted to do.” Emma, also a CF student at the time, came on board as a dresser for *9 to 5*.

They worked together again on *Cry-Baby The Musical*, this time with Emma onstage in the ensemble and Faith backstage as assistant stage manager. They continued the sister act for *La Cage aux Folles*, both backstage, with Faith again as ASM and Emma on deck crew. Emma also worked as a dresser for *Shrek The Musical*. And Faith is in the booth again as stage manager for *I Love a Piano*.

Do they have a favorite volunteer activity?

Faith: “Stage managing is my favorite by far. The longer I get to be involved in anything at OCT, the better. There's nothing like calling a show in that booth.”

Emma: “It's an even tie between dressing and assistant stage-managing for me. There is nothing better than nailing a quick change or a scene change.”

In future, Faith would like to be a spotlight operator or dresser, while Emma would love to operate the sound board or light board. “It would be a totally different view than what I'm used to,” she says.

What's the most rewarding thing for them about volunteering at Ocala Civic Theatre?

Faith: “Getting to be in that incredible atmosphere with so many incredible people. Between all of the people who teach you like {Production Manager/Technical Director} Jeff Davis and {Volunteer Coordinator/Box Office Manager} Craig James, and the new relationships formed with the cast and crew members, it's one of the best atmospheres to be in.”

Both girls are now pursuing degrees with the University of Central Florida. Faith adds, “We are both very family-oriented people, and it is a great joy to us that many refer to us as the Pruitt sisters, but also know and appreciate us as individuals. We feel so grateful that this theatre community has accepted us with open arms. Also, Emma would like to add that we have a rescue cat named Eva Duarte Purr-on.”

Purrfect. Emma and Faith, we definitely do appreciate you and welcome you with open arms! Your skills and work ethic are tremendous. We're delighted that your family has become a wonderful part of the OCT theatre family!

## Restaurant Discounts

Several local restaurants offer discounts or coupons to our patrons throughout the theatre season. You must show your ticket stub to receive these discounts.

- **Blue Highway Pizza:** 10% off your check on day of show. Not valid with any other offer. 2130 E. Silver Springs Blvd., (352) 629-5555.
- **Braised Onion:** 10% off your check on day of show, or during the week of the performance at dinner hour. Excludes alcohol. 754 NE 25th Ave., (352) 620-9255.
- **The Ivy House Restaurant:** 10% off your check. Not valid with any other offers or discounts. 53 S. Magnolia Ext., (352) 622-5550.
- **La Cuisine French Restaurant:** 10% off dinner any night. 48 SW 1st Ave., (352) 433-2570.

## Box Office Hours

Monday – Friday 10:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

On Saturdays with a performance: 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

The lobby and box office open one hour before each performance.

Get information and buy tickets online any time at [www.ocalacivictheatre.com](http://www.ocalacivictheatre.com) (A service charge applies to online purchases.)

**Box Office: (352) 236-2274**

**Administrative Offices:  
(352) 236-2851**

## Social Media

 Ocala Civic Theatre and  
Ocala Civic Theatre Education Department

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 Ocala Civic  
Theatre

## Notes from The Education Department

The Winter/Spring 2018 class brochure is out now! Pick one up in the Theatre lobby or download it from [www.OcalaCivicTheatre.com](http://www.OcalaCivicTheatre.com). To get one in the mail or by e-mail from now on, call the box office at (352) 236-2274 and ask to be added to the Theatre for Young Audiences mailing list.

Starting January 13, we now offer Saturday Series Sampler classes. After-school classes begin Monday, January 15. And on several school holidays, we also have School's Out classes for ages 6-13, like Star Wars and The Heroes of Olympus. All the details on these and other exciting theatre-education opportunities can be found in the Winter/Spring 2018 brochure.

## Literacy Tour



## Literacy Tour 2018 January 16 – February 23



Our 12th annual literacy tour kicks off this month! We are excited to visit local schools to celebrate the work of selected authors in a fun and dramatic way while encouraging students to read.

This year for grades K-3 we have Andrea Beaty's *Rosie Revere, Engineer* series. Rosie, who dreams of becoming a great engineer, is inspired to invent wondrous gizmos. Afraid of failure, she hides them under her bed – until her aunt tells her you can only truly fail if you quit.

For grades 4-6, Lois Lowry's young-adult classic *The Giver* is our featured book. In a seemingly perfect community where everyone is assigned a role, young Jonas discovers a shocking truth when he is chosen to become "The Receiver of Memory." (A theatrical adaptation of *The Giver* is live on stage February 15-25 at Ocala Civic Theatre.)

The literacy tour runs January 16 through February 23. If you're interested in being a presenter, call (352) 236-2851, ext. 107, as soon as possible.

## Book a performance today with the Golden Troupers!



The Golden Troupers are a terrific group of age 55+ performers who travel Marion County entertaining local audiences with comedy skits and songs. They perform at no charge for non-profit organizations, but donations are gratefully accepted. To join or to book the Troupers for your club or community, call (352) 236-2274 or Marlene Harr at (352) 687-3868.

Rehearsals are held at the Theatre on Mondays at 1 p.m. from September to May. Join the Troupers – it's a golden opportunity!



ACT 4 would like to extend apologies to those who were looking forward to our February Dinner Theatre production of *Shoot-Out at Sadie's Saloon*, which was cancelled due to unforeseen circumstances beyond our control. The show will be rescheduled for a later date.

ACT 4 would like to extend a special thank you to those who contributed to the success of *A Night at the Casino*. Sponsors: Neighborhood Storage; Aardvark Encore – Darrell and Ginny Riley; Fakhoury Medical and Chiropractic Center; B. Thomas Fuson, M.D.; Carl and Joan Gustafson; Katya Vineyards; Demetrick LeCorn, D.M.D., M.S.; Dick and Maxine Nelson; and Joseph and Marilyn Smith of Epona Farm. Gift Basket and Prize Donors: Patti Cole, Ana Dunwoody, Joan Gustafson, Paulette Hamilton, Katya Vineyards, Lois Ann Kohlweiss, and Ocala Civic Theatre. We would also like to thank all of the volunteers who donated their time and talents. This fund-raiser would not have been possible without all of you.

ACT 4 will host a *St. Patrick's Day Luncheon and Fashion Show* on Saturday, March 17, at the Ocala Elks Club. Complete information about this event, which will feature *Resort Fashions by Tiffany*, will be announced in the February newsletter.

And be sure to check the February *Curtain Raiser* for information about our next Taste of ACT 4. It's going to be an old-fashioned potluck supper! Members, friends and those interested in finding out more about ACT 4 are all invited to bring their favorite dish (and enough to share) for an evening of good food and entertainment.



## Notes from the **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

**Mary H. Britt**

Hello! The holidays are behind us and 2018 is a brand-new year! If you haven't already heard, the new year will also include a new look for us. A small change is the look of our newsletter. We have a new format and color. I hope you like it – be sure to let us know what you think.

The really big news is that in August we are removing the seats in the auditorium and replacing them with new, wider seats. 2018 marks thirty years in this building. Thirty years means these seats have been well-used and it's definitely time to retire them. The new seats will be 3" - 5" wider than the old ones and will have a comfortable 4" seat pad, plus we will have cup holders. When you next visit the theatre, we have samples of seat options on display in the lobby for you to view. We will also be painting the auditorium and making a few minor repairs. How much will all this cost? I'm so glad you asked! We expect the renovations to cost about \$200,000, so we are asking for your help. Enclosed in this newsletter is a donation and pledge form. Please review it and help us make this project a beautiful success. If you have any questions, please e-mail me or give me a call. I will be happy to respond. It's an exciting time in the life of Ocala Civic Theatre.

While we were in the midst of planning for the future renovation, we also faced the closing on one chapter. Sadly, one of our founders, Rosemary Greene, passed away in December. Rosemary and her husband, John Greene, were part of a group of young men and women who in 1950 decided it was time that Ocala had its own local theatre group. Prior to 1950, Ocala was one of the small-town stops on many theatrical tours. The tours stopped only briefly, and there were no opportunities for locals to participate. The group rolled up their sleeves and made it happen. They organized a little theatre group and named it The Marion Players.

Rosemary Thrasher Greene was 24, fresh out of college, full of energy, with the right combination of enthusiasm, talent, and "why not" to start a theatre company. In those days, the charter members did it all – acted, directed, built sets and costumes, sold tickets, organized fundraisers, mowed the lawn, and cleaned the bathrooms. They planned the seasons, recruited volunteers, and nurtured the fledgling company as it grew over the years. With her husband, John, by her side and sister, Louise Thrasher Carpenter, joining the group in 1952, Rosemary and the other young men and women dedicated years to making sure that their community could enjoy the finest live theatre and guarantee that the organization would grow into what is now known as Ocala Civic Theatre. Rosemary was central to the operation of the theatre for 61 years, "retiring" in 2011. While she no longer volunteered, she still attended productions regularly and always provided feedback on what she had seen.

Rosemary was a graduate of the Florida State College for Women (later known as Florida State University), whose motto was "Femina Perfecta" – which, translated, means "Complete Woman." I can't imagine an individual who more completely lived up to that motto. A leader when women rarely were in the limelight. A leader, but always a lady. A talented actor, director, and versatile volunteer. She guided us through the first 67 years of our existence and will be a cherished part of our continued growth.

She passed peacefully at 93 with family by her side. And we have lost something that is hard to describe. It's a part of our history... a spirit... it's the memory of her singing, harmonizing with Louise while they worked in the box office. She never lost that passion for the "little theatre" that she founded.

The first musical performed by The Marion Players was *The Fortune Teller* in 1953. Louise directed, and Rosemary played the title role. I wonder if they knew....

See you at the Theatre!

### 2017-2018 Board of Directors

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

SEASON 2017 - 2018 ■ JANUARY 2018

# THE CURTAIN RAISER

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PERMIT NO. 9

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1 HAPPY NEW YEAR! Theatre Closed	2 Auditions for <i>The Giver</i> 7pm	3 Auditions for <i>The Giver</i> 7pm	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11 <i>I Love a Piano</i> 8pm	12 <i>I Love a Piano</i> 8pm	13 <i>I Love a Piano</i> 8pm
14 <i>I Love a Piano</i> 2pm	15 Tickets On Sale for <i>The Giver</i>	16	17 <i>I Love a Piano</i> 8pm	18 <i>I Love a Piano</i> 8pm	19 <i>I Love a Piano</i> 8pm	20 <i>I Love a Piano</i> 2pm & 8pm
21 <i>I Love a Piano</i> 2pm	22	23	24 <i>I Love a Piano</i> 8pm	25 <i>I Love a Piano</i> 8pm	26 <i>I Love a Piano</i> 8pm	27 <i>I Love a Piano</i> 2pm & 8pm
28 <i>I Love a Piano</i> 2pm	29 Auditions for <i>The Foreigner</i> 7pm	30 Auditions for <i>The Foreigner</i> 7pm	31	<b>JANUARY</b>		

The Curtain Raiser is the official newsletter of The Marion Players, Inc., dba Ocala Civic Theatre. The Theatre is located at 4337 East Silver Springs Boulevard, Ocala, Florida, 34470. The Curtain Raiser is published monthly and is available free of charge to anyone who is interested in our activities. For information about the organization or to be added to the mailing list, call (352) 236-2274.

Sponsored in part by the State of Florida, Department of State, Division of Cultural Affairs, and the Florida Council on Arts & Culture.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<b>FEBRUARY</b>				1  ASL* <i>I Love a Piano</i> 8pm	2 <i>I Love a Piano</i> 8pm	3 <i>I Love a Piano</i> 2pm
4 <i>I Love a Piano</i> 2pm	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15 <i>The Giver</i> 7:30 pm	16 <i>The Giver</i> 7:30 pm	17 <i>The Giver</i> 11am & 7:30pm
18 <i>The Giver</i> 2pm	19 Tickets On Sale for <i>The Foreigner</i>	20	21 <i>The Giver</i> 7:30 pm	22 <i>The Giver</i> 7:30 pm	23 <i>The Giver</i> 7:30 pm	24 <i>The Giver</i> 11am & 7:30pm
25 <i>The Giver</i> 2pm	26	27	28			



If you have any questions, please contact Mary Britt at (352) 236-2851, ext. 104, or mbritt@ocalacivictheatre.com.