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News Release

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THE JEFF AWARDS TO HONOR ARTISTIC DIRECTOR, THE ARTISTIC HOME THEATER CO-FOUNDER AND EDUCATOR KATHY SCAMBIATTERA WITH THIS SEASON'S SPECIAL NON-EQUITY AWARD

(March 17, 2026 - Chicago, IL) – Recognizing decades of commitment to the Chicago theater community as an actor, director, producer and extraordinary educator who has shaped generations of artists, the Joseph Jefferson Awards will honor Kathy Scambiattera with the 2026 Joseph Jefferson Special Award at the 52nd Non-Equity Awards celebration Monday, March 23, 2026 at the Harris Theater in Chicago.

Kathy Scambiattera is Artistic Director and co-founder of The Artistic Home where, for 25 seasons, she has overseen all aspects of production for 58 shows, 25 One Act Festivals (always sold out) and various staged readings and developmental workshops. At the company, she has directed 16 productions and acted in 13 of them. Over the last few decades, The Artistic Home has received multiple Jeff Awards and nominations, with six Non-Equity Jeff Award nominations this year.

Her Chicago theater journey began in 1978, where she performed notably as an ensemble member of Center Theater for more than a decade. Then, after a six-year stint acting and teaching in Los Angeles, including work with the Pacific Resident Theater, she returned in 1998 to co-found The Artistic Home, first as a dedicated Meisner training studio and then expansion to a theater company. Widely regarded as Chicago's purest and longest-running Meisner program, The Artistic Home has trained nearly 1,000 actors and Scambiattera has been the director of the actor training program for 27 years. The establishment of the theater company came two years after the training center opened.



Kathy Scambiattera

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“In a city rich with talented performers and teachers, Kathy stands apart in her selfless dedication, not just on stage but also behind the scenes where she always prioritizes truthful storytelling and elevating others”, said Jeff Awards Chair Paulette Petretti announcing this year’s recipient. “Her students and company are a testament to her lasting impact and the quiet force she has been to enable so much excellence in Chicago theater for decades.”

In addition to her teaching, Scambiatterra has worked as a recognized actor in Chicago on stage at Northlight Theatre, Theater Wit, Steppenwolf Theatre Company, Drury Lane Theatre, Chicago Shakespeare Theater, Goodman Theatre, Raven Theatre, Rivendell Theatre Ensemble, Interrobang Theatre Project as well as at The Artistic Home. Her TV/Film credits include *Chicago PD* (NBC), *Mr. Throwback* (Peacock), *Philip K. Dick’s Electric Dreams* (Amazon), Hekla (Michael Glover Smith) *Good Guy with a Gun* (One Shot Productions), and *Monuments* (Zaxiefilms), among others.

A committed educator, Scambiatterra has also taught at The School at Steppenwolf, Columbia College Chicago, Center Theater’s The Training Center, Carolyn Berry Studio, The Pacific Resident Theatre, Director’s Symposium, US Army (Heidelberg, Germany) and Screen Training Ireland. For the past 15 years, she has worked with The Chicago High School for the Arts (ChiArts®) teaching acting and directing in the Theatre Conservatory, where she has been inspiring diverse teenagers from every background to pursue theater, sometimes amid challenging circumstances. At ChiArts, she recently directed *Bring It On*, *Eurydice* and *The Skin of our Teeth*. Many of her students have gone on to professional stages, filmmaking, and even ensemble membership at The Artistic Home, as well as receiving Jeff Awards and nominations.

Scambiatterra is represented by ATG actorstalentgroup.com.

The 52nd Non-Equity Awards celebration will be held Monday, March 23, 2026, at the Harris Theater in Chicago, IL, beginning at 7:00pm CST with a red carpet walk commencing at 6:00pm. The ceremony will be directed by Adrian Abel Azevedo, co-hosted by Chicago entertainment power couple Alexis and Kelvin Roston Jr., and under the musical direction of Dr. Michael McBride.

TICKET INFORMATION

Tickets are \$71.50 (includes ticket + required fees) for general admission. A group rate of \$62.30 (includes ticket + required fees) is available for parties of 10 or more by contacting the Harris Theater box office directly at 312-334-7777. Single tickets can also be purchased at the Harris Theater box office now and through the evening of the awards show. To purchase tickets and learn more about this program and the Jeff Awards, visit www.jeffawards.org.

For information can also be found on the Jeff Awards social media including [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#).

About The Jeff Awards

The Jeff Awards is one of the most active and engaged theater awards organizations in the country evaluating hundreds of theatrical productions annually and holding two awards ceremonies highlighting work over the past Equity and Non-Equity seasons. Through our recommendations, awards, and honors we help foster the growth of companies, encourage artists, bring new appreciation for diverse storytelling, and cultivate civic pride in the achievements of the Chicago theater community. Originally chartered in 1968 to recognize Equity productions, the Jeff Awards Non-Equity Wing was established in 1973 to celebrate outstanding achievement in non-union theatre. The Jeff Awards is professionally independent and voting members are unaffiliated with any theater companies or producing organizations.

For more information, visit www.jeffawards.org.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON THE AWARDS PROGRAM

This year's Non-Equity awards spotlight 157 theater artists across 27 categories of excellence in theater production among shows from 26 companies. During the most recent season which ran from January 1, 2025, to December 31, 2025, Jeff Awards members attended 102 Non-Equity productions. From these, 47 productions became "Jeff Recommended" and, therefore, eligible for award nominations.

The Jeff Awards website lists all the current award nominees, along with previous recipients and nominations as well as other Jeff Awards information and news. Visit www.jeffawards.org.

The Special Award recognizes those who have had a meaningful impact on Chicago theater with honors as part of the Non-Equity Jeff Awards since 1969. Learn more [here](#) about previous recipients.

Names of award recipients will be released immediately following the program on March 23rd by email and on the website under Non-Equity Awards at www.jeffawards.org.

Media may contact theaters and artists directly for interviews. For quotes or an interview with any Jeff Awards committee members, please call or e-mail Suzanne Ross at 312-953-6987 or suzanne@suzanne-ross.com.

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