

**MEMORIAL RESOLUTION OF THE FACULTY
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON**

ON THE DEATH OF PROFESSOR EMERITA FANNIE TURNBULL TAYLOR

Fannie Taylor, professor emerita in social education and College of Letters and Science administration, died on April 15, 2008 at age 94. She will be remembered by her many friends and colleagues as a visionary director of the Wisconsin Union Theater, a staunch arts advocate, and a dedicated teacher. Madison Magazine's salute to 50 people who shaped Madison in the 20th century stated, "No one did more for the performing arts in this century than Fan Taylor."

Fan Taylor was born in Kansas City, Missouri and grew up in Lake Forest, Illinois. She attended Vassar College briefly during the Depression until her family's resources ran out. When Taylor's father moved to Madison, she enrolled at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and graduated in 1938 with a B.A. in journalism.

In fall 1939, she began her long association with the Wisconsin Union Theater. Her first job was publicity director for the Wisconsin Players, and her first assignment was to publicize the theater's premiere event, Alfred Lunt and Lynne Fontaine in "The Taming of the Shrew," on October 9, 10, and 11, 1939. The Lunts took a break from Broadway to open the Union's magnificent new theater. Fan became publicity director of the Union Theater in 1943 and then its first director in 1946, a position she held for twenty years.

Fan's motto as theater director was, "Program for your audience, but always a little better." The entire Madison community was the beneficiary. "Until the Civic Center opened in 1980, the Union Theater was the palace of culture in Madison," said Michael Goldberg, who later became Union Theater director. "The concert series, the classical music, was the cornerstone of the programming, but it was everything else as well, from Louis Armstrong to Martha Graham. Everybody who mattered in the performing arts appeared there over the years, and that was Fan's leadership." "Fan did not have a mandate for cultural diversity," Goldberg added. "It didn't exist in the '50s and '60s. Nobody was talking that language. What Fan did was book the best, and if the best happened to be an Ella Fitzgerald, a Duke Ellington, or a Paul Robeson, that's who she presented."

Fan Taylor was not only an astute programmer, she was also a dedicated mentor who imparted her skills to students on the Union's Music Committee. Barbara Connell Manley, a former chair of the committee, recalled, "She included us in everything: the decisions regarding the famous Union Concert Series—the budget we had to work with, the open theater dates, the artists' fees we had to pay, the concert program, the publicity we needed to generate, how many tickets had to be sold to make a profit, what problems there could be at the ticket office the night of the performance." Many of Fan's students went on to careers in arts administration.

In 1956, Fan helped found the Association of College, University and Community Arts Administrators and was its first executive director. The organization was dedicated to helping performing artists find venues and vice-versa. Today, it is known as the Association of Performing Arts Presenters, the nation's largest service and advocacy group for the performing arts. In recognition of Fan's leadership, the association created the "Fan Taylor Distinguished Service Award" for exemplary service to the field of professional presenting.

In 1966, Fan moved to Washington, D.C. to become the first music program director and program information officer of the new National Endowment for the Arts. She was recommended for the post by violinist Isaac Stern. Among her accomplishments was the creation of an arts residency program modeled on the Wisconsin Idea, which became vital to developing what are now modern dance touring programs.

Fan maintained her ties to the university and in 1969, helped create the arts administration graduate program in the School of Business with Professor E. Arthur Prieve, the first of its kind in the nation. The program is now called the Bolz Center for Arts Administration. The program grew out of Union student committee work that helped to develop management skills and programming sensitivities. Andrew Taylor, the current director of the Bolz Center, recalled, "Back in the 1950s, when only a few considered the management, marketing, and advancement of the arts a professional endeavor, Fan was teaching UW-Madison students on the subject and gathering a national coalition of her peers to learn more from each other. She fostered countless networks of professionals, encouraging all of them to find and mentor others in turn. During one of our last lunches together here in Madison, she was still curious about my students, insistent on their curriculum, and bubbling with stories of her performing past."

Returning to Madison in 1976, Fan served as coordinator for the UW's new Arts Consortium. Created in 1975 by Chancellor Edwin Young, the Arts Consortium was charged with developing ways of coordinating and rationalizing arts activities on campus. The committee was chaired by Dean E. David Cronon.

Fan served on many local boards, including the Madison Civic Music Association, Madison Civic Center Foundation, the Elvehjem Museum of Art Council, the Wisconsin Foundation for the Arts, and Bach Dancing and Dynamite Society. She also helped create the Madison Children's Museum in 1980.

Fan Taylor retired in 1984. In 1989, she wrote a history of the Union Theater on its fiftieth anniversary, The Wisconsin Union Theater—Fifty Golden Years, which was edited by Mollie Buckley and published by the Memorial Union Building Association. It is a lavishly illustrated book which documents the glorious history of the Union Theater. In 2000, James Wockenfuss, emeritus trustee of the Memorial Union Building Association, created a fund in Taylor's honor to support the continuation of Fan's programming philosophy. And in 2008, the Memorial Union passed a memorial resolution which read, "In recognition of Fan's outstanding devotion to the students, faculty, artists, and alumni of the University of Wisconsin-Madison, the Memorial Union Building Association, on behalf of more than 80,000 lifetime members, expresses its deepest appreciation and gratitude for Fan Taylor's decades of dedicated service and for her lasting contribution to the Wisconsin Union, the university and the nation."

Fan Taylor is survived by her daughters, Kathleen Taylor Isaacs of Pasadena, Maryland, and Anne Taylor Wadsack of Madison, and by seven grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.

MEMORIAL COMMITTEE

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