



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

*THE SPOTLIGHT SHINES ON THEATER EXCELLENCE AS NOMINEES FOR THE  
47<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL NON-EQUITY JEFF AWARDS ARE ANNOUNCED*

Contact:

Nick Obis  
Non-Equity Wing Chair  
[nonequitywing@jeffawards.org](mailto:nonequitywing@jeffawards.org)

Suzanne Ross  
Media and Marketing Chair  
[suzanne@suzanne-ross.com](mailto:suzanne@suzanne-ross.com)  
312-953-6987

Editor's Note:

A complete list of nominees can also be found online at the non-Equity section at [www.jeffawards.org](http://www.jeffawards.org).

April 28, 2020 – Chicago – With the conclusion of the 2019-2020 Chicago non-Equity theater season, the Jeff Awards announces the nominees for the 47<sup>th</sup> annual awards for theater excellence that include 120 theater artists across 21 categories. During this past season, which ended a few weeks early in mid-March due to government guidelines on public gatherings related to the COVID19 virus, Jeff Awards members attended the openings of 126 productions. From these, 52 productions became “Jeff Recommended” and therefore eligible for award nominations.

This year, the work of 31 non-Equity theater companies is showcased with 44 productions receiving one or more nominations. Four productions tied for most nominations including “All Quiet on the Western Front,” “The Ballad of Lefty & Crabbe,” “Big Fish,” and “P.Y.G. or The Mis-Education of Dorian Belle,” which each received seven nominations. Among theater companies, Griffin Theatre garnered the most nominations with 10, followed by Jackalope Theatre Company (9), Lifeline Theatre (8) and BoHo Theatre, Pride Films and Plays, Red Tape Theatre and Underscore Theatre (all with 7).

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A virtual celebration will be held Monday, June 8, 2020 to recognize theater excellence over the past non-Equity season, announce recipients and honor the dedicated theater companies so significantly impacted during these challenging times. Details on accessing the free online program will be available in early June.

**The 2020 nominees are:**

**Production – Play**

- "All Quiet on the Western Front" - Red Tape Theatre
- "First Love is the Revolution" - Steep Theatre Company
- "Middle Passage" - Lifeline Theatre
- "Mlima's Tale" - Griffin Theatre Company
- "P.Y.G. or The Mis-Education of Dorian Belle" - Jackalope Theatre Company
- "The Undeniable Sound of Right Now" - Raven Theatre

**Production – Musical**

- "The Ballad of Lefty & Crabbe" - Underscore Theatre Company
- "Big Fish" - BoHo Theatre
- "Ghost Quartet" - Black Button Eyes Productions
- "Head Over Heels" - Kokandy Productions
- "Hedwig and the Angry Inch" - Theo Ubique Cabaret Theatre

**Ensemble**

- "All Quiet on the Western Front" - Red Tape Theatre
- "The Ballad of Lefty & Crabbe" - Underscore Theatre Company
- "Blue Stockings" - Promethean Theatre Ensemble
- "Emma" - Lifeline Theatre
- "Ghost Quartet" - Black Button Eyes
- "P.Y.G. or The Mis-Education of Dorian Belle" - Jackalope Theatre Company

**New Work**

- Larry Todd Cousineau & Cindy O'Connor - "All That He Was" - Pride Films and Plays
- Matt Foss - "All Quiet on the Western Front" - Red Tape Theatre
- Sam Kebede - "EthiopianAmerica" - Definition Theatre Company
- Jillian Leff & Joe Lino - "Small World" - The New Colony
- Kenneth Lin - "Life On Paper" - Jackalope Theatre Company

**Director – Play**

- Lili-Anne Brown - "P.Y.G. or The Mis-Education of Dorian Belle" - Jackalope Theatre Company
- Spenser Davis - "Blue Stockings" - Promethean Theatre Ensemble
- Spenser Davis - "Labyrinth" - Broken Nose Theatre
- Matt Foss - "All Quiet on the Western Front" - Red Tape Theatre
- Jerrell L. Henderson - "Mlima's Tale" - Griffin Theatre Company

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**Director – Musical**

- Donterrio Johnson - "A Man of No Importance" - Pride Films and Plays
- Ed Rutherford - "Ghost Quartet" - Black Button Eyes Productions
- Stephen Schellhardt - "Big Fish" - BoHo Theatre
- Rusty Sneary - "The Ballad of Lefty & Crabbe" - Underscore Theatre Company
- Derek Van Barham & Elizabeth Swanson - "Head Over Heels" - Kokandy Productions

**Performer in a Principal Role – Play**

- Laura Berner Taylor (Grace) - "Out of Love" - Interrobang Theatre Project
- Dennis Bisto (Bèrenger) - "The Killer" - Trap Door Theatre
- Elaine Carlson (Mrs. Kitty Warren) - "Mrs. Warren's Profession" - Promethean Theatre Ensemble
- Bailey Castle (Barbara, Barbara's Mom, Barbara's Dad) - "Iron Kisses" - Theatre Above the Law
- Bilal Dardai (Samir) - "Language Rooms" - Broken Nose Theatre
- Eric Gerard (Blacky Blackerson) - "P.Y.G. or The Mis-Education of Dorian Belle" - Jackalope Theatre Company
- David Goodloe (Mlima) - "Mlima's Tale" - Griffin Theatre Company
- Jacqueline Grandt (Du) - "Keely and Du" - Redtwist Theatre
- Tracey Greenwood (Vivie Warren) - "Mrs. Warren's Profession" - Promethean Theatre Ensemble
- Brookelyn Hébert (Ada Byron Lovelace) - "Ada and the Engine" - The Artistic Home
- Mary Williamson (Ida) - "Life on Paper" - Jackalope Theatre Company

**Performer in a Principal Role – Musical**

- Jeremiah Alsop (Musidorus) - "Head Over Heels" - Kokandy Productions
- Amanda Giles (Elizabeth) - "If/Then" - Brown Paper Box Co.
- Ryan Lanning (Alfie Byrne) - "A Man of No Importance" - Pride Films and Plays
- Will Lidke (Hedwig) - "Hedwig and the Angry Inch" - Theo Ubique Cabaret Theatre
- Amanda Raquel Martinez (Pearl, The Victim, Lady Usher, Soldier, Scheherazade) - "Ghost Quartet" - Black Button Eyes Productions
- Shea Pender (James "Crabbe" Hathaway) - "The Ballad of Lefty & Crabbe" - Underscore Theatre Company
- Kyle Ryan (Theodore "Lefty" Childs) - "The Ballad of Lefty & Crabbe" - Underscore Theatre Company
- Tommy Thurston (Edward Bloom) - "Big Fish" - BoHo Theatre

**Solo Performance**

- Scott Gryder (Alex More) – "Buyer & Cellar" - Pride Films and Plays
- Scott Sawa (Henry) - "Here Lies Henry" - Interrobang Theatre Project
- Megan Wells (Atina Diffley) - "Turn Here - Sweet Corn" - Saltbox Theatre Collective

**Performer in a Supporting Role - Play**

- Lynne Baker (Charlotte) - "Beyond Therapy" – Eclipse Theatre Company
- Shenise Brown (Michilla Thomas) - "Spoken Word" – MPAACT
- Elaine Carlson (Luella) - "Why Torture Is Wrong and the People Who Love Them" – Eclipse Theatre Company

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- Renee Lockett (Aunt Mama) - "Sugar in Our Wounds" - First Floor Theater
- Marika Mashburn (Eva Ardsley) - "For Services Rendered" – Griffin Theatre Company
- John Mossman (Charles Babbage) - "Ada and the Engine" - The Artistic Home
- Krystal Ortiz (Lois Ardsley) - "For Services Rendered" - Griffin Theatre Company
- Madeline Pell (Actor 4/Harriet Smith and others) - "Emma" - Lifeline Theatre
- Shariba Rivers (Candylady) - "Hoodoo Love" - Raven Theatre
- Michael Turrentine (Geedi, Wamwara, Hassan Abdulla) - "Mlima's Tale" - Griffin Theatre Company
- Kevin Webb (Èduoard) - "The Killer" - Trap Door Theatre

#### **Performer in a Supporting Role – Musical**

- Bridget Adams-King (Kate) - "If/Then" - Brown Paper Box Co.
- Kyrie Anderson (Sandra Bloom) - "Big Fish" - BoHo Theatre
- Brittney Brown (The Girlfriend) - "All That He Was" - Pride Films and Plays
- Parker Guidry (Pythio) - "Head Over Heels" - Kokandy Productions
- Parker Guidry (Lucas) - "If/Then" - Brown Paper Box Co.
- Brian Huther (Gene Sherman) - "The Ballad of Lefty & Crabbe" - Underscore Theatre Company
- Jeff Pierpoint (Will Bloom) - "Big Fish" - BoHo Theatre

#### **Scenic Design**

- Alan Donahue - "Middle Passage" - Lifeline Theatre
- Alan Donahue - "Whose Body?" - Lifeline Theatre
- Jeffrey D. Kmiec - "The Undeniable Sound of Right Now" - Raven Theatre
- Sotirios Livaditis - "For Services Rendered" - Griffin Theatre Company
- Manuel Ortiz - "Last Night in Karaoke Town" – The Factory Theater
- Sydney Lynne Thomas - "Hoodoo Love" - Raven Theatre

#### **Costume Design**

- Aly Renee Amidei - "For Services Rendered" - Griffin Theatre Company
- Stefani Azores-Gococo - "P.Y.G. or The Mis-Education of Dorian Belle" - Jackalope Theatre Company
- Robert S. Kuhn - "Hedwig and the Angry Inch" - Theo Ubique Cabaret Theatre
- Uriel Gomez - "Head Over Heels" - Kokandy Productions
- Rachel M. Sypniewski - "Blue Stockings" - Promethean Theatre Ensemble
- Mieka van der Ploeg - "First Love is the Revolution" - Steep Theatre Company

#### **Sound Design**

- Barry Bennett - "Middle Passage" - Lifeline Theatre
- Sam Clapp - "Sugar in Our Wounds" - First Floor Theater
- L.J. Luthringer - "Mlima's Tale" - Griffin Theatre Company
- Dan Poppen - "All Quiet on the Western Front" - Red Tape Theatre
- Erik Siegling - "Small World" - The New Colony

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### **Lighting Design**

- Michelle Benda - "Out of Love" - Interrobang Theatre Project
- Simean "Sim" Carpenter & Scott Tobin - "Middle Passage" - Lifeline Theatre
- Jared Gooding - "Mlima's Tale" - Griffin Theatre Company
- Stephen Sakowski - "All Quiet on the Western Front" - Red Tape Theatre
- Eric Watkins - "Sugar in Our Wounds" - First Floor Theater

### **Choreography**

- Breon Arzell - "Head Over Heels" - Kokandy Productions
- Megan Farley - "Big Fish" - BoHo Theatre
- Jesse Hoisington - "The Killer" - Trap Door Theatre
- Jenna Schoppe - "The Ballad of Lefty & Crabbe" - Underscore Theatre Company
- Leah Urzendowski - "All Quiet on the Western Front" - Red Tape Theatre

### **Original Music in a Play**

- Ben Chang - "The Hound of the Baskervilles" - City Lit Theatre
- Jeffrey Levin - "Hoodoo Love" - Raven Theatre
- Jeffrey Levin - "Kiss" - Haven Theatre
- Aaron Stephenson - "P.Y.G. or The Mis-Education of Dorian Belle" - Jackalope Theatre Company  
Shawn Wallace and Desta Sound - "Spoken Word" - MPAACT

### **Musical Direction**

- Michael McBride - "Big Fish" - BoHo Theatre
- Robert Ollis - "A Man of No Importance" - Pride Films and Plays
- Jeremy Ramey - "Hedwig and the Angry Inch" - Theo Ubique Cabaret Theatre
- Jeremy Ramey - "Hello Again" - Theo Ubique Cabaret Theatre
- Nick Sula - "Ghost Quartet" - Black Button Eyes Productions

### **Fight Choreography**

- Rachel Flesher & Zack Payne - "First Love in the Revolution" - Steep Theatre Company
- Maya Vinice Prentiss - "Ethiopian America" - Definition Theatre Company
- Maureen Yasko & Chris Smith - "Non-Player Character" - Red Theater Chicago

### **Projection Design**

- Clare Brennan, Aaron Sawyer, & Beth Wolf - "Non-Player Character" - Red Theater Chicago
- Paul Deziel - "P.Y.G. or The Mis-Education of Dorian Belle" - Jackalope Theatre Company
- Paul Deziel & Alex J. Gendal - "Middle Passage" - Lifeline Theatre
- Yeaji Kim - "The Effect" - Strawdog Theatre Company
- G. "Max" Maxin IV - "Ghost Quartet" - Black Button Eyes Productions

### **Artistic Specialization**

- Uriel Gomez (Make-up Design) - "Small World" - The New Colony
- Keith Ryan (Wig Design) - "Hedwig and the Angry Inch" - Theo Ubique Cabaret Theatre
- Robert-Eric West (Wig and Makeup Design) - "Casa Valentina" - Pride Films and Plays

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### **Nominations by Company:**

- Griffin Theatre Company – 10
- Jackalope Theatre Company – 9
- Lifeline Theatre – 8
- BoHo Theatre – 7
- Pride Films and Plays – 7
- Red Tape Theatre – 7
- Underscore Theatre Company – 7
- Black Button Eyes Productions – 6
- Kokandy Productions – 6
- Theo Ubique Cabaret Theatre – 6
- Promethean Theatre Ensemble – 5
- Raven Theatre – 5
- Brown Paper Box Co. – 3
- First Floor Theater – 3
- Interrobang Theatre Project – 3
- The New Colony – 3
- Steep Theatre Company – 3
- Trap Door Theatre – 3
- The Artistic Home – 2
- Broken Nose Theatre – 2
- Definition Theatre – 2
- Eclipse Theatre Company – 2
- MPAACT – 2
- Red Theater Chicago – 2
- City Lit Theater – 1
- The Factory Theater – 1
- Haven Theatre – 1
- Redtwist Theatre – 1
- Saltbox Theatre Collective – 1
- Strawdog Theatre Company – 1
- Theatre Above the Law – 1

### **By Play with multiple nominations:**

- "All Quiet on the Western Front" – 7
- "The Ballad of Lefty & Crabbe" – 7
- "Big Fish" – 7
- "P.Y.G. or The Mis-Education of Dorian Belle" – 7
- "Ghost Quartet" – 6
- "Head Over Heels" – 6
- "Mlima's Tale" – 6

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- “Hedwig and the Angry Inch” – 5
- “Middle Passage” – 5
- “For Services Rendered” – 4
- “Blue Stockings” – 3
- “First Love is the Revolution” – 3
- “Hoodoo Love” – 3
- “If/Then” – 3
- “The Killer” – 3
- “A Man of No Importance” – 3
- “Small World” – 3
- “Sugar in Our Wounds” – 3
- “Ada and the Engine” – 2
- “All That He Was” – 2
- “Emma” – 2
- “EthiopianAmerica” – 2
- “Life on Paper” – 2
- “Mrs. Warren's Profession” – 2
- “Non-Player Character” – 2
- “Out of Love” – 2
- “Spoken Word” – 2
- “The Undeniable Sound of Right Now” – 2

**Theater Artists with more than one nomination:**

- Elaine Carlson – 2
- Spenser Davis – 2
- Paul Deziel – 2
- Alan Donahue – 2
- Matt Foss – 2
- Parker Guidry – 2
- Jeffrey Levin – 2
- Jeremy Ramey – 2

**SPECIAL NOTICE TO NEWS MEDIA**

*The 47th Annual Non-Equity Jeff Awards and Community Unity Celebration will be held virtually Monday, June 8. Details on accessing the free program will be made available in early June.*

*Names of award recipients will be released immediately following the virtual program on June 8 by email and on our website under Non-Equity Awards at [www.jeffawards.org](http://www.jeffawards.org).*

*You may contact theaters and artists directly for interviews. If you would like to include a quote or an interview with any Jeff Awards committee member, please call or e-mail Suzanne Ross at 312-953-6987 or [media@jeffawards.org](mailto:media@jeffawards.org).*

*The Jeff Awards website, [www.jeffawards.org](http://www.jeffawards.org), lists all the current Non-Equity nominees, along with previous recipients and nominees as well as other Jeff Awards information and news.*

## **ABOUT THE JEFF AWARDS**

Promoting excellence in Chicago theater, The Jeff Awards began its annual recognition program in 1968. In 1973, it expanded its scope to establish the Non–Equity Wing to celebrate outstanding achievement in non–union theater. Members include 55 individuals representing a wide variety of backgrounds in theater (including producers, directors, actors, playwrights, designers, professors of theater, entertainment lawyers and agents, and theater lovers), the Jeff Awards is committed to celebrating the vitality of Chicago area theatre by recognizing excellence through its recommendations, awards, and honors. Opening night judges include both the members as well as Artistic and Technical theater volunteers (the “AT Team”), representing Artistic Directors, producers, directors and artists from Chicago theaters. The Jeff Awards fosters the artistic growth of area theater companies and artists, and promotes educational opportunities, audience appreciation, and civic pride in the achievements of the theater community. Each year, the Jeff Awards judges over 300 theatrical productions and hosts two awards ceremonies.

The 2020 Equity Jeff Awards program is scheduled to take place when the Equity recognition is traditionally held in the fall. Information on the date and format of this program will be announced in late August.

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