

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

TELEPHONE 202.232.7267. BOX OFFICE 202.332.3300. FAX 202.588.5262. WEB STUDIOTHEATRE.ORG. EMAIL STUDIO@STUDIOTHEATRE.ORG

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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DATE: September 17, 2009

JOY ZINOMAN TO RETIRE AFTER 35 YEARS. THE STUDIO THEATRE'S FOUNDING ARTISTIC DIRECTOR WILL STEP DOWN AFTER 2009-2010 SEASON.

Joy Zinoman, the Founding Artistic Director, has announced that she will retire from The Studio Theatre on September 1, 2010. Her departure will come at the end of the 2009-2010 season, after an astonishing 35 years at the helm of The Studio Theatre and The Studio Theatre Acting Conservatory. The decision was initially announced to the staff and board members at the Annual Retreat four years ago.

Zinoman commented on her departure from The Studio Theatre by saying, "This has been a difficult decision. Running The Studio Theatre has always been exhilarating and fulfilling, and I could not be prouder of the legacy I am leaving behind. But the job is a round-the-clock, seven-days-a-week responsibility. I believe it is time for me to start a more rational life—to have time free for myself and for my family."

"A dynamic new artistic director," Zinoman continued, "will keep The Studio Theatre fresh and vital in the years to come. I am leaving it at a time of extraordinary artistic excellence and great financial stability. As much as this is the right time for me to retire, I will miss The Studio Theatre terribly."

For the past 35 years, Zinoman has presided over profound changes—at The Studio Theatre and in the Washington DC theatre scene in general—and has been one of the driving forces behind those seismic shifts. When Zinoman began The Studio Theatre, the nation's capital was a profoundly different place. The first elected mayor was only a few years into his first term, the scars of the 1968 race riots were dramatically apparent in burnt-out buildings and abandoned neighborhoods and the city had almost no opportunities for professional theatre artists. With less than a handful of theatres, cultural offerings for DC residents were extremely limited. As *The Washington Post's* James Lardner writes, "In the 1960s the professional theatre in Washington was a meager thing indeed. Given the miserable history of such efforts," he continues, "The Studio Theatre's success has been flabbergasting."

When Zinoman founded The Studio Theatre with designer Russell Metheny, she kicked off a theatre boom. Today, there are 76 theatres included in the Helen Hayes Awards for excellence in Washington theatre. Clearly a theatrical trailblazer, Zinoman received accolades for her artistic work from the start. The *Post's* Don Shirley noted in the 1970s, "The Studio Theatre got off to an auspicious beginning with [Zinoman's] sterling production of *The Rimers of Eldritch*." Three decades later, in 2009, Zinoman was honored with the inaugural Mayor's Arts Award for Visionary Leadership in the Arts.

Audiences soon flocked to The Studio Theatre to see bold new interpretations of contemporary work by Neil LaBute, Tom Stoppard, Caryl Churchill, William Finn, Harold Pinter, Suzan-Lori Parks and Martin McDonagh. The Studio Theatre was the first area producer of the work of August Wilson, Terrence McNally, Kenneth Lonergan, Lypsinka and Ricky Jay, and consistently demonstrated a commitment to reinventing classics such as *Waiting for Godot* and *The Three Sisters*. The Studio Theatre has also been a home for international work, which has included last year's Welsh reading series, a season devoted to contemporary Russian plays, early productions of Peking Opera and the Indian epic *Shakuntala*. Zinoman has also championed great Irish writers like Conor McPherson, Sebastian Barry and Mark O'Rowe.

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Over the years, Zinoman's programming has included new work from nationally renowned theatre artists such as David Cale, Paul Zaloom, *The Civilians*, Dael Orlandersmith and rainpan 43. In the 1980s, the *Post's* Joe Brown called the work of The Studio Theatre "a triumph." Today, The Studio Theatre consistently fills its four theatres, with approximately 70,000 people now attending each year. Additionally, The Studio Theatre has 7,000 subscribers.

Over the past three decades, The Studio Theatre has grown from its pilot season of three productions to ten annual productions. It has been recognized for artistic work at the highest level, receiving 11 Helen Hayes Awards for Outstanding Production of a Play or Musical in the 25-year history of the Awards. Zinoman has received two Awards for Outstanding Direction, for Stoppard's *Indian Ink* and Churchill's *A Number*. The *Post's* Peter Marks extols, "director Joy Zinoman dips rewardingly into the wellspring of emotional truth."

The Studio Theatre has anchored the striking revitalization of the Logan Circle area, and today, owns three buildings—totaling 60,000 square feet—at the epicenter of this neighborhood. After an award-winning renovation, The Studio Theatre's four-theatre, 900-seat complex contains stunning public spaces, full production shops, administrative offices and classrooms—all under one roof. The Studio Theatre also owns two buildings and 16 apartments for visiting artists and apprentices, all within walking distance of the Theatre.

Started on a shoestring—just \$10,000—the Studio impressed critics. In the early '90s, *The Washington Post's* Lloyd Rose declared, "the small-budget Studio Theatre [stands] shoulder-to-shoulder with the giants." Now, The Studio Theatre has a general operating budget of over \$5 million, assets of \$25 million, management funds of \$5 million and a current technology and capital improvements upgrade campaign totaling \$2.5 million. Zinoman has established a precedent for financial stability, regularly securing 65 percent of income from earned revenue. The 2008-2009 fiscal year just ended with a surplus of over \$500,000.

Susan L. Butler, Chair of the Board of Trustees comments, "Joy Zinoman is without a doubt one of the seminal theatre figures of Washington DC. She has been a beloved and visionary leader of The Studio Theatre and we will miss her deeply. We have had the great fortune to benefit from her extraordinary artistic sensibility, her wise guidance and her inspirational leadership. We salute and thank her for her remarkable accomplishments and significant contributions to The Studio Theatre, to Washington DC and to American theatre. We are grateful beyond measure and will miss her profoundly."

Zinoman's extensive résumé justifies Butler's enthusiasm. She has directed almost 70 productions within the three production wings of The Studio Theatre—The Studio Theatre season, Special Events and the Studio 2ndStage—including the current production of Harold Pinter's *Moonlight*. She has received the Washingtonian of the Year Award, *The Washington Post* Award for Innovative Leadership in the Theatre Community and the Mayor's Arts Awards for Excellence in an Artistic Discipline, and for Excellence in Service to the Arts. She also received the *Star Tribune* Critics Award for Outstanding Director for the Minneapolis run of *Topdog/Underdog* at Mixed Blood Theatre Company. She was honored with the 2000 Arts Founders Award from the Cultural Alliance of Greater Washington and in February 2003, Zinoman was named a WETA Hometown Hero. Consistently, *The Washingtonian* magazine has named her one of the *100 Most Powerful Women in Washington*.

Currently serving as the Director of The Studio Theatre Acting Conservatory, Zinoman will continue as the Director of Curriculum and as Master Teacher, training new instructors and leading classes. The Acting Conservatory has trained over 8,000 actors and directors, many of whom are working at all levels in Washington DC theatres. The Studio Theatre has received 28 Helen Hayes Awards for Outstanding Performance and is known for the powerful acting in its intimate theatres. Hundreds of Conservatory students, who have included Isabel Keating, Veanne Cox, Cotter Smith and Oliver Platt, have gone on to national careers in theatre, film and television.

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During this transition year, The Studio Theatre will conduct a nationwide search for a new director, while Zinoman remains fully active as Artistic Director. The Studio's core management, Keith Alan Baker, Managing Director and Artistic Director of 2ndStage; Serge Seiden, Associate Producing Artistic Director; and Morey B. Epstein, Executive Director of Institutional Development will continue with the Theatre.

Phillips Oppenheim, a national leader in nonprofit executive searches, will assist The Studio Theatre with this leadership transition. During the search, applications and nominations should be submitted to the attention of Becky Klein and Mark Tarnacki at studio@phillipsoppenheim.com.

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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. Founded in 1978, The Studio Theatre is led by the driving force of Joy Zinoman, Founding Artistic Director, whose recent work has been called **“riveting,” “beautifully orchestrated”** and **“inspired”** by *The Washington Post*; along with Keith Alan Baker, Managing Director/Artistic Director, 2ndStage; Serge Seiden, Associate Producing Artistic Director; and Morey B. Epstein, Executive Director of Institutional Development. The Studio 2ndStage creates edgy, explosive, extreme 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 35th 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 community and in neighborhood revitalization.

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 14th Street, NW (Northeast corner of 14th 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
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