



**Milwaukee Rep Presents the World Premiere of
George & Gracie: A Love Story in the Stackner Cabaret
Starring hometown favorites Tami Workentin and James Pickering**

March 25, 2026 [Milwaukee, WI] – [Milwaukee Repertory Theater](#) presents the World Premiere of ***George & Gracie: A Love Story*** by Tami Workentin **May 1 – June 14, 2026, in the Stackner Cabaret**. For nearly 40 years, George Burns and Gracie Allen captivated millions as entertainment’s original power couple—sharing love, laughter, and impeccable comedic timing across vaudeville, radio, television, and film. Now, Milwaukee’s own powerhouse duo, **Tami Workentin** and **James Pickering**, bring their story to life in a heartfelt tribute filled with theatrical magic and showbiz charm.

George & Gracie: A Love Story traces George Burns and Gracie Allen’s journey from a struggling vaudeville act to the height of stardom, celebrating their enduring partnership, their groundbreaking comedy, and the devotion that defined their lives on and off stage. Warm, witty, and deeply human, *George & Gracie: A Love Story* invites audiences to rediscover two of America’s most iconic entertainers in a production sure to captivate and inspire.

George & Gracie: A Love Story is a **John (Jack) D. Lewis New Play Development Program** production and part of **World Premiere Wisconsin’s** (WPW) statewide new play festival, for which Milwaukee Rep is a lead producer. The play’s path to the stage began in 2021, when Associate Artistic Director Laura Braza and playwright Tami Workentin first started discussing the idea on the closing night of *Steel Magnolias*, for which Braza directed and Workentin starred. Braza read an early script soon after, and the two continued shaping the piece over the years as it evolved. When the Rep sought the right project to represent the theater in the 2026 WPW festival, *George & Gracie: A Love Story* quickly stood out—an **original work by a Wisconsin native and longtime Rep collaborator** that aligns seamlessly with both the festival’s mission and the goals of the Rep’s New Play Development Program. Since programming it into the season, Braza and Workentin have advanced the script through multiple workshops, including a summer session in Door County. Following its debut in the Stackner Cabaret, the play will continue its journey with a second staging at Northern Sky Theater in September.

At the heart of this World Premiere are two of Milwaukee’s most beloved artists. While *George & Gracie: A Love Story* marks **Tami Workentin’s** debut as a playwright, she is no stranger to Milwaukee stages, where her memorable performances have made her a fixture of the city’s theater scene. Each holiday season, audiences delight in seeing Workentin and her husband, **James Pickering**, as the joyful Mr. and Mrs. Fezziwig in Milwaukee Rep’s *A Christmas Carol*. Pickering, whose extraordinary career spans more than 50

years and countless unforgettable roles, returns once again to the Rep stage, bringing his signature depth, humor, and humanity to the role of George Burns. Together, this real-life couple brings a rare authenticity and irresistible chemistry to George and Gracie, making this premiere an especially meaningful moment for Milwaukee audiences. Joining them is **Jonathan Riker**, a former Milwaukee Rep EPR and recently had a star turn in Milwaukee Chamber Theatre's production of *I Am My Own Wife* is playing the Elevator Man, a role Workentin wrote with him in mind from the beginning.

George & Gracie: A Love Story is directed by **Laura Braza** (*Million Dollar Quartet*, Milwaukee Rep) with music direction and arrangements by **Alissa Rhode** (*Dairy Heirs*, Northern Sky), set design by **Lisa Schlenker** (*Dairy Heirs*, Northern Sky), costume design by **Jason Orlenko** (*Beehive: the 60's Musical*, Milwaukee Rep), lighting design by **Rachel Levy** (*Dial M for Murder*, Milwaukee Rep), co- sound design by **Jack Purves** with co-sound designer and magic and movement coordinator **Wolfe Bowart**, and stage manager Merit Glover.

George & Gracie: A Love Story is a John (Jack) D. Lewis New Play Development Program production and a part of World Premiere Wisconsin's statewide new play festival. It's part of the David Kundert Stackner Season and is made possible by Associate Producer Richard Grunke and William Grash, Susan and John Harrits, Kris and Wayne Leuders, and Diane K. O'Connor.

Purchase tickets to **George & Gracie: A Love Story** at www.MilwaukeeRep.com, call the Ticket Office at 414-224-9490 or visit in-person at 108 E Wells Street in downtown Milwaukee.

For more information, please visit www.MilwaukeeRep.com

::Fact Sheet::

George & Gracie: A Love Story

By Tami Workentin

Directed by Laura Braza

May 1 – June 14, 2026

Running time: Approximately 2 hours no intermission

Download **George & Gracie: A Love Story** [Press Kit](#) with photos and logos.

Ticket Information

Tickets: www.MilwaukeeRep.com, by phone at 414-224-9490, or Ticket Office at 108 E Wells Street, Milwaukee.

Hours: 12noon – 6pm; on performance days the Ticket Office remains open until 15 minutes past curtain.

Student Discounts: Students 18 and under can purchase \$25 tickets for select seating areas.

25 & Under: Select \$25 tickets available for patrons 25 & Under. (Select 25 & Under price at checkout online)

Group Sales: Discounted tickets for parties of 10+. Call 414-290-5340.

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About Milwaukee Repertory Theater

Milwaukee Rep is the largest performing arts organization in Wisconsin. Its new artistic home, the Associated Bank Theater Center, opened Fall 2025 with three unique performance venues—the Ellen & Joe Checota Powerhouse Theater, Herro-Franke Studio Theater, and Stackner Cabaret. For over seven decades, Milwaukee Rep has been a centerpiece of Milwaukee's vibrant arts and cultural scene with productions ranging from Broadway musicals to Shakespeare to American Classics and New Works that are entertaining, inclusive and impactful. Under the leadership of Artistic Director Mark Clements and Executive Director Chad Bauman, Milwaukee Repertory Theater ignites positive change in the cultural, social and economic vitality of its community by creating world-class theater experiences that entertain, provoke and inspire meaningful dialogue among an audience representative of Milwaukee's rich diversity. More information visit www.MilwaukeeRep.com

About World Premiere Wisconsin

World Premiere Wisconsin is a statewide organization supporting the Wisconsin theater ecosystem through the execution of World Premiere Wisconsin's new play festivals and ongoing efforts to promote relationship-building amongst theater-makers, foster the development of new plays and musicals, and draw attention to the dynamic work being done by theaters in Wisconsin. WPW is proudly led by producing theaters Forward Theater, Milwaukee Repertory Theater, Northern Sky Theater and Ten Chimneys Foundation, with additional support from Festival Theaters across Wisconsin. Learn more and explore the 2026 festival at worldpremierewisconsin.com.

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[Download the George & Gracie Press Kit Here.](#)