

**SUPPORT THE NEXT GENERATION
OF THEATRE ARTISTS!**



In keeping with the theme of
"works by Neil Simon"

The Fond du Lac High School Department
of Theatre would like to invite you to the
fall production of . . .

Neil Simon's Comic Fable

Fools

Thursday, Friday, and Saturday,
October 17th, 18th, and 19th, 2024
7pm FdLHS Performing Arts Center

Reserved Seating tickets available
beginning September 16th, 2024
Adults \$10 and Students \$8
www.hometowntickets.com
Or at the box office 30 minutes prior
to the show:
Adults \$12 and Students \$10

A close-up photograph of a goat's head, facing slightly to the right. The goat has light brown fur and long, curved horns. The background is a soft-focus landscape of green grass and blue mountains under a clear sky.

THE GOOD DOCTOR

A black and white theater poster for the play 'The Good Doctor'. The title 'THE GOOD DOCTOR' is at the top in a decorative, serif font. Below the title is a window with six panes, each containing a portrait of a different character. In the foreground, a man with a full beard and a top hat sits at a desk with a typewriter. A sign on the typewriter reads 'by Neil Simon'. Another sign on the desk says 'based on the works of Anton Chekov'. The scene is lit with dramatic, low-key lighting, creating a classic, theatrical atmosphere.

APRIL 26 - MAY 4, 2024

THE GOOD DOCTOR

By Neil Simon

Based on the short stories of Anton Chekov

Director
Chris Flieller

Stage Manager
Jane Flieller

Costume Design
Wanda L. Martin

Light Design
Andy Brault

Set Design
Chris Flieller

Crew Chief
Kira Downham

Time: Near the turn-of-the-century

Place: Russia

There will be one fifteen-minute intermission.

Please no food or drinks in the theatre.

**The use of recording and/or photography/video of any kind
(including cell phones) is strictly prohibited.**

**“The Good Doctor” is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals
on behalf of Samuel French, Inc. www.concordtheatricals.com**



SPECIAL THANKS

Plays and musicals don't put themselves on! It takes the time and talents of many individuals. Like the wonderful community theatre groups, we at UWO/FDL Prairie Theatre rely on the help of volunteers. We would like to thank the following people for their generosity in bringing *The Good Doctor* to life for you to enjoy:

Anthony Wood, Julia Regalie, Paul Thelen, Milt Flieller, David Neese, Daniel Schneider, Steve Wilson, Wendy Koepp, Lakeland University, Fond du Lac High School Theatre Department, Leslie Fitzwater, Kathy Smith, Fond du Lac Community Theatre, and Skylight Music Theatre (Milwaukee).

ACT I

The Sneeze

Ivan	Daniel Schneider
Sonya	Sarah Hurtgen
General	David Neese
General's Wife	Leslie Fitzwater

Surgery

Kuryatin	Matt Ragalie
Sexton	David Neese

Too Late For Happiness

Man	David Neese
Woman	Leslie Fitzwater

Seduction

Peter	Matt Ragalie
Husband	David Neese
Wife	Julia Regalie

ACT II

The Drowned Man

Writer	Matt Ragalie
Sailor	Jake Badovski
Policeman	Daniel Schneider

The Audition

Nina	Hailey Wessels
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Defenseless Creature

Assistant	Korbin Braun
Woman	Sarah Hurtgen
Kistunov	David Neese

The Arrangement

Father	Matt Ragalie
Son	Korbin Braun
Courtesan	Julia Regalie

Upcoming theatrical entertainment in Fond du Lac!



Learn more: fdlct.com



DIRECTOR'S NOTES

THE GOOD DOCTOR

Director.....	Chris Flieller
Stage Manager	Jane Flieller
Costume Design	Wanda Martin
Set Design	Chris Flieller
Light Design	Andy Brault
Light Board Operator	Meaghan Lefeber
Sound Board Operator	Samuel Fitzwater-Butchart
Deck Chief/Wardrobe/Crew.....	Kira Downham
Crew	Zaiden Benzel *
	Hayden Binversie
	Johnathon VanderGrinten *
Box Office/UWO/FDL Staff.....	Renee Anderson
Set Construction Interns	Zaiden Benzel *
	Johnathon VanderGrinten *

* These Fond du Lac High School students are participating in *The Good Doctor* through the UW-Oshkosh (CAPP) program. Time spent building the set, learning about technical theatre and being part of the production as crew translates into paid pre-college credit.

* * * * *

Zaiden Benzel (Crew/Set Construction) Zaiden is a sophomore at Fond du Lac High School. This will be his seventh show as crew. He has been the assistant stage manager for *Hold Me* at Fond du Lac High School and is excited to take a shot at this show by UW Oshkosh-Fond du Lac campus. Zaiden plays in Symphony Band at the high school, Stage Craft, and helped build the set for this show. He hopes you enjoy *The Good Doctor*.

Johnathon VanderGrinten (Crew/Set Construction) Johnathon is a sophomore at Fond du Lac High School where he sings in V-Jam. He has performed in nine shows including the King in *Frozen, Jr.*, the Mayor in *Seussical* and Goran in *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang, Jr.* *The Good Doctor* marks his second time working crew for a production and he was also responsible for helping build the set.

The Good Doctor is Neil Simon's heartwarming and hilarious tribute to Anton Chekhov, the late nineteenth-century playwright and short story writer. Simon, the popular Pulitzer Prize and Tony Award-winning playwright, cleverly wove a selection of Chekhov short stories into a performance of unending fun, joy, infectious humor and poignant sweetness.



The title of the play refers to Chekhov's "other" profession as a physician. It is the figure of Chekhov himself who introduces his wide array of characters. He brings to life an over-zealous young dentist, a madwoman with a nervous disorder, a man who earns money by "drowning," a blustering general, a "lady" of the night, a sneezing playgoer, the world's greatest seducer, among them. In this play, Neil Simon seeks to celebrate the folly and tenderness of what it is to be human.

We proudly present this evening of storytelling to you as the last presentation at the University of Oshkosh-Fond du Lac as the campus is due to shut down at the end of June 2024. As with other plays produced by UWO-FDL, *The Good Doctor* combines the talents of university students with the talents of local actors. This production also includes students from Fond du Lac High School in acting and backstage roles. It has been an honor building this program over the past four years.



Thank you for the past four years: All Is Calm, Inherit the Wind, Joseph Dreamcoat, Joe Hill, Lizzie and today's performance of The Good Doctor. It's been a wonderful ride with beautiful artists from university and high school students to those from the community. — Chris Flieller

ABOUT THE COMPANY

Jake Badovski (Ensemble) Jake is delighted to join the ensemble of actors in the University of Oshkosh at Fond du Lac's production of *The Good Doctor*. After graduating from the University of Minnesota and attending the Gaity School of Acting in Dublin, Jake is thrilled to return to his hometown of Milwaukee and continue to perform and create meaningful stories with incredible art-makers in the region. Some of Jake's previous credits include *All is Calm*, *The Hobbit*, *She Kills Monsters*, *The Winter's Tale*, *Skin of Our Teeth* and *Antigone*. Thank you for supporting the necessity that is the arts, this production and always!

Korbin Braun (Ensemble) Korbin attends FDL High School where he is involved with the school's choir and theater programs. He enjoys hanging out with his friends and singing. Past productions include Jack Kelly in *Newsies. Jr* for the FDL Community Theatre, Bass Wickersham Brother in *Seussical* and an ensemble role in *Hold Me* at FDLHS. Korbin is excited to perform alongside seasoned actors in this classic comedy and thanks his theater director, Mr. Wilson, for bringing this opportunity to him and his family for their support.

Leslie Fitzwater (Ensemble) Leslie has been acting and singing professionally for forty years. Her career spans opera, theater, music theater, cabaret and mime. Her roles have been as diverse as *Paddington Bear* to *Carmen*. While Leslie has played her share of well-known characters such as Desiree Armfeldt (*A Little Night Music*), Golda (*Fiddler on the Roof*), Fraulein Schneider (*Cabaret*), Agnes (*I Do! I Do!*), Irma (*Irma La Douce*) and Marmie (*Little Women*), she is best known for her portrayal of the French chanteuse, Edith Piaf. Leslie is a private voice and acting coach, has given seminars on vocal production for the young singer, has taught voice and speech at First Stage Theatre Academy and is an adjunct faculty member at Pius XI High School.

Sarah Hurtgen (Ensemble) Sarah attends UW Oshkosh at Fond du Lac and makes her stage debut with *The Good Doctor*. She is very excited for this opportunity. She thanks her parents for believing in her.

David Neese (Ensemble) David has appeared throughout Southeastern Wisconsin in over 100 plays, musicals and revues. Favorite roles include Henry Drummond (*Inherit the Wind*), Atticus Finch (*To Kill a Mockingbird*), Friar Lawrence (*Romeo & Juliet*), Henry Higgins (*My Fair Lady*) and Edna Turnblad (*Hairspray*), among them. David earned a BA in Journalism from UWM and an

ABOUT THE AUTHOR (CONT.)

Simon's string of Broadway successes included four plays running simultaneously during the 1966-67 season. He scored major hits with *Promises, Promises* (1968), a musical based on the 1960 Billy Wilder film *The Apartment*, and with *The Sunshine Boys* (1972), a tribute to the bygone art of vaudeville. Simon drew extensively from his own life and upbringing in his theatrical writing. *Chapter Two* (1977), about a widowed writer embarking on a new relationship, began its stage run four years after the death of Simon's first wife. The playwright also mined his personal history for the "Eugene Trilogy" — *Brighton Beach Memoirs* (1983), *Biloxi Blues* (1985) and *Broadway Bound* (1986) — with its New York City-born protagonist spending time in the military before teaming with his brother to write comedy. Simon achieved a critical breakthrough when his 1991 play, *Lost in Yonkers*, was awarded a Pulitzer Prize for Drama, along with a Tony for Best Play.

After *Come Blow Your Horn* was turned into a Frank Sinatra movie in 1963, Simon tried his hand at writing feature films, starting with *After the Fox* (1966). Several of his original screenplays drew strong praise, with *The Goodbye Girl* (1977) earning an Academy Award nomination. Additionally, Simon adapted many of his plays for the big screen. *The Odd Couple* famously became both an Oscar-nominated film in 1968 and an acclaimed TV series in the early 1970s. Simon also delivered successful film adaptations of *Plaza Suite* (1971), *The Sunshine Boys* (1975) and *California Suite* (1978), among others. Simon also penned two memoirs: *Rewrites* was published in 1996, and *The Play Goes On* followed in 1999.

Simon was nominated for 17 Tony Awards over the course of his career, winning three times and garnering a special Tony in 1975 for his contributions to theater. Additionally, he was nominated for four Academy Awards, named a Kennedy Center Honoree and earned honorary degrees from such institutions as Williams College and Hofstra University.

In 1983, the Shubert Organization changed the name of the 1920s-era Alvin Theatre to the Neil Simon Theatre, making him the first living playwright to have a Broadway venue named in his honor.

Simon passed away on August 26, 2018, at a Manhattan hospital due to complications from pneumonia.

Continued ...

ABOUT ANTON CHEKHOV (1860—1904)

Anton Pavlovich Chekhov was born in 1860, the third of six children to a family of a grocer, in Taganrog, Russia. His father was a religious fanatic and a tyrant who abused his wife and children. Chekhov was a part-time assistant in his father's business and also a singer in a church choir.

In 1876, Chekhov's father was declared bankrupt after overextending his finances building a new house, having been cheated by a contractor named Mironov. To avoid debtor's prison, he fled to Moscow where his two eldest sons, Alexander and Nikolai, were attending university. The family lived in poverty in Moscow. Young Anton was left behind to sell the family's possessions and finish his education. In 1879, Chekhov obtained a scholarship at the Moscow University Medical School from which he graduated in 1884.

Chekhov considered medicine his principal profession though he made little money from it. With an acute awareness of the plight of those who live in poverty, Chekhov organized relief funds for the outbreak of famines and such diseases as cholera and treated the poor free of charge. He would travel far to care for those in need and most mornings, patients lined up at his door to be seen.

His love of storytelling, which came from his mother, never waned. Along with an exceptionally busy schedule as a doctor and health problems of his own, Chekhov continued to write. "Medicine is my lawful wife," he once said "and literature is my mistress."

As his artistic ambition grew, Chekhov made formal innovations that influenced the evolution of the modern short story. He made no apologies for the difficulties this posed to readers, insisting that the role of an artist was to ask questions, not to answer them.



Chekhov's stories are as wonderful and necessary now as when they first appeared. It is not only the immense number of stories he wrote—for few, if any, writers have ever done more—it is the awesome frequency with which he produced masterpieces, stories that delight and move us, that lay bare our emotions in ways only true art can. Among his most treasured works are *The Three Sisters*, *The Cherry Orchard*, *Uncle Vanya* and *The Seagull*. These classics are still read today as well as

presented in stage and on film. Chekhov succumbed to tuberculosis at the age of forty-four.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Marvin Neil Simon was born on July 4, 1927, in the Bronx. He grew up in the Washington Heights neighborhood of Manhattan, where he lived with his parents, Irving and Mamie, and his older brother, Danny. His parents had a tumultuous marriage, with Irving often leaving the family for months at a time. As a result, Simon took refuge in movies as a child, finding particular solace and delight in comedies.

After graduating from DeWitt Clinton High School in the Bronx, Simon briefly attended New York University before signing up for the Army Air Force Reserve. He was sent to Lowry Field Base in Colorado, where he served as a sports editor for its newspaper, the *Rev-Meter*, and took classes at the University of Denver, until his discharge in 1946.

After returning to New York, Neil Simon took a job in the Warner Brothers Manhattan office mailroom. A pivotal moment came when he and Danny created a sketch for radio producer Ace Goodman, launching their careers as a comedy-writing team. The brothers soon began writing material for stars like Milton Berle and Jackie Gleason.

In the early 1950s, Neil and Danny Simon joined the all-star writing cast of the Sid Caesar television series *Your Show of Shows*, which also included Mel Brooks, Woody Allen and Carl Reiner. By the middle of the decade the brothers had parted ways, but Neil Simon continued his success via the small screen; he earned Emmy Award consideration for his work with Caesar, and also wrote for *The Phil Silvers Show* and *The Garry Moore Show*.

Simon began writing for the stage while still employed as a TV writer, collaborating with his brother for the short-lived musical *Catch a Star!* in 1955. His first solo play, *Come Blow Your Horn*, began a solid run on Broadway in 1961, following years of rewrites. However, it was his follow-up effort, *Barefoot in the Park* (1963), that established the playwright as a star in his field, a reputation that was cemented with his instant classic about mismatched roommates, the Tony Award-winning *The Odd Couple* (1965).

Continued

ABOUT THE COMPANY (CONT.)

MBA from Lakeland University. He is a retired Postmaster and presently serves as an EHS Manager for Sheridan in Random Lake. David is co-founder of the Sheboygan Pops Concert Band, sings with the Sheboygan Symphony Chorus and serves his church as Elder and Liturgist. As an accomplished photographer, he has donated his services to many nonprofits throughout the state. David and his wife, Deborah, are blessed with five children and five grandchildren. In his spare time, he enjoys hiking, tennis, bowling, reading, baseball, travel, genealogy, family time and socializing. David is eternally grateful to his mother, Carmen, for introducing him to the arts at a young age and for always being his greatest supporter. He is thrilled and honored to share another creative journey with Chris and Jane, along with a supremely talented cast and crew.

Julia Ragalie (Ensemble) Julia is a Milwaukee-based performer. She was last seen on the Prairie Theater stage as Alice Russell in *Lizzie*. Other credits include *Medea (Medea: A New Rock Musical)*, *Extraordinary Girl (American Idiot)*, *Whatsername (American Idiot)* and *Sue Snell (Carrie)*. She is a princess performer with Fairytale Birthday Company and a member of the Brew City Bombshells burlesque troupe. She is excited to perform in this show with her real-life husband, Matt.

Matt Ragalie (Writer/Ensemble) Matt is delighted to be in the UWO-Fond du Lac's production of *The Good Doctor*. Some of Matt's recent acting credits include: *Bat Boy* in *Outskirts Theatre's Bat Boy the Musical*, *John Proctor* in *Lake Country Playhouse's production of The Crucible*, *Michael* in *Tick, Tick...Boom* also with *Lake Country Playhouse*, and *Johnny* in *Green Day's American Idiot the Musical* at *Milwaukee Rock Theater*. Matt is thrilled to be once again on stage with his incredibly talented wife, Julia, and in this production alongside such a creative and talented cast and production team! You can also catch Matt performing as a stand up comedian with performances across Milwaukee, Madison, and Chicago.

Daniel Schneider (Ensemble) Daniel is a veteran of theatre bios, and yet he still panics when asked to write one. You may have sneezed him most recently as *Squidward* in *FDLCT's The SpongeBob Musical*, or a-choo-ing up the stage as *Franklin Hart Jr.* in *9 to 5: The Musical* with the same company (and costume!). He last performed with UWO-FDL in *All is Calm* to a more silent gesundheit. He hopes you are blown away by the show, and not offended by bad puns.

Hailey Wessels (Ensemble) Hailey is a Fond du Lac High School senior who has been in almost all the shows put on by the high school. You might have recently seen her playing *Mrs. Mayor* in the musical *Seussical* and multiple characters in the play *Hold Me*. Next year, Hailey is going to UW-Green Bay and will major in English. Though she has no plans to pursue theater as a career, she will continue being involved in acting in college. Hailey is astounded by this group's acting abilities-- they must've all had a great "audition." After all, if their temperatures were 101 or lower, they almost certainly blew the director(s) away.

ABOUT THE COMPANY (CONT.)

Andy Brault (Light Design) Andy is a math teacher at Fond du Lac High School with a love and passion for the arts. Theater taught him how to present himself while teaching a class full of students. He met his wife, Tiffany, in theater at Marian University and even acted in *The Good Doctor* with her there. Andy currently uses this passion to coach his Forensics students. He taught himself lighting design while directing shows at Horicon high school, but it wasn't until he started doing shows at the Prairie Theater that he actually received formal instruction in lighting design. Thank you, Chris Flieller, for teaching me so much about the stage. Andy is particularly proud for instilling the joy and love of the stage and other fine arts in his three children (and his biggest fans), Lucy, Charlie, and Cora.

Kira Downham (Deck Chief/Wardrobe) Kira currently attends UWO-Fond du Lac. She recently discovered theatre and is loving it! She is very excited to be working on this production, having served as crew on last fall's production of *Lizzie*. Kira is particularly interested in learning more about theatrical costuming.

Samuel Fitzwater-Butchart (Sound Engineer/Board Operator) Samuel is a Milwaukee native and has worked for Skylight Music Theatre, Next Act Theatre and Theatre Gigante, among others. He currently holds resident artist positions with Theatre Gigante (*I Am My Own Wife*, *Metamorphosis*, *Tarzan*, *Spalding Gray: Stories Left to Tell*, *Crave*, among others). Other credits include work with Three Crows Theatre (IL) (*Our Country's Good*, *Trojan Women*, *These Shining Lives* and *Macbeth*); and Open Door Theatre (VT) (*Proof* and *MM3M*).

Wanda Martin (Costume Design) Wanda has been sewing for over 40 years and fell in love with costuming in high school. She has an Associates of Applied Science in Fashion Design and a Bachelor of Science in Costume Design from UW-Madison. She loves spending time with her husband Peter and daughter Genevieve, playing games, cooking, and traveling. In her free time she enjoys sewing for others, reading and projects around the home. She feels fortunate to be part of working with such a wonderful group of folks.