WHAT WE ARE ALL ABOUT
SoHo Playhouse is many things. It’s the nearly 200 year old building on 15 Vandam St. in lower Manhattan. It’s the the hundreds of shows which have represented all the extremes of life. It’s the thousands of artists who have written, performed, suffered, and transformed within our brick walls. It’s the hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers, Americans, and global citizens who have sat in our pressure-cooked velvet chestnut seats and wondered with awe, cried out loud, laughed till paralysis, booed, thought, inspired, witnessed, fell asleep, had heart attacks (yes), engagements (yes), and epiphanies.

It’s all of that, and more. SoHo Playhouse is one of the most iconic off-Broadway theatres in all of New York City and off-Broadway as a movement is arguably one of the most important developments for the American Arts. American theatre is respected all over the world as inferior to none. That reputation is in large measure due to the courage and willingness to experiment from actors, producers, and playwrights.

I became Artistic Director of SoHo Playhouse in 2004, a few years after I produced one of my most successful shows, Killer Joe, here. The production was best described by the Today Show as a, “brilliant barroom brawl of a play,” filled with beer, weed, television, and a raunchy family from somewhere in the middle of Texas. People that know me know that I really like to explore the pits of society, showcasing the deepest holes and darkest corners of people, as long as there is truth in the expression.

It was at this same point in time, I used to find my way up to the apartment above the theatre where the decor and furniture hadn’t been touched since the 1960’s. Here I would have my weekly coffees with Dorothy Ames, who owned the building then and until very recently. We used to converse about many things, and a lot of the time, these conversations would loop back to one idea, “this building is a home for curiosity.” I think that’s one of the reasons she entrusted me to shepherd the future for SoHo Playhouse. Because whether it’s a raunchy family in Texas, a dancer with cerebral palsy, a sexually charged feminist, or a half-baked comedian from down-under; I’m curious about it all.

The world’s a place full of polarizing ideas each becoming stronger and more isolated, pulling in large amounts of people. These ideas on a political, economic, and social level can’t seem to find any middle ground, and as a result this dichotomy is creating large amounts of conflict, tension, and anxiety. I strongly feel the Playhouse is a place where this dichotomy is bridged. The beauty of the Playhouse is that it provides a forum for people to come and sit and listen together.

In all my years, it’s always been my curiosity that has driven me forward. I think curiosity is the primary ingredient for empathy, compromise, and art. SoHo Playhouse is one of the last great venues for the curious. It’s a place for artists to share their messages with the world, and a place for audiences to listen.

I ask you to join me in sustaining this amazing place.
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The land on which the theatre is situated was part of the Richmond Hill Estate. That was Aaron Burr’s famous estate where George Washington was headquartered for The Battle of Manhattan.


1807 Aaron Burr’s creditors sell Richmond Hill estate to John Jacob Astor for $32,000.

1807 Vandam Street created alongside King Street and Charlton Street.

1826 The building situated on the lot 15 Vandam Street was constructed.

1880’s Tammany Hall Democrats took over 15 Vandam Street to use as their Democratic Party social quarters.

1918 “Battery” Dan Finn and Mayor ‘Beau James’ Walker used 15 Vandam as residential quarters.

1922 The upstairs was converted into a theatre and speaking hall. The downstairs was used as a speakeasy bar during Prohibition.

1963 Edward Albee took over the building and converted into South Village Theatre.

1970’s Used as an incubator and performance house for the Playwright’s Unit which fostered playwrights like Sam Shepard, Leroi Jones, and Lanford Wilson.

2004 Darren Lee Cole took over the lease on SoHo Playhouse reviving an off-Broadway tradition.

2005 Launched the Fringe Encore Series bringing the best Fringe shows from around the world back to New York City.

PRESENT Platform for international artists to share their messages with the world. Working on a symbiosis between stage and digital to keep off-Broadway alive.
“People go to Broadway to look. They go off-Broadway to listen.”

- Edward Albee
  Director and Developer of one of the most famous playwrighting unit in theatre history (Playwright’s Unit) at the SoHo Playhouse
The Future of SoHo Playhouse Inc.

How can we help new and emerging artists?

What kind of ideas do we want to share?

How do we sustain ourselves in downtown Manhattan when property values keep going up?

How do we get the “next generation” into Off-Broadway?

What kind of relationship should Off-Broadway and our company have to new media?

How do we bridge the gap between increasingly polarized segments of society?

How do we build a team that keeps the ethos of Soho Playhouse for long-term?

Where else can Soho Playhouse make an impact?

How do we keep Soho Playhouse as a home for the curious?
FOCUS 1: SOHO PLAYHOUSE INC. PRODUCTIONS

This is always going to be the core of SoHo Playhouse. It’s the heart of every theatre - what you end up actually putting on stage. Our shows fall into two different categories: the challenging and the entertaining. What challenges the audience to think about a different point of view? What is the relationship between the form and the message? SoHo Playhouse works as both a producing house and receiving house which means that some of the productions are produced in-house and some of the productions are produced from the outside and use the space as a venue. Every show has to fit within the ethos and and the mission.

Our core programming goals are this, which might change from year to year:

• SOHO PLAYHOUSE TO PRODUCE ONE PRODUCTION
• PARTNER WITH 3 OUTSIDE PRODUCTIONS FOR MAIN STAGE

FOCUS 2: THEATRE UPGRADES

The building is nearly 200 years old, with the last major renovations happening well over 50 years ago. As a result, the space often reflects that. Part of what makes SoHo Playhouse so special is this nostalgia that lingers in the air when you walk in, whether it’s the chestnut seats with the gold accents, the broadway lights in the dressing rooms, or the speakeasy that’s romantically similar to it’s design in the 1920’s. SoHo Playhouse has partnered with a design and architecture firm to create plans to enhance the nostalgia and mystique of SoHo Playhouse while modernizing the bathrooms, entrance, seats, speakeasy, and dressing rooms – which would stimulate creativity among the resident artists; offer more resources for potential partners, and command better reviews and higher ticket prices.

FOCUS 3: REHEARSAL & OFFICE SPACE

An office or a studio is a haven that purifies emotions through the evocation of fear. It creates stimulation and interaction among creators. It’s a place to be free. A studio rehearsal space provides a venue for artists to be both comfortable and vulnerable enough to experiment in the riskiest ways. Creating an environment of collaboration which is the basis of most great ensemble art.

• Rent the 2500 square foot former apartment directly above the main stage with office space in the front for writers and producers, and rehearsal space for actors in the rear.

FOCUS 4: STUDENT PROGRAMS

In recent years, SoHo Playhouse has partnered with some of the top schools in Costa Rica, the U.K, and New York City providing some of the elite theatre instruction in the world. These youth programs have produced shows presented at the famous Edinburgh Fringe Festival, in Porto Portugal, off-Broadway at SoHo Playhouse, and have toured internationally.

• Expand our relationships with local schools, specifically Little Red School House Elizabeth Erwin
• Continuing to teach off-Broadway techniques to international students

FOCUS 5: PLAYWRIGHT WORKSHOPS & GRANTS

SoHo Playhouse has history with one of the most famous playwrighting workshops in the entire world - Edward Albee’s Playwrights Unit Workshop. Workshops like Albee’s hardly still exist in the world, yet they are vitally important. Albee’s workshop which was started at SoHo Playhouse was instrumental in the careers of Sam Shepard, LeRoi Jones, Adrienne Kennedy, Terrence McNally, John Guare, Frank Gagliano, Lanford Wilson, Lee Kalchern, and Megan Terry.

• Create an annual $5000 grant to be given to a NYC playwright and artists
• Create additional grants for university student playwrights and artists

MICHAEI SHANNON
Killer Joe ’98 Actor / Excuse My Dust ’14 Producer

“I think it’s no secret that it this is a very difficult profession, especially in New York City. What [Darren Lee Cole] has been doing and what this theatre has been doing is to give artists who have a dream- a platform to share their message with the world. I came in and produced a show with Darren - a 1 woman show about Dorothy Parker, a show from Chicago, which was wanting to come to New York - and SoHo Playhouse provided the arena for her to do the show.”

“This place is invaluable. It’s full of ghosts, it’s full of history, full of personality. These seats, that stage, it’s like a church. Darren’s heart and soul is theatre and all different kinds of theatre, he’s not doing one particular thing. Darren is searching for an endless array of shows, experiences, and performers. He travels to the deepest parts of the world looking for the show, looking for the message. In a way, he’s like a Christopher Columbus trying to find the next great thing. It takes people with that type of exploratory spirit to keep the form moving forward.”

“Art is a thing that is so easily brushed aside but if we didn’t have it, there would be no reason to live. Art is the inspiration to live. At this point in time, there is an assault on the arts and it’s up to use to make sure it doesn’t erode.”

“So it’s important that there’s somewhere in New York where people don’t feel like they are walking on eggshells all the time, and feeling like their going to lose their shirt if they don’t make the right decision. Because there is no right decision. Often times when a show’s main focus is money, the artist makes their decision based on what would make the audience happy. But that’s not always what the audience needs to see.”
FOCUS 6: FRINGE ENCORE SERIES

The Fringe Encore Series is a selection of between 16 and 24 of the top shows from Fringe Festivals around the world. Cities like Edinburgh, Brighton, Adelaide, Wellington, Cape Town, Orlando, Hollywood, New York, Scranton, Toronto, and Winnipeg have all been contributors to this Series. It was recently reviewed as, “The Best International Theatre Series in the World.”

Anyone can put a show on at Fringe, literally anyone. From first-time performers to the world’s most talented artists. Fringe is the platform for the riskiest and most experimental forms of theatre. Oftentimes, the question after these Fringe run concludes, is “now what?” Shows and artists with massive amounts of potential, importance, or talent are often given no further opportunity. That’s why SoHo Playhouse created the Fringe Encore Series - to give these productions a platform, a venue, and the tools with which to develop.

- Continue to annually host the Fringe Encore Series at SoHo Playhouse bringing the best international theatre in the world to our New York audience.

FOCUS 7: DIGITAL PARTNERSHIPS

Off-Broadway and Fringe shows have become one of the leading feeder systems for content on Netflix, Amazon Prime, and other major streaming platforms. Recent SoHo Playhouse hits - Hannah Gadsby, James Acaster, Daniel Sloss, and Phoebe Waller-Bridge’s upcoming Fleabag are perfect examples of this.

- Continue creating partnerships with the biggest streaming platforms to forge an unprecedented partnership between stage and new media.

FOCUS 8: TOURING

Many of the shows produced at SoHo Playhouse have potential to be extremely successful for national and international tours. Even more importantly, some of this work needs to be heard by audiences in Latin America, Asia, Europe, urban and rural parts of America.

For example, currently, SoHo Playhouse is in the process of producing a touring version of Bill W. and Dr. Bob, the famous story of the founders of AA. This show has had a significant social impact wherever it has been performed and is an example of how off-Broadway theatre can impact audiences on an international level.

- Create national and international touring productions both professional and student

FOCUS 9: EXPAND FOOTPRINT

For over 10 years, SoHo Playhouse had a partner theatre in Jaco, Costa Rica. The off-Broadway style theatre with bamboo floors in the heart of Playa Jaco was the very first theatre in this small beach town. It provided an opportunity for Costa Rican artists to develop and perform their works. It created a dialogue, community, and social initiatives which aided in the significant artistic and economic development of the town. The theatre also provided an opportunity for many of the local youth to express themselves artistically.

- Open more venues and create more programs internationally to spread the ethos of SoHo Playhouse to a much larger audience.

FOCUS 10: CREATE LONG-TERM SUSTAINABILITY

Our core team has been very small for many years, it’s the nature of the theatre business; an industry full of transient artists who migrate with shows from venue to venue. From our interactions and from some of the impact in recent years, our mission has only gotten more important.

- In order to keep the ethos of SoHo Playhouse alive, we are building a team who can simultaneously transform the SoHo Playhouse mission, breathe the values and ethos, and maximize impact.

MICHAEL LAURENCE

Playwright & Actor / Krapp 39 - '08

“I've had a long and great relationship with SoHo Playhouse. It started because Darren saw Krapp 39 at the Fringe Festival which he was adjudicating at the time. He came right up to us, we talked for hours, and he helped to develop Krapp 39. I ran here for 6 months which was an amazing run for an off-Broadway show and we were nominated for awards and we got a lot of good press. It also gave me the ramp to my next play and the play after that.” There was always a sense of sympatico between us and around the work.

“It is such a long and productive and fun history at SoHo Playhouse. There’s such rich exciting adventurous work that is given an opportunity at SoHo Playhouse that would never otherwise see the light of day. For those plays to come here, to come to SoHo Playhouse which is a storied nexus of off-Broadway, a theatre that was homebase theatre for Edward Albee’s Playwrights Unit- it’s incredible. The foundational leading lights of off-Broadway were here. It’s electric, it’s exciting, it’s a survey course in the riskiest types of theatre.”

“This place has been a launching pad for so many playwrights and performers and theatre makers which are heart deep, all kinds of crazy stuff. You’re mining for gold and sometimes you find it and that’s why SoHo Playhouse is more important now than ever before because we are in an economic landscape where risk-taking is not so easy in theatre in New York which is crazy because you used to see anything in New York. It’s harder now.”

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The Fringe Encore Series, Darren Cole, SoHo Playhouse is more important now than ever before.

In 2017, Tymisha Harris performed as Josephine Baker in Josephine: A Burlesque Cabaret Dream Play at the Winnipeg Fringe Festival. Her 1-woman show was spotted and selected by the Playhouse to perform as part of the 2017 Fringe Encore Series at the SoHo Playhouse. Ensuingly, her show was selected by an off-Broadway committee and she was awarded the Fringe Encore Series Outstanding Production Awards over 16 other Fringe Encore shows. As a result she was given a 6 month off-Broadway run at the SoHo Playhouse which ran from January to May 2018.

“Tymisha Harris’ performance is a tour de force.”

***** Staff Pick – CBC

“It’s a perfect piece of theatre for the time we are currently in.”

***** - Plays To See NYC

“If there’s a truly must-see show...it’s Josephine”

*****– Winnipeg Free Press

“ Probably the closest to an evening with Josephine Baker as one will ever experience.” - Stagebiz NYC
2019 WINTER / SPRING SEASON

“2019 is going to be a really good one. From Seinfield alum Marc Jaffe and Broadway playwright Eric Coble comes a heartfelt rollercoast about PARKINSON'S DISEASE, followed by Baba Brinkman’s rap guide triage; 3 shows about CONSCIOUSNESS, EVOLUTION, and CLIMATE CHANGE. One of the hottest comedians in the world, DANIEL SLOSS joins in February with his brand new show - DANIEL SLOSS: X, followed by PHOEBE WALLER-BRIDGE who is bringing her award winning show FLEABAG. We also have two award-winning shows from last year’s Fringe Encore Series who are developing their shows further - DR. JEKYLL AND MR. HYDE and THE DAY I BECAME BLACK. The fall season will feature the 2019 FRINGE ENCORE SERIES.”
After its sold-out run in London, Phoebe Waller-Bridge’s award-winning comedic play, directed by her longtime collaborator Vicky Jones, comes to New York for 5 weeks only. The play that inspired the hit television series, FLEABAG is a rip-roaring look at some sort of woman living her sort of life. Fleabag may seem oversexed, emotionally unfiltered and self-obsessed, but that’s just the tip of the iceberg. With family and friendships under strain and a guinea pig café struggling to keep afloat, Fleabag suddenly finds herself with nothing to lose.
Bi-racial comedian Bill Posley grew up happily identifying as both black and white. But at age 10, he learned the world does, in fact, judge a book by its color and, even though he’s half white, he’s labeled 100% black. Does a young comedian have to get rid of his whiteness in order to be the color he’s "supposed" to be? Hear Posley weigh in on the modern-day conversation about race from a unique perspective.

"You’re going to have fun at this show. It’s going to feel powerfully great to be there. You’re going laugh ur ass off. You’re going to love this guy. And then you’re going to get kicked in the heart. And you’re going to cry. And you’re going to be grateful. Because this guy is effin brilliant. This is the kind of comedy that needs to be celebrated. And taken into the heart. It’s a show that will wake you up forever." - Helene Udy, HFF18

THE DAY I BECAME BLACK
MARCH - APRIL 2019

This Dr. Jekyll & Mr. Hyde is bare-bones, but fully engaging. The sets are made entirely of black, stackable stairs with hidden compartments that open for embellishments. The costumes are also all black, with minimal accessories to help the audience with the character changes. The staging/direction (also by Stromberg) is smart and sharp to fully maximize the humor of the production. "SoHo Playhouse’s version of the classic story is an amazing time at the theater, and a must-see! Absolutely fantastic!"

DR. JEKYLL AND MR. HYDE
APRIL - MAY 2019

DANIEL SLOSS: X
FEBRUARY, JUNE 2019

He’s made a record 9 appearances on ‘Conan’, has 2 Netflix hour-long specials (“DARK” & “Jigsaw”) streaming worldwide (in 190 countries and 26 languages), and his stand-up clips have over 20 million views. He has also sold out extended seasons in the past 11 Edinburgh Fringes (packing out the biggest venues at the world’s biggest arts festival), performed 3 solo off-Broadway runs and tours extensively to rave reviews throughout Australasia, USA, UK and nearly 30 countries across Europe.

Still 28 years old, this is the North American debut of Daniel’s newest and ground-breaking 10th solo show, currently receiving rave reviews as he tours it across Europe and the UK.
Fringe Encore Series was created as a learning center and stepping stone for the talented and amazing productions that are a part of The New York International Fringe Festival every August in New York City. Now having expanded to include the largest Fringe Festivals in the world including The Encore Series has achieved global reach. Each fall, Fringe Encore Series presents the “best of” productions from each festival and allows these worthy shows a chance to perform in New York City at the historic SoHo Playhouse. Now the top emerging artists, writers and producers have a platform to show their work in one of the world’s theatre capitals! In addition one of these special productions is named OUTSTANDING PRODUCTION OF THE YEAR. The winner receives a full Off Broadway run in New York City.

Baba Brinkman’s Rap Guide to Evolution, Consciousness, and Climate Chaos, a scientific theater cycle at the SoHo Playhouse.
• **Consciousness** - "Peer reviewed rapper” Baba Brinkman takes a deep dive into the neuroscience of human experience, from sensations to hallucinations.
• **Evolution** - A hip-hop tour of modern evolutionary biology, winner of the Scotsman Fringe First Award in Edinburgh and nominated for a Drama Desk Award off-Broadway
• **Climate Chaos** - Confronts the challenge and also the failings of human psychology that make climate change such an easy problem to ignore. With scientists, activists, contrarians, and even the Pope adding their voices to the soundtrack, get ready for a funny and refreshing take on the world’s hottest topic.

**HOW TO HELP**

SoHo Playhouse has transformed New York City and inspired visitors from around the world. Your gift is essential to make sure this magnificent theatre company continues to inspire new generations of artists, audiences and visitors and meets the challenges of the 21st-century.

Your gift today helps improve access to the building, opens new areas to the public, replaces technology and machinery and ensures SoHo Playhouse is equipped to welcome as many people in as many ways possible.

SoHo Playhouse belongs to us all. Everyone should be able to have a SoHo Playhouse experience, no matter what circumstances they face in life.

**BRONZE** $1000  --------  **SILVER** $2500  --------  **GOLD** $5000  --------  **PLATINUM** $10,000+
THE WHO AND WHAT
SOHO PLAYHOUSE

PLAYS

THE BOYS IN THE BAND
KILLER JOE
THE EMPEROR JONES
THE DEVINE SISTER
ROOM SERVICE
KRAPP 39
NANETTE
FLEABAG
RAP GUIDE TO EVOLUTION
THE OTHER JOSH COHEN
JOSEPHINE: A CABARET DREAM PLAY
DR JEKYLL & MR HYDE
BILL W. & DR BOB
BRIGHT COLORS AND BOLD PATTERNS

PLAYWRIGHTS

EDWARD ALBEE
CHARLES BUSCH
LEROI JONES
DARIO FO
TRACY LETTS
MICHAEL LAURENCE
ADAM RAPP
PHOEBE WALLER BRIDGE
HANNAH GADSBY
SAM SHEPHERD
LANFORD WILSON
TERRANCE MCNALLY
JOHN GUARE
JEAN CLAUDE VAN ITALLIE
MEGAN TERRY
PIGPEN THEATRE COMPANY
In 2010, Pigpen Theatre Company performed at SoHo Playhouse with one of their debut productions, *The Nightmare Story* and followed it up in 2011 with *The Mountain Song*. Pigpen has gone on to tour across the world with their unique combination of sultry, blues, and storytelling.
Thank you for your support all of these years. Without you, none of these shows, this art, and our community is possible.

Can’t wait to see what we do together these next 10 years.