

Studio 180 Theatre Announces Mark McGrinder as New Artistic Director

Toronto, ON - October 13, 2023 – Studio 180 Theatre today announced the appointment of company co-founder, theatre artist and director **Mark McGrinder** as Studio 180's new Artistic Director, following the retirement of Founding Artistic Director **Joel Greenberg** this past June. Mark officially stepped into the role on October 12 for Studio 180's 2023/2024 season opener, a Studio 180 IN DEVELOPMENT reading of *Discount Dave and the Fix* by Rebecca Auerbach.

"The role of Artistic Director is nothing short of pivotal," said **Matthew Emek**, Chair of the Board, Studio 180 Theatre. "They're the creative visionary and the heart and soul of a theatre company, guiding the artistic process and inspiring both artists and audiences alike. Upon Joel's retirement announcement, we embarked on an 18-month process to thoughtfully select the person who would lead us into the next exciting chapter of Studio 180's journey. As one of the company's co-founders, Mark has been a valuable member of the team as an actor, director, workshop leader, and most recently, Associate Artistic Director. Mark is a devoted champion of the next generation of Canadian theatre artists, and we are confident that he will continue Studio 180's respected work as a supporter of new plays and a producer of vital mainstage productions."

McGrinder is an actor, writer, and artist educator with decades of experience on both sides of the stage. He is known for championing theatrical work that centres complex ideas and issues through multiple perspectives. He is also dedicated to making space for new playwrights, and his stewardship of Studio 180's IN DEVELOPMENT program has created space for new work by Yolanda Bonnell, Hannah Moscovitch, Rachel Mutombo, Amy Rutherford, Marcel Stewart, Taylor Trowbridge, and many more.

"From day one, Studio 180 has been a collaborative artistic enterprise, focused on connection and conversation," said **McGrinder**. "I'm honoured to take on the Artistic Director role, to continue the incredible offerings we share on stage, and to expand the reach of our new work development program, and our IN CLASS work with students. Studio 180 started out as a collective with our original production of *The Laramie Project* and that collaborative spirit has guided us for the past twenty years. I couldn't feel more confident in the team we have and our capacity to carry the company forward into our third decade of connecting artists and audiences through compelling and necessary stories."

McGrinder's many Studio 180 performing credits include *Oslo*, *The Nether*, *You Will Remember Me*, *Clybourne Park* and *Stuff Happens*. He has been a director and/or dramaturg(e) for many of Studio 180's IN DEVELOPMENT projects and, as the program's coordinator, has worked to connect creators with the appropriate collaborators required to bring their visions to the stage. He adapted and directed *Love, Dishonor, Marry, Die, Cherish, Perish* for PANAMANIA, directed *Standing on Ceremony: The Gay Marriage Plays* and worked as Associate Director for *Blackbird*, *God of Carnage* and Studio 180's 10th Anniversary reading of *The Laramie Project*.

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McGrinder was a member of the acting ensemble at the Shaw Festival for five seasons and he performed in several reviews with The Second City's National touring company. He has been head or co-writer on several collective creations (*Single and Sexy*, *That Artz Show* and *The Berlin Show*) and his play *MacHamlet* was presented as part of the Alumnae Theatre's New Ideas Festival. As an artist educator he has worked with high school, college and university students in and beyond the GTA.

"Mark's appointment as Artistic Director of Studio 180 Theatre is wonderful news, I can't imagine a more seamless transition for the company," said **Founding Artistic Director Joel Greenberg**. "As one of the original five founding members, the creator of 180's new play development program, and as Associate Artistic Director for many seasons, Mark has enriched overall programming with his dedication to collaboration, a hallmark of the company's philosophy. It must also be noted that it was Mark who championed the creation of Studio 180's digital world in 2020. At a time when we could not have imagined our immediate future, Mark was a calm centre and provided exemplary leadership."

Studio 180's 2023/24 season continues in the new year with a Studio 180 IN DEVELOPMENT reading of *Death to the Prometheans* by Camille Intson, directed by 郝邦宇 Steven Hao, and the Canadian premiere of *Four Minutes Twelve Seconds* by James Fritz, directed by Mark McGrinder. Visit studio180theatre.com to learn more.

Studio 180 Theatre's 2023/24 season is made possible through the support of the following funders: BMO Financial Group (Season Sponsor), Zukerman Family Foundation (Founding Patron), RBC Foundation (RBC Emerging Artist Program), with operating support from the Toronto Arts Council and Ontario Arts Council, capacity building support from the Government of Canada, and IN CLASS education support from the Aubrey and Marla Dan Foundation, Patrick and Barbara Keenan Foundation, BridgeWater Family Wealth Services, Gwen and Richard Harvey, and Diane King.

ABOUT STUDIO 180 THEATRE

Studio 180 Theatre is a Toronto-based company with a mission to engage, provoke and entertain through dynamic theatre and innovative Beyond The Stage experiences that delve into social and political issues. Since 2002, Studio 180 Theatre has evolved from an informal artistic collective into one of Toronto's most respected independent professional theatre companies, expanding to include a strong new play development program and an extensive IN CLASS workshop program which engages with 2,000 students annually. *Indecent*, *The Chinese Lady*, *The Laramie Project*, *Stuff Happens*, *Our Class*, *Clybourne Park*, *The Normal Heart*, *The Nether*, and *Oslo*, are among the many plays Studio 180 has produced in the past 20 years.

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