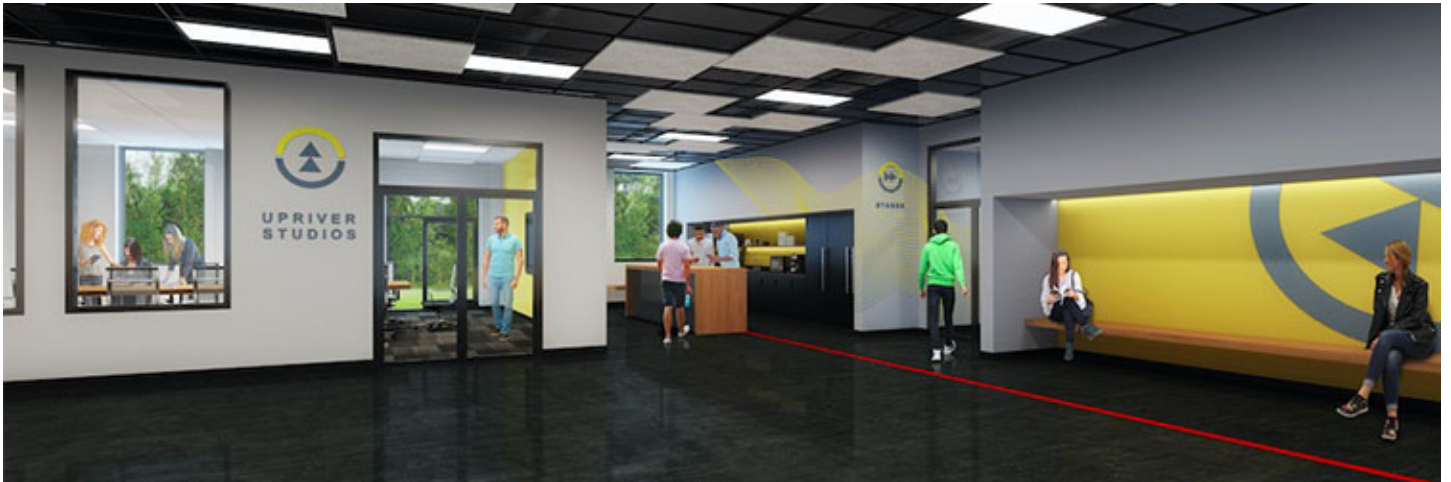




Spacesmith commissioned to design large-scale production facility for Upriver Studios – 104,000 s/f

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Saugerties, NY Expanding its presence in Upstate New York, the international architecture and interiors firm Spacesmith has been commissioned to design Upriver Studios.

The large-scale production facility for film and TV will ultimately comprise 104,000 s/f of sound stages and post-production and support spaces in an adapted former manufacturing building. Led by noted actress and director Mary Stuart Masterson, media strategist Beth Davenport, and producer Diane Wheeler-Nicholson, the new facility makes the bucolic area more attractive to major film, television and media productions. Spacesmith has designed the adaptive reuse for Upriver Studios with an eye toward the maximum functionality of a sound stage, making it an attractive option for production crews that tend to use the well-equipped studios in New York City. Coupled with the Hudson River Valley's relatively low costs of labor and living, its scenic views, and the region's recently increased motion picture tax credit, the new studios offer an alternative for production groups that previously worked only in large metropolitan areas.

"With the public health crisis, the location has become even more attractive to stakeholders seeking a safe place to set up production," said Katy Flammia, AIA, director of design at Spacemith. "There is plenty of space — both indoors and out — for social distancing, and no elevators to contend with as in many urban facilities."

Located where actors, producers and crew members can avoid mass transit, the Upstate New York

region is also advantageous during challenges such as the current pandemic and street protests, she adds. Upriver Studios is near the main highway connecting Albany the metro area, and is easily accessed by car or shuttle.

Spacesmith's designers and architects are taking extra precautions to design for improved wellness, safety, and control of infection, specifying new no-touch fixtures throughout the complex and increasing the space between makeup bays, along with recommending a high-performance HVAC system for air filtration. Additional hand-washing stations and janitorial closets have also been added to encourage hygienic practices for production enterprises using Upriver Studios.

Environmental responsibility is a top priority for both Spacesmith and client Stuart Masterson, who pledged that Upriver Studios would meet the film industry's strictest standards and help productions become eligible for a green tax credit. Plans are in place to ensure the studios use 100% clean, renewable energy by 2030. The building features locally sourced materials, rooftop photovoltaics, low-flow toilets and fixtures, and high-efficiency LED lighting throughout. Situated on a generous site, the repurposed structure can also be expanded to meet the needs of larger productions — either through permanent additions or by parking temporary trailers in two large, adjacent parking lots. An outdoor break area also serves as a casual meeting place for cast and crew, weather permitting.

“Our project team has been thrilled to support Upriver Studios in its mission to provide a new climate-forward, strategically located production facility that will catalyze creative industry in the Hudson Valley,” says Spacesmith founding principal Jane Smith, FAIA, IIDA. “Spacesmith is committed to creating more new buildings and places like these that support the region’s arts, commerce and civic life.”

With currently stalled production schedules set to resume activity in the fall, Upriver Studios plans to open its first phase this summer, fully equipped to host major productions, according to Spacesmith's Flammia.

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