



By **JOHN LOGAN**
Directed by **JOEL FERRELL**

the **STUDYGUIDE**

Thru March 24
Wyly Theatre, 9th Floor

Mark Rothko

A collaboration with the
DALLAS MUSEUM OF ART

How Would You Handle a Brush With Genius?

New York. 1958. Mark Rothko – uncompromising, volatile, brilliant – undertakes a new commission. His newly-hired assistant challenges the master's theories. This production turns the 9th floor of the Wyly Theatre into Rothko's studio for a thrilling bio-drama as vivid as any primary color. *Contains adult language.*

Dallas Theater Center
gratefully acknowledges

Deedie and Rusty Rose

and **Jennifer and John Eagle**

for their support of DTC's commitment
to collaboration through *Red* and
its related activities.

Dallas Theater Center would like to recognize the
generosity of our major corporate partners.

CHASE • **Pier 1**® • **Target** • **Wells Fargo**

About the Play

Red, written in 2009 by John Logan, won the 2010 Tony Award® for Best Play. *Red* is a two-actor play that tells the story of Mark Rothko, an abstract expressionist painter best known for his large-scale works exploring floating shapes and color, and the commission he received from the Four Seasons Restaurant in the Seagram Building in New York in 1958. *Red* takes place entirely within Rothko's studio and features the characters of Rothko and his fictional assistant, Ken.



John Logan



Rothko's Seagram's murals

The Seagram's commission involved the creation of a series of canvases to cover the walls of the Four Seasons Restaurant. While Rothko preferred to display his work in groups, and the Seagram commission was theoretically the perfect opportunity for him to create an environment for his work to be displayed, the play focuses on Rothko questioning the integrity of the project. During the play, Ken increasingly probes and questions Rothko about his intentions for his Seagram paintings as well as his theories on art.

To experience Dallas Theater Center's production, audience members must walk directly into a recreation of Rothko's studio—the play's set—and sit around three walls along its perimeter. Rothko intended viewers of his work to be completely immersed in his paintings. Reflecting that intention, viewers of *Red* will be completely immersed in the play, literally sitting among the actors.

Environmental Theater and *Red*

Environmental Theater is a style of theater that came out of the New Theater movement of the 1960s and is attributed to Richard Schechner and the Performance Group. In this style of theater, there is a blurring of the boundary between the audience's space and the actors' space.

Schechner and the Performance Group reshaped their theater space to conform to each play. The sets utilized multilevel platforms, balconies, ramps and scaffolds surrounding a playing area that encroached on the audience's territory, providing a larger performance area for the actors and a greater flexibility of interaction between the audience and performers. The audience of the environmental theater was invited, even expected, to participate.

Dallas Theater Center has a long tradition of Environmental Theater and has, over the years, converted its various unconventional spaces into performance areas. In *Red*, the Wyly Theatre's 9th floor

Jordan Brodess as Ken, Kierna Connolly as Mark Rothko in *Red*.
Photo by Karen Almond.



Rehearsal Hall has been transformed into a recreation of Mark Rothko's studio. To successfully do this without damaging the two existing walls, the one wall of mirrors, the one wall of windows and the floor, meant that DTC's production team had to build a miniature room within the existing room. In the completed set, the audience enters the space through a small vestibule which then opens up into the replica of Rothko's studio. The audience then takes their seats around the studio space and is immersed in the set.

To see the conversion of the Rehearsal Hall, take a moment to view this time-lapse video hosted by DTC's Production Manager, Jeff Gifford, who provides details on the technical aspects of the construction at youtu.be/NJPVrtySbPs

A Collaboration in the Arts District

The production of *Red* is a collaboration between Dallas Theater Center and the Dallas Museum of Art. Throughout the creation of the show, the staff of the DMA has partnered with DTC's staff, actors and designers to understand the context of the play and Rothko's place in the world of art. Additionally, both DTC and the DMA have created a number of enrichment events around Rothko and the production. Please take a stroll through the Arts District and visit the Dallas Museum of Art to see Mark Rothko's painting, *Orange, Red and Red*.

For more information on Mark Rothko, visit the Dallas Museum of Art at dm-art.org. Additionally, the National Gallery of Art has extensive information on Rothko and abstract expressionism online at nga.gov/feature/rothko/intro1.shtm

RED By the Numb#rs

10,560 feet of lumber were used in the construction of the set—that's **2** miles!

The set includes **6** unsupported roof trusses, each weighing **400-500** pounds.

In order to place the **6** roof trusses, it took **2** material lifts (machines that lift heavy materials straight up into the air), **3** Genies (machines that lift people up to work high off of the floor) and **6** people **1** full day.

The set includes **190** feet of **16'**-tall walls.

10 industrial strength suction cups were used to secure one wall of the set to the wall of mirrors in the 9th Floor Rehearsal Hall.

The entire set had to travel up **9** stories in a **12'** freight elevator, so no single piece of the set could be longer than **12'** long/wide.

2,000 square feet of flooring was laid in the 9th Floor Rehearsal Hall.

608 plastic bolt heads were cast by the props department.

2,400 square feet of soft goods were used in the creation of the props and set.

17 paint stretchers were built for the show, including some that were only used for rehearsal.

The actors spent **3** days test-painting in DTC's production shop

250 yards of fabric will be used during the run of *Red* to create the canvases the actors use.

170 gallons of paint will be used in the rehearsal and the run of the show.

The actors use **1.5** gallons of paint to paint **1** canvas during each performance.