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Ignite Theatre Concludes Production with "The Wiz"

Ignite Theatres' thirty-first production, *The Wiz*, will be its last.

In 2009 Keith Rabin, Jr., Reace Daniel and Will Adams introduced a different kind of theatre company to the theatre going public – one that only produced musicals, and only musicals that were regional premiers or under-produced. On August 7, 2009, they opened their first production, *bare: the musical*.

According to Co-Founder and Executive Producer Will Adams, "Set pieces were falling apart and microphones were not working. Several audience members left at intermission. But we did it!"

A program of Lucent Performing Arts, the company began as Gravity Defied Theatre and produced their first five shows under that name. In May of 2011 the decision was made to change the name to Ignite Theatre. The change to Ignite was more in line with the mission of providing the community with provocative and innovative theatrical experiences.

Ignite Theatre is an SCFD funded Tier III organization and the decision to close the theatre was not made lightly or due to lack of financial resources. While there were a number of factors involved, two key issues played a major role in the decision; Ignite does not own its own performance space, and changes at the Aurora Fox Arts Center, a wonderful partner for 30 productions, resulted in challenges scheduling its productions appropriately. Additionally the board and artistic leadership found it could no longer dedicate the time and necessary resources to continue at the current pace.

Adams stated, "Eight years and thirty-one productions later, Ignite Theatre has positively impacted the lives of hundreds of actors, directors, designers and musicians, and many thousands of audience members. We've created a difference in the Denver-area theatre community. "I'm proud of what we have accomplished, and thankful for the support of so many people over the years, especially our audience members."

Co-Founder and Artistic Director Keith Rabin, Jr. said, "As I quickly near the end of my time in the Denver theatre community, and as Ignite Theatre slowly dims its flame until the next spark of creativity lights it I can only say that I've met some of the most amazing, loving and supportive people who took us to where we are today."

Lucent Performing Arts will remain in operation leaving them open to possibilities of future programs that will continue in Ignite Theatre's footsteps, such as educational workshops, guerilla theatre or remounts of past productions.

It seems appropriate that Ignites' final production is "The Wiz." Written as an allegory for the political, economic and social events of America, Dorothy's experiences, like Ignite's, were, none the less, magical and inspirational.

This beloved Broadway musical sets Dorothy's adventures in the Land of Oz to a dazzling, lively mixture of rock, gospel, and soul music. "The Wiz" plays through January 29 on the Aurora Fox Mainstage Theatre, 9900 East Colfax Avenue, Aurora, Co 80013. Performances are Thursdays, Fridays, Saturdays and Monday, January 16 at 7:30 p.m.; Sundays at 2:30 p.m. Tickets are \$28 Adult, \$26 Senior/Military, \$20 Student and \$25 Group (6+) and are available online at www.ignitetheatre.com or by calling 866-811-4111.

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