

'Louis' tops L.A. Drama Crix awards

Bio musical nabs four nods at annual event

By JULIO MARTINEZ

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The Sacred Fools Theater Company staging of the bio tuner "Louis and Keely Live at the Sahara" led the kudos at the 40th annual Los Angeles Drama Critics Circle (LADCC) Awards, garnering four nods, including outstanding production.

Ceremony, hosted by Vicki Lewis, was held Monday at North Hollywood's El Portal Theater.

Elephant Theater Company's "Anything" and Fountain Theater's "Gem of the Ocean" nabbed three awards each, including production. Rogue Artists Ensemble's "The Tragical Comedy or Comical Tragedy of Mr. Punch" also earned three. Garnering two nods each were Theater Banshee's revival of John Steinbeck's "Of Mice and Men" and the Center Theater Group at the Ahmanson's staging of the Dolly Parton tuner "9 to 5: The Musical."

In all, 19 legiters were honored, with 13 small-stage (99 seat or less) productions cited along with six large and medium house stagings. Among five special kudos, the Margaret Harford Award for sustained excellence in theater was given to Los Angeles Women's Shakespeare Company. The Drama Circle also announced a new special nod, the Milton Katselas Award, to be presented beginning next year for career or special achievement in directing.

The Los Angeles Drama Critics Circle was founded in 1969. It is dedicated to excellence in theatrical criticism and to the encouragement and improvement of theater in Greater Los Angeles.

Here is a complete list of winners:

PRODUCTION

"Anything," Elephant Theater Company at the Lillian Theater

"Gem of the Ocean," Fountain Theater

"Louis and Keely Live at the Sahara," Sacred Fools Theater Company at Sacred Fools and at the Matrix Theater

MCCULLOH AWARD FOR REVIVAL (For Shows written between 1920 and 1980)

"Of Mice and Men," Theater Banshee

DIRCTION

Jeremy Aldridge, "Louis and Keely Live at the Sahara"

Ben Bradley, "Gem of the Ocean"

David Fofi, "Anything"

WRITING

Athol Fugard, "Victory," the Fountain Theater

WRITING (Adaptation)

Sean T. Cawelti with Miles Taber and the Rogues, "The Tragical Comedy or Comical Tragedy of Mr. Punch," Rogue Artists Ensemble at Bootleg Theater

MUSIC DIRECTION

Dennis Kaye, "Louis and Keely Live at the Sahara"

CHOREOGRAPHY

Andy Blankenbuehler, "9 to 5: The Musical," Center Theater Group at the Ahmanson Theater

Lee Martino, "Kiss of the Spider Woman," Havok Theater Company at Bootleg Theater

MUSICAL SCORE

Michael Friedman, "Bloody Bloody Andrew Jackson," Center Theater Group at the Kirk Douglas Theater

Dolly Parton, "9 to 5: The Musical"

LEAD PERFORMANCE

Sean Branney, "Of Mice and Men"

Jake Broder, "Louis and Keely Live at the Sahara"

Ellen Geer, "Long Day's Journey Into Night," Theatricum Botanicum

John Glover, "Secrets of the Trade," the Black Dahlia Theater

Louis Jacobs, "Anything"

Judy Kaye, "Sweeney Todd, The Demon Barber of Fleet Street," Center Theater Group at the Ahmanson Theater

FEATURED PERFORMANCE

J.D. Cullum, "Don Juan," A Noise Within

Beth Kennedy, "As U2 Like It," Troubadour Theater Company at the Falcon Theater

Sharon Lawrence, "Orson's Shadow," Pasadena Playhouse

Adolphus Ward, "Gem of the Ocean"

ENSEMBLE PERFORMANCE

"Assassins," West Coast Ensemble at the El Centro Theater

SET DESIGN

Laura Fine Hawkes, "Snake in the Grass," Salem K Theater Company at the Matrix Theater

LIGHTING DESIGN

Steven Young, "Thrill Me: The Leopold and Loeb Story," Havok Theater Company at the Hudson Backstage Theater

COSTUME DESIGN

Shigeru Yaji, "An Italian Straw Hat: A Vaudeville," South Coast Repertory

SOUND DESIGN

Ken Rich, "The Common Air," SoulArt and Elephant C.A.F.E at Theater Asylum

SOLO PERFORMANCE

Nilaja Sun, "No Child...," Center Theater Group at the Kirk Douglas Theater

CGI/VIDEO

Brian White, "The Tragical Comedy or Comical Tragedy of Mr. Punch"

PUPPET AND MASK DESIGN

Joyce Hutter and Patrick Rubio, "The Tragical Comedy or Comical Tragedy of Mr. Punch"

FIGHT CHOREOGRAPHY

Ned Mochel, "On an Average Day," VS. Theater Company at the Elephant Theater Lab

2008 SPECIAL AWARDS RECIPIENTS

The Ted Schmitt Award For The World Premiere of an Outstanding New Play (sponsored by Samuel French Inc.): E.M. Lewis for "Song of Extinction.

The Polly Warfield Award for an Excellent Season in a Small to Midsize Theater (sponsored by the Nederlander Organization): Sacred Fools Theater Company.

The Angstrom Award for Career Achievement in Lighting Design (sponsored by Angstrom Lighting): Lisa D. Katz.

The Margaret Harford Award for Sustained Excellence in Theater (sponsored by Camelot Artists): Los Angeles Women's Shakespeare Company.

The Joel Hirschhorn Award for Outstanding Achievement in Musical Theater (sponsored by David Elzer/Demand PR): Nick DeGruccio.