

The Boston Theater
Critics Association

ELLIOT NORTON AWARDS

www.ElliotNortonAwards.com

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**The Boston Theater Critics Association
Presents**

The 39th

**Elliot Norton Awards
Nominations Announced**

**Elliot Norton Prize for Sustained Excellence
Awarded to**

John Douglas Thompson

-- Virtual Ceremony Set For Monday, May 23, 2022 at 8 pm --

More than 60 nominations in over two dozen categories of outstanding actors, directors, designers, choreographers, musicians, and productions were announced today by the Boston Theater Critics Association (BTCA) for the **39th Elliot Norton Awards**. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, no live ceremony will be held; instead, the awardees, including those for visiting productions and performers, will be revealed in a virtual ceremony on Monday, May 23 at 8:00 pm. Details will be announced soon on how to view the event on ElliotNortonawards.com.

This year's recipient of the ***Elliot Norton Prize for Sustained Excellence*** is John Douglas Thompson, a performer with deep roots in New England who has been hailed by many as the leading American Shakespearean actor. Special Citations will be awarded to Arlekin Players Theater & Zero Gravity (zero-G) Virtual Theater Lab artistic director Igor Golyak, and actress Darya Denisova, and to Julianne Boyd, outgoing artistic director of Barrington Stage Company.

Joyce Kulhawik, president of the Boston Theater Critics Association, stated, "It's been two long years since we've gathered, but the BTCA can't wait to applaud the work of this relentless theater community. Theater artists everywhere have been devastated by the effects of the pandemic, but true to form they have persevered, reinvented, and continue to rise to a still unfolding challenge— by showing up however possible with work that is new, relevant, entertaining, and enlightening. During an unprecedented era of global strife, we are thrilled to bestow The ELLIOT NORTON AWARDS to honor and amplify the creative spark that lights our way."

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, Nancy Grossman, Joyce

ELLIOT NORTON AWARDS

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Kulhawik, Kilian Melloy, Bob Nesti, Ed Siegel and Jacquinn Sinclair) to honor the outstanding productions, directors, designers and performers whose work audiences have seen on greater Boston stages throughout the season.

This year marks the second time a virtual ceremony has been held, as was the case in 2020, because of the Covid19 pandemic. No awards were presented in 2021, due to the suspension of live performances.

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: Johnny Lee Davenport, Melinda Lopez, 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.

This year's recipient of the Elliot Norton Prize for Sustained Excellence is John Douglas Thompson. Mr. Thompson was bitten by the acting bug in 1986 when he left his job in computer sales to study at Trinity Repertory Company in Providence, R.I. and subsequently at Shakespeare & Company in Lenox, Mass., becoming one of the major players in both those companies. He then became a member of the American Repertory Theater from 1999 to 2002. He played Othello for all three companies.

Mr. Thompson has been based in New York since then. His breakout year was 2009, when he played the title roles in "Othello" and Eugene O'Neill's "The Emperor Jones" in New York. He won a [Lucille Lortel Award](#) and an [Obie Award](#) for "Othello" and a [Drama Desk Award](#) nomination for "The Emperor Jones."

The 57-year-old actor has continually returned to New England. He played Louis Armstrong in "Satchmo at the Waldorf" at Shakespeare & Company and the Long Wharf Theatre in New Haven, Connecticut before taking the play to New York where he won a Drama Desk and Outer Critics Circle award.

He may be best known to local audiences for portraying the boxer Emile Griffith in "Man in the Ring" for the Huntington Theatre Company, for which he won the 2019 Elliot Norton Award for Outstanding Performance by an Actor in a Large Theater. This past summer he starred as Prospero in the Commonwealth Shakespeare Company's production of "The Tempest," for which he is again nominated for a Norton Award. He recently wrapped up his acclaimed portrayal of Shylock in "The Merchant of Venice" by Theatre for a New Audience in New York and at the Shakespeare Theatre Company in Washington, D.C.

Mr. Thompson has also won plaudits for his work in television and movies, most recently for "Mare of Easttown" with Kate Winslet and Julian Fellowes' "The Gilded Age," both for HBO.

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Critics Association

ELLIOT NORTON AWARDS

www.ElliotNortonAwards.com

Details will follow on how to view the **39th Elliot Norton Awards** on Monday night May 23rd. For a complete list of the nominees, visit ElliotNortonawards.com

Boston Theater Critics Association 39th Elliot Norton Awards

Elliot Norton Prize for Sustained Excellence

John Douglas Thompson

Special Citation

Arlekin Players Theater & Zero Gravity (zero-G) Virtual Theater Lab, artistic director Igor Golyak
For pushing the boundaries of digital space to create a new genre of theater

And actress Darya Denisova

For her fresh, pioneering performances interacting virtually with a global audience, while also transcending experimental technology to excite and engage us in original, revolutionary productions
"State vs. Natasha Banina," "chekhovOS," and "Witness."

Special Citation

Julianne Boyd, Outgoing Artistic Director of Barrington Stage Company, for her 27 years at the helm of the award-winning, Pittsfield-based theater she co-founded: both an incubator for ambitious new work and the birthplace of Broadway hits.

The 2022 Elliot Norton Award nominees

Outstanding Musical Production

"Once on This Island," SpeakEasy Stage Company

"All Is Calm," Greater Boston Stage Company

"Passing Strange," Moonbox Productions

Outstanding Production by a Large Theater

"The Tempest," Commonwealth Shakespeare Company

"The Bluest Eye," Huntington Theatre Company

"Macbeth in Stride," American Repertory Theater

Outstanding Production by a Midsize Theater

"The Sound Inside," SpeakEasy Stage Company

"BLKS," SpeakEasy Stage Company

"People, Places & Things," SpeakEasy Stage Company

Outstanding Production by a Small or Fringe Theater

"Tiny Beautiful Things," Gloucester Stage Company

"Seared," Gloucester Stage Company

"The Importance of Being Earnest," Apollinaire Theatre Company

The Boston Theater
Critics Association

ELLIOT NORTON AWARDS

www.ElliotNortonAwards.com

Outstanding Ensemble, Large Theater

"The Bluest Eye," Huntington Theatre Company
"The Tempest," Commonwealth Shakespeare Company
"Teenage Dick," Huntington Theatre Company

Outstanding Ensemble, Midsize Theater

"Once on This Island," SpeakEasy Stage Company
"People, Places & Things," SpeakEasy Stage Company
"BLKS," SpeakEasy Stage Company

Outstanding Ensemble, Small or Fringe Theater

"Tiny Beautiful Things," Gloucester Stage Company
"The Importance of Being Earnest," Apollinaire Theatre Company
"Passing Strange," Moonbox Productions

Outstanding Solo Performance

Maurice Emmanuel Parent, "Mr. Parent," Lyric Stage Company of Boston
Jasmine M. Rush, "Queens Girl in the World," The Nora, The Front Porch Arts Collective and The Hangar Theater at Central Square Theater
Karen MacDonald, "At Wit's End," Merrimack Repertory Theatre

Outstanding Direction for a Large Theater

Steven Maler, "The Tempest," Commonwealth Shakespeare Company
Awoye Timpo, "The Bluest Eye," Huntington Theatre Company
Moritz von Stuelpnagel, "Teenage Dick," Huntington Theatre Company

Outstanding Direction for a Midsize Theater

David R. Gammons, "People, Places & Things," SpeakEasy Stage Company
Pascale Florestal, "Once on This Island," SpeakEasy Stage Company
Tonasia Jones, "BLKS," SpeakEasy Stage Company

Outstanding Direction for a Small or Fringe Theater

Lyndsay Allyn Cox, "Tiny Beautiful Things," Gloucester Stage Company
Kiki Samko, "A Grinchley Christmas Carol," Gold Dust Orphans
Danielle Fauteux Jacques, "The Importance of Being Earnest," Apollinaire Theatre Company

Outstanding Musical Performance by an Actor

Jared Troilo, "The Last Five Years," Lyric Stage Company of Boston
Anthony Pires Jr., "Passing Strange," Moonbox Productions
Ivan C. Walks, "Passing Strange," Moonbox Productions

Outstanding Musical Performance by an Actress

The Boston Theater
Critics Association

ELLIOT NORTON AWARDS

www.ElliotNortonAwards.com

Peli Naomi Woods, "Once on This Island," SpeakEasy Stage Company
Whitney White, "Macbeth in Stride," American Repertory Theater
Maria Hendricks, "Passing Strange," Moonbox Productions

Outstanding Performance by an Actor for a Large Theater

John Douglas Thompson, "The Tempest," Commonwealth Shakespeare Company
Michael Underhill, "Witch," Huntington Theatre Company
Brian D. Coats, "The Bluest Eye," Huntington Theatre Company

Outstanding Performance by an Actress for a Large Theater

Shannon DeVido, "Teenage Dick," Huntington Theatre Company
Hadar Busia-Singleton, "The Bluest Eye," Huntington Theatre Company
McKenzie Frye, "The Bluest Eye," Huntington Theatre Company

Outstanding Performance by an Actress for a Midsize Theater

Jennifer Rohn, "The Sound Inside," SpeakEasy Stage Company
Marianna Bassham, "People, Places & Things," SpeakEasy Stage Company
Maureen Keiller, "Incident at Our Lady of Perpetual Help," Greater Boston Stage Company

Outstanding Performance by an Actor for a Midsize Theater

Nathan Malin, "The Sound Inside," SpeakEasy Stage Company
Nael Nacer, "The Merchant of Venice," Actors' Shakespeare Project
Sharmarke Yusuf, "BLKS," SpeakEasy Stage Company

Outstanding Performance by an Actress for a Small or Fringe Theater

Celeste Oliva, "Tiny Beautiful Things," Gloucester Stage Company
Abigail Erdelatz, "The Importance of Being Earnest," Apollinaire Theatre Company
Emma Laird, "Romeo and Juliet," Apollinaire Theatre Company

Outstanding Performance by an Actor for a Small or Fringe Theater

Nael Nacer, "Tiny Beautiful Things," Gloucester Stage Company
Malcolm Ingram, "Reparations," Gloucester Stage Company
Jordan Pearson, "Seared," Gloucester Stage Company

Outstanding New Script

"Mr. Parent," by Melinda Lopez with Maurice Emmanuel Parent, Lyric Stage Company of Boston
"Macbeth in Stride," by Whitney White, American Repertory Theater
"Black Bean Project," by Melinda Lopez and Joél Pérez, Huntington Theatre Company

Outstanding Design for a Large Theater

"The Bluest Eye," Huntington Theatre Company (Scenic design by Jason Ardizzone-West; costume design by Dede Ayite and Rodrigo Muñoz; lighting design by Adam Honoré; sound design by Aubrey Dube; hair, wig and makeup design by J. Jared Janas)

The Boston Theater
Critics Association

ELLIOT NORTON AWARDS

www.ElliotNortonAwards.com

“Teenage Dick,” Huntington Theatre Company (Scenic design by Wilson Chin; costume design by Kelsey Hunt; lighting design by Amith Chandrashaker; sound design by Palmer Hefferan)

“Witch,” Huntington Theatre Company (Scenic design by Luciana Stecconi; costume design by Chelsea Kerl; lighting design by Mary Louise Geiger; sound design by Melanie Chen Cole)

Outstanding Design for a Midsize Theater

“People, Places & Things,” SpeakEasy Stage Company (Scenic design by Jeffrey Petersen; costume design by Gail Astrid Buckley; lighting design by Jeff Adelberg; sound design by David Wilson; video design by Adam Stone)

“BLKS,” SpeakEasy Stage Company (Scenic design by Jenna McFarland Lord; costume design by Cassandra Queen; lighting design by Kat C. Zhou; sound design by Anna Drummond)

“Erma Bombeck: At Wit’s End,” Merrimack Repertory Theatre (Scenic design by Daniel Zimmerman; costume design by Teresa Snider-Stein; lighting design by Joel Shier; sound design by Scott Stauffer; filmmaker Kathy Wittman)

Outstanding Musical Direction

David Freeman Coleman, “Once on This Island,” SpeakEasy Stage Company

Matthew Stern, “All Is Calm,” Greater Boston Stage Company

Julius LaFlamme, “Passing Strange,” Moonbox Productions

Outstanding Choreography

Jazelynn Goudy, “Once on This Island,” SpeakEasy Stage Company

Peter DiMuro, “Everyday Life and Other Odds and Ends,” Sleeping Weazel, presented by ArtsEmerson

Levi Philip Marsman, “The Tempest,” Commonwealth Shakespeare Company