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STAGES ST. LOUIS RECEIVES MAJOR CONTRIBUTION FROM MARY STRAUSS



(November 1, 2021) St. Louis philanthropist Mary Strauss has made a generous contribution to STAGES St. Louis to name The Black Box Theatre at The Kirkwood Performing Arts Center which will now be known as The Strauss Black Box Theatre.

“The generosity of Mary Strauss to the St. Louis community is legendary.” said Jack Lane, Executive Producer of STAGES St. Louis. “This incredibly special gift to name the Kirkwood Performing Arts Center Black Box Theatre will no doubt resonate for decades to come.”

Mary and Jack met in 1986, a year before STAGES St. Louis had its inaugural season, when the doors of the Strauss home were opened wide for a first visit. Thirty-five years later, Strauss remains a steadfast supporter and mentor of STAGES.

“For the past 35 years, I have supported and watched STAGES grow from a small professional theatre to a venue for pre-Broadway musicals,” said Strauss. “With the opening of the Kirkwood Performing Arts Center, including a Black Box space, I saw this as opportunity as an ongoing way to help nurture the future of St. Louis performing arts.”

The Black Box Theatre has quickly become one of the most compelling performing arts spaces in St. Louis. “The magnificence of the “blank slate” design leaves the space open to all forms of performance,” said Lane. “Unlike any performance space in St. Louis, the very essence of the Black Box Theatre design beckons creativity in its highest form. From theatre for young audience productions to off-Broadway shows to dance to cabaret to jazz to workshops of new plays and musicals, The Strauss Black Box Theatre will become an artistic jumping off point for both local and national productions. The Strauss Black Box Theatre has the absolute power to change the face of the arts in St. Louis.”

Kirkwood Mayor Tim Griffin said: “The City of Kirkwood is deeply indebted and grateful to Mary Strauss for this incredible gift. Great art will happen in The Strauss Black Box Theatre, and we are deeply moved by this extraordinary gesture from such a remarkable woman.”

STAGES St. Louis

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. For 35 years, STAGES has built upon that mission and achieved the well-earned reputation of being called “Broadway in St. Louis”. With over 1.5 million lives touched by STAGES Artistic and Education programs since opening in 1987. In 2021, STAGES celebrates its 35th Anniversary Season of producing Broadway-quality theatre, presenting 140 performances from June through October to nearly 50,000 patrons. For more information, <https://stagesstlouis.org/>

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