The American Clock
A RADIO PLAY PRESENTATION
BY ARTHUR MILLER
DIRECTED BY ENSEMBLE MEMBER AUSTIN PENDLETON
History, it seems, has a way of repeating. When first broaching the idea of a radio play production of Arthur Miller’s *The American Clock*, the quarantine was still relatively new and the ensemble was looking for ways to stay active and engaged with the theater during the shutdown. A play with over 45 roles and a sweeping scope seemed as though it would provide a great deal of opportunity for ensemble involvement, as well as being an audacious choice for Steppenwolf to pursue in this current moment of social distancing and isolation. Many hands were raised, and Austin agreed to helm, and we were on our way.

Based in part on Studs Terkel’s seminal *Hard Times*, the play’s action spans more than a decade and attempts to capture the complexities and struggles of both individuals and an entire nation clinging desperately to hope as they navigate the trials of The Great Depression. This narrative has, over the course of these past few weeks, become eerily more prescient. Written in 1980, but a reflection of Miller’s experience of growing up in the 30’s, it is written from a position of perspective and specificity that allows for time to be organized vertically, as opposed to horizontally – creating the impression that those moments from the past exist right alongside our present moment. Rather than something that is happening long ago and far away, it is happening...
here and now and the problems – the systems that were designed to maintain a social order - exist now as they did then and continue to create vulnerabilities and struggles for those least able to afford it.

As the play’s action moves us deeper into the Depression, Robertson, who serves as one of our narrators, observes: “Then and now, you have to wonder what really held it all together, and maybe it was simply the Future: the people were still not ready to give it up.” As unemployment numbers rise, economic inequality increases, and shameful racial disparities within our system are once again brought to light, what has been made clear over this rehearsal process is that this ensemble of artists is inspired to engage by their inherent hope in the future. It is an inspiration to see, even virtually, an intergenerational and diverse congregation of our artists working together, inspired by one another, and excited by the future of both the new theater and the next era of theater that it will surely usher in.

We look so forward to the opportunity to bring our collective voices and artistry to work that will lift up and bring our community together. There is much work to be done but I am renewed in my admiration of this ensemble of artists who want nothing more in this moment than to bring their art and work to engage with our community and get back to the work that we do. Our future is together, and we look forward to finding it with you.

Anna D. Shapiro, Artistic Director
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The American Clock

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THEATRE COMPANY PRESENTS

THE AMERICAN CLOCK
A RADIO PLAY PRESENTATION

By Arthur Miller
Directed by Austin Pendleton

FEATURING
Joan Allen†, Kate Arrington†, Ian Barford†, Robert Breuler†, Cliff Chamberlain†, Gary Cole†, Celeste M. Cooper†, Glenn Davis†, Kathryn Erbe†, Audrey Francis†, K. Todd Freeman†, Francis Guinan†, Jon Michael Hill†, Tim Hopper†, Ora Jones†, Terry Kinney†, Tina Landau†, John Malkovich†, Sandra Marquez†, James Vincent Meredith†, Laurie Metcalf†, Amy Morton†, Caroline Neff†, Austin Pendleton†, Jeff Perry†, William Peterson†, Yasen Peyankov†, Molly Regan†, Karen Rodriguez†, Anna D. Shapiro†, Namir Smallwood† and Lois Smith†

HOSTED BY
Carrie Coon†

PRODUCTION
Rob Milburn & Michael Bodeen Sound Design
Jonathan Berry Artistic Producer
Martha Wegener & Gregor Mortis Sound Engineers
Elise Hausken Production Manager
JC Clementz, CSA Casting Director
Laura D. Glenn Production Stage Manager

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Steppenwolf Theatre Company is a constituent of Theatre Communications Group (TCG), the national organization for nonprofit professional theater.
† member of the Steppenwolf Theatre Company ensemble.

STEPPENWOLF 7
CAST (in alphabetical order)

Joan Allen† Judge Bradley
Kate Arrington† Miss Fowler/Doris Gross
Ian Barford† Arthur Clayton/Stanislaus
Robert Breuler† Toland/Grandpa
Cliff Chamberlain† Joe/Henry Taylor
Gary Cole† Arthur A. Robertson
Celeste M. Cooper† Harriet Taylor/Isabel
Glenn Davis† Clarence/Ryan
Kathryn Erbe† Charley/Farmer 1/Rudy
Audrey Francis† Diana Morgan
K. Todd Freeman† Theodore K. Quinn
Francis Guinan† Jesse Livermore/Sheriff
Jon Michael Hill† Lee Baum
Tim Hopper† Ralph
Ora Jones† Irene
Terry Kinney† Brewster
Tina Landau† Bidder #2
John Malkovich† Roosevelt
Sandra Marquez† Dr. Rosman
James Vincent Meredith†
   William Durant/Banks/Isaac
Laurie Metcalf† Fanny Margolies/Mrs. Taylor
Amy Morton† Tony
Caroline Neff† Frank/Edie
Austin Pendleton† Graham
Jeff Perry† Moe Baum
William Peterson† Dugan
Yasen Peyankov† Kapush
Molly Regan† Rose Baum
Karen Rodriguez†
   Frank Howard/Farmer 2/Lucy
Anna D. Shapiro† Bidder #1/Bidder #3
Namir Smallwood† Sidney Margolies
Lois Smith† Lucille

ADDITIONAL STAFF
Carrie Coon† Host

SPECIAL THANKS
Gina Cirone
Erin Cook
Karena Fiorenza
Suzanne Petri
Patrick Zakem

† member of the Steppenwolf Theatre Company ensemble.

THE AMERICAN CLOCK was recorded under a SAG-AFTRA Collective Bargaining Agreement.
LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We recognize that Steppenwolf Theatre sits on Native land. This area is the traditional homelands of the people of the Council of Three Fires, including the Ojibwe, Potawatomi and Odawa. Although for over 200 years Native Nations have been forcibly removed from this territory, we must acknowledge that this land continues to be a site of gathering and healing for more than a dozen other Tribal Nations and remains home to over 100,000 tribal members in the state of Illinois.

WHAT IS A LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT?

A land acknowledgement is a formal statement that recognizes and honors the enduring relationship that exists between Indigenous communities and their traditional homelands. The purpose of recognizing the original inhabitants of this land is to show respect, gratitude and appreciation to those whose land we reside on, as well as raise awareness about histories that are often erased or forgotten. It is important to understand the longstanding history that has brought us to reside on land currently occupied by non-Indigenous communities, and to pursue an understanding of everyone’s place within that history. It is important to note that land acknowledgements do not exist in a past tense: colonialism still lives with us today in various forms, and we hope you join us as we consider and interrogate our present participation.

FOR FURTHER RESOURCES AROUND LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS, PLEASE VISIT:

American Indian Center
www.aicchicago.org

Native Land Digital
https://native-land.ca/about/

Laurier Students’ Public Interest Research Group
A politically-oriented, social justice organization connected to Wilfrid Laurier University (Waterloo, Ontario)
lspirg.org/knowtheland

“Indigenous Land Acknowledgement, Explained”
Teen Vogue Article (February 2018)

We are very grateful to our friends at the American Indian Center—Chicago, specifically Fawn Pochel, for their guidance on Steppenwolf’s new practice around Land Acknowledgements.
Joan Allen (Judge Bradley) recorded from her home in Weston, CT. She has been an ensemble member of Steppenwolf Theatre Company since 1976. Her favorite role at Steppenwolf was Helen in *And a Nightingale Sang.* [Click here to see Joan's full bio.]

Kate Arrington (Miss Fowler, Doris Gross) recorded from Brooklyn, NY. She has been an ensemble member of Steppenwolf Theatre Company since 2007. Her favorite role at Steppenwolf was Bee in *A Parallelogram.* [Click here to see Kate's full bio.]

Ian Barford (Arthur Clayton, Stanislaus) recorded from his office at home. He has been an ensemble member of Steppenwolf Theatre Company since 2007. His favorite role at Steppenwolf was Wheeler in *Linda Vista.* [Click here to see Ian's full bio.]

Robert Breuler (Grandpa, Tolland) recorded from home. He has been an ensemble member of Steppenwolf Theatre Company since 1986. His favorite role at Steppenwolf was Andrei Botvinnik in *A Walk in the Woods.* [Click here to see Robert’s full bio.]

Cliff Chamberlain (Joe, Henry Taylor) recorded from his bedroom in Los Angeles. He has been an ensemble member of Steppenwolf Theatre Company since 2018. There is a three-way tie for his favorite role at Steppenwolf between Mr. Peel in *The Minutes*, Karl/Steve in *Clybourne Park*, and Zack in *Belleville.* [Click here to see Cliff’s full bio.]

Gary Cole (Arthur A. Robertson) recorded from Los Angeles. He has been an ensemble member of Steppenwolf Theatre Company since 1984. His favorite role at Steppenwolf was Scooter in *Traces.* [Click here to see Gary’s full bio.]

Celeste M. Cooper (Harriet Taylor, Isabel) recorded from Chicago, IL. She has been an ensemble member of Steppenwolf Theatre Company since 2018. Her favorite roles at Steppenwolf have been Imani in *BLKS* and Rosie in *The Doppelgänger (an international farce).* [Click here to see Celeste’s full bio.]

Glenn Davis (Clarence, Ryan) recorded from Chicago. He has been an ensemble member of Steppenwolf Theatre Company since 2017. His favorite role at Steppenwolf was Elegba in *The Brother/Sister Plays.* [Click here to see Glenn’s full bio.]

Kathryn Erbe (Rudy, Charley, Farmer 1) recorded from Brooklyn, NY. She has been an ensemble member of Steppenwolf Theatre Company since 1992. Her favorite role at Steppenwolf was Stella in *A Streetcar Named Desire.* [Click here to see Kathryn’s full bio.]

Audrey Francis (Diana Morgan) recorded from Chicago. She has been an ensemble member of Steppenwolf Theatre Company since 2017. Her favorite role at Steppenwolf was Beatrix in *The Doppelgänger (an international farce).* [Click here to see Audrey’s full bio.]

THE AMERICAN CLOCK BIOS

10 Bios
K. Todd Freeman (Theodore K. Quinn) recorded from New York City. He has been an ensemble member of Steppenwolf Theatre Company since 1993. His favorite role at Steppenwolf was Dee in *Downstate*.

[Click here to see K. Todd's full bio.]

Francis Guinan (Jesse Livermore, Sherriff) recorded from Elmhurst, IL. He has been an ensemble member of Steppenwolf Theatre Company since 1978. His favorite role at Steppenwolf was Charlie in *August: Osage County*.

[Click here to see Francis’ full bio.]

Jon Michael Hill (Lee Baum) recorded from NYC. He has been an ensemble member of Steppenwolf Theatre Company since 2007. His favorite role at Steppenwolf was role Franco Wicks in *Superior Donuts*.

[Click here to see Jon's full bio.]

Tim Hopper (Ralph) recorded from Yondorf Hall. He has been an ensemble member of Steppenwolf Theatre Company since 1988. His favorite role at Steppenwolf was Sean in *Your Home in the West*.

[Click here to see Tim’s full bio.]

Ora Jones (Irene) recorded from several places including Steppenwolf’s studio, her bed and her closet. She has been an ensemble member of Steppenwolf Theatre Company since 2007. When asked what her favorite role at Steppenwolf has been, she said “I’ve been blessed with so many great opportunities on these stages. I remember them all, and I’ve loved them all for various reasons”.

[Click here to see Ora’s full bio.]

Terry Kinney (Brewster) recorded from his kitchen at home. He is a co-founder of Steppenwolf Theatre Company.

[Click here to see Terry’s full bio.]

Tina Landau (Bidder #2) has been an ensemble member of Steppenwolf Theatre Company since 1997. At Steppenwolf, she most recently directed and co-wrote *MS. BLAKK FOR PRESIDENT*.

[Click here to see Tina’s full bio.]

John Malkovich (Roosevelt) recorded from Cambridge, MA. He has been an ensemble member of Steppenwolf Theatre Company since 1975. His favorite role at Steppenwolf was Al in *Big Mother*.

[Click here to see John’s full bio.]

Sandra Marquez (Dr. Rosman) recorded from her favorite spot on her sofa. She has been an ensemble member of Steppenwolf Theatre Company since 2016. Her favorite role at Steppenwolf was Nora in *A Doll’s House, Part 2*.

[Click here to see Sandra’s full bio.]

James Vincent Meredith (William Durant, Banks) recorded from his basement. He has been an ensemble member of Steppenwolf Theatre Company since 2007. His favorite role at Steppenwolf was John Proctor in *The Crucible*.

[Click here to see James’ full bio.]

Laurie Metcalf (FannyMargolis, Mrs. Taylor) recorded from Burbank, CA. She has been an ensemble member of Steppenwolf Theatre Company.

[Click here to see Laurie’s full bio.]

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Company since 1975. Her favorite role at Steppenwolf was Darlene from *Balm in Gilead*.

Click here to see Laurie’s full bio.

**Amy Morton** (Tony) recorded from her home office. She has been an ensemble member of Steppenwolf Theatre Company since 1997. When asked what her favorite role at Steppenwolf has been, she said “all of them at one time or another”.

Click here to see Amy’s full bio.

**Caroline Neff** (Frank, Edie) recorded from Springfield, New Jersey. She has been an ensemble member of Steppenwolf Theatre Company since 2016. Her favorite role at Steppenwolf was all of them.

Click here to see Caroline’s full bio.

**Austin Pendleton** (Director, Graham) recorded from New York City. He has been an ensemble member of Steppenwolf Theatre Company since 1986. His favorite production he directed at Steppenwolf was *Three Sisters*.

Click here to see Austin’s full bio.

**Jeff Perry** (Moe Baum) recorded from Los Angeles. He is a co-founder of Steppenwolf Theatre Company. His favorite role at Steppenwolf was Astrov in *Uncle Vanya*.

Click here to see Jeff’s full bio.

**William Petersen** (Dugan) recorded from Los Angeles. He has been an ensemble member of Steppenwolf Theatre Company since 2008. His favorite role at Steppenwolf was Hamm from *Endgame*.

Click here to see William’s full bio.

**Yasen Peyankov** (Kapush) recorded from his house in the Bronzeville neighborhood of Chicago. He has been an ensemble member of Steppenwolf Theatre Company since 2002. His favorite role at Steppenwolf was Sigmund Freud in *Hysteria*.

Click here to see Yasen’s full bio.

**Molly Regan** (Rose Baum) recorded from Williamstown, Massachusetts. She has been an ensemble member of Steppenwolf Theatre Company since 1984. Her favorite roles at Steppenwolf have been Rose in *Another Time and Aunt Dan in Aunt Dan and Lemon*.

Click here to see Molly’s full bio.

**Karen Rodriguez** (Frank Howard, Lucy) recorded from her home in Roscoe Village in Chicago, IL. She has been an ensemble member of Steppenwolf Theatre Company since 2018. Her favorite role at Steppenwolf was Julia in *I Am Not Your Perfect Mexican Daughter*.

Click here to see Karen’s full bio.

**Anna D. Shapiro** (Bidder #1, Bidder #3) has been an ensemble member of Steppenwolf Theatre Company since 2005 and is Steppenwolf’s Artistic Director. At Steppenwolf, she most recently directed the Broadway production of *The Minutes*.

Click here to see Anna’s full bio.
Namir Smallwood (Sydney Margolies) recorded from his closet. He has been an ensemble member of Steppenwolf Theatre Company since 2017. His favorite role at Steppenwolf is the next one. But strong contenders are Lee in *True West* and Peter in *Bug*.  
Click here to see Namir’s full bio.

Lois Smith (Lucille) recorded from Philadelphia. She has been an ensemble member of Steppenwolf Theatre Company since 1992. Her favorite roles at Steppenwolf have been Ma Joad in *The Grapes of Wrath*, and Halie in *Buried Child*.  
Click here to see Lois’ full bio.

Rob Milburn & Michael Bodeen (Sound Design) recently created music or sound at Steppenwolf for *Lindiwe*, *The Roommate*, *Guards at the Taj*, *The Doppelgänger* (an international farce), *The Christians*, *Visiting Edna*, *East of Eden* and many others since 1987.  
Click here to see their full bio.

Laura D. Glenn (Production Stage Manager) recorded and worked from her home office overlooking her garden in Evanston. This was a wonderful opportunity to work with so many old friends and with Austin again.  
Click here to see Laura’s full bio.

David Schmitz (Executive Director) has worked at Steppenwolf Theatre Company for 15 years, serving in the roles of Director of Finance and Administration, General Manager and currently as Executive Director. Prior to working at Steppenwolf, David was the General Manager at Lookingglass Theatre Company, Associate Artistic Director of Stage Left Theatre and Business Manager at the entertainment agency Adair Performance. Currently, he serves as Vice President of the Board for The House Theatre of Chicago as well as on the boards of the League of Chicago Theatres and Arts Alliance Illinois. David is a former board member for the Lincoln Park Chamber of Commerce and has worked as a strategic planning, business practices, finance and hiring consultant for numerous Chicago organizations, including The House Theatre of Chicago, The Hypocrites and Stage Left Theatre, among others. He holds a BA in theatre from the University of Northern Colorado, an MFA from the Theatre Conservatory at the Chicago College of Performing Arts, Roosevelt University and a Certificate in Non Profit Management from Roosevelt University.
Anna D. Shapiro: To get started, I really want to talk about your connection to the play, having directed it a couple times. What is your attachment to The American Clock, and how do you feel about doing it right now in this moment?

Austin Pendleton: I saw the play when it was first done at Playwrights Horizons in New York. It was the very beginning years of Playwrights Horizons and they were doing this new Arthur Miller play. And it knocked me out. They did the play as it is often done—with a comparatively small cast, in this case 14 or 15, the majority of whom played several roles. And the part of the mother (which along with the son and the father is the closest thing to a lead role) was played by Joan Copeland, Arthur Miller’s sister. It was pretty much the same play it is now. And I was knocked out. I was unprepared for it. I had run into Arthur on the street near our apartment maybe two or three months before that. And I already knew him because I’ve been in a play of his at the Kennedy Center. I said, “so what’s up?” “You know, I’ve got this play,” he said in his Bronx accent, “and I think I like it. It’s sort of something new for me.” And indeed it was.

I went to see it, just being kind of curious. And with all its sprawling-ness, or almost because of that, it had an impact on me, at least equal to one or two of the works considered his great plays. And I’d always been a big fan of those.

The first act of Death of a Salesman—did you know that was written overnight?

AS: Yes, but I only know that because you told me.

AP: It’s an extraordinary story. And I have a feeling that the structural freedom that was behind Death of a Salesman somehow had something in common with the structural freedom in The American Clock. I mean, Arthur was, of course, a breathtaking master of structure. And he writes about All My Sons in his memoir, “I’m not going to finish this play until I have it built like a brick abode.” Everything that happens leads to the next. All My Sons truly has that and is very powerful for it. And, of course, The Crucible has that structural solidity as you know.

But both Death of a Salesman and The American Clock have, in very different ways, this wild structural—this is slightly the wrong word—intuitive freedom. Not that the other plays aren’t also intuitively informed, but intuitive in terms of structure. Anything goes. It’s like a “let’s jump out of the plane and hope the parachute opens” kind of thing.

AS: Yes. And in his late plays like this, I sense that Miller is trying to physically embody the way things feel, versus just thought investigations or political investigations, right?

AP: Yes, right. The climax of The American Clock is a group of women playing cards in the heat with the blinds drawn so that the bill collector won’t see that they’re there. And largely making small talk. It’s so direct and simple. And un-abstract; the opposite of abstract. He’s so good at that. And he’s not often given credit for that.
AS: I think you’re right. You know, I don’t think many of the great writers have more than one trope. I don’t think of that as a criticism. I mean, Chekhov. Yeah, that’s one trope. But that’s because those tropes are lush and important, unnecessary and somewhat eternal.

AP: There are whole books—whole volumes—that set out to prove that very point about Shakespeare.

AS: That’s right. And I think that Miller sometimes doesn’t get credit when he breaks out of certain structural tropes. Because he was so well lauded for his structure. And I think he sometimes got a little trapped in that. And so, for me, us doing *The American Clock* and us doing it this way, recognizes that structural playfulness.

Now, you have to tell me if this is apocryphal or not, but the word on the street is that you’ve always loved this play, you wanted to do the play, but you insisted that it had 45 people in it. And Martha Lavey, who adored you beyond words and always wanted you to be doing *The American Clock* and us doing it this way, recognizes that structural playfulness.

AP: It was wonderful. And then I directed *The American Clock* again, but eight years after that, at HB Studio in New York, and the same thing applied. And on that tiny stage at HB we had almost 50 actors. Again, it was astonishing. Actors kept pouring out of the aisles.

AS: I can’t imagine it because we’re now in an era of programming restraint in terms of the number of human bodies onstage, because the actors cost so much when we make plays, especially regionally. I like movies that are durational events. I love long movies. I love the ones that kind of change my heartrate. And it feels like totally right. It’s just like, “oh, my heartbeat has

"OUR THEATER MAGIC TRICK IS THE HUMAN BODY AND HOW WE DEPLOY IT. AND WHEN YOU DEPLOY IT WITH THAT MANY PEOPLE IT BECOMES SOMETHING THAT YOU CAN’T TURN AWAY FROM. AND IT’S THRILLING"
to slow down now I have to open up my ears and my heart in a different way.” And it is like that for plays when you get to have a lot of people onstage, and you aren’t suspending disbelief by having one actor pretend to be 20 people. It’s a crowd event. And I imagine that when you were directing it for this radio-play version that we are presenting, and you were hearing all those different voices, it must have felt amazing.

AP: It’s like a piece of music for a lot of voices. And when one actor is playing four or five roles, no matter however many inventive things they do with their voice, it is still the same voice.

AS: The multiplicity of voices in the American experience is what gives this play value. It’s like our magic trick. Our theater magic trick is the human body and how we deploy it. And when you deploy it with that many people it becomes something that you can’t turn away from. And it’s thrilling.

AP: And often it’s made clearer with multiplicity.

AS: That’s exactly right. The American Clock is made clearer with the multiplicity of voices.

AP: Right. Because that multiplicity is the structure.
## STEPPENWOLF STAFF

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- **Anna D. Shapiro**
  - Artistic Director
- **Leelai Demoz**
  - Associate Artistic Director
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  - Artistic Producer and Artistic Director, Steppenwolf for Young Adults
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  - Casting Director
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  - Director of New Play Development
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    - Tuit Glaye
  - **Madin Gurung**
    - Rina Gurung
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    - Abebe Mezen
  - **Shamshuddin**
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- **Madeline Long**
  - Senior Communications Director
- **Erika Nelson**
  - Senior Marketing Director
- **Joel Moorman**
  - Creative Director
- **Christopher Huizarr**
  - Lead Designer
- **Lowell Thomas**
  - Video Content Producer
- **Kerstin Adams**
  - Senior Digital Marketing Manager
- **Javier Dubon**
  - Senior Marketing Manager
- **Corinne Florentino**
  - Social Media and Communications Assistant
- **Gin To**
  - Marketing Assistant
- **Derek Van Barham**
  - Marketing Assistant
- **Leean Kim Torske**
  - PR Associate
- **Corinne Neal**
  - Audience Services Director
- **Stephanie Heller**
  - Audience Services Manager
- **William Benjamin**
  - Audience Services Manager
- **Jimmy Freund**
  - VIP Liaison to Audience Services
- **Mike Brunlieb**
  - Data Developer
- **Rukmini Girsh**
  - Audience Services Supervisor
- **Molly Layton**
  - Group Sales Coordinator
- **Craig Barnes**
  - Willow Dawson
- **Kat Davis**
  - Elizabeth Ellis
- **Kenya Hall**
  - Greg Glomb
- **Hanna Kime**
  - Connor Lifson
- **DJ Shafer**
  - Julia Waits
- **Audience Services Associates**

### AUDIENCE EXPERIENCE
- **Aaron Aptaker**
  - Audience Experience Director
- **Megan Kaminsky**
  - Audience Experience Manager
Yasen Peyankov’s adaptation of The Seagull with an all-ensemble cast will open the new theatre-in-the-round in 2021!

Only 400 seats and six rows deep, the new theatre-in-the-round brings audiences closer than ever before.

The theater building will also feature a dedicated education floor, tripling the reach and impact of Steppenwolf’s education work. Visitors will enjoy a bright and open two-story atrium lobby, new bar and sidewalk lounge.

To support and learn more, visit steppenwolf.org/buildingonexcellence
Renewing your membership is more than just securing your seat. It’s protecting your theatre and our artistic family.

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UP NEXT IN MEMBER-EXCLUSIVE CONTENT:

IN THE RED AND BROWN WATER
a reimagining of a Steppenwolf favorite

Visit: steppenwolf.org/riskfreesehason
or call our remote Audience Services team at 312-335-1650 for assistance.