

PERFORMING ARTS

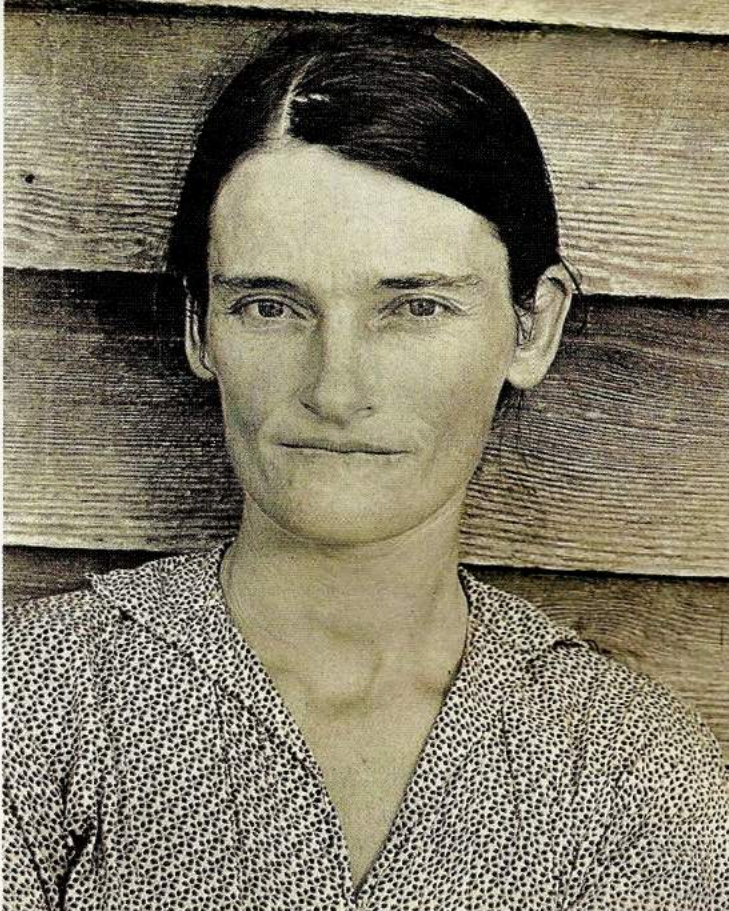
Seize These Days

THE THING ABOUT MARCH IN WISCONSIN IS that we come to expect some good days and some bad days. On the bad days, we all keep the blankets and woolies handy, but on the good days, when the sunshine peeks through the clouds with the promise of the coming spring, it's important to lean into the world and enjoy it. *Carpe Diem*, and all that.

Similarly, two very special arts events in Milwaukee will also flare brightly but briefly this month, and you'd be wise to take advantage of the opportunity to enjoy their welcome glow. Shows that enjoy long runs certainly make life more convenient, but when performances only last a day or two, that rarity makes the event all the more precious for the audience that was lucky enough to attend. After all, what really made the mythical Brigadoon special was you only had one chance to visit it, right?

At Danceworks, the boys finally have their day when local danceman Ed Burgess assembles a talented group of fellas for a weekend series of performances called *A Guy Thing*. Burgess has been a fixture in the Milwaukee dance scene for years, and he is recruiting choreographers from the modern dance world as well as friends from The Milwaukee Ballet to put together a muscular collection of pieces that showcase men in tights. While Danceworks has not actually promised that spandex apparel will be involved, when you put a group of the area's most talented male dancers together for this kind of a show, there's sure to be surprises.

Another quick hit performance in March comes from Milwaukee Chamber Theatre as they continue their evolving new works initiative The Montgomery Davis Play Development Series on Monday, March 16. This forum for new theatrical works in Milwaukee honors former Milwaukee Chamber Theatre co-founder and Artistic Director Davis in a way that he would have adored: through the unadulterated



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and unadorned celebration of words. This month they're offering *A Thousand Words* by Gwendolyn Rice. The play is a time-travel story that shifts back and forth in time and tackles the life of photographer Walker Evans. Evans is best known for his work during the Great Depression documenting the economic decline of the farm family through his stunning, deeply empathetic images. Jen Gray, who introduced herself as a director of note to Milwaukee audiences with Milwaukee Shakespeare's production of *Love's Labour's Lost*, is at the helm for this exciting presentation of new work.

When and where: *A Guy Thing* is presented by Danceworks at the Danceworks Studio Theatre, 1661 N. Water Street, from March 6-8. Call 414.277.8480 or visit www.danceworksmke.org.

A Thousand Words is presented by Milwaukee Chamber Theatre in a staged reading, free of charge to the public in The Broadway Theatre Center's Skylight Bar, 158 N. Broadway on March 16 at 7:30 p.m. For more information call 414.276.8842 or visit www.chamber-theatre.com.

— JONATHAN WEST



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A Thousand Words chronicles Walker Evans, whose photos captured the Depression (top). Ed Burgess (above) presents *A Guy Thing* at Danceworks.