STEPHEN WADE’S EXHILARATING THEATRICAL CONCERT
THE BEAUTIFUL MUSIC ALL AROUND US
COMES TO THE REP’S STACKNER CABARET


*The Beautiful Music All Around Us* brings Wade’s near-lifetime exploration of Southern musical traditions to the Stackner. Best known for his long-running one-man show, *Banjo Dancing*, Wade’s newest piece is based on his recent award-winning book, *The Beautiful Music All Around Us*, that uncovers largely hidden, but surprisingly influential, makers of iconic American folksong. Drawn from the celebrated Library of Congress field recordings of the 1930s and ‘40s, this exhilarating theatrical concert features spoken word, projected images, and live music-making. *The Beautiful Music All Around Us* is guaranteed to be a performance unlike any audiences have ever seen.

The stories Wade shares in his book have been described as “compelling, moving, and revelatory” by the Chicago Tribune and as giving “new and vivid life to long-gone performers and their songs.” Terry Teachout in the Wall Street Journal calls the book “a masterpiece of humane scholarship – but one that reads like a detective story.” Publishers Weekly says, “It offers an understanding not only of a musical thread vital to American culture, but of America itself.”

“I was originally made aware of Stephen Wade from his long-running, one-man show *Banjo Dancing* that ran in regional theaters across the country for nearly twenty years. But beyond that, he’s an internationally recognized American folk music scholar and a legendary musician himself,” says Artistic Director Mark Clements. “Stephen manages to combine his extraordinary and unique skills as a music scholar, virtuoso musician and witty entertainer to dazzling effect, and it’s a real coup for us to present his new show in the Stackner.”

“Within days that *The Beautiful Music All Around Us* first went into print,” recalls Stephen Wade, “I began bringing the book back home. I felt it needful to return to all those persons and places within its
pages. At each stop I gave localized programs, playing music and speaking, all the while framing those presentations with slide shows I’d assembled for the occasion. Now this performance takes a new turn here in Milwaukee, a place filled with a storied history and beautiful music all its own.”

The Stackner Cabaret Season is sponsored by Sally Manegold.

**TICKETS**

Tickets for The Beautiful Music All Around Us begin at $40.00. Single Tickets for all of Milwaukee Repertory Theater’s 2014/15 productions are now on sale and can be purchased by going online 24/7 at [www.MilwaukeeRep.com](http://www.milwaukeerep.com), through The Rep’s Ticket Office by calling **414-224-9490**, or in person at 108 E. Wells Street. Group tickets are also available for purchase by calling Group Sales Coordinator Morgan Halverson at **414-290-5340**.

To learn more about The Rep or its productions, please visit [www.MilwaukeeRep.com](http://www.milwaukeerep.com).

**THE CAST**

**Stephen Wade** (Creator and Performer) has spent nearly his entire life in study of American folklife, uniting the twin strands of scholarship and the creative arts. Growing up in Chicago in the 1950s and 1960s, Wade was exposed to a number of vernacular musicians who had moved north to the city from the Mississippi Delta and the Southern Appalachians. His models included Fleming Brown of the Old Town School of Folk Music, and Brown’s teacher, Doc Hopkins, an old-time, Kentucky-bred performer on the WLS National Barn Dance. Benefitting from their encouragement, Wade developed Banjo Dancing, a theatrical performance that combined storytelling, traditional music, and percussive dance. The show opened in Chicago in May 1979, a thirteen-month run that included an invited performance at the White House. In January 1981, Wade brought Banjo Dancing to Washington, D.C.’s Arena Stage for a three-week engagement that stretched to ten years, making it one of the longest-running, off-Broadway shows in the United States. Wade’s second theater piece, On the Way Home, garnered the Joseph Jefferson award in 1993. In 2003, Wade received the Helen Hayes/Charles MacArthur award for his work as composer, adapter, and musical director for the world premiere of Zora Neale Hurston’s Polk County.

The Beautiful Music All Around Us: Field Recordings and the American Experience was published in 2012 by the University of Illinois Press. This 504-page study showcases nearly two decades of research during which Wade tracked down the communities, families, and performers connected with early Library of Congress field recordings across the American South. These recordings, which Wade first gathered in A Treasury of Library of Congress Field Recordings (Rounder Records, 1997), gave rise to his folksong commentaries that have aired on National Public Radio’s Morning Edition and All Things Considered. In 2013, The Beautiful Music All Around Us received the ASCAP Deems Taylor award and the Association of Recorded Sound Collections (ARSC) award for Best History.

In fall 2012, Wade also released Banjo Diary: Lessons from Tradition on Smithsonian Folkways. This Grammy-nominated album explores musical knowledge passed across the generations. He has recorded and/or produced more than a dozen albums. He recently served as 2013-2014 artist/scholar in
residence at George Washington University (Department of Music) and 2013 George A. Miller Visiting Scholar, Center for Advanced Study, University of Illinois. He currently directs the American Roots Music Program at the Rocky Ridge Music Center in Estes Park, Colorado.

CREATIVE TEAM

Brent Hazelton (Production Coordinator), a Whitewater native, is a former Rep Acting Intern (1999/2000) and is The Rep’s Associate Artistic Director and Director of New Project Development. The 2014/15 Season is Hazelton’s 16th at The Rep, 14th as a member of the Artistic Staff, and fourth as Associate Artistic Director. He came to Milwaukee after graduating from Cornell College in Mt. Vernon, Iowa. Administratively at Milwaukee Rep, Hazelton oversees the New Project Development Program, spearheads the season planning process, collaborates on internal strategic planning and initiative development, and works with the rest of the Artistic Staff to program and support Milwaukee Rep productions. From 2003 to 2010, Brent also served as Milwaukee Rep’s Artistic Internship Program Director. Artistically at Milwaukee Rep, Hazelton wrote and directed the 2010/11 and 2014/15 Stackner Cabaret hit, Liberace! (published and licensed through Steele Spring Theatrical Licensing), conceived the premiere installment of Rep Lab, and directed Song Man Dance Man (Stackner Cabaret, 2011/12), How the World Began (Stiemke Studio, 2012/13), and The Whipping Man (Stiemke Studio, 2013/14). He has also directed short plays for Rep Lab, staged readings for The Rep/Ten Chimneys Foundation and the University of Wisconsin-Parkside, among others. In his previous career as an actor, Hazelton appeared regionally with Riverside Theater in Iowa City, the Dorset Summer Theater Festival in Dorset, Vermont, and Griffincroft Productions and has performed in Milwaukee with Milwaukee Repertory Theater, Renaissance Theaterworks, In Tandem Theater, Boulevard Ensemble Studio Theater, to name a few. Hazelton is also a former member of the adjunct faculties of Carthage College and the University of Wisconsin-Parkside, and has taught developmental workshops at colleges, conservatories, and universities across the country.

Noele Stollmack (Lighting Designer) returns to The Rep after designing The Whipping Man last season and The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (Abridged) during the 2011/12 Season. Recent lighting includes Redwood Curtain, as well as the world premiere of Jeff Daniels’ The Meaning of Almost Everything at the Purple Rose Theatre Company, Skylight Music Theatre’s productions of Fidelio and El Cimarron, along with Molly Sweeney, Antony & Cleopatra, and Dickens in America for American Players Theatre. Stollmack’s lighting has appeared in productions at Brooklyn Academy of Music, Sydney Opera House, Houston Grand Opera, Opera Ontario, Opera Pacific, Portland Opera, Vancouver Opera, Madison Opera, Nashville Opera Association and First Stage.

Barry G. Funderburg (Sound Designer) returns to Milwaukee Rep after recently designing The Color Purple. Memorable Rep productions include How the World Began, Othello, The 39 Steps, The Cherry Orchard, Pride and Prejudice, Armadale, Mary Stuart, Work Song, and Angels in America: Millennium Approaches. Off-Broadway, Barry designed the critically acclaimed New York premiere of Wittenberg at The Pearl Theatre Company. Regional theater credits include Fake, Carter’s Way, and Mother Courage and Her Children at Steppenwolf Theatre Company, 16 productions at Utah Shakespeare Festival, including the recent regional theater premiere of Peter and the Starcatcher, and Kansas City Repertory Theatre, Arizona Theatre Company, City Theatre Company (Pittsburgh), CENTERSTAGE (Baltimore),
Alabama Shakespeare Festival, Peninsula Players, American Players Theatre, LA Theatre Works, and Indiana Repertory Theatre. Chicago credits include Next Theatre, Theatre at the Center, and Lookingglass Theatre Company. Funderburg has received four Chicago Equity Jeff Award nominations, the 1996 and 2008 Jeff Awards for Sound Design, and an MFA in sound design from Purdue University.

Richelle Harrington Calin (Stage Manager) has been with Milwaukee Rep since 2004. Milwaukee Rep credits include: *after all the terrible things I do*, *Bach at Leipzig*, *The Clean House*, *Intimate Apparel*, *Gem of the Ocean*, *A Christmas Carol*, *They Voysey Inheritance*, *Life Could Be a Dream*, *Glengarry Glen Ross*, *The Night is a Child*, *I Am My Own Wife*, *Greater Tuna*, *Pride and Prejudice*, *Shear Madness*, *The Lady with All the Answers*, *Yankee Tavern*, *Route 66*, *Cabaret*, *Bombshells*, *Ma Rainey’s Black Bottom*, *Yellowman*, *Othello*, *The Mountaintop* and *How the World Began*.

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FACT SHEET

**WHAT:** *The Beautiful Music All Around Us*

**WRITTEN AND PERFORMED BY:** Stephen Wade

**THEATER:** Stackner Cabaret

**DATES:** January 16, 2015 – March 15, 2015

**DESCRIPTION:** Legendary musician and 2013 Grammy-nominee Stephen Wade, who has delighted audiences from the White House to Broadway, brings his near-lifetime exploration of Southern musical traditions to the Stackner. Best known for his long-running one-man show, *Banjo Dancing*, Stephen’s newest piece is based on his award-winning recent book that uncovers the largely hidden, but surprisingly influential, makers of iconic American folksong. Drawn from the celebrated Library of Congress field recordings of the 1930s and ‘40s, this exhilarating theatrical concert features spoken word, projected images, and live music-making. *The Beautiful Music All Around Us* is guaranteed to be a performance unlike any you have ever seen.

**ACCESS SERVICES**

*Audio-Described Performance, Sunday, January 25 – 7:00pm* – the show will be described aloud for patrons who are blind or have low vision.

**PERFORMANCES:**

- Friday, 1/16/15 – 8:00pm – Preview
- Saturday, 1/17/15 – 8:00pm – Preview
- Sunday, 1/18/15 – 7:00pm – Opening
- Tuesday, 1/20/15 – 6:30pm – Early Bird
- Wednesday, 1/21/15 – 7:30pm
- Thursday, 1/22/15 – 7:30pm
Friday, 1/23/15 – 8:00pm  
Saturday, 1/24/15 – 4:00pm/8:00pm  
Sunday, 1/25/15 – 2:00pm/7:00pm – Audio-Description

Tuesday, 1/27/15 – 7:30pm  
Wednesday, 1/28/15 – 7:30pm  
Thursday, 1/29/15 – 7:30pm  
Friday, 1/30/15 – 8:00pm  
Saturday, 1/31/15 – 4:00pm/8:00pm  
Sunday, 2/1/15 – 2:00 pm/7:00pm

Tuesday, 2/3/15 – 7:30pm  
Wednesday, 2/4/15 – 7:30pm  
Thursday, 2/5/15 – 7:30pm  
Friday, 2/6/15 – 8:00pm  
Saturday, 2/7/15 – 4:00pm/8:00pm  
Sunday, 2/8/15 – 2:00pm/7:00pm

Tuesday, 2/10/15 – 7:30pm  
Wednesday, 2/11/15 – 7:30pm  
Thursday, 2/12/15 – 7:30pm  
Friday, 2/13/15 – 8:00pm  
Saturday, 2/14/15 – 4:00pm/8:00pm  
Sunday, 2/15/15 – 2:00pm/7:00pm

Tuesday, 2/17/15 – 7:30pm  
Wednesday, 2/18/15 – 7:30pm  
Thursday, 2/19/15 – 7:30pm  
Friday, 2/20/15 – 8:00pm  
Saturday, 2/21/15 – 4:00pm/8:00pm  
Sunday, 2/22/15 – 2:00pm/7:00pm

Tuesday, 2/24/15 – 7:30pm  
Wednesday, 2/25/15 – 7:30pm  
Thursday, 2/26/15 – 7:30pm  
Friday, 2/27/15 – 8:00pm  
Saturday, 2/28/15 – 4:00pm/8:00pm  
Sunday, 3/1/15 – 2:00pm/7:00pm

Tuesday, 3/3/15 – 7:30pm  
Wednesday, 3/4/15 – 7:30pm  
Thursday, 3/5/15 – 7:30pm  
Friday, 3/6/15 – 8:00pm  
Saturday, 3/7/15 – 4:00pm/8:00pm  
Sunday, 3/8/15 – 2:00pm/7:00pm

Tuesday, 3/10/15 – 7:30pm  
Wednesday, 3/11/15 – 7:30pm
Thursday, 3/12/15 – 7:30pm  
Friday, 3/13/15 – 8:00pm  
Saturday, 3/14/15 – 4:00pm/8:00pm  
Sunday, 3/15/15 – 2:00pm/7:00pm – Closing

**TICKET PRICES:** Prices begin at $40.00.

**TICKETS/INFORMATION:** 414-224-9490 or buy tickets online at **www.MilwaukeeRep.com**

**TICKET OFFICE LOCATION:** 108 E. Wells Street in Milwaukee’s Downtown Theater District

**TICKET OFFICE HOURS:** Monday – Sunday, Noon – 6:00pm*  
*On days with performances the Ticket Office will stay open until fifteen minutes after curtain.

*Please note: The Rep’s Ticket Office will be closed Christmas and New Year’s Day.*

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Milwaukee Repertory Theater is a nationally-recognized company that presents compelling dramas, powerful classics, award-winning contemporary works, full-scale musicals, housed in its three unique performance venues – the Quadracci Powerhouse, Stiemke Studio and Stackner Cabaret. The Rep also produces an annual production of *A Christmas Carol* at the beautiful and historic Pabst Theater. Under the leadership of **Artistic Director Mark Clements** and **Managing Director Chad Bauman**, The Rep is committed to creating plays that are meaningful and relevant to the society we live in – plays that are challenging, visceral and engage the community through the issues they explore, demonstrating how a theater deeply rooted in its locality can also enjoy a richly influential and resonant national voice.