



NEWS RELEASE

*For More Information Please Contact:*

Brett Murray  
bmurray@stagesstlouis.org  
636.449.5773

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## DON AND NANCY ROSS TO BE HONORED AT STAGES ST. LOUIS 2021 APPLAUSE GALA



(ST. LOUIS) – STAGES St. Louis is thrilled to announce that Don & Nancy Ross will be honored at the 2021 Applause Gala to be held on Friday, November 5 at The Kirkwood Performing Arts Center.

Don & Nancy have made an indelible mark on the arts community in St. Louis, MO supporting a number of both performing and fine arts organizations. In 2021, their mark expanded to include the crown jewel of the state-of-the-art Kirkwood Performing Arts Center, the 529-seat Ross Family Theatre, new home to all mainstage productions for STAGES St. Louis.

“When you think of philanthropy and the arts community in St. Louis, you think of Don & Nancy Ross,” said Mosbacher Family Executive Producer Jack Lane. “During our 20221 Season thousands of patrons have walked through the doors of The Ross Family Theatre at The Kirkwood Performing Arts Center and been wowed by the artistry, the attention to detail, and the intimacy. Without Don & Nancy, that would not have been possible. I cannot think of a better couple to receive this special honor at this year’s Applause Gala.”

In 2021 STAGES St. Louis is celebrating its 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Season, as well as its inaugural season in its new artistic home at The Kirkwood Performing Arts Center. Home to The Ross Family Theatre, the state-of-the-art facility is also home to a flexible and immersive black box theatre, dual-level lobby, event space, and more. The Kirkwood Performing Arts Center will play home to the Applause Gala for this first time this year.

“For 35 years, STAGES St. Louis has truly defined Broadway-Quality in the St. Louis area,” said Don Ross. “Seeing what this the organization can do in their new home and hearing what they plan to do, we are thrilled to be honored on this very special evening and play a part in the future of the arts here in St. Louis.”

The 2021 Applause Gala will take place on Friday, November 5 and will take guests on an evening-long tour of the new space, including:

- Silent auction, cocktails, and a look at STAGES’ history in the Black Box Theatre and Event Space beginning at 6:30pm.
- Welcome and 3-course dinner on both the orchestra and mezzanine levels of the lobby at 8:00pm.
- Live and sponsorship auction as well as a special performance from the STAGES Performing Arts Academy at 9:00pm.
- Entertainment starring Broadway Legend and Tony Award Winner Beth Leavel onstage in The Ross Family Theater at 9:30pm, where Beth will be bringing her 54 Below cabaret act from New York to St. Louis for the very first time.

“After closing our first season in The Ross Family Theatre, I think everyone at STAGES can agree that this space is home” said Associate Producer Andrew Kuhlman. “When planning for an event looking back on 35 years of musical theatre magic in St. Louis, we wanted to host a true celebration! And we all knew that celebration would not be happening without the support of Don & Nancy Ross.”

Table sponsorships and single tickets for the 2021 Applause Gala are still available for purchase starting at \$300. Please contact the STAGES St. Louis Development Office at 636.449.5776 to purchase. Please visit us online at [StagesStLouis.org/SpecialEvents](https://StagesStLouis.org/SpecialEvents) for more information.

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*STAGES St. Louis is the region's foremost not-for-profit company committed to preserving and advancing the art form of Musical Theatre through excellence in performance and education. This year, STAGES celebrates its 35<sup>th</sup> year of producing Broadway-quality theatre, as well as the grand opening of our new home, The Ross Family Theatre at The Kirkwood Performing Arts Center.*

*STAGES Performing Arts Academy is regionally renowned for its innovative and multi-disciplinary programs that transform lives through immersion in the Musical Theatre arts. Celebrating its 16th year, it is also the only such program in the St. Louis region to be connected to a professional theatre company. Whatever the age or experience level, whether a new or continuing student, aspiring performing artists throughout the St. Louis region have the opportunity to explore and cultivate their talent at STAGES, and set the stage for life changing experiences. For more information or to register today please call 636.449.5775 or visit us online at [www.StagesStLouis.org](http://www.StagesStLouis.org).*

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