

In his director's notes for OCP's January production of *Beauty and the Beast*, artistic director Garrett Bradley reflected on all that has happened since OCP's last production of this Disney classic. As many will recall, a devastating fire destroyed the Lebowsky stage and much of the theater on February 13, 2007 only two weeks before opening night of *Beauty and the Beast*. Along with his OCP family, Bradley felt the shock and sadness upon hearing this news. In a flurry of activity, the cast and crew, and too many volunteers to count, somehow found a way for the show to go on! As scheduled, *Beauty and the Beast* opened on the Owosso Middle School stage.



What happened next was even more amazing—a resolute group of local theatre supporters made the decision to rebuild the Lebowsky. This ambitious goal required time, money, and perseverance, but in March 2014, the Lebowsky reopened with a production of *Shrek, the Musical!*

Eleven years after the fire and the first *Beauty and the Beast*, it seemed appropriate that OCP once again stage this show, to reflect how far OCP had come. As Bradley stated: "The warmth of a Disney musical is just what we all need to get through the winter and to think back on the efforts of those who, against all odds, performed this show 11 years ago."

The headlines on the Lansing City Pulse read: Roaring success: 'Disney's *Beauty and the Beast*'. The article raves on the sets, props, costumes, orchestra, and 45 dancers. "Claire Canfield is enchanting as Belle. Troy Seyfert is imposing and emotive as the Beast. Most everyone in the talented cast deserves mention for their singing and actions."

Young princesses were invited to take tea with Belle at the Abiding in the Vine.



While in rehearsal of *Beauty and the Beast*, OCP hosted the dinner theater, *The Awesome 80s Prom*, at the D'Mar Banquet & Conference Center. It was time to start looking for a prom date! All the favorites from the 80s movies were at the prom. The captain of the football team (Ervin Batka), the geek (Tommy Laurin), the head cheerleader (Taylor Rupp), the foreign exchange student (Amy Winchell) and more. All vied for Prom King and Queen, and the audience decided who won!

In April, *Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike*, opened at the Lebowsky. In this laugh-out-loud-funny yet unexpectedly moving American comedy directed by Ben Cassidy, we met middle-agers Vanya (Doak Bloss) and his sister Sonia (Anna Owens), who lived in the farmhouse where they grew up. When their movie-star sister Masha (Charlotte Maybury Ruppert) returned home with her boy-toy Spike (Jason Durr), an unforgettable weekend ensued. Also featured in the cast were Rachael Cupples as Cassandra and Taylor Rupp as Nina. Rupp won the Lansing Pulse Best Actress for her performance.



OCP pushed the envelope and opened on June 15 with *The Full Monty*. Six unemployed steel workers (Adam Woolsey, Phineas Reed, Michael Windnagle, Alex Quinlan, Quentin Brainerd, Artis White), tried to make some quick cash by taking off their clothes. While many people initially think *The Full Monty* was probably a show for women (since after all, it does involve male strippers), the truth is, in many ways, this show was for men. At its heart lies a story of male friendships. OCP did not choose to do this show for the shock factor; rather, it was chosen because it speaks to so many important issues – parenting, relationships, unemployment and camaraderie – in such an entertaining way! Garrett Bradley directed this very successful musical.

A favorite musical of all times, *Mamma Mia!* opened in September. Featuring the music of ABBA, the plot revolved around a mother (Amanda DeKatch) a daughter (Isa Rodriguez), three possible dads (Rusty Broughton, Michael Windnagle and Chad DeKatch) and a trip down the aisle not to be forgotten. The story-telling magic of ABBA's timeless songs propelled this sunny and funny tale that unfolded on a Greek island paradise.



Ken Ludwig's comedy, *Leading Ladies*, took the stage in November. Two English Shakespearean actors, Jack (Linus Banghart-Linn) and Leo (Quentin Brainerd II), found themselves so down on their luck that they were performing "scenes from Shakespeare on the Moose Lodge circuit in the Pennsylvania Amish country. When they heard that an old lady in York, PA was about to die and leave her fortune to her two long lost English nephews, they resolved to pass themselves off as her beloved relatives and get the cash. However, when they got to York, they found out that the relatives were not nephews but nieces (Amy Winchell and Casey Voss)! *Ladies* was directed by Lyn Freeman.

2018 ended with the very popular *Holiday at Lebowsky – Celebrate the Season*. Filled with song, dance and holiday sentiment, this annual production has been the perfect way for families to usher in the best season of the year!

In addition to OCP's regular season, we welcomed back to the Lebowsky Stage, *3 Men and a Tenor* who brought high energy and touching arrangements of over 50 years of music, both in March and their December *Ha Ha Holiday!* Show. Leo Days in his *Elvis Tribute* performed three eras of Elvis in a single show. Each era was meticulously revived through Day's amazing vocals, sultry moves and fine costumes. Due to his popularity, a second performance was added.



Other community organizations used the stage. Fraternal Order of Police hosted country artist Ronnie McDowell. The Memorial Healthcare Foundation's February Gala decorated the Lebowsky into a Phantom of the Opera theater. Memorial Healthcare brought all their employees to the theater for the Power of Compassion with motivational speaker Rudy Ruettiger whose early life and career at Notre Dame were the inspiration for the 1993 film *Rudy*. Kim's Dance Dynamics performed their *Holiday Recital*. Corunna High School and Middle School students staged their plays in the Studio Theater as did the Shiawassee Community Children's Theatre.

We couldn't have done it without our techies and musicians.



## AWARDS

OCP had a number of award events this year. Adding to its "Wall of Fame" for their contribution to OCP were Kit and Paul Kuhlman, Mary Jo Damm Strong and Anna Owens.



Annual Argie awards were presented to:

Best Musical and People's Choice: *Beauty and the Beast*  
 Best Play: *Rabbit Hole*  
 Best Special Production: *Holiday Lebowsky: If You Just Believe*  
 Best Actor in a Leading Role: Adam Woolsey, *The Full Monty*  
 Best Actress in a Leading Role: Claire Ladaga, *Beauty and the Beast*  
 Best Actor in a Supporting Role: Michael Windnagle, *The Full Monty*  
 Best Actress in a Supporting Role: Kathy Kowalski, *The Full Monty*  
 Best Actor in a Featured Role: Artis White, *The Full Monty*  
 Best Actress in a Featured Role: Alissa Britten, *Beauty and the Beast*  
 Best Director: Anna Owens, *Rabbit Hole*  
 Best Choreography: Erica Duffield, *Beauty and the Beast*  
 Best Musical Direction: Jillian Boots, *Beauty and the Beast*  
 Best Set Design: Dirk Rennick and Dan Wenzlick, *Beauty and the Beast*  
 Best Costume Design: Lisa Bradley, *The Full Monty*  
 Best Lighting Design: Rachael Cupples, *The Full Monty*  
 Best Sound Design: Brandon Hook, *Beauty and the Beast*



Included for the first time in the Lansing area Pulsar Awards, OCP was nominated for 16 awards and received six, including Garrett Bradley as Best Musical Director; Jillian Boots for Best Musical Direction; Make Windnagle, Anna Owens and Gail Worden for Best Property Design; Taylor Rupp for Best Featured Actress (Play); Best Actress (Musical) Claire Canfield-Ladaga; and Best Supporting Actress (Musical) Stephanie Banghart.

## EDUCATION

The Owosso Community Players, with the support of the Cook Family Foundation, is realizing its vision of bringing performing arts education in its many disciplines to the greater Shiawassee region. At OCP, we believe that immersion in the arts fosters confidence, creative problem-solving skills, and a healthy self-image.

The new Performing Arts Program is now year-round and is split into three 6-week "terms", plus Summer Camps. It is our hope to engage students from kindergarten through adulthood every term, with workshop times varying from after school into early evening, and on Saturdays.

The 2018 offerings included:

- Imagination for grades K-2
- Acting and Storytelling for grades 1-3
- Storytelling for grades 3-5
- Acting for grades 9-12
- Stage Combat
- Dance and Movement
- Sewing
- Magic
- Summer Camps for grades 3-5 and 6-9

## THE FINANCES

OCP finances are based on the formula established by most arts organizations: 50% from ticket sales and 50% from other sources, such as donations, membership and grants.

Shows have been sponsored by Memorial Healthcare; Nelson-House Funeral Homes; Cline, Cline & Griffin, PC; Riverview Dental; Drs. Thomas Teal & Jeannine Hopfensperger; Tom Cook and Anna Owens; Dr. Daniel Williams and Diane Cutler; Associated Radiologists of Flint, PC; Owosso Medical Group; Sage Link Credit Union; Owosso Graphic Arts; and Ludington Electric.

The Cook Family Foundation; Michigan Council for the Arts and Cultural Affairs (MCACA), the Youth Advisory Council and The Alden and Vada Dow Family Foundations have awarded grants totaling \$53,000. These funds support the education program, resurrection of the proscenium arch, re-branding and marketing as well as general operation.

During the 2013-14 Rebuild Campaign, OCP launched at Take a Seat Fundraiser, which allowed individuals to "purchase" a seat in the new Lebowsky with a gift of \$1000. This was very successful and 250 seats provided \$250,000 toward the reconstruction. This year another 13 seats were "sold" with those funds going to OCP's sustainability. All seats have engraved plaques on the arms with the donors' names.

A new Super Fan Membership gave benefits for those signing up to give \$9.99 a month. In exchange they received advanced opportunity to purchase eight tickets to each show prior to the public on-sale date, access to the Young Donor Lounge, and acknowledgement in all OCP show programs. This program has helped OCP with its cash flow and has proven to be very popular with 30 new members.

On Giving Tuesday, donations were matched by the Cook Family Foundation; Sam and Michelle McLaren; Mario and Eric Chaves; and Joy Welty. Over \$6,500 was raised.

OCP loves a party and we held a couple of great ones! OPA! Opening the season launch and Speakeasy raised funds to augment expenses.



## STAFF



Kathy Brooks  
Executive Director



Garrett Bradley  
Artistic Director



Mark Shaheen  
Education Coordinator

Jerry Frezon, Box Office Manager  
 Shawn Koboldt, Bookkeeper  
 Dennis Bowen, Custodian

What Dreams are Made Of!



## Owosso Community Players Invite You to

# Celebrate Gifts of the New Year

...with Quality Entertainment the whole year through!

JOIN US at  
**LEBOWSKY**  
*Celebrate The Season*

Mark your calendars for these upcoming performances at the Lebowsky Center

Hollywood Comedy & Magic Show • January 11

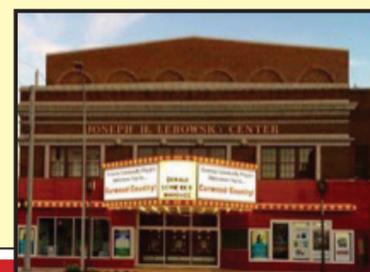
Tarzan • February 22 - March 2

Heywood Banks • March 8

AACT Fest • March 15-16

The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time  
 • April 26 - May 5

Cabaret • June 14-23



To Purchase Tickets, Visit [owossoplayers.com](http://owossoplayers.com) or OCP Box Office at 114 E. Main St., Owosso or Call (989) 723-4003