
News From: **The Helen Hayes Awards**

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THREE SPECIAL AWARDS TO BE PRESENTED AT THE 26TH HELEN HAYES AWARDS ON APRIL 5, 2010

Washington, DC – The 26th Helen Hayes Awards will be presented at the historic Warner Theatre on Monday April 5. In addition to 151 theatre artists, ensembles and productions nominated in 26 categories, three special awards will be given:

- **The Helen Hayes Tribute** sponsored by Jaylee Mead;
- **The *Washington Post* Award** for Innovative Leadership in the Theatre Community; and
- **The John Aniello Award** for Outstanding Emerging Theatre Company

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The Helen Hayes Tribute, sponsored by philanthropist Jaylee Mead, is presented every year honoring some of the most distinguished artists in the theatre profession. This year is no exception. This year, The Helen Hayes Tribute will be presented to legendary playwright **EDWARD ALBEE**.

Born in Washington, DC, **EDWARD ALBEE** burst onto the American theatrical scene in the late 1950s with a variety of plays that detailed the agonies and disillusionment of that decade and the transition from the placid Eisenhower years to the turbulent 1960s. Albee's plays, with their intensity, their grappling with modern themes, and their experiments in form, startled critics and audiences alike while changing the landscape of American drama. The recipient of three Pulitzer Prizes, his 25 plays include *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf*, *A Delicate Balance*, *Three Tall Women*, *The Zoo Story*, *The Play About the Baby*, and *Seascape*, among others.

Previous Tribute recipients include Derek Jacobi, James Earl Jones, Mary Martin, Angela Lansbury, Jason Robards, Chita Rivera, August Wilson, Jerry Herman, Terrence McNally, Frances Sternhagen, and the Artistic Directors of Washington area theatres.

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The *Washington Post* Award for Innovative Leadership in the Theatre Community will be presented to arts activist **ANDY SHALLAL**. **ANAS "ANDY" SHALLAL** is an Iraqi-American artist, activist and restaurateur. He is the founder and proprietor of Busboys and Poets, an activism center and café with three locations in the Washington area, which features prominent speakers and authors, theatre events and provides a venue for social and political activism. He is the co-founder of The Peace Café, presented in connection with Theater J productions to promote Arab and Jewish dialogue and improved understanding. He is a member of the board

of trustees for The Institute for Policy Studies and has been a featured speaker at several conferences and panels that deal with Iraqi, as well as Israeli-Palestinian issues. He sits on several arts and philanthropic boards and has received numerous human rights and peace awards.

Since 1986, *The Washington Post* has honored the inspired efforts of theatres, directors, local governments, service organizations, and several remarkable individuals – all with an imaginative spirit who have brought about change and progress within the Washington theatre community. .

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The John Aniello Award for Outstanding Emerging Theatre Company will be given to **1ST STAGE**. **1ST STAGE** was created in September 2008 by two former Fairfax County public school teachers and a local singing/acting teacher, together with the young artists they had met and taught over many years. Their vision was to create a home in Tysons Corner, VA to provide opportunities for emerging local artists to launch and nurture their professional theatre careers and in fact be the “first stage” in the careers of these artists

Presented for the third time, this award was established in memory of John Aniello, a devoted champion of young, promising talent and an avid Washington theatergoer since 1960. The John Aniello Award recognizes and encourages the efforts of companies who are just getting started yet have produced a body of work that is new, daring, and exciting. Previous recipients are Constellation Theatre Company and Taffety Punk Theatre Company.

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MONDAY, APRIL 5, 2010

The 26th Helen Hayes Awards

8pm at the Warner Theatre
13th and E Streets, NW
Award presentation honoring excellence in Washington professional theatre

The Ovation Gala

10:30pm at the JW Marriott Hotel
1331 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Celebrating the nominees and recipients at Washington's largest cast party

The Helen Hayes Awards

Founded in 1983, the Helen Hayes Awards is a vibrant living legacy to Washington native and “First Lady of the American Theatre,” Helen Hayes, whose legendary work ethic and standards of excellence continue to inspire Washington artists. Among the area’s chief community builders, The Helen Hayes Awards helps to strengthen the region by building one of its most powerful assets: the professional theatre. While the organization takes center stage on one night each year, work behind the scenes continues all year to build audiences, honor excellence, and educate youth with:

- helenhayes.org, the comprehensive go-to internet resource used by more than two million annually, with information, links, calendar listings, a database of Awards recipients, and so much more.
- [The Washington Audience Development Initiative](#), a regional communications initiative that builds and broadens Washington theatre audiences through integrated marketing and public awareness.

- "Helen Hayes Recommended," a new marketing initiative to assist theatres promotes their productions while they are running. Helen Hayes Awards judges independently provide a numerical score specifically for this purpose. When the total score meets or exceeds a benchmark, the endorsement is offered.
- The Theatre Legacy Project, a unique program that introduces young, public school students and Boys and Girls Club members to the magic and practical applications of live theatre via a four part program in the classroom and the theatre. All educators, tickets, bus transportation, teacher training, and resource materials are provided free-of-charge. More than 35,000 children have participated in the program since 1994.
- The Washington Theatre Guide, the most comprehensive resource of its kind with information about complete seasons, festivals, readings, and special events at all Washington theatres as well as nearby restaurants, parking, and public transportation. The Guide also offers theatre education resources for students, teachers, parents, and professional theatre students.
- Washington Theatre TixCertificates, flexible \$20 gift certificates redeemable at close to 50 participating theatres throughout the Washington area.

For more information about Helen Hayes Awards programs and services, visit www.helenhayes.org, email info@helenhayes.org, or call 202-337-4572.

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