

# ***Ticket Holders***

## **Theatre L.A. Ovation Awards 2002 Nominations**

**by Travis Michael Holder**

The list of nominees for the Theatre L.A. Ovation Awards 2002 were announced last Sunday, Sept. 29, at the opulent old Palace Theatre in Downtown Los Angeles. This signals the theme for this year's award ceremony, "L.A.'s Back on Broadway," heralding the current ongoing cultural and economic resurgence of Downtown. The gala will be held this year on Nov. 24 at the Orpheum Theatre, one of the other old grande dame playhouses which once energized the historic theater district of long ago L.A. With the completion next year of the cornerstone Disney Concert Hall and other improvements to the area, the hope is that Downtown will again start to be returned to its former glory.



The annual Ovation Awards celebrate the artistic excellence of L.A.'s theater artists and their continuing contribution to the local cultural scene, with the voting body consisting of representatives from Theatre L.A. member companies and 65 independent theater professionals. First established in 1989, the Ovations are the only peer-judged, competitive theater awards in town.

This year's nominees include Deaf West Theatre's sweeping hit *Big River*, which reopens at the Mark Taper Forum on Nov. 14. *Big River* collected the most Ovation nominations at 11, with four shows tied for second place, with eight apiece: The Taper's *Flower Drum Song*, *Into the Woods* at the Ahmanson (both now playing in New York), the Colony's glorious *Side Show*, and Road Theatre's *Napoli Millionaria*. Among producing companies, Center Theatre Group was in front with 28 nominations, followed by The Colony with 15.

Among the nominees are: Play, larger theaters: *Crossings*, *Journeys of Catholic Immigrants*, Cornerstone Theater; *Red*, East West Players; *The Laramie Project*, Colony Theatre; and *The House of Bernarda Alba* and *The Molière Comedies* at the Taper. Play, smaller theaters: *After the Fall*, Fountain Theatre; *Clyt at Home*, Theatre of NOTE; *Death of a Salesman*, Interact Theatre; *Napoli Millionaria*, Road Theatre; *The Exonerated*, Actors' Gang.

Musical, larger theaters: *A Class Act*, Pasadena Playhouse; *Crazy for You*, Civic Light Opera of South Bay Cities; *Flower Drum Song*, Taper; *Into the Woods*, Ahmanson; *Side Show*, the Colony. Musical, smaller theaters: *Big River*, Deaf West Theatre; *Laura Comstock's Bag-Punching Dog*, Circle X Theatre; *Pinafore!*, Celebration Theatre; *Spoon River Anthology*, Theatre West; *Steel: John Henry and the Shaker*, Oasis Theatre Company.

World premiere play: Cornerstone's *Crossings*, *Journeys of Catholic Immigrants*; The Gang's *The Exonerated*; Matt Pelfrey for *Terminus Americana*; Dakin Matthews for his translation of *The Proof of the Promise*; Sam Bobrick and Julie Stein for *Lenny's Back*. World premiere musical: Paula Mitchell-Manning and John Lathan, *Flirting With Morty*; Jillian Armenante and Alice Dodd, *Laura Comstock's Bag-Punching Dog*; Leon Martell and Penka Kouneva, *Steel: John Henry and the Shaker*; Max Baxley and Geo Hartley, *Twisted*; Rose Leiman Goldemberg, *Picon Pie*. Touring production: *Aida*, *Copenhagen*, *The Full Monty* and *The Tale of the Allergist's Wife*.

Director, play: Ayana Cahrr, *How Kintu Became a Man*; Dan Bonnell, *And Still the Dogs*; Deborah LaVine, *Napoli Millionaria*; Jessica Blank and Erik Jensen, *The Exonerated*; Karen Kalensky, *Traveling Lady*; Nick DeGruccio, *The Laramie Project*; Stephen Sachs, *After the Fall*. Director, musical: Alan Coats, *Crazy for You*; Jeff Calhoun, *Big River*; Larry Sousa, *Swing!*; Nick DeGruccio, *Side Show*; Robert Longbottom, *Flower Drum Song*.

Lead actor, play: Brian Bedford, *The Molière Comedies*; Daniel Davis, *Talking Heads*; George Murdock, *The Price*; Joe Mellis, *Coyote on a Fence*; Mike Genovese, *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*; Morlan Higgins, *After the Fall*; Sam Anderson, *Napoli Millionaria*. Lead actress, play: Fay Cato, *Tonseisha*; Jeanne Sakata, *Red*; Kathleen Chalfant, *Talking Heads*; Livia Trevino, *Coyote on a Fence*; Shareen Mitchell, *Tennessee in the Summer*; Suanne Spoke, *Napoli Millionaria*; Tracy Middendorf, *After the Fall*.

Lead actor, musical: Bill O'Brien, *Big River*; David Engel, *Crazy for You*; Kevin Earley, *Side Show*; James Black, *Big River*; Michael A. Shepperd, *Steel: John Henry and the Shaker*; Nic Arzen, *Moscow*; R. Christofer Sands, *Pinafore!* Lead actress, musical: Christa Jackson, *Always...Patsy Cline*; Julie Dixon Jackson/Misty Cotton, *Side Show*; Lea Salonga, *Flower Drum Song*; Sally Struthers, *Always...Patsy Cline*; Stephanie Block, *Crazy for You*.

Featured actor, play: Al Mancini, *Time of Your Life*; William Mesnik, *Love's Labour's Lost*; Cooper Thornton, *After the Fall*; Joe Spano, *The Devil's Disciple*; Neil Vipond, *Richard III*. Featured actress, play: Carol Kane, *He Hunts*; Cathy Lind Hayes, *He Hunts*;

Lily Nicksay, *The Wild Duck*; Louise Davis, *Tennessee in the Summer*; Mary Lou Rosato, *King Lear*.

Featured actor, musical: Christopher Sieber, *Into the Woods*; David Jennings, *Side Show*; Gregg Edelman, *Into the Woods*; Rod Keller, *You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown*; Troy Kotsur, *Big River*. Featured actress, musical: Beth Malone, *You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown*; Donna Bullock, *A Class Act*; Jodi Long, *Flower Drum Song*; Laura Benanti, *Into the Woods*; Sandra Allen, *Flower Drum Song*.

Solo performance: Ann Randolph, *Squeeze Box*; Arlene Malinowski, *Or Forever Hold Your Peace*; Gigi Bermingham, *Non-Vital Organs*; Jackie Maruschak, *Last Stop Neverland*; Saundra Quarterman, *Shak'n, Part One*. Ensemble performance: casts of *How Kintu Became a Man*, *Jacques Brel is Alive and Well and Living in Paris*, *Swing!*, *The Exonerated*, *The Laramie Project*, *The Last Season*.

This year, the prestigious annual James A. Doolittle Award for Leadership in Theatre will be awarded to the L.A. County Board of Supervisors and the Career Achievement Award will be presented to those veteran troupers Carole Cook and Tom Troupe. For information about tickets to the gala 2002 Ovation Awards ceremony on Nov. 24, call (213) 614-0556.

## ***The Mayor of Zalamea***

### **Bilingual Foundation of The Arts**

#### **reviewed by Jose Ruiz**

If its September, it means that the BFA is opening a new season of classic theater, presenting works by the giants of Spanish literature in English and Spanish as its long time tradition continues.

This time, they open with a tale of pride, arrogance, lust and power plays and it isn't even about Washington D.C. This drama by Pedro Calderon de la Barca written in the 1600s is a prime example of the time-honored concept of feminine virtue being violated and her honor and reputation left in limbo while the bureaucracy decides how to deal with her assailant.

Simple folks with simple needs populate the little town of Zalamea and when a troop of soldiers passes on the way to Portugal, the Captain and his men invite themselves to lodging at the home of a respected, prominent citizen, the just elected Mayor. Protocol and honor dictate that he open his home, but he doesn't without first

warning his beautiful daughter to stay out of sight, knowing full well the tendency of soldiers.

Soon enough, though, the Captain catches a glimpse of her and immediately decides he must have her at any cost. After enlisting a not too bright soldier to create a distraction he sneaks to her room and as the saying goes, has his way. The enraged brother discovers the deed and challenges the Captain to a duel, succeeding only in wounding him.

The Mayor, meanwhile, had approached the Captain earlier, begging him to marry his daughter to preserve her honor, with no success. Now that the Captain is wounded, the father orders him held until it is decided if his trial will be in a military tribunal or a civil court. While the argument continues, the King happens by and passes judgment, deciding the Mayor has jurisdiction. However, by this point, it may be too late.

The adaptation, by Margarita Galban and Lina Montalvo has a usual excellence in every scene. The costuming, music and singing all work to establish the feel of the town's need for honor and pride. Each week the production alternates in English and Spanish; and most of the cast plays both parts. The presentation will run through Nov. 3. Call (323) 225-4044 for reservations.

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