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Community Theatre, For the Entire Community

With transition to iconic Hjemkomst Center, FMCT expands reach into Moorhead

MOORHEAD, Minn. – After nearly two years of performing in borrowed spaces across town, Fargo Moorhead Community Theatre is taking up a more permanent residence in downtown Moorhead.

FMCT has been staging productions out of its Studio 6 Broadway space, as well as other local venues, since a structural issue in December 2019 rendered its 50-year-old theatre in Fargo's Island Park unsuitable for occupants. This July, FMCT will expand across the river to one of the region's most recognizable landmarks.

Heritage Hall in Moorhead's iconic Hjemkomst Center has previously housed rotating exhibits for The Historical and Cultural Society of Clay County. Beginning this summer, it will be home to two stages—a larger one for FMCT's shows, and a smaller stage which may be rented out to community members for smaller productions, like concerts, poetry readings, and one-act plays. The theatre also hopes to utilize other areas of the Center, including the Norwegian-style Hopperstad Stave Church, for more intimate or experimental projects.

Executive Director Judy Lewis is thrilled by the prospect of expanding access to performance opportunities for local artists.

"The community has supported FMCT for so long, particularly over the past year, and we want to use this opportunity to repay them," Lewis said. "As long as we do not have a mainstage production running, any artist—whether they are a musician, an actor, a dancer, a poet—can come in and rent our stage for the fraction of the price of a traditional venue."

Lewis is grateful for the welcome that FMCT has received from the city of Moorhead and honored to be joining a community with an already robust theatre scene, from award-winning high school and collegiate programs to local organizations like Gooseberry Park Players, Theatre B, and Trollwood Performing Arts School.

"Every opportunity to create and experience theatre is a win for us all," Lewis said. "I could not be more excited to expand our reach into Moorhead and work with these incredible organizations to bring more art to even more people."

The move across the river is not a farewell to the theatre's Fargo roots. FMCT intends to retain their flagship space in Island Park and eventually, pending a final ruling from insurers and necessary renovations, divide performances and educational programming between the two locations.

Rather, Lewis sees the transition as an opportunity for Fargo Moorhead Community Theatre to live up to the fullness of its name.

"FMCT will never move out of Fargo. We are simply moving into Moorhead, too," she says. "This is a chance for us to embrace the entire 'community' in our name."

The curtains will rise on the Hjemkomst Center this fall, with performances for FMCT's 2021-2022 season to be held in the theatre's new location. However, while renovations to Heritage Hall are still underway, FMCT's summer production of "All Shook Up" will be held July 22-25 at TAK Music Venue in Dilworth. Tickets sales begin June 28. For more information, visit fmct.org.