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Funds raised from the auction and ticket sales will go toward stage and building improvements, including new stage lights, rigging, curtains, an acoustic shell, a loading area and dressing rooms, a new roof, as well as a new concession stand and box office.

Liberty Theatre Executive Director Jennifer Crockett hopes to raise \$200,000 from the auction.

Bittersweet but triumphant

Lauderdale and Noack performed their version of Gershwin's piece with Oregon Ballet Theatre in 2017 and decided to focus on "the blue hour." Noack said it refers to twilight as well as the moment in France when a wife looks up from washing dishes and realizes her husband is cheating on her.

Noack said their version is "more maybe bittersweet

but also triumphant."

Gershwin's piece is one of the most famous and recognizable pieces of 20th century American music. Noack said the work is very much an expression of him and Lauderdale as pianists.

"The parts that I play are closer to the soloist part in the original score and the parts that he plays are generally more of the orchestral and creative, improvised sections," Noack said.

Noack was recently featured on CBS This Morning for his "In a Landscape: Classical Music in the Wild" concerts, where he brings a grand piano to iconic locations across Oregon, including at the Astoria Column last year.

Lauderdale and Noack will be joined by The von Trapps, the great-grandchildren of the Captain and Maria von Trapp as well as Katie Harman Ebner, Miss America 2002 from Oregon.

Both Noack and Lau-



Pianist Thomas Lauderdale

derdale will also play solo works as well.

Lauderdale has been playing "Rhapsody in Blue" for more than 20 years. He first performed the piece with an orchestra under the baton of Norman Leyden at Portland's Arlene Schnitzer

concert hall after winning a competition when he was in high school.

"The best part for me is to get to be part of this making music with him and making something new out of something he's so familiar with and loves so much,"



Pianist Hunter Noack

Noack said.

Renovations

Crockett said this is the renovation to complete the Liberty.

Renovations will focus on stage support, preservation and energy efficiency.

Crockett had been attending conferences for the League of Historic American

Theaters when she realized how limited the Liberty was without renovations to its backstage.


The Liberty partnered with the theater design firm Schuler Shook to look at needed improvements to the theater.

"It became pretty obvious pretty quick that we really are kind of crippled as a theater," Crockett said.

A makeover would allow for groups like Portland Opera, Oregon Ballet Theatre and traveling Broadway shows to perform at the Liberty. Stage renovations are something the Liberty has always wanted to do, but it had been struggling to pay its bills, she said.

The Liberty doubled its budget and ended in the black for the first time in many years this year, Crockett said.

Renovations, she estimated, could happen over July and August in 2019 or 2020 depending on funds raised. The Liberty is working with local parks to move programming outside during those months.

Crockett is looking forward to seeing Lauderdale and Noack perform together. "They have a great chemistry," she said. 

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Crossword Answers

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