



*For Release*

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## **Circle Theatre and Theo Ubique Cabaret Theatre Take Top Honors at the 40<sup>th</sup> Annual Non-Equity Jeff Awards Ceremony in Chicago**

*June 3, 2013 - Chicago, IL.* A stage tale of troubled families, a true-life story musical about gay servicemen in World War II and a rousing rock ‘n’ roll revue took home top honors Monday, June 3, at Park West during the 40<sup>th</sup> Annual Non-Equity Jeff Awards ceremony recognizing excellence in non-union Chicago theatre.

Circle Theatre in Oak Park and Theo Ubique Cabaret Theatre in Chicago each received four awards, more than any other company, at Monday night's ceremony.

Circle Theatre’s “When The Rain Stops Falling,” a searing story of two troubled families spanning time over an 80-year stretch, garnered three awards: Kevin Bellie for Projection Design, John Gawlik for Direction of a Play, and the award for Best Production – Play for the 2012-2013 season. Brigitte Ditmars also received the award for Best Choreography for Circle Theatre's “Reefer Madness.”

Theo Ubique Cabaret Theatre’s “Smokey Joe’s Café,” a rock ‘n’ roll tribute to the music catalog of Leiber and Stoller, was the recipient of Best Production - Revue, as well as Direction of a Musical or Revue for Brenda Didier and Music Direction for Jeremy Ramey. Their production of “Smokey Joe’s Café” has transferred to a new space to continue its successful run, and is now playing at the Royal George Theatre. Theo Ubique’s other award recipient was Kelli Harrington, who garnered Principal Actress in a Musical for Andrew Lloyd Webber's “Aspects of Love.”

“Under A Rainbow Flag” from Pride Films and Plays, a new musical based on the real experiences of Evanston resident Jon Phillips and following the lives of four gay servicemen during World War II, was honored for New Work and for Best Production-Musical. The coveted Ensemble Award went to Sideshow Theatre Company’s “Idomeneus,” a U.S. premiere that featured 15 actors playing a variety of roles to address a question common to Greek tragedy: “What if I chose differently?”

Joe Dempsey, a long-time Chicago actor and ensemble member of the Neo-Futurists, served as emcee for the award show, which recognized 120 nominees in 25 categories from 45 productions, and ultimately honored 26 recipients from 17 theatres with awards celebrating excellence in all aspects of Chicago Non-Equity theatre. Jonathan Berry directed Monday's ceremony, and Jeff Non-Equity Chair John D. Glover produced the event.

Diane Hires, the chair of the 52-member Jeff Committee, welcomed the audience and presented this year's Special Jeff Award to Richard Cotovsky, artistic director of the Mary-Arrchie Theatre Co. and often dubbed "The Godfather of Storefront Theater," honoring him for his cutting edge contributions to Non-Equity Chicago theatres during the past four decades.

Other individual acting awards in principal roles went to Peter Oyloe as Hank Williams in "Hank Williams: Lost Highway" produced by Filament Theatre Ensemble, Jeremy Trager for his role playing the accused Lindberg baby kidnapper in "Hauptmann" at Bohemian Theatre Ensemble and Lindsey Pearlman as Maria, a twin who's been damaged by love in the funny, life-affirming world premiere run of the play "Never the Bridesmaid," produced by Polarity Ensemble Theatre.

The Den Theatre's "City of Dreadful Night," an atmospheric hard-boiled tale of city crime, claimed three awards, with Mikey Moran receiving the award for Original Incidental Music, Henry Behel for Scenic Design and Cat Wilson for Lighting Design. Supporting Role honors went to Danni Smith for "See What I Wanna See" at Bailiwick Chicago, Jason Richards for "Avenue Q" at NightBlue Performing Arts Company, Felisha McNeal for "Jar the Floor" at eta Creative Arts Foundation and to Walter Briggs for "The Glass Menagerie" at Mary-Arrchie Theatre Co.

Paul Edwards's "Peyton Place" received the award for New Adaptation, and Sound Design honors went to Christian Gero for "Flare Path" at Griffin Theatre Company. The Jeff Award for Costume Design went to Kate Setzer Kamphausen for "Sexy Baby" at Hell in a Handbag Productions.

More than 600 guests attended Monday's awards gala, which also featured musical production numbers from the season's nominated musicals and revues, including Circle Theatre's "Reefer Madness," Bohemian Theatre Ensemble's "The Spitfire Grill," NightBlue Performing Arts Company's "Avenue Q," Pride Films and Plays' "Under A Rainbow Flag" and Theo Ubique Cabaret Theatre's "Smokey Joe's Café."

The Jeff Awards has been honoring outstanding theatre artists annually since established in 1968. With up to 52 members representing a wide variety of backgrounds in theatre, the Jeff Awards is committed to celebrating the vitality of Chicago area theatre by recognizing excellence through its recommendations, awards and honors. The Jeff Awards fosters artistic growth of area theatres and theatre artists and promotes educational opportunities, audience appreciation, and civic pride in the achievements of the theatre community. The Jeff Awards evaluates more than 250 theatrical productions and host two awards ceremonies annually. Originally chartered to recognize only Equity productions, the Jeff Awards established the Non-Equity Wing in 1973 to celebrate outstanding achievement in non-union theatre. The next Equity Awards Ceremony, honoring productions presented under union contracts, is on Monday, Nov. 4, 2013, at the Drury Lane Oakbrook in Oakbrook Terrace.

## **2013 Non-Equity Jeff Award Recipients**

### **PRODUCTION – PLAY**

“When The Rain Stops Falling,” Circle Theatre

### **PRODUCTION – MUSICAL**

“Under A Rainbow Flag,” Pride Films and Plays

### **PRODUCTION – REVUE**

“Smokey Joe’s Café,” Theo Ubique Cabaret Theatre

### **ENSEMBLE**

“Idomeneus,” Sideshow Theatre Company

### **DIRECTOR – PLAY**

John Gawlik, “When The Rain Stops Falling,” Circle Theatre

### **DIRECTOR – MUSICAL OR REVUE**

Brenda Didier, “Smokey Joe’s Café,” Theo Ubique Cabaret Theatre

### **ACTRESS IN A PRINCIPAL ROLE – PLAY**

Lindsey Pearlman, “Never the Bridesmaid,” Polarity Ensemble Theatre

### **ACTOR IN A PRINCIPAL ROLE – PLAY**

Jeremy Trager, “Hauptmann,” Bohemian Theatre Ensemble

### **ACTRESS IN A PRINCIPAL ROLE – MUSICAL**

Kelli Harrington, “Aspects of Love,” Theo Ubique Cabaret Theatre

### **ACTOR IN A PRINCIPAL ROLE – MUSICAL**

Peter Oyloe, “Hank Williams: Lost Highway,” Filament Theatre Ensemble

### **SOLO PERFORMANCE**

Blake Montgomery, “Charles Dickens Begrudgingly Performs ‘A Christmas Carol.’ Again.,” The Building Stage

### **SCENIC DESIGN**

Henry Behel, “City of Dreadful Night,” The Den Theatre

### **COSTUME DESIGN**

Kate Setzer Kamphausen, “Sexy Baby,” Hell in a Handbag Productions

LIGHTING DESIGN

Cat Wilson, "City of Dreadful Night," The Den Theatre

SOUND DESIGN

Christian Gero, "Flare Path," Griffin Theatre Company

ORIGINAL INCIDENTAL MUSIC

Mikey Moran, "City of Dreadful Night," The Den Theatre

MUSIC DIRECTION

Jeremy Ramey, "Smokey Joe's Café," Theo Ubique Cabaret Theatre

NEW WORK

Leo Schwartz, "Under A Rainbow Flag," Pride Films and Plays

NEW ADAPTATION

Paul Edwards, "Peyton Place," City Lit Theater Company

CHOREOGRAPHY

Brigitte Ditmars, "Reefer Madness," Circle Theatre

ARTISTIC SPECIALIZATION

Kevin Bellie, Projection Design, "When The Rain Stops Falling," Circle Theatre  
Ryan Bourque, Fight Choreography, "Coriolanus," The Hypocrites

ACTOR IN A SUPPORTING ROLE – PLAY

Walter Briggs, "The Glass Menagerie," Mary-Arrchie Theatre Co.

ACTRESS IN A SUPPORTING ROLE – PLAY

Felisha McNeal, "Jar the Floor," eta Creative Arts Foundation

ACTOR IN A SUPPORTING ROLE – MUSICAL

Jason Richards, "Avenue Q," NightBlue Performing Arts Company

ACTRESS IN A SUPPORTING ROLE – MUSICAL

Danni Smith, "See What I Wanna See," Bailiwick Chicago

SPECIAL AWARD

Richard Cotovsky

## **MULTIPLE RECIPIENTS**

### **Theatre Companies**

Circle Theatre – 4

Theo Ubique Cabaret Theatre – 4

The Den Theatre – 3

Pride Films and Plays – 2

### **Productions**

“City of Dreadful Night” – 3

“Smokey Joe’s Café” – 3

“When The Rain Stops Falling” – 3

“Under A Rainbow Flag” – 2

### **SPECIAL NOTICE TO NEWS MEDIA**

The Jeff Awards website, [www.jeffawards.org](http://www.jeffawards.org), lists all current nominees and statistics, along with other Jeff Awards information and news. Photos from the event will be available on our website [www.jeffawards.org](http://www.jeffawards.org), for your download and use. Please credit Johnny Knight Photography. If you need a quote or interview with any Jeff Awards Committee member, please contact Jeffrey Marks at 312-606-0400 or [media@jeffawards.org](mailto:media@jeffawards.org).