

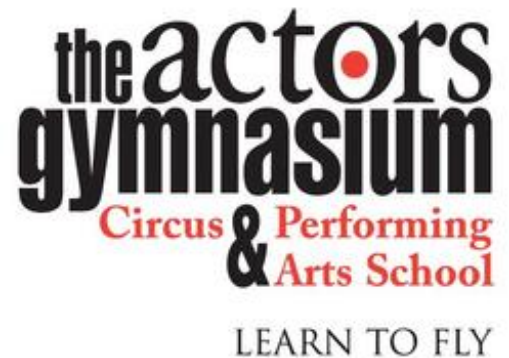
## The Actors Gymnasium Announces Change in Leadership Structure to Coincide with 20th Anniversary

### Actors Gymnasium

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Theatrehood(s):

**Evanston**



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Evanston, Ill. — August 10, 2015: The Actors Gymnasium today announced a leadership change in conjunction with its 20<sup>th</sup> season. Co-founder and Artistic Director of Programming Larry DiStasi will become Advising Artistic Director and join the Advisory Board as he focuses on his performing and personal artistic career. DiStasi has been cast in the fall production of *Treasure Island* at Lookingglass Theatre, where he is a Founding Ensemble Member.

"Five years ago, The Actors Gymnasium embarked on a bold capacity-building initiative with the goal of having in place by our 20<sup>th</sup> year an enduring, leading professional circus and performing arts institution. We have successfully achieved that goal. While I will remain involved, I can now focus on acting and other artistic pursuits knowing what we have built will continue to thrive," DiStasi said.

A longstanding Chicagoland cultural icon, The Actors Gymnasium has achieved national recognition for its classes, programs, and productions. The Gym recently opened a second studio at the Noyes Cultural Arts Center. Its Professional Circus Training Program, designed to prepare dedicated artists for professional circus performance, is set to launch in September.

"Larry has filled many roles over the years, including that of managing director," said Board President Sam Fishkin. "His focus on excellence helped build The Actors Gymnasium into one of the nation's premier circus and performing arts centers."

Co-Founder and Artistic Director of Circus Arts Sylvia Hernandez-DiStasi will assume full artistic responsibility for the company. Executive Director Virginia Nugent will continue to oversee business operations.

"Larry's physical theatre background and artistic vision of circus as a multi-dimensional performing art form became a core part of The Gym. That vision is key to what makes The Actors Gymnasium unique," said Hernandez-DiStasi. "Larry is an amazing writer, actor, and director, and will continue to inspire."

### **About The Actors Gymnasium**

The Actors Gymnasium is dedicated to bringing a new physicality to the American Theatre. Encouraging ground-breaking theatrical exploration, The Actors Gymnasium teaches circus arts, physical theatre and multi-disciplinary performance to children and adults; produces original, daring works of circus-theatre; and serves as a talent resource, providing performance opportunities to our students and innovative professional event entertainment for a wider audience.