

MEDIA ADVISORY

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National Academy of Sciences Announces Staged Theatrical Reading of Roald Hoffmann's *Should've*

WASHINGTON – Cultural Programs of the National Academy of Sciences (CPNAS) and the Studio Theatre announce a staged theatrical reading of *Should've*, a play by Nobel Prize-winning chemist and National Academy of Sciences member Roald Hoffmann. The performance is directed by Nathan Norcross, artistic apprentice at Studio Theatre, and it features Caroline Bootle, Liz Pierotti, Peter Pereyra, and Marley Kabin. It is the second collaboration between CPNAS and the Studio Theatre.

As *Should've* opens, Friedrich Wertheim, a German-born chemist, has taken his own life, blaming himself for putting an easy way to make a neurotoxin into the hands of terrorists. The circumstances and reasons for his death disturb profoundly the lives of three people connected to Wertheim -- his daughter Katie (a scientist herself, a molecular biologist, but with very different ideas about the social responsibility of scientists), Katie's lover Stefan (a conceptual artist), and Wertheim's estranged second wife, Julia.

In 29 fast-moving scenes, these people's lives are fractured by the suicide. The motives for Wertheim's action aren't as simple as they seem; in a detective story, there emerges a remarkable set of circumstances about his parent's survival in Nazi Germany. The ethical conflict between Katie and her father is very, very deep. Questions arise about the responsibility of artists in society. And there is more than one skeleton in Stefan's closet.

A play about the social responsibility of scientists and artists on one level, *Should've* is also about three people trying to resist the transforming power of death. They are unable to do so, sundered as they are by memories and a past that emerges from that death. And, eventually, the consequences shape a different bond among the three. The performance is followed by a post-show discussion with director Nathan Norcross and playwright Roald Hoffmann.

The reading is on Monday, Oct. 27, 6:30 p.m. to 9 p.m. at the National Academy of Sciences Auditorium, 2101 Constitution Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. Reservations and photo IDs are required. No charge. To make a reservation, visit <http://shouldve.eventbrite.com>

Cultural Programs of the National Academy of Sciences sponsors exhibitions, film screenings, theatrical readings, the quasi-monthly salon called D.C. Art Science Evening Rendezvous (DASER), and other events that explore relationships among the arts and sciences. For more information, visit www.cpnas.org.

Studio Theatre is Washington's premier venue for contemporary theatre, "where local audiences will find today's edgiest playwrights" (*Variety*). Studio produces the work of today's greatest writers, augmented by occasional productions of modern classics. Studio's work is marked by its emphasis on excellence in acting and design, and the signature intimacy of its four theatres, all of which seat fewer than 225 patrons. The quality of this work has been recognized over its 36-year history by sustained community support and 60 Helen Hayes Awards for excellence in professional theatre. For more information, visit <http://www.studiotheatre.org/>

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