



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The complete list of Non–Equity Jeff Award nominees is also available online at:

www.jeffawards.org

*Trap Door Theatre to Receive
2019 Non-Equity Special Award*



Trap Door Ensemble (2019)

Chicago, IL (May 22, 2019) – The Jeff Awards will present Trap Door Theatre with a 2019 Non-Equity Special Award to honor the company’s endeavors in opening a magical door to an evocative and surreal world over the last 25 years.

In a review of Trap Door's inaugural production of "Madman and the Nun" at the Chopin Theatre, theatre critic Chris Jones wrote, "Keep your eye on the people at Trap Door." Since then, Trap Door has made its 45-seat home in a former machine shop, down a long gangway on Cortland Street. Over the last quarter century, this prolific company has produced 116 shows, including thirty-five American premieres, seventeen world premieres, and ten European tours in six countries, and has stretched its boundaries beyond Bucktown with the recent formation of Trap Door International, a sister company that produces out of Barcelona, Spain.

Artistic Director Beata Pilch founded Trap Door with a commitment to seeking out challenging yet obscure works and bringing them to life on stage. Whether it is a European classic rarely seen in the United States, an untarnished piece of American literature, or the playwright living next door, Trap Door finds these voices and presents them to the public through innovative expression.

Early in Trap Door's history, Ms. Pilch teamed up with leading lady and artistic partner Nicole Wiesner to develop a unique artistic vision that encompasses theatre, film and multimedia. While the group is grounded in Chicago, it has performed in international festivals in France, Hungary, Romania, Poland and the Republic of Moldova.

Trap Door has been dubbed "the best avant-garde theater in the city," by theatre journalist Lucia Mauro and over the years has garnered significant awards and praise. Venus Zarris, from Gay Chicago Magazine described the Trap Door experience as "purgatorial paradise of the sublime surreal." Recently, Time Out ranked Trap Door among the best storefront theatres in the city, and The Chicago Reader asked, "Is Trap Door Chicago's greatest theatre success of the last quarter century?"

Past Trap Door productions that received Jeff Awards include: *Lebensraum* (2000), *Nana* (2003), *Beholder* (2009), *First Ladies* (2011), *the word progress on my mother's lips doesn't ring true* (2012), *La Bete* (2015), and *How to Explain History of Communism to Mental Patients* (2016).

The Jeff Awards will celebrate Trap Door's mission to bring obscure works of literature to startling life on stage, illuminating challenging language through myth, ritual, and revolution.

Tickets are \$45 in advance and \$50 on June 3. To purchase tickets, visit the Athenaeum website (<http://athenaeumtheatre.org>). A group rate of \$40 is available for parties of 10 or more by calling the Athenaeum box office. Festive cocktail attire is suggested, and the public is cordially invited. For more information, contact Drew Blau, Non-Equity Wing Chair, at nonequitywing@jeffawards.org. Follow live tweets from the ceremony and behind the scenes at #jeffawards.

The Jeff Awards has 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 (including producers, directors, actors, playwrights, designers, professors of theatre, entertainment lawyers and agents, and theatre 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 not only the members but also Artistic & Technical theatre volunteers (the “AT Team”), including Artistic Directors, producers, directors and artists from Chicago theatres.

The Jeff Awards fosters 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. Each year, the Jeff Awards judges over 300 theatrical productions and host two awards ceremonies. 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 will be held on October 21 at Drury Lane Oakbrook.

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SPECIAL NOTICE TO NEWS MEDIA

Your ***complimentary ticket*** to the 46th Annual Non–Equity Jeff Awards ceremony will be at the Athenaeum box office 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 on June 3, by email and on our website. Photos from the event will be available on our website.

If you need a quote or interview with any Jeff Awards committee member, please email Jeffrey Marks at: media@jeffawards.org.

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

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