

Annie Baker's *John* calls for a rigorously detailed first floor of a Bed and Breakfast in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. The characters refer directly to the objects and furnishings in the room, thereby dictating that the space be naturalistic and fully fleshed-out. The space is primarily inhabited by Mertis, the owner of the Bed and Breakfast. The design and dressing of the space directly reflect her tastes and interests. The heavy use of pattern, the abundant assemblage of knick-knacks and dolls, and the kitschy décor all contribute to the deeply unsettling atmosphere.



John, by Annie Baker, produced by Signature Theatre, 2018.
Directed by Joe Calarco.



Becoming Dr. Ruth, by Mark St. Germain, produced by Theatre J, 2018.
Directed by Holly Twyford.

In *Becoming Dr. Ruth* by Mark St. Germain, Dr. Ruth, who is packing up her apartment in New York City, engages the audience in a conversation about the many places her life has brought her: Germany, Switzerland, a kibbutz in Israel, a youth hostel in Jerusalem, Paris, and New York City. The design is a departure into Dr. Ruth's ephemeral internal landscape. As the story of Dr. Ruth's life unfolds, her packing boxes reveal dollhouse versions of her many homes. The miniature nature of her collection of domestic spaces allows Dr. Ruth (and her audience) to engage with complex, often tragic memories as though they are frozen in time.