

PRESS RELEASE

# The Studio Theatre

THE STUDIO THEATRE. THE STUDIO 2NDSTAGE. THE STUDIO THEATRE ACTING CONSERVATORY. 1501 FOURTEENTH STREET, NW, WASHINGTON, DC 20005. WASHINGTON DC

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## THE 2009-2010 SEASON: THE YEAR IN REVIEW

- Ten Works Produced: Five Plays, Two Special Events and Three 2ndStage Projects
- Joy Zinoman Announces Retirement for End of 2009-10 Season
- After Nationwide Search, The Studio Theatre Chooses David Muse as New Artistic Director
- Fiscal Year 2009 Ends with \$503,000 Surplus
- Two-Year, \$2.5 Million *Upgrading Connections* Capital Campaign Completed
- The Studio Theatre Acting Conservatory Celebrates 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

The 2009-2010 season was one of the most exciting seasons in The Studio Theatre's history. In its four theatres, The Studio Theatre produced a season astonishingly diverse in nature with unequalled performances and superior production values. With ten productions exploring big business, familial relationships, desire, the nature of beauty and mortality, the Studio presented a season of theatre that wasn't afraid to ask challenging and timely questions. It was also a landmark year in The Studio Theatre's history, a year full of major announcements and celebrations.

### HIGHLIGHTS OF THE 2009-2010 SEASON

#### JOY ZINOMAN ANNOUNCES RETIREMENT

#### DAVID MUSE TO SUCCEED ZINOMAN AS ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

After 35 years of unflinching leadership, **Joy Zinoman**, The Studio Theatre's Founding Artistic Director, announced her retirement, effective September 1, 2010. From there, a nationwide search began as The Studio Theatre simultaneously celebrated the Founding Artistic Director's legacy with a series of memory-filled parties. The search came to a successful close with the exhilarating announcement that **David Muse**, a director well known to Washington theatre, would succeed Zinoman as the next artistic director, immediately following her retirement.

#### THE 2009-2010 SEASON STATS

The Studio Theatre's 2009-2010 Season featured 454 performances in 48 weeks of production, with 18 weeks of extension. Subscriptions reached a record high with 7,004 people subscribing. Total paid attendance surpassed 64,500 with over \$2,636,000 in total ticket sales for the year.

#### THE 2009-2010 SEASON

The Studio Theatre forged ahead into a new decade with an irresistible and irreverent season of plays. The season featured work by a slate of great 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century playwrights: **Harold Pinter**, **Howard Teichmann**, **George S. Kaufman**, **Tarell Alvin McCraney**, **Neil LaBute** and **David Mamet**.

Numerous playwrights visited The Studio Theatre and The Studio 2ndStage, long known as an artistic home for contemporary writers. **Tarell Alvin McCraney** attended *In the Red and Brown Water*; composer **Joshua Schmidt** attended *Adding Machine: A Musical*, directed by its co-writer **Jason Loewith**; and **John Epperson** (a.k.a. **Lypsinka**) starred in his adaptation of **James Kirkwood's** *Legends!* For The Studio 2ndStage **Dan LeFranc** saw his *Sixty Miles to Silver Lake*, while **Stew** and **Heidi Rodewald** attended *Passing Strange*. Additionally, **Judith Teichmann Steckler**, daughter of *The Solid Gold Cadillac's* **Howard Teichmann** attended a revival of her father's play.

#### THE 09-10 SEASON BEGINS WITH THE POETIC MOONLIGHT

The 2009-2010 season opened with a powerful meditation on loss and mortality with **Joy Zinoman's** haunting production of Harold Pinter's poetic *Moonlight*. Studio Theatre favorite **Ted van Griethuysen** starred as a man haunted by regret and his imminent death. *Metro Weekly* extolled that the production was, "full of powerful performances. Van Griethuysen is fantastic!"

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### THE SOLID GOLD CADILLAC BRINGS THE LAUGHS

The season continued with a hilarious send up of big business, *The Solid Gold Cadillac*, by

Howard Teichmann and George S. Kaufman. **Nancy Robinette** delighted audiences as a small-time investor taking on a team of corrupt executives in **Paul Mullins**'s charming production. *The Examiner* called *The Solid Gold Cadillac*, "Brilliant! Timely! Right on the Mark!"

### IN THE RED AND BROWN WATER TAKES WASHINGTON BY STORM

**Serge Seiden**'s stirring production of *In the Red and Brown Water* was the second play in **Tarell Alvin McCraney**'s landmark trilogy, *The Brother/Sister Plays*, to appear at The Studio Theatre. Filled with music and fiery passion, this production stayed with the audience long after the final curtain call. With *The Washington Post* claiming it was, "Superb! Incandescent! ELECTRIC!," it's no wonder *In the Red and Brown Water* extended multiple times.

### REASONS TO BE PRETTY BECOMES A RUNAWAY HIT

New Artistic Director **David Muse** took on **Neil LaBute**'s searing comedy, *Reasons to Be Pretty*, which had the audience gasping and howling with laughter night after night. In LaBute's third play exploring the American obsession with physical beauty, one of LaBute's male protagonists finally "grew up." Peter Marks of *The Washington Post* called *Reasons to Be Pretty*, "A juicy little hit—LABUTE AT HIS BEST!"

### SEASON WRAPS UP WITH MAMET'S MASTERWORK AMERICAN BUFFALO

In her final production as Founding Artistic Director, **Joy Zinoman** was joined by all four resident designers – **Russell Metheny**, **Michael Giannitti**, **Helen Q. Huang**, **Gil Thompson** – to transform the Milton Theatre into Don's Resale Shop for **David Mamet**'s contemporary classic, *American Buffalo*. This lauded production featured **Edward Gero**, **Peter Allas** and **Jimmy Davis** in three unforgettable performances. *Washington City Paper* exclaimed that *American Buffalo* as, "one of the finest acts of theatre you're likely to see this year!"

### SPECIAL EVENTS

In 2009-2010, The Studio Theatre produced two very different, yet equally exciting productions in its Special Events series. Directed by **Jason Loewith**, one of its two writers (along with composer **Joshua Schmidt**) *Adding Machine: A Musical* chilled and thrilled audiences in its raw production in Stage 4. The production went on to receive multiple Helen Hayes Award nominations including Outstanding Resident Musical. **Lypsinka** returned to The Studio Theatre in a hilarious new adaptation of **James Kirkwood**'s *Legends!* With Lypsinka and acclaimed actor **James Lecesne** playing two aging Hollywood divas, *Legends!* was the comedy event of the summer!

### THE STUDIO 2NDSTAGE

The Studio 2ndStage continued its tradition of producing raw, unconventional and risky productions. The season opened with **Rahaleh Nassri**'s production of *That Face*, the U.S. introduction of British playwrighting phenom, **Polly Stenham**, shortly before the play's premiere in New York. The quirky *Sixty Miles to Silver Lake* by rising American playwright **Dan LeFranc**, directed by **Serge Seiden**, took audiences on a wild father-son road trip. The Studio 2ndStage season came to a powerful close with **Keith Alan Baker** and **Victoria Joy Murray**'s production of *Passing Strange*, a dazzling and critically acclaimed rock musical by musicians **Stew** and **Heidi Rodewald**. The wildly popular production - the first revival since its Broadway run, and the first production without its original star and creator - proved that *Passing Strange* can have a life after Stew.

### UPGRADING CONNECTIONS, \$2.5 MILLION TECHNOLOGY AND CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS CAMPAIGN COMPLETED

At the close of the 2007-2008 season, The Studio Theatre announced that it would implement *Upgrading Connections*, a two-year \$2.5 million capital campaign to enhance the Theatre's technological capabilities and allow it to set artistic and production standards for tomorrow. Now, just two years later, this incredible campaign is successfully complete.

The first year of the campaign saw the purchase and implementation of Tessitura, a newly-integrated database. The Theatre developed a new website, installed new servers and made computer upgrades. The lighting and sound capabilities received numerous technical upgrades and great strides were made in the greening of The Studio Theatre as it became 100% powered by wind energy.

In the second year of the campaign, the dynamic new website expanded and a new telecommunications system was installed. The Mead Theatre underwent a renovation, designed by Russell Metheny; new risers, carpeting and step lights were installed. Additions to the Metheny grid, the overhead light-hanging structure, were incorporated, allowing for expanded artistic possibilities in lighting and set design. New ventilation systems were installed in the shops, increasing the health and well-being of The Studio Theatre's staff. Additionally, The Studio Theatre continued to find new ways to make the Theatre's

numerous buildings more energy efficient through the use of LED light bulbs, a more efficient heating system in apprentice housing and increased recycling efforts.

#### UNDERWRITERS PROVIDE MAJOR SUPPORT FOR ARTISTIC PROGRAMMING

The 2009-2010 Season was produced with underwriting support provided by the following:

- *The Money Plays* (*Adding Machine: A Musical*, *The Solid Gold Cadillac* and *American Buffalo*) were generously underwritten by **Jaylee Mead**, with additional underwriting from **Joan and David Maxwell** and **Steve and Linda Skalet**. Additional support was received from **Gerald and Laura Rosberg**, **Jerry and Patti Sowalsky** and **Henry von Eichel**.
- *Moonlight* was produced with generous underwriting from two Anonymous Donors.
- *In the Red and Brown Water* was produced with generous underwriting from **David and Helen Kenney**.
- *Reasons to Be Pretty* was produced with generous underwriting from **Susan and Dixon Butler**, with additional underwriting from **David and Jean Grier**. Additional support was received from **Kate Perry and George Dellinger**.
- *American Buffalo* was produced with underwriting from **Stanley and Rosemary Marcuss**.
- The Studio 2ndStage Season was produced with generous underwriting from **A. Fenner Milton**. Additional support for *Passing Strange* was provided by **Donald and Nancy Bliss** and **The Meredith Foundation**.

#### ACTING CONSERVATORY

The Studio Theatre Acting Conservatory celebrated its 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary during the 2009-2010 season with teacher training, new instructors, development of new class materials and the integration of the Tessitura database. It was announced that **Roma Rogers** will take over as Director of the Conservatory following Joy Zinoman's retirement. Ms. Zinoman will continue as Director of Curriculum and Master Teacher, training teachers and developing the curriculum.

This year, The Studio Theatre Acting Conservatory maintained its high level of enrollment, as 570 students participated in 64 classes and 4 workshops taught by 21 teachers over three semesters.

*Youth-On-Stage* introduced 50 young people to dramatic literature, developed their basic acting skills and instilled in them a love of theatre that will last a lifetime. In this rigorous, disciplined program, youth lacking the financial resources to pursue formal theatre training were offered free placement to work side-by-side with paying students from a diversity of backgrounds. The Young Actors' Program included classes during Fall, Spring and Summer Intensive semesters. It included 87 students over the three semesters.

#### ARTS MOTIVATING YOUTH (A.M.Y) OPENS YOUNG IMAGINATIONS

The Studio Theatre's youth programs reached hundreds of DC's disadvantaged young people, instilling the joy of self-expression and expanding young peoples' communication skills through actor training, in-class study and free performances of Studio Theatre productions.

*Passport to the Imagination* prepared over 600 local high school students to attend free matinees of Tarell Alvin McCraney's *In the Red and Brown Water* and David Mamet's *American Buffalo* with in-class lessons and study guides. Each performance was followed by a discussion with members of the artistic team and the performers.

#### APPRENTICES GAIN PROFESSIONAL THEATRE EXPERIENCE

The Studio Theatre's Apprentice Program is a rigorous and rewarding 50-week opportunity for on-the-job career training and experience. It is designed to enhance students' education by providing invaluable real-life work that helps to bridge the gap between experience in the academic theatre and a career in professional theatre. With the chance to work alongside the finest professionals, the program is dedicated to early career development in specific areas of specialization, with additional education in all areas of the theatre. In the 2009-10 Season, ten recent college graduates from across the country came to The Studio Theatre to participate in this program.

#### FISCAL YEAR ENDS WITH GENERAL-OPERATING SURPLUS

The Studio Theatre will close out Fiscal Year 2010 on August 31, 2010 with a general-operating budget of \$4,782,951 with an earned:unearned income ratio of 65:35 and a major year-end surplus of \$503,000. \$192,000 of the surplus came from selling Combined Lot Development rights to Washington-area real estate developers, JBG Companies.

FALL BENEFIT, *A NIGHT OF A THOUSAND JOYS* GALA, *JOY RIDE* FAREWELL TRIBUTE  
Guided by Board Chair **Susan L. Butler**, Special Events Chair **Liz Cullen**, and Board Members **Nancy Abeles**, **Irene Harriet Blum**, **Vincent Brown**, **Jon Danforth** and **Linda Skalet**, hundreds of people gathered to support The Studio Theatre at three fundraising events.

#### *Fall Benefit*

Prior to attending a special performance of Joshua Schmidt and Jason Loewith's *Adding Machine: A Musical* on October 14, 2009, Benefit guests gathered at Logan Circle restaurant, **Commissary**, for dinner. Following the performance, guests gathered in The Studio Theatre's soaring atrium for a post-performance dessert party, catered by **Eatonville Restaurant**, with the actors, director/playwright and musicians.

#### *A Night of a Thousand Joys and Joy Ride Farewell Tribute*

The Studio Theatre's 2010 Annual Gala, *A Night of a Thousand Joys*, honored Founding Artistic Director Joy Zinoman. Even a raging blizzard couldn't stop revelers as champagne and cocktails flowed. Entertainment and dancing went long into the night at this glamorous once-in-a-lifetime event. Entertainment was provided by theatre, film and television star **Tracie Thoms**, and featured a special appearance by the unparalleled **Lypsinka**.

*Joy Ride*, A Farewell Tribute, took place on July 26, 2010 to honor the legacy of Joy Zinoman. Partygoers enjoyed dinner, entertainment, dancing and a tribute film celebrating Zinoman's life and career. Studio Theatre friends, family, actors, designers, staff and Board toasted the outgoing Founding Artistic Director. Board Chair Susan L. Butler, announced that the city will rename the 14<sup>th</sup> and P-Street intersection outside of The Studio Theatre "Joy Zinoman Way."

These special events raised more than \$400,000 to support The Studio Theatre's Capital Campaign, artistic work, The Studio Theatre Acting Conservatory, the new Master Teacher Chair and outreach programs.

#### STUDIO WELCOMES NEW BOARD AND STAFF MEMBERS

The Studio Theatre proudly welcomed new Board of Trustees Members **Nancy Abeles**, **Jean Grier**, **Leonade Jones**, **Stanley Marcuss**, **Virginia A. McArthur** and **Orville A. Smith**.

Joining The Studio Theatre production department were **Charlie Olson** as Technical Director, **Mike Donohue** as Master Carpenter, **Deb Thomas** as Properties Master and **Jennifer Harris** as Assistant Production Manager in the production department.

Joining the administrative staff were **Nick Torres** as Information Technology Director, **David Harvey** as Information Technology Assistant, **Jen Goldsmith** as Development Grant Writer, **Lauren Reynolds** as PR/Marketing Assistant, **Hunter Styles** as Subscriptions Manager, **Aviva Pressman** as Administrative Assistant, and **Alvin Ford** as Box Office Manager.

#### SERVING OUR COMMUNITY

In addition to the artistically-ambitious season, in 2009-10 The Studio Theatre continued its award-winning commitment to the city and the neighborhood it calls home. Throughout the season, alongside The Studio Theatre's own productions, important community events were held in its theatres, lobbies and atrium.

The Studio Theatre helps improve the lives of people throughout the region by supporting the work of more than 200 not-for-profit social service agencies, and donating tickets valued at over \$200,000. Providing Community Space allows not-for-profit community groups and arts organizations to use The Studio Theatre's facilities for free, such as the D.C. Hip Hop Theatre Festival. Additionally, the Capital Fringe Festival and Kyogen both took up residencies at The Studio Theatre. The latter was presented by The Japan Foundation by the esteemed Sengoro Shigeyama Family during the 2010 National Cherry Blossom Festival.

The Studio Theatre's *Studio District Neighborhood Initiative* provided low-to-moderate income residents of Washington's Logan Circle/Shaw neighborhood with increased access to The Studio Theatre's plays and programs throughout the year, forging a cohesive urban community centered around the neighborhood's cultural hub, The Studio Theatre. Through *Studio District Nights*, people who live or work in the *Studio District* could purchase tickets for only \$10.

## THE STUDIO THEATRE INFORMATION:

The Studio Theatre is Washington's premiere venue for contemporary theatre and is **“where local audiences will find today's edgiest playwrights...a place for innovation,”** according to *Variety*. The Studio Theatre's mission is to produce the best in contemporary theatre. Its restless, innovative spirit makes it a leader both in Washington DC and in the nation.

Artist-founded and artist-driven, The Studio Theatre demands the highest quality production values, bringing audiences provocative writing along with unparalleled artistry in performance, directing and design. The Studio Theatre was founded in 1978 by Joy Zinoman, whose recent work has been called **“riveting,” “beautifully orchestrated”** and **“inspired”** by *The Washington Post*. David Muse was named Artistic Director of The Studio Theatre, beginning with the 2010-2011 season, following Zinoman's retirement. Before being named Artistic Director, Muse had great directorial successes with The Studio Theatre and beyond. The leadership team also includes Keith Alan Baker, Managing Director/Artistic Director, 2ndStage; Serge Seiden, Associate Producing Artistic Director; and Morey B. Epstein, Executive Director of Institutional Development. In 2004, The Studio Theatre opened a new four-theatre complex, a major landmark that anchors the 14th Street Arts District. The four-theatre complex with its soaring atrium was quickly hailed as **“a magnificent theatre space that promises more memorable evenings to come”** (*Washington City Paper*). The Studio 2ndStage creates edgy, explosive and electrifying productions that complement The Studio Theatre's season. *The Washington Post* proclaimed that 2ndStage **“has long been a playground for...directors and actors (and naturally, some of its riskier experiments)”** and that a **“convention-defying approach informs many 2ndStage offerings.”** The Studio Theatre provides opportunities for developing theatre artists as year-long apprentices. The Studio Theatre Acting Conservatory offers rigorous professional theatre training in close partnership with the working artists at The Studio Theatre. Now in its 35<sup>th</sup> year, it has been called **“the area's premiere professional training facility for actors and directors”** by *Variety*. The Conservatory has trained over 8,000 actors and directors, now performing on Broadway, Off Broadway and in theatre and film across the country. The Studio Theatre is deeply invested in the eclectic vitality of its community.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

**Accessibility:** All performances are fully accessible to accommodate patrons with special needs. FM listening assistive system available. Call for schedule of sign-interpreted performances. Accessible seats available by reservation. Call the Box Office at 202-332-3300 or V/TTY 202-667-8436.

**Location:** 1501 14<sup>th</sup> Street, NW (Northeast corner of 14<sup>th</sup> and P Streets).

**Parking:** Please call the Box Office for parking information.

**Metro Stops:** Red Line: Dupont Circle, Orange/Blue Lines: McPherson Square, and Green Line: U Street/Cardozo.

**Contact Information:** Tickets: 202-332-3300 V/TTY: 202-667-8436 Fax: 202-332-1187  
Administration: 202-232-7267 Admin. Fax: 202-588-5262

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