

STUDIO



PRESS RELEASE

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ARTISTIC DIRECTOR, DAVID MUSE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, REBECCA ENDE LICHTENBERG

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STUDIO THEATRE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR ANNOUNCES PLAN TO STEP DOWN IN 2027

Search for David Muse's Successor to Begin in Fall 2025

WASHINGTON, DC — **David Muse**, Studio Theatre's longtime Artistic Director, has announced that he will be leaving the position in late 2027, after what will have been a transformative 17-year tenure in the role.

Muse, who was previously Associate Artistic Director of Shakespeare Theatre Company and succeeded Studio founder Joy Zinoman in 2010, has overseen more than 125 productions at Studio and has directed 26 plays himself. Under his leadership, Studio has cemented its status as one of nation's preeminent homes for contemporary theatre. Muse brought new play development to Studio, launching a robust incubator for new work that has commissioned 40 artists and produced 17 world premieres. Many of those shows have had rich post-Studio lives, including *Lungs* (BAM, Old Vic), *Red Speedo* (New York Theatre Workshop), *Good Bones* (The Public Theater), and *John Proctor is the Villain*, which is currently running on Broadway. He has also emphasized international programming – during his tenure, one third of the plays produced at Studio have been written by writers from abroad, and the company has brought nine international productions to DC.

Muse has cultivated a younger and more diverse audience, brought hundreds of new artists to Studio, and significantly increased artist compensation. He also envisioned and oversaw Studio's largest-ever capital campaign, a \$20M expansion and upgrade of Studio's four-theatre complex which resulted in the creation of the Victor Shargai Theatre, a state-of-the-art fully flexible space that has ushered in a new area of design and production creativity at Studio.

In a letter to Studio patrons, donors, and frequent artistic collaborators, Muse said, "I've accomplished most of what I set out to do here, and I've begun to feel a certain restlessness and hunger for new challenges. I'm also of the mind that jobs like mine shouldn't be forever ones, because theatres are refreshed by new leadership. So I feel like it's time, both for me and for the theatre, to pass on this distinguished baton."

Studio Literary Director Adrien-Alice Hansel, whose time at Studio coincides with Muse's, said, "David came to Studio with a vision for how to expand its tradition of plays with excellent writing, opportunities for indelible performances, and extraordinary design in intimate spaces. David has built Studio's artistic infrastructure and expanded the range of writers and other artists we work with. And personally, having a front-row seat to David's particular mix of curiosity, enthusiasm, and dogged pursuit of artistically satisfying solutions to various producing challenges has been deeply gratifying."

The remaining two seasons of Muse's tenure, like the fifteen prior, promise plenty of acclaimed productions of important contemporary plays. The diverse and vital collection of plays produced during his first fifteen seasons sold almost one million tickets and garnered 156 Helen Hayes nominations.

Studio will undertake a nationwide search to find Muse's successor, under the direction of Studio's board of trustees and Executive Director Rebecca Ende Lichtenberg. Board chair Rob Batarla said, "David will leave Studio in as strong a position, both creatively and commercially, as it has ever been. While he will definitely be missed, we know Studio will continue to thrive."



About Studio Theatre

Studio Theatre is a national leader in the production of contemporary plays. Over 46 years and more than 425 productions, Studio has grown from a company that produced in a single rented theatre to one that owns a multi-venue complex stretching half a city block, but has remained committed to core distinguishing characteristics: deliberately intimate spaces; excellence in acting and design; and seasons that feature many of the most significant playwrights of our time. Studio's seasons are intentionally diverse and eclectic, featuring buzzworthy plays from today's hot writers, groundbreaking world premieres, and reinvigorated contemporary classics, produced and performed by leading local, national, and international artists. Studio also incubates and develops new work, nurtures the next generation of arts leaders, and proactively engages with its community through a wide array of initiatives. Studio is committed to inclusion and access, and makes a concentrated effort to proactively dismantle barriers that have excluded people from joyful participation in our art form. Studio's location, rich history, unique venues, and commitment to artistry have made it a regional landmark, where audiences find the best that contemporary theatre has to offer.

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Header photo: David Muse with the playwright and company of *John Proctor is the Villain*.



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