

Greetings, Company of Season “2.5”

In light of the chaotic happenings of the last couple days, I want to weigh in with you about how things look moving forward in our corner of the world. **TheatreMidwest’s most important concern is for the health and well-being, physical and mental, of all people connected to the organization.** We also do well remind ourselves that there are certain things that we can control as a company and as individuals, and many things we can’t. We are staying current on information from CDC, Iowa Department of Health and World Health Organization (and trying to tune out the ratings-driven entertainment news orgs.)

It is neither possible nor useful to list all the things that are or are not happening around the country and world. The overarching strategies, however, seem to be:

- ❖ reduce large-group or very public interactions
- ❖ protect against ‘spread’ and especially the most vulnerable potential sufferers
- ❖ keep ourselves clean and healthy.

To that end:

#### **PUBLIC EVENTS AND INTERACTION.**

- ❖ The most common postponement cycle we are seeing for things like schools and arts programming involves taking a 2-ish week hiatus while evaluating developments.
- ❖ Both of our upcoming performance projects are at the end of (*Stripped*) or way after (*Atlas*) that period. We are not currently canceling or postponing either of these, but will vigilantly monitor developments.
- ❖ We are monitoring and communicating with our venue/hosts at HVJF, Tee-Hee’s, B-Side/Omaha, and Viking/Grand View.
- ❖ Other presenting companies in the region are continuing with their plans and preparations, e.g.-*Singin’ in the Rain* opens tonight at DMPlayhouse (and big shout out to Stephanie Scheider and Maggie Schmitt who are in it!); Iowa Stage Theatre continues work toward a March 27 opening; DMPA/Civic Center programs continue. Thoughtful statements if you are interested: <https://www.dmplayhouse.com/notice/>; <https://desmoinesperformingarts.org/covid-19-update/>

**UPSHOT: WE WILL CONTINUE TO EVALUATE THE SITUATION AS OUR NEXT PUBLIC PERFORMANCE ON MARCH 31 APPROACHES—FOR NOW, NO CANCELLATIONS OR POSTPONEMENTS.**

#### **“COMMUNITY SPREAD”**

- ❖ Next rehearsal for *Stripped* is March 27. See above about ‘hiatus.’
- ❖ Rehearsals for *Atlas* continue tonight (Friday) through Tuesday, [5 day hiatus], Sun (22th) through Tuesday (24th), then more hiatus. Production meetings, Sunday afternoons.
- ❖ HVJF while ‘open to the public’ during business hours, is not a ‘public place’ in the manor of gas stations, grocery stores, etc. The upstairs rehearsal room is neither ‘open to the public’ nor able to accommodate more than 20 people. Given that we rehearse there so much these days, its use by other ‘outside’ groups beyond HVJF staff is very rare. The space is cleaned regularly and well taken care of.
- ❖ Importantly, sinks and soap are continuously available within feet of the rehearsal space.
- ❖ People wishing to participate in meetings or rehearsals, but concerned about leaving home, are invited to use our video conferencing system as needed.

**UPSHOT: REHEARSAL WILL CONTINUE IN LIGHT OF PRIVACY AND CLEANLINESS OF SPACE. VIDEO/ONLINE PARTICIPATION IS ALWAYS AVAILABLE.**

#### **CLEANLINESS AND “SOCIAL DISTANCE”**

- ❖ We will continue to do the following before, during, and after rehearsal sessions—provide antibacterial wipes and/or gel, remind about use of sinks and soap, minimize physical contact among our people as much as possible, check with personnel about general health, note and take action about any symptoms (CV-19 or otherwise!) manifesting in rehearsal.
- ❖ Expect that people who are sick will stay home and give us as much notice as possible to that effect.

**UPSHOT: CLEANING/DISINFECTING METHODS ARE READILY AVAILABLE AND SICK PERSONS WILL STAY (OR BE SENT) HOME.**