



DUNHAM FOUNDATION MATCHES CONTRIBUTIONS UP TO \$250,000

Challenge Accepted! This fall our friends at the Dunham Foundation bolstered the theater's general operations with the support of a \$250,000 \$1-for-\$1 matching opportunity. Many of you rose to that challenge. Now, we're proud to share that, due to the support of hundreds of Paramount donors like you, we succeeded in completing that match.

Dunham has invested in numerous artistic priorities at Paramount over the years. Most recently, their gifts have supported projects like the John C. Dunham Aurora Arts Center (during Paramount's recent Act II capital campaign) and the John C. Dunham Pavilion at Thomas J. Weisner RiverEdge Park.

The Dunham Foundation is also leading the way in collaboration with Aurora Women's Empowerment Foundation, Community Foundation of the Fox River Valley, Fox Valley United Way and the INC Board to provide much needed support to many area nonprofits severely impacted by Covid-19.

Paramount has met numerous challenges brought on by the coronavirus pandemic at our organization and in the surrounding community. We live in a thriving community because of tireless efforts to make the world a better place. Our sincere thanks go out to you.



AURORA CIVIC CENTER AUTHORITY
PARAMOUNTAURORA.com

ENCORE SOCIETY

For generations, theater-goers have enjoyed musicals, concerts, movies and more onstage at the Paramount. A planned gift to the Paramount Theatre will fulfill our mission to introduce the magic of live performing arts to future generations.

The Encore Society honors individuals who have chosen to arrange a planned gift in their estate plans to support the Paramount. Such a gift enables you, the donor, to achieve your personal financial goals (e.g., limiting estate taxes, providing for your heirs) and leave a lasting legacy to support the Paramount.

As you make long-term financial arrangements with family and loved-ones, including estate plans, please consider the Paramount. Gifts of any amount are accepted and can be designated to the fund of your choice. Benefits are life-long and begin as soon as you notify us of your gift and send a copy of the documentation that mentions the Paramount Theatre. In addition, naming opportunities may be available.

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A NOTE FROM OUR CEO TIM RATER



Dear Friends,

Welcome to the Backstage Bulletin! Throughout the year, we hope to share periodic updates with you about the theater, our successes and other noteworthy events driven by your contributions to Paramount.

You know first-hand that Paramount is more than just a presenter of great performances. We strive to be a spirit-lifting, community-building institution.

Despite so many challenges from the past year, you have demonstrated that our mission to make the arts accessible to every age and socioeconomic background, introduce the magic of live theater across generations, to encourage expansive imaginations and broad views of people and the world, and contribute to the future stability and growth of Aurora's downtown remains vitally important.

Thanks to your support, now more than ever, Paramount has compiled a long list of improbable accomplishments... things the doubters said this theater could never do. But like a character in its own play, Paramount has overcome long odds to discover an inspiring new sense of self.

But that's what happens in theaters: by their nature, they ask us to suspend disbelief. To consider the possible. To imagine the wonders that arise from human inspiration.

Inside are a few inspiring stories that I hope you enjoy and share widely with your fellow Paramount patrons. Let your friends know how we continue to push the limits and discover how your philanthropy is making a difference at Paramount

But fair warning: you might have to suspend disbelief...

INSIDE SCOOP...

Sneak peek at Copley Theatre renovation

New Works Department newest initiative, The Inception Project

National Endowment for the Arts grant supports new program at School of the Arts

Dunham Foundation matches your donations

Encore! Planned Giving at Paramount



PARAMOUNT
THEATRE



New Year, New Theater

Get an exclusive look at our newly renovated Copley Theatre!

A theater that has accomplished so much might be expected to rest on its laurels. Not so at the enterprising Paramount, which uses each new opportunity as a spring board to the next. While the stage lights have been temporarily dimmed at our main stage, the work lights have been burning for months across the street at the Copley Theatre.

The entire theater, which in recent years has been used primarily for Second City's annual holiday run and was once the Broadway Series rehearsal hall, has been stripped down and rebuilt from the floorboards up.

The stage space is now on the floor; the seating is now raked in an upward slope away from the stage; new seats, carpeting and lighting have been installed. In addition, new state-of-the-art control booths have been built that can handle anything from musical artists and stand-up comedians to the Paramount's new BOLD Series – a line of stimulating plays designed for more intimate and thought-provoking productions.

Work on the space began immediately following the successful conclusion of the Act II capital campaign. Naming opportunities are still available for donors who wish to make an investment in this impressive new space.

The theater is not the only area that received a facelift. A new bar, located within steps of the Copley doors, is in the process of being finished, as well as a new Copley Box Office. All of these spaces will make their debut this November when Second City returns.



Copley Theatre Before

THE Inception PROJECT

a new initiative from Paramount's New Works Department

Paramount Theatre broke new ground in January with the launch of the Inception Project – a new initiative from our New Works Department. The readings, held on separate nights, featured “Pretended” by Lanise Antoine Shelley and “BULL: a love story” by Nancy García Loza.


The project was funded by a \$40,000 Healing Illinois grant from the Illinois Department of Human Services in partnership with The Chicago Community Trust to begin, or continue, the work of racial healing across the state.

Theater, by its nature, is a creative enterprise. Creativity, by its nature, holds an element of risk. And philanthropy, by its nature, helps insulate a creative organization from that risk. Generous supporters allow a creative organization to seize opportunities... to innovate with confidence... to sustain promising new programs as they struggle to find their feet.

Paramount plans on making The Inception Project an annual event – affirming our commitment to elevating marginalized voices, social justice and artistic excellence – with hopes of using it as a launching pad for future productions of new works, including potential world premieres as part of the soon to start BOLD Series in the Copley Theatre.



A moment captured on screen from "BULL: a love story" by Nancy García Loza featuring Eddie Martinez (top, left), Lisandra Tena (bottom, right), Esme Perez (bottom, left) and Rinska Carrasco (top, right).



awards

\$10,000

grant

The development of an original play is currently underway. The program will have significant impact in our community by delivering Paramount programming directly to Title I schools and children in the Aurora area.

Hundreds of students have participated in virtual classes at PSA during the pandemic. The school's goal is to reach even more students with this new artistic offering. As school budgets continue to eliminate access to performing arts and field trips, we are bringing the theater to them!

Paramount School of the Arts – unique in the western suburbs – created a splash from its very debut in June 2019. Contributions provide flexibility to act quickly and keep the school ahead of the curve, while inspiring everyday achievements and transforming lives in our community.

The Paramount School of the Arts has received \$10,000 from the National Endowment for the Arts to launch a **NEW** Theatre for Young Audiences touring program.