

The Boston Theater
Critics Association

ELLIOT NORTON AWARDS

www.ElliotNortonAwards.com

EMBARGOED until 8 PM on THURS., 4/11/2019

Press Contact: **Kathy Rochefort**
(617) 842-9283
kathy@rochefortassociates.com

**Boston Theater Critics Association
Announces
The 37th Annual
Elliot Norton Awards Nominations**

**Melinda Lopez
to Receive
Elliot Norton Prize for Sustained Excellence**

**-- Ceremony Set For Monday, May 20 at 7 pm
at the Huntington Avenue Theatre --**

Two dozen nominations of outstanding actors, directors, designers and ensembles were announced today by The Boston Theater Critics Association (BTCA), with winners to be revealed at the **37th Annual Elliot Norton Awards** on Monday, May 20, 2019 at 7 PM, at the Huntington Avenue Theatre.

This year's recipient of the ***Elliot Norton Prize for Sustained Excellence*** is Melinda Lopez, who has consistently enriched the Boston theater community as a playwright, actress and educator. A Special Citation will be awarded to Zeitgeist Stage Company, which will be concluding its 18-year residency in Boston at the end of this season.

The awards for outstanding visiting productions, actor and actress were also announced:

Outstanding Visiting Production

"Measure for Measure," Cheek by Jowl and Pushkin Theatre Moscow, presented by ArtsEmerson

Outstanding Visiting Musical Production

"Hamilton," presented by Broadway In Boston

Outstanding Visiting Performer

Vaishnavi Sharma, "Bedlam's Pygmalion," presented by Underground Railway Theater

Outstanding Visiting Musical Performers

Nicholas Christopher, "Hamilton," presented by Broadway In Boston

Ani Djirdjirian, "Spamilton," presented by the Huntington Theatre Company

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Joyce Kulhawik, President of the BTCA, stated, "Our theater community is on fire! This year's nominees represent the most diverse group of artists we've ever honored. This continues to be a time of social and political upheaval, with women and people of color at the forefront. The result? Many Boston theater artists have responded with work that provokes conversation, and re-focuses our gaze on cutting-edge issues and creative solutions. The Boston Theater Critics Association has recognized those contributions and sifted through the full bounty of offerings to celebrate the entire community-- on one stage, on one glorious night!"

The 37th **Annual Elliot Norton Awards** celebrate the Boston area's theater community, future artists and the importance of the arts in our country. The ceremony will feature musical performances by nominees, the awarding of **The Elliot Norton Prize for Sustained Excellence** and a post-ceremony party. Supported by a matching grant from Broadway In Boston, a scholarship will be awarded to allow resource-limited high schools to participate in Massachusetts Educational Theater Guild's annual High School Festival, and to provide awards to the winners of the high school Scene Partners Contest.

The 2019 awards are presented with the support of the Huntington Theatre Company and the New England Conservatory, where the after party will be held in the new Student Life and Performance Center, Burnes Hall.

The **Elliot Norton Awards** are presented annually by The Boston Theater Critics Association (Don Aucoin, Jared Bowen, Terry Byrne, Carolyn Clay, Christopher Ehlers, Iris Fanger, Joyce Kulhawik, Kilian Melloy, Bob Nesti and Ed Siegel) to honor the outstanding productions, directors, designers and performers that audiences have seen on greater Boston stages throughout the season.

The **Elliot Norton Awards** are named for the eminent Boston theater critic Elliot Norton, who remained an active supporter of drama, both locally and nationally, until his death in 2003 at the age of 100. The Boston theater community carries on his legacy and can be proud of its remarkable growth at a time in our nation's history when the arts are struggling to survive.

Special and honored guests at the awards in past years comprise a Who's Who of distinguished artists whose work has appeared on Boston's stages, including: Randy Rainbow, Cherry Jones, Lea DeLaria, Mary Louise Wilson, Olympia Dukakis, Chita Rivera, Tommy Tune, Al Pacino, Edward Albee, Brian Dennehy, August Wilson, Julie Harris, Sir Ian McKellen, Lynn Redgrave and Jason Robards Jr.

Melinda Lopez is the playwright-in-residence at the Huntington Theatre Company, and a National Playwriting Fellow with the Mellon Foundation. Her plays have been seen all over the United States, and most recently in Cuba. Her work strives to bridge the 90 miles between the US and Cuba. MALA,(coming to Audible!) SONIA FLEW and BECOMING CUBA are her best known plays. Currently she is working on MARIEL about the 1980 Boatlift. Melinda is also an actress and has appeared in regional theatre, film and radio. Favorite roles include Mrs. Gibbs (OUR TOWN, Huntington Theatre, Dir. David Cromer) and Victoria, MOTHERFUCKER WITH THE HAT (SpeakEasy Stage, IRNE, Best Supporting Actress.) She is

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active in the Cuban American community, raises funds for humanitarian aid for people in need in Cuba, and travels to Cuba regularly to volunteer. (www.friendsofcaritascubana.org.) Melinda was mentioned by President Obama in his 2016 address to the Cuban and American people. Mayor Marty Walsh named

October 29, 2016 “Melinda Lopez Day” in the City of Boston, honoring her contribution to the arts. She lives in Boston with her husband, daughter, giant yellow dog, and other critters. Melinda teaches playwriting at BU & Wellesley College, and occasionally sleeps on the ground in the American Southwest. She has run two marathons and plays a little ukulele.

Legendary actress **Faye Dunaway**, winner of an Academy Award, three Golden Globes, a BAFTA, and an Emmy, will be the Guest of Honor at the much anticipated annual event. She is set to portray Katharine Hepburn in Matthew Lombardo’s one woman play “Tea at Five,” which chronicles Hepburn’s turbulent childhood, her unlikely rise to stardom, and her heart-breaking romance with Spencer Tracy. The play’s only pre-Broadway engagement will be at Boston’s Huntington Avenue Theatre June 21-July 7. Joyce Kulhawik remarked, “Her portrayals and luminous presence on stage and screens large and small, as well as her longstanding connection to Boston--as a student, as a young actor at the Harvard Summer Rep Theatre, as a star filming “The Thomas Crown Affair” in our city, and her most recent appearance here onstage in “Master Class”-- make Ms. Dunaway the ideal honored guest. “

The 37th annual Elliot Norton Awards will be held at the Huntington Avenue Theatre, 264 Huntington Ave., Boston, on Monday, May 20 at 7 PM. Tickets are priced at \$35.00; savvy shoppers will take advantage of \$10 off the regular ticket price (available through May 10), using the code NORTIES10. **Tickets are on sale** at the Boston Theatre Scene Box Office, by calling (617) 933-8600, and at www.bostontheatrescene.com.

Boston Theater Critics Association 37th Annual Elliot Norton Awards

Elliot Norton Prize for Sustained Excellence

Melinda Lopez

The 2019 Elliot Norton Award nominees

Outstanding Production, Large Theater

“Richard III,” Commonwealth Shakespeare Company

“Man in the Ring,” Huntington Theatre Company

“Birdy,” Commonwealth Shakespeare Company

Outstanding Production, Midsize Theater

“The Wolves,” Lyric Stage Company of Boston

“Between Riverside and Crazy,” SpeakEasy Stage Company

“Equivocation,” Actors’ Shakespeare Project

“The Little Foxes,” Lyric Stage Company of Boston

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Outstanding Production, Small or Fringe Theater

"The Audacity: Women Speak," Sleeping Weazel
"A Midsummer Night's Dream," Apollinaire Theatre Company
"Love! Valour! Compassion!," Zeitgeist Stage Company

Outstanding Musical Production

"The Black Clown," American Repertory Theater
"Once," SpeakEasy Stage Company
"Jagged Little Pill," American Repertory Theater

Outstanding Actor, Large Theater

Faran Tahir, "Richard III," Commonwealth Shakespeare Company
John Douglas Thompson, "Man in the Ring," Huntington Theatre Company
Kyle Vincent Terry, "Man in the Ring," Huntington Theatre Company

Outstanding Actress, Large Theater

Marianna Bassham, "Romeo and Juliet," Huntington Theatre Company
Nancy E. Carroll, "Romeo and Juliet," Huntington Theatre Company
Jordan Boatman, "The Niceties," Huntington Theatre Company

Outstanding Actor, Midsize Theater

Nael Nacer, "Macbeth" and "Equivocation," Actors' Shakespeare Project
Remo Airaldi, "The Little Foxes," Lyric Stage Company of Boston
Tyrees Allen, "Between Riverside and Crazy," SpeakEasy Stage Company

Outstanding Actress, Midsize Theater

Octavia Chavez-Richmond, "Between Riverside and Crazy," Speakeasy Stage Company
Amanda Collins, "Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley," Merrimack Repertory Theatre
Amelia Broome, "The Little Foxes," Lyric Stage Company of Boston

Outstanding Actor, Small or Fringe Theater

Jeremiah Kissel, "Cyrano," Gloucester Stage Company
Brooks Reeves, "Love! Valour! Compassion!," Zeitgeist Stage Company
Ken Baltin, "My Station in Life," Gloucester Stage Company

Outstanding Actress, Small or Fringe Theater

Jennifer Rohn, "Dark Room," Bridge Repertory Theater
Juliet Bowler, "Not Medea," Flat Earth Theatre
Khloe Alice Lin, "Our Dear Dead Drug Lord," Off the Grid Theatre
Liz Adams, "Noir Hamlet," Centastage

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Outstanding Musical Performance by an Actor

Davóné Tines, "The Black Clown," American Repertory Theater

Phil Tayler, "Cabaret," Moonbox Productions

Davron S. Monroe, "Breath & Imagination," The Front Porch Arts Collective and Lyric Stage Company of Boston

Outstanding Musical Performance by an Actress

Lauren Patten, "Jagged Little Pill," American Repertory Theater

Elizabeth Stanley, "Jagged Little Pill," American Repertory Theater

Mackenzie Lesser-Roy, "Once," SpeakEasy Stage Company

Outstanding Director, Large Theater

Bryn Boice, "Universe Rushing Apart: Blue Kettle and Here We Go," Commonwealth Shakespeare Company

Michael Greif, "Man in the Ring," Huntington Theatre Company

Steven Maler, "Birdy," Commonwealth Shakespeare Company

Outstanding Director, Midsize Theater

Tiffany Nichole Greene, "Between Riverside and Crazy," SpeakEasy Stage Company

Paul Melone, "Once," SpeakEasy Stage Company

A. Nora Long, "The Wolves," Lyric Stage Company of Boston

Outstanding Director, Small or Fringe Theater

David J. Miller, "Love! Valour! Compassion!," Zeitgeist Stage Company

Olivia D'Ambrosio, "Dark Room," Bridge Repertory Theater

Kiki Samko, "Nightmare on Elf Street," Gold Dust Orphans

Outstanding Design, Large or Visiting Theater

"The Black Clown," American Repertory Theater: Scenic and costume design by Carlos Soto, lighting by John Torres, sound by Kai Harada

"The End of TV," by Manual Cinema, presented by ArtsEmerson: Sound design by Kyle Vegter, puppets by Lizi Breit with associate puppet designer and storyboard artist Drew Dir, costumes by Mieka Van Der Ploeg, lighting by Claire Chrzan with associate Shelbi Arndt, masks by Julia Vanarsdale Miller

"Moulin Rouge!," presented by Ambassador Theatre Group: Scenic design by Derek McLane, costumes by Catherine Zuber, lighting by Justin Townsend, sound by Peter Hylenski

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Outstanding Design, Midsize, Small or Fringe Theater

“Brokelahomo!” and “Nightmare on Elf Street,” Gold Dust Orphans: sets by Windsor Newton, costumes by Scott Martino

“The Little Foxes,” Lyric Stage Company of Boston: Scenic design by Janie E. Howland, costumes by Gail Astrid Buckley, lighting by Karen Perlow, sound by Dewey Dellay

“Dark Room,” Bridge Repertory Theater: Scenic design by Ryan Bates, costumes by Chelsea Kerl, lighting by Stephen Petrilli, sound design and original compositions by Elizabeth Cahill, properties by Esme Allen

Outstanding Ensemble

“Love! Valour! Compassion!,” Zeitgeist Stage Company

“All My Sons,” Praxis Stage

“A Midsummer Night’s Dream,” Apollinaire Theatre Company

“Small Mouth Sounds,” SpeakEasy Stage Company

Outstanding Solo Performance

Liza Jessie Peterson, “The Peculiar Patriot,” the National Black Theatre and Hi-Arts production, presented by ArtsEmerson

Jade Wheeler, “Who is Eartha Mae?,” Bridge Repertory Theater

Sara Porkalob, “Dragon Cycle: Dragon Lady and Dragon Mama,” American Repertory Theater

Outstanding New Script

“The Tragic Ecstasy of Girlhood,” by Kira Rockwell, presented by Boston Playwrights’ Theatre

“Noir Hamlet,” by John Minigan, presented by Centastage

“Dragon Mama,” by Sara Porkalob, presented by American Repertory Theater

Outstanding Choreography

Ilyse Robbins, “Once,” SpeakEasy Stage Company

Sonya Tayeh, “Moulin Rouge!,” presented by Ambassador Theatre Group

Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui, “Jagged Little Pill,” American Repertory Theater

Outstanding Musical Direction

Tom Kitt, “Jagged Little Pill,” American Repertory Theater

Steven Ladd Jones, “Once,” SpeakEasy Stage Company

Dan Rodriguez, “Cabaret,” Moonbox Productions