

# FIRST LOOK STAGED READING SERIES

Presented by The Studios of Key West

Submission Deadline: July 15, 2026

Readings: January to April 2027

## About the Series

The *First Look* Staged Reading Series offers playwrights and creative teams the opportunity to workshop and present new plays to a live audience at a formative moment in their creation. This initiative supports the development of innovative theatrical voices and invites Key West audiences to experience the artistry of bringing a play to life.

Hosted in The Studios' Helmerich Theater—a flexible black box space ideal for intimate performance—the series is rooted in our mission to nurture original work, engage new audiences, and create meaningful community dialogue through the arts.

Participation in First Look includes production support, travel & housing and a modest honorarium.

## Goals

- Support the development of new plays not yet fully produced.
- Connect playwrights with a live audience in a supportive, developmental setting.
- Introduce Key West audiences to bold new American voices and ideas.

## Eligibility & Submission Guidelines

- Open to new American plays that have not yet received a full production.
- Plays with small casts (2–4 actors) are preferred, though larger ensembles will be considered.
- We encourage proposals that foster collaboration between local and visiting artists, partner with other organizations, or aim to reach new or underrepresented audiences.

**Submission Deadline:** July 15, 2026

**Notification by:** September 1, 2026

## Productions

- Four plays will be selected.
- Rehearsals and readings will take place between January 24, 2027 and April 11, 2027.

## **Rehearsal & Performances**

- Each play is allotted 25 hours of rehearsal and 2 public staged readings.
- All rehearsals and performances take place in the Helmerich Theater.
- Readings are lightly staged with music stands, stools, and minimal props.
- A lighting designer and sound engineer will be available to support basic cues and effects.

## **Logistics & Support**

### **Travel:**

- Participants must be available to be in Key West for 7–8 days, during one of the following periods:
  - January 24-31, 2027
  - February 21-28, 2027
  - March 14-21, 2027
  - April 4-11, 2027
- Roundtrip coach airfare will be arranged by The Studios.
- Reasonable travel expenses (e.g., transport to/from home airport) will be reimbursed.
- Transportation within Key West will be on foot, by bike (provided), or by other arrangement.

### **Housing:**

- Out-of-town artists will be housed in The Studios' Artist Housing or in a community host home (private bedroom and bathroom included).

### **Compensation:**

- Playwright, director, non-Equity stage managers, and non-Equity actors will each receive a \$500 honorarium.
- Equity actors and stage managers will be paid according to the Actors Equity Association Category 2, Tier A Single Engagement Agreement standards.

## **Proposal Requirements**

Please include:

- **Title & Brief Synopsis** of the play

- **Why this play now?** What makes it timely, and why is The Studios a good fit?
- **Number of actors and creative team members**
- **Brief bio of playwright**
- **Complete script**

Have questions? We're here to help guide the process.

**Reach out to:**

**Jeffrey Johnson**

Executive Producer of *First Look*

jeffjohnson73@me.com

**Erin Stover**

Artistic Director of The Studios of Key West

erin@tskw.org

