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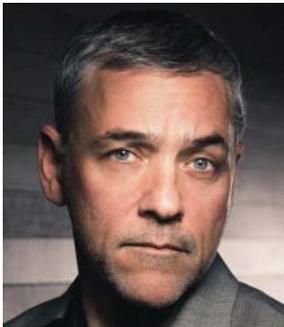
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Editor's Note:

The complete list of Equity Jeff Awards nominees is available on-line in the News and Events section at www.jeffawards.org.



MICHAEL HALBERSTAM TO RECEIVE SPECIAL JEFF AWARD

October 3, 2016 - Chicago, IL. The Joseph Jefferson Awards Committee will pay tribute to Michael Halberstam at the 2016 Equity Jeff Awards Ceremony on Monday, October 17. The Artistic Director of Writers Theatre since its inception in 1992 is being honored for outstanding theatrical accomplishments and contributions to Chicagoland theatre for the past 25 years.

Halberstam is hardly a stranger to the Jeff Awards, which recognize outstanding achievement in Chicago-area theatre. Among other accomplishments, Writers Theatre has received more than 100 Jeff Award nominations and garnered 26 awards, including 11 nominations and two awards for best production. Halberstam himself has received seven nominations: five as a director, one as an actor and one as an adaptor.

A native of England, Halberstam graduated from the University of Illinois before heading to Chicago and eventually opening the new theatre in the back room of a Glencoe bookstore. In 2003, a 108-seat performing venue at the Woman's Library Club of Glencoe was added. The new state-of-the-art facility opened in February, designed by world-renowned Studio Gang Architects, having two theatre spaces. One is a 250-seat theatre designed to maintain Writers Theatre's trademark intimacy, and a flexible 50-99 seat black box theatre reminiscent of their first performance space in the bookstore.

Under Halberstam's artistic leadership, Writers Theatre has attained a national reputation for excellence and has garnered critical praise for the consistent high quality and intimacy of its artistry, providing the finest interpretations of both classic and contemporary theatre.

Michael Halberstam has directed over 35 productions for the company, and performed in many. His directing credits at Writers Theatre include "Julius Caesar", "Arcadia", "Isaac's Eye", "The Real Thing", and the world premiere of "A Minister's Wife". Previously, he spent two years at The Stratford Festival in Ontario and performed in "Timon of Athens", the title role in "The Knight of the Burning Pestle", "Much Ado About Nothing" and "As You Like It". Halberstam's Chicago acting credits include productions with Wisdom Bridge Theater, Court Theatre and Chicago Shakespeare Theater. He directed "The Gamester" (Northlight Theatre), "A Man for All Seasons" (Peninsula Players Theatre), "Hamlet" (Illinois Shakespeare Festival), "Candida" (Jean Cocteau Repertory Theatre in New York), "Ten Little Indians" (Drury Lane Theatre), a highly acclaimed revival of "Crime and Punishment", which Writers Theatre produced off-Broadway at 59E59 Theatres in New York, "Enchanted April" and "State of the Union" (Milwaukee Repertory Theater). In 2010, he directed "A Minister's Wife" at Lincoln Center Theater, and also directed the west coast premiere at San Jose Repertory Theatre in 2013.

His forays into opera have included "The Rape of Lucretia" (Chicago Opera Theater), "Francesca da Rimini" featuring the Chicago Symphony Orchestra conducted by Christoph Eschenbach and "Le Freyschutz", a Berlioz adaptation of the Weber opera conducted by Christoph Eschenbach in its North American premiere (Ravinia Festival).

Halberstam spent two and a half years teaching Shakespeare at The Theatre School at DePaul University and has received awards for excellence in theater management and/or artistic achievement from The Chicago Drama League, The Arts & Business Council of Chicago, Chicago Lawyers for the Creative Arts, and The Chicago Associates of the Stratford Festival. He also received the 2010 Zelda Fichandler Award, the 2013 Artistic Achievement Award from the League of Chicago Theatres, he was named the Chicago Tribune's 2013 "Chicagoan of the Year" for Theater, and he recently received the Award of Honor for Outstanding Contributions to the field from the Illinois Theatre Association. He currently serves on the board of the Arts Club of Chicago.

There has also been a change in classification for a nominee. The Jeff Awards Committee has advised The House Theatre of Chicago that its production of "United Flight 232", which had been nominated as a New Work, is considered a New Adaptation. The nominees for New Work and New Adaptations are otherwise unchanged.

The 48th Annual Jeff Awards ceremony honoring excellence in professional theatre produced within the immediate Chicago area will be held on Monday, October 17th, at Drury Lane Oakbrook, 100 Drury Lane, Oakbrook Terrace. The ceremony, directed by Michael Weber and produced by Merrill Prager, will feature live performances from nominated musicals. Emceeding the festivities will be esteemed Chicago actors Janet Ulrich Brooks and James Earl Jones II.

The Jeff Awards have been honoring outstanding theatre artists annually since it was established in 1968. With up to 55 members representing a wide variety of backgrounds in theatre, the Jeff Awards Committee is committed to celebrating the vitality of Chicago area

theatre by recognizing excellence through its recommendations, awards, and honors. The Jeff Awards foster the artistic growth of area theatres and theatre artists and promotes educational opportunities, audience appreciation, and civic pride in the achievements of the theatre community.

SPECIAL NOTICE TO NEWS MEDIA

Your *complimentary ticket* to the 48th Annual Equity Jeff Awards Ceremony will be held at the News Media Table at the Drury Lane Theatre only if you make a reservation in advance with Jeffrey Marks at 312-606-0400 or media@jeffawards.org.

Names of award recipients will be released immediately following the presentation ceremony October 17th by email and on our website. Photos from the event will be available on our website. A Media Curtain is available for your own photos. We will also have an interview area available to you, and will assist in bringing interviewees to that area. If you need a quote or interview with any Jeff Awards committee member, please call or e-mail Jeffrey Marks at 312-606-0400 or media@jeffawards.org.

The Jeff Awards website, www.jeffawards.org, lists all the current Equity nominees and statistics, along with previous recipients and nominees and other Jeff Awards information and news.