

PRESS RELEASE

STUDIO
THEATRE

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DATE: June 16, 2020

UPDATE ON STUDIO THEATRE'S 2020-2021 SEASON

To ensure the safety of its artists, patrons, and staff during the ongoing uncertainty and threat posed by COVID-19, Studio Theatre will begin presenting subscription programming in January 2021 with a truncated four-play 2020-2021 season. Titles will be announced in the coming months. Studio closed its doors to the public on March 15, 2020, cutting short its production of Antoinette Nwandu's *Pass Over* and canceling productions of *Fun Home* and Abe Kogler world premiere, *Aspen Ideas*.

Because of its shifting season, Studio plans to run each of its productions for longer periods to allow for low seating capacity in its theatres in observance of social distancing. The Theatre is also exploring the potential for virtual or streamed performances to share its work with more audiences and to accommodate those who would rather wait to return to a traditional theatre space. Additionally, Studio is revisiting Front of House and Concessions protocol, changing how it operates to create as safe an environment as possible for patrons, artists, and staff.

Changes are being made in accordance with Mayor Muriel Bowser's ReOpen DC plan, as well as national best practices put forth by industry organizations, Equity and theatre union representation, and public health experts, such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Patrons have been notified of pending changes to the 2020-2021 season.

"Studio will be a very different place in the 2020-2021 season," said Artistic Director David Muse. "In planning next season, we're having to navigate a host of factors—artist availability, the Mayor's reopening guidelines, Equity regulations, financial feasibility, and how to reconcile live theatre with social distancing—and these things don't always line up. It's difficult, but our team is up to the challenge and exploring all options as we rebuild a season that is distinctly Studio."

"The world is changing so quickly these days, we're doing our best to pivot as needed to implement best practices so that we can begin presenting live theatre as soon as it's safe to do so. We have been heartened by the support of our patrons and subscribers, and hope they'll stick with us," said Managing Director Rebecca Ende Lichtenberg. "Our whole industry is different now than it was a few months ago, and like theatres across the country, Studio is having to revisit how it does business."

Due to the severe financial impact of COVID-19, Studio has also been forced to downsize its operations and eliminate several staff positions beginning in July. In addition, staff will be furloughed in July, with some furloughs extending into the fall when Studio can resume normal business operations.

ABOUT STUDIO THEATRE

Studio Theatre is Washington's premier venue for contemporary theatre, "where local audiences will find today's edgiest playwrights" (*Variety*). One of the most respected mid-sized theatres in the country, Studio produces exceptional contemporary drama in deliberately intimate spaces. Drawing inspiration from great ensembles—where people work together with a spirit of generosity and professional rigor—Studio brings characteristic thoughtfulness and daring to its work onstage and off, through its new work incubator and engagement, education, and workforce training initiatives. Studio serves nearly 75,000 people each year, including more than 1,000 youth and young adults through community engagement initiatives. Founded in 1978, the quality of Studio's work has been recognized by sustained community support, as well as 72 Helen Hayes Awards for excellence in professional theatre.

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