Fountain Theatre in E. Hollywood gets permission for outdoor stage

By City News Service   January 12, 2021

Photo courtesy Fountain Theatre

East Hollywood - The Fountain Theatre announced Tuesday it has received approval from the city of Los Angeles to install a temporary outdoor stage for the purpose of presenting live performances and other events during the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Pandemic permitting, we hope to open our first outdoor production by late spring or early summer," said the theater's artistic director, Stephen Sachs. "We're planning an exciting Los Angeles premiere that dramatizes urgent social issues using the Fountain's signature bold and theatrical approach."

Sachs told The Eastsider in December that the next round of plays were already scheduled. But the names have not yet been released.

Installed in what is now the theater parking lot at 5060 Fountain Ave., the new performance area will be able to accommodate 50 to 84 audience members. It will feature seven rows of chairs, each six feet apart, as well as a dozen high-top tables positioned six feet apart for use by patrons from the same "bubble" households.

Every aspect of the outdoor performance area will meet COVID-19 safety guidelines, according to Sachs.

"The most painful aspect of the past 10 months has been the separation from our patrons and the disconnection from our art form," he said. "Until our indoor theater reopens, the outdoor stage will be a thrilling performance venue and a hub for our educational and community engagement programs. The outdoor stage will be the centerpiece as we re-emerge in 2021. It galvanizes our vision moving forward."

Documents with the city's Planning Department say the temporary outdoor performance space will consist of 18 steel-deck platforms - each measuring four feet by eight feet.

As for whether a venue in the parking lot requires a different sort of acting craft than indoors, "The outdoor stage won't change the way we perform," Sachs told The Eastsider. "It will allow us to perform at all."