

AFT Frequently Asked Questions

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american
FOLKLORE
T H E A T R E

2010 Season

What is American Folklore Theatre?

American Folklore Theatre is a non-profit professional theatre organization. Our mission is to create, develop, and present professional musical and dramatic productions which will further the knowledge and appreciation of the culture and heritage of the United States. We create all original musical shows – everything you see on our stage has been created for AFT and has been performed on our stage before it has been seen anywhere else.

What is the history of AFT? How long has it been around?

The story of American Folklore Theatre begins with a group called “The Heritage Ensemble.” This group was created by Dave Peterson, a professor at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, who assembled the group after discovering a pine-rimmed theatre while camping at Peninsula State Park. Feeling the magic in this wooded setting, he assembled a group of singers and musicians to perform on the stage. The Heritage Ensemble would go on to perform on the Peninsula State Park stage for the next 20 years. During these 20 years, the troupe produced and performed original concerts and reviews covering many aspects of Midwestern folklore.

In 1990 long-time members of The Heritage Ensemble morphed into American Folklore Theatre with the emphasis on the creation and production of book musicals as well as concerts. The group’s name was changed to **American Folklore Theatre** to broaden its scope while still depicting its roots in the traditions of populist culture. **This year marks the 20th Anniversary of American Folklore Theatre.**

Is AFT a professional theatre company?

Absolutely. American Folklore Theatre only casts performers whose profession is acting. A number of our performers are members of the Actors Equity Association – a labor union that represents over 45,000 actors and stage managers working across the United States. AFT conducts professional auditions in New York, Chicago, Minneapolis and Wisconsin and company members now perform regularly on and off-Broadway and at major regional theatres throughout the country.

Where do American Folklore Theatre performances take place?

During our summer season, we perform outdoors at the large AFT Amphitheatre at Peninsula State Park in Fish Creek, WI. The theatre is not covered – we perform under a canopy of stars. Seating at the theatre consists of sturdy wooden benches with backs, and seat cushions are available for rental. During the fall season, AFT heads indoors to perform at the Old Gibraltar Town Hall in Fish Creek, WI.

Is the theatre difficult to get to? Is handicap access available?

The Theatre is located in **Peninsula State Park**. Peninsula State Park has two entrances – the Fish Creek entrance and the Ephraim entrance. There will be many signs directing you to the Theatre from both entrances. The parking lot for the Theatre is actually the overflow parking lot for Nicolet Beach. Once you are parked in the lot, it’s only about a three or four minute walk to the Theatre. The theatre also has handicap access and parking, although tour buses are not permitted in the Handicap Parking



AFT Frequently Asked Questions (Continued)

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Is the theatre difficult to get to? Is handicap access available? (Continued)

area for accessibility reasons. If you have a handicapped guest, please let the AFT office know and we will arrange a way to transport them from the tour bus to the theatre.

The **Old Gibraltar Town Hall** is located in downtown Fish Creek near the waterfront. Parking is mostly on-street parking. In case of a tour bus, a call to the AFT Office is appreciated so we may plan for the bus in advance. The theatre is handicap accessible - if a member or your party needs special seating, please call the AFT Office so we can plan accordingly.

The **Historic Ephraim Village Hall** is located on Highway 42 in Ephraim, across from the waterfront. The hall is a large stone building with the Ephraim Public Library on the lower level and Chef's Hat Café restaurant on the other side of the building. Parking in Ephraim is mostly on-street parking. In case of a tour bus, a call to the AFT Office is appreciated so we may plan for the bus in advance. As far as handicap access, there is a handicap lift at the back of the village hall, and handicap seating in the hall has traditionally been in the front row. If you have a disabled person in your party, please call the AFT Office so we can plan accordingly.

Is there anything else that I might need to know about American Folklore Theatre shows?

All AFT shows are appropriate for all ages. The shows range in average 90 minutes. Summer and Fall shows are all one-act shows with no intermission. We do offer refreshments for sale at all our shows. Our concession stand at the park is filled with AFT apparel, recordings, and other great items – all ready to purchase to take home with you!

Any special information I need to know when I bring my group to the Theatre or the Old Gibraltar Town Hall?

If you have paid in advance, your group will already have your tickets – we mail out tickets if we have enough time to do so. **Please be sure to arrive 30 minutes before show time** in order to be seated in the reserved section. You will need to wait in line with your tickets, and please make sure that everyone has a ticket in hand. When you get to the usher who is taking tickets, identify the name of your group and tell him or her that you have reserved seating. He or she will point you in the direction of the seating usher, who will seat you accordingly. That's all you have to do – other than sit back, relax, and enjoy the show, of course!

Any other questions that haven't been answered by this sheet?

Please call the AFT office at (920) 854-6117 or visit our website at www.FolkloreTheatre.com.

Mission Statement

The mission of American Folklore Theatre is to create, develop, and present professional musical and dramatic production which will further the knowledge and appreciation of the culture and heritage of the United States.

The Theatre is dedicated to maintaining standards of artistic excellence; celebrating and illuminating the human condition; reaching a large audience of all ages, including families; and fostering a humanistic work environment with adequate and appropriate emotional, financial and creative support for all those associated with us.

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