

The Boston Theater  
Critics Association

# ELLIOT NORTON AWARDS

[www.ElliotNortonAwards.com](http://www.ElliotNortonAwards.com)

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## The 36<sup>th</sup> Annual Elliot Norton Awards Recipients

**Leigh Barrett  
Receives Annual  
Elliot Norton Prize for Sustained Excellence**

**Randy Rainbow is Guest of Honor**

-- Awards Presented at Ceremony on Monday, May 21  
at the Huntington Avenue Theatre --

Awards were presented to more than two dozen outstanding actors, directors, designers, and ensembles tonight by The Boston Theater Critics Association (BTCA), at **The 36<sup>th</sup> Annual Elliot Norton Awards** ceremony, held at the Huntington Avenue Theatre.

This year's recipient of the *Elliot Norton Prize for Sustained Excellence* was Leigh Barrett, who has sustained Boston theater audiences with her expressive musical theater performances, vocal range, and versatility for decades. A Special Citation was awarded to Robert J. Eagle, to honor his 50 years at Reagle Music Theatre in Waltham. The 2018 Elliot Norton Arts Education Award was given out by the BTCA with a matching grant from Broadway in Boston to the musical theater program at Boston Conservatory at Berklee.

**Randy Rainbow** was the Guest of Honor. A comedian, actor, writer, host, and internet sensation, he is best known for his viral comedy videos. His popular series of political spoofs and song parodies have garnered international acclaim and more than 100 million views. He's been called "the best thing about the 2016 GOP race" by Dan Savage and his musical tribute to the first presidential debate of 2016 ("BRAGGADOCIOUS!") received 28 million views in its first two days. After accepting his award, Randy Rainbow turned in one of his trademark satirical video performances—live.

Joyce Kulhawik, President of the BTCA, stated, "Tonight absolutely rocked! The whole community felt completely united, celebrating each other, *with* the critics, who were proud to unabashedly honor the outstanding theatrical work ubiquitous in Greater Boston!"

**The 36th Annual Elliot Norton Awards** continues to turn a spotlight on the importance of the arts in our country. In addition to the presentation of the awards, the evening featured performances by the casts of the nominated musical productions. These included the Huntington Theatre Company's "Merrily We Roll Along," Company One Theatre's "Hype Man: a break beat play," and Wheelock Family Theatre's "In the Heights." Students from the musical theater division of the Boston Conservatory at Berklee, recipient of this year's Arts Education Award, also took the stage.

A gala after-party sponsored by the Howard Gotlieb Archival Research Center at Boston University, followed in the Huntington Theatre's Stewart Lane and Bonnie Comley Studio 210.

The **Elliot Norton Awards** are presented annually by The Boston Theater Critics Association (Don Aucoin, Jared Bowen, Terry Byrne, Carolyn Clay, Iris Fanger, Jeremy D. Goodwin, 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 year.

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 who have graced Boston's stages, including: 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.

For more details on the 36<sup>th</sup> Annual Elliot Norton Awards, including a full list of awardees and nominees, visit <http://www.elliottnortonawards.com>

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## 36<sup>th</sup> Annual Elliot Norton Awards

### **Elliot Norton Prize for Sustained Excellence**

Leigh Barrett

### **Guest of Honor**

Randy Rainbow

### **Outstanding Visiting Production**

*The Color Purple* (Boch Center Shubert Theatre)

### **Outstanding Performance by an Actor in a Visiting Production**

Richard Thomas, *The Humans* (Boch Center Shubert Theatre)

### **Outstanding Performance by an Actress in a Visiting Production**

Adrianna Hicks, *The Color Purple* (Boch Center Shubert Theatre)

### **Outstanding Musical Production**

*Arrabal* (American Repertory Theater)

### **Outstanding Production, Large Theater**

*Beckett in Brief* (Commonwealth Shakespeare Company)

### **Outstanding Production, Midsize Theater**

*Constellations* (Underground Railway Theater)

### **Outstanding Production, Small Theater**

*Hype Man: a break beat play* (Company One Theatre)

### **Outstanding Production, Fringe Theater**

*3/Fifths' Trapped in a Traveling Minstrel Show* (Sleeping Weazel)

### **Outstanding Design, Large Theater**

*Home* (ArtsEmerson) Scenic design by Steven Dufala, costumes by Karen Young, lighting by Christopher Kuhl, sound by Brandon Wolcott, illusions by Steve Cuiffo

### **Outstanding Design, Midsize, Small or Fringe Theater**

*A Dead Man's Diary: A Theatrical Novel* (Arlekin Players Theatre) Stage design by Nikolay Simonov, lighting by Stephen Petrelli, sound by Jakov Jakoulov, video by Svetlana Vakhutinsky and Aleksey Shemyatovsky

**Outstanding Actor, Large Theater**

McKinley Belcher III, *A Guide for the Homesick* (Huntington Theatre Company)

**Outstanding Actress, Large Theater**

Gracyn Mix, *Romeo and Juliet* (Commonwealth Shakespeare Company)

**Outstanding Actor, Midsize Theater**

Jacob Athyal, *Guards at the Taj* (Underground Railway Theater)

**Outstanding Actress, Midsize Theater**

Caitlin Nasema Cassidy, *Paradise* (Underground Railway Theater)

**Outstanding Actor, Small or Fringe Theater**

Barlow Adamson, *Elemeno Pea* (Boston Playwrights' Theatre)

**Outstanding Actress, Small or Fringe Theater**

Lindsay Eagle, *Fat Pig* (Flat Earth Theatre)

**Outstanding Musical Performance by an Actor**

Will McGarrah, *Souvenir* (Lyric Stage Company of Boston)

**Outstanding Musical Performance by an Actress**

Leigh Barrett, *Souvenir* (Lyric Stage Company of Boston) and *Gypsy* (Lyric Stage Company of Boston)

**Outstanding Director, Large Theater**

Sergio Trujillo, *Arrabal* (American Repertory Theater)

**Outstanding Director, Midsize Theater**

Summer L. Williams, *Barbecue* (Lyric Stage Company of Boston)

**Outstanding Director, Small or Fringe Theater,**

Allison Olivia Choat, *The 39 Steps* (Moonbox Productions)

**Outstanding New Script**

Idris Goodwin, *Hype Man: a break beat play* (Company One Theatre)

**Outstanding Solo Performance**

Keith Hamilton Cobb, *American Moor* (O.W.I. Bureau of Theatre and Phoenix Theatre Ensemble)

**Outstanding Musical Direction**

David Reiffel, *Man of La Mancha* (New Repertory Theatre) and *Shakespeare in Love* (SpeakEasy Stage Company)

**Outstanding Ensemble**

*In the Heights* (Wheelock Family Theatre)