

## 2021 Heritage Award Nomination

*Olympia's Preservation Award supports the Heritage Commission's goal of recognizing excellence in the rehabilitation of historic objects, buildings, structures, sites and districts, as well as new construction in historic areas (OMC 18.12.055).*

### PERSON MAKING NOMINATION:

Name	Contact Details	Date of Nomination
Andrea Pareigis	apareigi@ci.olympia.wa.us	1/18/2021

### NOMINATION TYPE:

Person	Project <b>X</b>	Other:
Organization	Building	

### CATEGORY OF NOMINATION:

Preservation	Education <b>X</b>	Other:
New Construction	Scholarship	

### NOMINEE:

Name	Address	Phone/Email
<b>The Hotel Olympian 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Grand Gala Extravaganza</b>		willis@olynet.com

### SIGNIFICANCE OF NOMINATION:

*Brief summary of the significance of the person, organization, project or building. This text will be used by the City of Olympia in preparing and presenting the award at the City Council meeting. Attach additional pages as needed.*

One of the many ways history is preserved is through the art of storytelling. World renowned, and locally inspired playwright Bryan Willis had made a career out of retelling history through inspired and creative plays. His latest work, **The Hotel Olympian 100th Anniversary Grand Gala Extravaganza**, not only showcases important Olympia history, but proves Willis' passion, perseverance and adaptability. Originally planned as a live on-location play, Willis reproduced this work as a radio play in response to the social gathering restrictions of the 2020 Pandemic and maintained a 2020 release coinciding with the 100 year anniversary of the celebrated Olympian Hotel.

**The Hotel Olympian 100th Anniversary Grand Gala Extravaganza** is a prime example of history, culture and the arts meeting. This play expands from the history of how and why the hotel was

built to include numerous references to other timely and significant facts including political leaders, Olympia Brewery, suffrage, and prohibition.

Prior to the building of The Hotel Olympian, Olympia was at risk of losing state capitol status. Critics were concerned over the lack of "world class accommodations" provided in Olympia. With the capitol status at risk, politicians, business leaders and other citizens formed and executed a plan to bring world class hospitality to Olympia. The result, The Hotel Olympian, still standing today at 116 Legion Way SE as part of the Downtown Olympia Historic District.

Willis' play goes into the details of this endeavor using the backdrop of the July 16<sup>th</sup>, 1920 Grand O pening. He recreates this historic event, and playfully takes observers on a 100-year, forward journey of Olympia's history through the creative use of a fortune teller. The play goes so far as to remind us, tongue in cheek, of the building's current use: low-cost senior living and a tattoo parlor. Historic figures, Governor Louis F Hart, brewer Peter G. Schmidt and Mayor Jesse T. Mills are among those recreated in this historic work.

Bryan Willis' uses his experiences and knowledge of Olympia to produce art appreciated globally. His plays have been produced throughout the United States and abroad in five different countries. While traveling has been a part of his career, he is still first and foremost a pacific northwest playwright. "As a native Olympian I think it's time we started telling our own stories." Willis was quoted in a News Tribune interview. Other plays inspired by Olympia include "Bootleg" and "Bicycle Noir: A Love Story on Wheels".

Bryan Willis should be commended on successfully using historic narratives to both entertain and educate audiences. Using the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Hotel Olympian, Willis was able to connect our history to current landmarks, invoking a sense of community and longevity. A radio version of the play aired on local station KGY December 2020. Plans are currently in the works for this play to be produced live on location at the Hotel Olympian, furthering the connection to history and place.

*I have attached information to support my nomination, including documents, images, & other recognitions.*

*For a project nomination, I have included "before" and "after" photos.*

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION – PROVIDE AS APPLICABLE**

**PROPERTY OWNER FOR BUILDING/PROJECT BEING NOMINATED (if different from above):**

Name	Address	Phone/Email
------	---------	-------------

--	--	--

**ARCHITECT / CONSULTANT FOR PROJECT BEING NOMINATED** (if different from above):

Name	Address	Phone/Email

**BUILDING DETAILS:**

Address	Historical Name
Year Built	Year Rehabilitated
Original/Early Owner	Original Architect/Builder
Original Use	Current Use
Heritage Designation Status	Other Information

***Attach additional pages as needed***

See Script Attached

Please email completed form and attachments to Marygrace Goddu at:  
[mgoddu@ci.olympia.wa.us](mailto:mgoddu@ci.olympia.wa.us)