



**NOTICE TO NOMINEES:**

Please provide your contact information and digital color headshot, as soon as possible, to Deric Gochenauer at [producer@jeffawards.org](mailto:producer@jeffawards.org)

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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***Editor’s Note:***

***The complete list of Equity Jeff Awards nominees follows this release and is also available online in the Equity Awards section at [www.jeffawards.org](http://www.jeffawards.org).***

## **The 51<sup>st</sup> Annual Equity Jeff Awards Announce Nominations for Theatrical Excellence in the 2018-2019 Season**

*Tuesday, September 3, 2019 – Chicago, IL* – Eleven world premiere plays and musicals seen first by Chicago audiences were among those receiving nominations by the Jeff Awards, announced today. A total of 192 nominations were made in 34 categories that honor Chicago Equity theatrical productions that opened between August 1, 2018 and July 31, 2019.

During the 2018-19 season, Jeff Awards judges attended opening nights of 132 Equity productions offered by 43 producing organizations and from these openings, 112 productions were “Jeff Recommended” and eligible for award nominations.

This season, Porchlight Music Theatre led the theatre scoreboard with 17 nominations, followed by Paramount Theatre with 16 and Court Theatre with 15. Paramount Theatre's "The Producers" led all productions with nine nominations, followed by its production of "The Wizard of Oz" with seven nominations.

In the coveted Ensemble categories, five musical productions were nominated for Ensemble-Music or Revue, and eight plays were nominated in the Ensemble – Play category. Actors' Equity Association supports the Equity Jeff Awards by sponsoring these Ensemble awards.

The 51<sup>st</sup> Annual Equity Jeff Awards ceremony honoring excellence in professional theatre produced within the greater Chicago area will be held on Monday, October 21<sup>st</sup>, at Drury Lane Theatre, 100 Drury Lane, Oakbrook Terrace.

This year's ceremony performances will again feature cast members from nominated musicals and plays. Pre-show appetizers and a cash bar will be offered from 6:00 to 7:30 PM, followed by the awards ceremony, directed by Steve Scott. A buffet reception will immediately follow the ceremony.

Advance purchase tickets, which include the ceremony and pre-/post-show parties, are \$85 (\$65 for members of Actors' Equity Association, United Scenic Artists, Stage Directors and Choreographers Society, Stage Managers' Association, IATSE, The Dramatists Guild of America, and the American Federation of Musicians). Tickets at the door, if available, will be an additional \$10 per ticket. The evening is black tie optional, and the public is invited to attend. To purchase tickets, visit the Jeff Awards website at [www.jeffawards.org](http://www.jeffawards.org). For more information, contact Jeff Awards Equity Ceremony Producer Deric Gochenauer at [producer@jeffawards.org](mailto:producer@jeffawards.org).

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 Jeff members but also the team of Artistic and Technical theatre volunteers (the "A/T Team") which is comprised of artistic directors, producers, directors from major Chicago theatres, actors and designers. 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 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.

## **2019 EQUITY JEFF AWARD NOMINEES**

### **Production – Play – Large**

"Downstate" – Steppenwolf Theatre Company

"Indecent" – Victory Gardens Theater

"Photograph 51" – Court Theatre

“Radio Golf” – Court Theatre  
“The Steadfast Tin Soldier” – Lookingglass Theatre Company

**Production – Play – Midsize**

“Frankenstein” – Remy Bumppo Theatre Company  
“Noises Off” – Windy City Playhouse  
“On Clover Road” – American Blues Theater  
“The Recommendation” – Windy City Playhouse  
“Something Clean” – Sideshow Theatre Company and Rivendell Theatre Ensemble

**Production – Musical – Large**

“Disney’s Beauty and the Beast” – Drury Lane Productions  
“Next to Normal” – Writers Theatre  
“The Producers” – Paramount Theatre  
“Six” – Chicago Shakespeare Theater  
“The Wizard of Oz” – Paramount Theatre

**Production – Musical – Midsize**

“Caroline, or Change” – Firebrand Theatre i/a/w TimeLine Theatre Company  
“A Chorus Line” – Porchlight Music Theatre  
“A Gentleman’s Guide to Love & Murder” – Porchlight Music Theatre  
“Gypsy” – Porchlight Music Theatre

**Production – Revue**

“Djembe! The Show” – Doug Manuel, Ashley DeSimone and TSG Theatricals  
“Women of Soul” – Black Ensemble Theater  
“You Can’t Fake the Funk: A Journey through Funk Music” – Black Ensemble Theater

**Ensemble – Play**

“Familiar” – Steppenwolf Theatre Company  
“For Colored Girls Who Have Considered Suicide/When the Rainbow is Enuf” – Court Theatre  
“Indecent” – Victory Gardens Theater  
“Noises Off” – Windy City Playhouse  
“Small Mouth Sounds” – A Red Orchid Theatre  
“Twilight Bowl” – Goodman Theatre

**Ensemble – Musical or Revue**

“A Chorus Line” – Porchlight Music Theatre  
“Million Dollar Quartet” – Marriott Theatre  
“Queen of the Mist” – Firebrand Theatre  
“Six” – Chicago Shakespeare Theater  
“You Can’t Fake the Funk: A Journey through Funk Music” – Black Ensemble Theater

**New Work – Play**

David Auburn – “The Adventures of Augie March” – Court Theatre

David Catlin – “Mary Shelley’s Frankenstein” – Lookingglass Theatre Company  
Jenny Connell Davis – “Scientific Method” – Rivendell Theatre Ensemble  
Ike Holter – “Lottery Day” – Goodman Theatre  
Manual Cinema – “Frankenstein” – Court Theatre  
Bruce Norris – “Downstate” – Steppenwolf Theatre Company  
Jen Silverman – “Witch” – Writers Theatre  
Mary Zimmerman – “The Steadfast Tin Soldier” – Lookingglass Theatre Company

**New Work – Musical**

David Cale – “We’re Only Alive for A Short Amount of Time” – Goodman Theatre i/a/w The Public Theater  
Michael Mahler and Jason Brett – “Miracle” – William A. Marovitz and Arny Granat  
Daniel Zaitchik – “Darling Grenadine” – Marriott Theatre

**Director – Play – Large**

Gary Griffin – “Indecent” – Victory Gardens Theater  
Pam MacKinnon – “Downstate” – Steppenwolf Theatre Company  
Ron OJ Parson – “Radio Golf” – Court Theatre  
Ron OJ Parson – “Too Heavy for Your Pocket” – TimeLine Theatre Company  
Vanessa Stalling – “Photograph 51” – Court Theatre  
Mary Zimmerman – “The Steadfast Tin Soldier” – Lookingglass Theatre Company

**Director – Play – Midsize**

Ian Frank – “Frankenstein” – Remy Bumppo Theatre Company  
Halena Kays – “On Clover Road” – American Blues Theater  
Jess McLeod – “Wolf Play” – The Gift Theatre  
Scott Weinstein – “Noises Off” – Windy City Playhouse  
Jonathan Wilson – “The Recommendation” – Windy City Playhouse

**Director – Musical – Large**

Jim Corti – “The Producers” – Paramount Theatre  
David Cromer – “Next to Normal” – Writers Theatre  
Amber Mak – “The Wizard of Oz” – Paramount Theatre  
Lucy Moss and Jamie Armitage – “Six” – Chicago Shakespeare Theater  
William Osetek – “Mamma Mia!” – Drury Lane Productions  
Alan Souza – “Disney’s Beauty and the Beast” – Drury Lane Productions

**Director – Musical – Midsize**

Lili-Anne Brown – “Caroline, or Change” – Firebrand Theatre i/a/w TimeLine Theatre Company  
Brenda Didier – “A Chorus Line” – Porchlight Music Theatre  
Elizabeth Margolius – “Queen of the Mist” – Firebrand Theatre  
Stephen Schellhardt – “A Gentleman’s Guide to Love & Murder” – Porchlight Music Theatre  
Michael Weber – “Gypsy” – Porchlight Music Theatre

### **Performer In A Principal Role – Play**

Bradley Armacost (Arthur Kipps) – “The Woman in Black” – PW Productions and Pemberley Productions

Emily Berman (Lusia Weiss Pechenik) – “A Shayna Maidel” – TimeLine Theatre Company

Janet Ulrich Brooks (Maria Callas) – “Master Class” – TimeLine Theatre Company

Chaon Cross (Rosalind Franklin) – “Photograph 51” – Court Theatre

David Darlow (André) – “The Father” – Remy Bumppo Theatre Company

Lawrence Grimm (Martin Heidegger) – “Hannah and Martin” – Shattered Globe Theatre

Nicole Michelle Haskins (Chess) – “Hopelessly Devoted” – Piven Theatre Workshop

Wendy Robie (Queen Elizabeth I) – “Elizabeth Rex” – Oak Park Festival Theatre

Namir Smallwood (Lee) – “True West” – Steppenwolf Theatre Company

Meg Thalken (Peggy) – “Four Places” – The Den Theatre

### **Performer In A Principal Role – Musical**

E. Faye Butler (Rose) – “Gypsy” – Porchlight Music Theatre

Matt Crowle (D’Ysquith Family) – “A Gentleman’s Guide to Love & Murder” – Porchlight Music Theatre

Rashada Dawan (Caroline) – “Caroline, or Change” – Firebrand Theatre i/a/w TimeLine Theatre Company

Andrés Enriquez (Monty Navarro) – “A Gentleman’s Guide to Love & Murder” – Porchlight Music Theatre

Kelly Felthous (Audrey) – “Little Shop of Horrors” – Drury Lane Productions

Sean Fortunato (Miss Trunchbull) – “Roald Dahl’s Matilda the Musical” – Drury Lane Productions

Blake Hammond (Max Bialystock) – “The Producers” – Paramount Theatre

Jacquelyne Jones (Percy Talbott) – “The Spitfire Grill” – American Blues Theater

Jake Morrissy (Leo Bloom) – “The Producers” – Paramount Theatre

Barbara E. Robertson (Anna Edson Taylor) – “Queen of the Mist” – Firebrand Theatre

### **Solo Performance**

David Cale (David) – “We’re Only Alive for A Short Amount of Time” – Goodman Theatre i/a/w The Public Theater

Matt Crowle (Crumpet) – “The Santaland Diaries” – Goodman Theatre

Joe Foust (Solo Performer) – “The Absolute Brightness of Leonard Pelkey” – American Blues Theater

Ross Lehman (Solo Performer) – “Sentimental Journey” – Citadel Theatre Company

Alexis J. Roston (Lady Day) – “Lady Day at Emerson’s Bar and Grill” – Congo Square Theatre Company

### **Performer In A Supporting Role – Play**

Patrick Agada (Joey) – “Something Clean” – Sideshow Theatre Company and Rivendell Theatre Ensemble

Janet Ulrich Brooks (Sister Clarissa) – “Over the Tavern” – Theatre at the Center

Kirsten Fitzgerald (Tracy) – “Sweat” – Goodman Theatre  
Sean Fortunato (Malvolio) – “Twelfth Night” – Writers Theatre  
K. Todd Freeman (Dee) – “Downstate” – Steppenwolf Theatre Company  
Brian Keys (Dwight Barnes) – “The Recommendation” – Windy City Playhouse  
James Vincent Meredith (Roosevelt Hicks) – “Radio Golf” – Court Theatre  
Scott Parkinson (Sir Andrew Aguecheek) – “Twelfth Night” – Writers Theatre  
Kelvin Roston, Jr. (Levee) – “Ma Rainey’s Black Bottom” – Writers Theatre  
Alfred H. Wilson (Elder Joseph Barlow) – “Radio Golf” – Court Theatre

**Performer In A Supporting Role – Musical**

Dara Cameron (Shelby Thorpe) – “The Spitfire Grill” – American Blues Theater  
Kyrie Courter (Natalie Goodman) – “Next to Normal” – Writers Theatre  
José Antonio García (Herbie) – “Gypsy” – Porchlight Music Theatre  
Emily Goldberg (Sibella Hallward) – “A Gentleman’s Guide to Love & Murder” – Porchlight Music Theatre  
Alex Goodrich (Oscar Lindquist) – “Sweet Charity” – Marriott Theatre  
Marya Grandy (Louise) – “Irving Berlin’s Holiday Inn” – Marriott Theatre  
Donica Lynn (Oda Mae) – “Ghost The Musical” – Theatre at the Center  
Sawyer Smith (Fastrada) – “Pippin” – Mercury Theater Chicago  
Catherine Smitko (Hannah Ferguson) – “The Spitfire Grill” – American Blues Theater  
Nat Zegree (Jerry Lee Lewis) – “Million Dollar Quartet” – Marriott Theatre

**Performer In A Revue**

Robin DaSilva (Mahalia) – “Mahalia Jackson: Moving Thru the Light” – Black Ensemble Theater  
Rashada Dawan (Singer) – “Djembe! The Show” – Doug Manuel, Ashley DeSimone and TSG Theatricals  
Rhonda Preston (Mature Nancy) – “Style and Grace: A Tribute to Lena Horne and Nancy Wilson” – Black Ensemble Theater  
Aeriel Williams (Young Lena) – “Style and Grace: A Tribute to Lena Horne and Nancy Wilson” – Black Ensemble Theater

**Scenic Design – Large**

William Boles – “The Producers” – Paramount Theatre  
Kevin Depinet and Christopher Rhoton – “The Wizard of Oz” – Paramount Theatre  
Kristen Robinson – “Familiar” – Steppenwolf Theatre Company  
Todd Rosenthal – “How to Catch Creation” – Goodman Theatre  
Todd Rosenthal – “A Midsummer Night’s Dream” – Chicago Shakespeare Theater  
Arnel Sancianco – “Lottery Day” – Goodman Theatre  
Arnel Sancianco – “Photograph 51” – Court Theatre

**Scenic Design – Midsize**

Jeffrey D. Kmiec – “Gypsy” – Porchlight Music Theatre  
Jeffrey D. Kmiec – “Noises Off” – Windy City Playhouse  
Angela Weber Miller – “All Childish Things” – First Folio Theatre  
Lauren Nigri – “The Recommendation” – Windy City Playhouse

Arnel Sancianco – “Something Clean” – Sideshow Theatre Company and Rivendell Theatre Ensemble

Joe Schermoly – “This Bitter Earth” – About Face Theatre

### **Costume Design – Large**

Hugh Durrant – “Nell Gwynn” – Chicago Shakespeare Theater

Rueben Echoles – “You Can’t Fake the Funk: A Journey through Funk Music” – Black Ensemble Theater

Theresa Ham – “The Wizard of Oz” – Paramount Theatre

Ana Kuzmanic – “The Steadfast Tin Soldier” – Lookingglass Theatre Company

Ryan Park – “Disney’s Beauty and the Beast” – Drury Lane Productions

Jordan Ross – “The Producers” – Paramount Theatre

### **Costume Design – Midsize**

Rachel Boylan – “Pippin” – Mercury Theater Chicago

Jeff Hendry – “A Gentleman’s Guide to Love & Murder” – Porchlight Music Theatre

Bill Morey – “Gypsy” – Porchlight Music Theatre

### **Sound Design – Large**

Mikhail Fiskel – “Cambodian Rock Band” – Victory Gardens Theater

Jeffrey Levin – “A Shayna Maidel” – TimeLine Theatre Company

Ray Nardelli – “Ma Rainey’s Black Bottom” – Writers Theatre

Adam Rosenthal – “The Wizard of Oz” – Paramount Theatre

Rick Sims – “Mary Shelley’s Frankenstein” – Lookingglass Theatre Company

Kyle Vegter and Ben Kauffman – “Frankenstein” – Court Theatre

### **Sound Design – Midsize**

Eric Backus – “The Absolute Brightness of Leonard Pelkey” – American Blues Theater

Eric Backus – “Wolf Play” – The Gift Theatre

Christopher Kriz – “Frankenstein” – Remy Bumppo Theatre Company

Jeffrey Levin – “Small Mouth Sounds” – A Red Orchid Theatre

Matt Reich – “The Worst Mother in the World” – Halcyon Theatre

### **Lighting Design – Large**

Tim Deiling – “Six” – Chicago Shakespeare Theater

Greg Hofmann – “The Wizard of Oz” – Paramount Theatre

Greg Hofmann and Jesse Klug – “A Midsummer Night’s Dream” – Chicago Shakespeare Theater

William C. Kirkham – “Mary Shelley’s Frankenstein” – Lookingglass Theatre Company

Jesse Klug – “The Producers” – Paramount Theatre

Ryan O’Gara – “Disney’s Beauty and the Beast” – Drury Lane Productions

### **Lighting Design – Midsize**

Mike Durst – “Frankenstein” – Remy Bumppo Theatre Company

Denise Karczewski – “A Chorus Line” – Porchlight Music Theatre

John Kelly – “This Bitter Earth” – About Face Theatre

Alexander Ridgers – “Pinocchio” – The House Theatre of Chicago  
Cat Wilson – “Queen of the Mist” – Firebrand Theatre

### **Choreography**

Christopher Chase Carter – “A Chorus Line” – Porchlight Music Theatre  
Brenda Didier – “Pippin” – Mercury Theater Chicago  
Brenda Didier – “The Producers” – Paramount Theatre  
Denis Jones – “Irving Berlin’s Holiday Inn” – Marriott Theatre  
Alex Sanchez – “Sweet Charity” – Marriott Theatre

### **Original Music**

Christopher Kriz – “Frankenstein” – Remy Bumppo Theatre Company  
Andre Pluess and Amanda Dehnert – “The Steadfast Tin Soldier” – Lookingglass Theatre Company  
Rick Sims – “Mary Shelley’s Frankenstein” – Lookingglass Theatre Company  
Kyle Vegter and Ben Kauffman – “Frankenstein” – Court Theatre  
Richard Woodbury – “The Winter’s Tale” – Goodman Theatre

### **Music Direction**

Roberta Duchak – “Six” – Chicago Shakespeare Theater  
Robert Reddrick – “You Can’t Fake the Funk: A Journey through Funk Music” – Black Ensemble Theater  
Malcolm Ruhl – “The Spitfire Grill” – American Blues Theater  
Andra Velis Simon – “Caroline, or Change” – Firebrand Theatre i/a/w TimeLine Theatre Company  
Tom Vendafreddo – “The Producers” – Paramount Theatre

### **Fight Choreography**

Jon Beal – “Cardboard Piano” – TimeLine Theatre Company  
Matt Hawkins – “Hamlet” – Chicago Shakespeare Theater  
Matt Hawkins – “Witch” – Writers Theatre  
Ned Mochel – “True West” – Steppenwolf Theatre Company

### **Puppet Design**

Lizi Breit and Drew Dir – “Frankenstein” – Court Theatre  
Chicago Puppet Studio – “Pinocchio” – The House Theatre of Chicago  
Chicago Puppet Studio – “The Steadfast Tin Soldier” – Lookingglass Theatre Company  
Stephanie Diaz – “Wolf Play” – The Gift Theatre  
Phillip Huber – “Darling Grenadine” – Marriott Theatre

### **Projection Design**

Anthony Churchill – “Scientific Method” – Rivendell Theatre Ensemble  
Rasean Davonte Johnson – “Frankenstein” – Court Theatre  
Kevan Loney – “The Wizard of Oz” – Paramount Theatre  
G. “Max” Maxin IV – “The Absolute Brightness of Leonard Pelkey” – American Blues Theater  
Mike Tutaj – “Hamlet” – Chicago Shakespeare Theater



### **Artistic Specialization**

Kristy Leigh Hall – Makeup Design – “Frankenstein” – Remy Bumpo Theatre Company  
Richard Jarvie – Wig & Make-up Design – “Nell Gwynn” – Chicago Shakespeare Theater  
Cassy Schillo and Wendy A. Huber – Properties Design – “All Childish Things” – First Folio Theatre

### **MULTIPLE NOMINATIONS**

#### **By Theater Company:**

Porchlight Music Theatre – 17  
Paramount Theatre – 16  
Court Theatre – 15  
Chicago Shakespeare Theater – 11  
Lookingglass Theatre Company – 10  
American Blues Theater – 9  
Writers Theatre – 9  
Black Ensemble Theater – 8  
Marriott Theatre – 8  
Steppenwolf Theatre Company – 8  
Windy City Playhouse – 8  
Drury Lane Productions – 7  
Goodman Theatre – 7  
Remy Bumpo Theatre Company – 7  
TimeLine Theatre Company – 5  
Firebrand Theatre – 4  
Firebrand Theatre i/a/w TimeLine Theatre Company – 4  
Victory Gardens Theater – 4  
About Face Theatre – 3  
The Gift Theatre – 3  
Mercury Theater Chicago – 3  
Sideshow Theatre Company and Rivendell Theatre Ensemble - 3  
First Folio Theatre – 2  
Goodman Theatre i/a/w The Public Theater – 2  
The House Theatre of Chicago – 2  
Doug Manuel, Ashley DeSimone and TSG Theatricals – 2  
A Red Orchid Theatre – 2  
Rivendell Theatre Ensemble – 2  
Theatre at the Center – 2

**By Production:**

The Producers – 9	Paramount Theatre
The Wizard of Oz – 7	Paramount Theatre
Frankenstein – 6	Remy Bumppo Theatre Company
A Gentleman’s Guide to Love & Murder – 6	Porchlight Music Theatre
Gypsy – 6	Porchlight Music Theatre
The Steadfast Tin Soldier – 6	Lookingglass Theatre Company
A Chorus Line – 5	Porchlight Music Theatre
Frankenstein – 5	Court Theatre
Six – 5	Chicago Shakespeare Theater
Caroline, or Change – 4	Firebrand Theatre i/a/w TimeLine Theatre Compan
Disney’s Beauty and the Beast – 4	Drury Lane Productions
Downstate – 4	Steppenwolf Theatre Company
Mary Shelley’s Frankenstein – 4	Lookingglass Theatre Company
Noises Off – 4	Windy City Playhouse
Photograph 51 – 4	Court Theatre
Queen of the Mist – 4	Firebrand Theatre
Radio Golf – 4	Court Theatre
The Recommendation – 4	Windy City Playhouse
The Spitfire Grill – 4	American Blues Theater
You Can’t Fake the Funk: A Journey through Funk Music – 4	Black Ensemble Theater
The Absolute Brightness of Leonard Pelkey – 3	American Blues Theater
Indecent – 3	Victory Gardens Theater
Next to Normal – 3	Writers Theatre
Pippin – 3	Mercury Theater Chicago
Something Clean – 3	Sideshow Theatre Company and Rivendell Theatre Ensemble
This Bitter Earth – 3	About Face Theatre
Wolf Play – 3	The Gift Theatre

**By Artists:**

Brenda Didier - 3  
Arnel Sancianco - 3  
Eric Backus - 2  
Janet Ulrich Brooks - 2  
David Cale - 2  
Matt Crowle - 2  
Rashada Dawan - 2  
Sean Fortunato - 2  
Matt Hawkins - 2  
Jeffrey D. Kmiec - 2  
Christopher Kriz - 2

Jeffrey Levin - 2  
Ron OJ Parson - 2  
Todd Rosenthal - 2  
Rick Sims - 2  
Kyle Vegter and Ben Kauffman - 2  
Mary Zimmerman - 2

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

Your complimentary ticket to the 51<sup>st</sup> Annual Equity Jeff Awards Ceremony will be held at the News Media Table at Drury Lane Oakbrook only if you make a reservation in advance with Jeffrey Marks at 312.606.0400 or [media@jeffawards.org](mailto:media@jeffawards.org).

Names of award recipients will be released immediately following the ceremony on October 21 by email and on our website under Equity Awards at [www.jeffawards.org](http://www.jeffawards.org) . 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 an interview with any Jeff Awards Committee member, please call or e-mail Jeffrey Marks at 312.616.0400 or [media@jeffawards.org](mailto:media@jeffawards.org).

The Jeff Awards website, [www.jeffawards.org](http://www.jeffawards.org), lists all the current Equity nominees, along with previous recipients and nominees and other Jeff Awards information and news.