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Award Recipients Announced at the 2023 Suzi Bass Awards
The 17th Suzi Awards Gala was held on November 13, 2023
at DeKalb History Center in Decatur, Georgia

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE *Recipients announced from 29 categories and representing 17 professional companies and 51 productions*
Full list of nominations and winners are contained within this release

Atlanta, GA—November 13, 2023: Suzi Bass Awards hosted a live event revealing the recipients for the 2022-2023 Atlanta professional theatre season last night, Monday, November 13, 2023, to patrons and industry artists. The Suzi Awards Ceremony and Celebration was held at DeKalb History Center, 101 E. Court Square, Decatur, GA 30030.

Winners from among the nominated artists in this year's twenty-nine (29) categories took home the coveted award. Suzi Judges and Suzi Members have chosen recipients in performance, direction, and design categories for plays and musicals.

The Ceremony also honored the recipients of the Lifetime Achievement Award, the Spirit of Suzi Award, the Callboard Award, the Volunteer of the Year Award, and the Gene-Gabriel Moore Playwriting award.

The live ceremony included performances from students of SOTA: School of the Arts and Central Gwinnett High School who performed an opening tribute to all outstanding musical nominees and served as the evening's ambassadors.

The Winners List: Winners are highlighted in the Nominations list at the end of this release. WINNERS will also be posted to the Suzi website. Please note, this list of nominees includes a couple corrections to the nominees list sent with the previous release, in addition to the winners being highlighted.

TOTAL AWARDS BY THEATRE COMPANY

Alliance Theatre	15	Dominion Entertainment	1
Actor's Express	5	Jennie T. Anderson Theatre & Atlanta Lyric Theatre	3
Aurora Theatre	3	Synchronicity Theatre	2
Center for Puppetry Arts	3	Out of Hand Theater	1

Total Awards by Production

<i>Water for Elephants</i>	Alliance Theatre	9
<i>Next To Normal</i>	Jennie T. Anderson & Atlanta Lyric Theatre	3
<i>Tesla vs. Edison</i>	Center for Puppetry Arts	3
<i>The Boy Who Kissed the Sky</i>	Alliance Theatre	3
<i>The Many Wonderous Realities of Jasmine Starr-Kidd</i>	Alliance Theatre	3
<i>A Prayer for the French Republic</i>	Actor's Express	2
<i>Jesus Hopped the "A" Train</i>	Actor's Express	2
<i>Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters</i>	Synchronicity Theatre	2
<i>The Play That Goes Wrong</i>	Aurora Theatre	2
<i>Dreamgirls</i>	Dominion Entertainment Group	1
<i>Lizzie</i>	Actor's Express	1
<i>Mary Poppins</i>	Aurora Theatre	1
<i>Shirley Chisolm: Unbossed & Unbowed</i>	Out of Hand Theater	1

A full list of categories and corresponding nominees with winners highlighted follows. Please note, any spelling errors or errors in the nominees list are the fault of this author, not the organization. Please feel free to send any corrections to kate.warner@thesuzis.org

Suzi Bass award for Lifetime Achievement Award was presented to **Wendall Johnson**, of Theatrical Outfit by former Artistic Director, Tom Key (and previous Suzi Bass Lifetime Achievement Award recipient) and current Artistic Director, Matt Torney. Wendell Johnson is currently the house manager at Theatrical Outfit, where he has served for the past 18 years. Prior to that, he was house manager and light board operator at Horizon Theatre. Wendell's first career was that of Executive Human Resources Manager for Amoco Corporation, a Fortune 500 oil and gas company. Over his 28 years with Amoco, Wendell served in numerous positions both domestically and internationally. A 1966 graduate of Howard University in Washington, DC, Wendell also holds a Master's of Business Administration degree from Long Island University in New York.

The Spirit of Suzi Bass Award

Each season, the Suzi Awards Board of Directors solicits nominations from the professional theatre community. The recipient will be a person or organization that demonstrates qualities reflecting Suzi Bass herself. Such qualities might include:

- Dedication to increasing the level of professionalism in the Atlanta Theatre Community;
- Selfless service to the Atlanta theatrical community through the development and support of theatre companies, professional artists, students of theatre, or new audiences;
- Consistent striving to better the working conditions of theatre artists, the support of audiences for theatre, or the environment for a strong and vibrant theatre community;
- True commitment to the joy of theatre as an avenue for self-expression, community empowerment, global connection, or cultural enrichment;
- Dedication to the belief that theatre can make a difference in Atlanta, and Atlanta theatre can make a difference in the world.

The Spirit of Suzi Award - The Overture Series at the Jennie T. Anderson Theatre under the direction of Jono Davis

Volunteer of the Year Award

Each season the current Voting Members of The Suzi Bass Awards will vote to award a special prize to a person from the greater Atlanta theatre community. This award is intended to recognize the long-term, intensive, or extraordinary work of a volunteer for a Suzi Participating Theatre. Nominees for this award will have contributed significant time and talent to their chosen organization. Since the support of volunteers is so vital to the functioning of theatre organizations in the Atlanta community, this award strives to recognize the contribution of all volunteers by highlighting a few.

Volunteer of the Year - Julianne Taft, Board Chair Synchronicity Theatre

Callboard Award

Each season, the current Voting Members of The Suzi Bass Awards will award a special prize to a person from the greater Atlanta theatre community. This award is intended to recognize the work of a stage manager or other technical crew, front-of-house staff, or production staff of a Suzi Participating Theatre. Anyone working on a production but not fitting into regular "Suzi" categories may be nominated by any Suzi Member, or by the administration of a participating theatre. **Callboard Award – LaWanda Green**, Operations Manager Horizon Theatre Company

Gene-Gabriel Moore Playwriting Award was awarded to **Kira Rockwell**, Atlanta-based playwright for her script *Oh, To Be Pure Again*. Actor's Express produced the world premiere, directed by Kate Bergstrom in March 2023.

ABOUT THE SUZI BASS AWARDS

The Suzi Bass Awards were founded in 2003 by Gene-Gabriel Moore along with a group of industry professionals to celebrate outstanding work in live theatre and the artists who produce it. This season, The Suzi Bass Awards volunteer judges chose nominees and recipients in 29 categories. In addition, the annual Spirit of Suzi Award honors a person or organization for their long-time dedication to Atlanta theatre; the Gene-Gabriel Moore Playwriting Award recognizes Atlanta's talented local playwrights through special notice of a recently produced play; and the Volunteer of the Year Award recognizes an individual or group with long-time volunteer contributions to a particular theatre.

Ensemble:

Lizzie

Actor's Express

Jasmine Renee Ellis*, Christina Leidel*, Jessica De Maria*, Megan Zhang*

Featured Performer (10 nominees, 2 awards)

Caleb Brink as Nicely Nicely Johnson *Guys and Dolls* Atlanta Lyric Theatre

Patty de la Garza as Little Becky Two Shoes
Express & Oglethorpe Theatre *Urinetown* Actor's

Lawrence Flowers as James "Thunder" Early

Dreamgirls

Dominion Entertainment

Desiré Gaston as Disco Donna
Theatre *Summer: The Donna Summer Musical* Aurora

Sara Gettelfinger* as Barbara *Water for Elephants* Alliance Theatre

Tatum McBride as Little Sally *Urinetown* Actor's Express &
Oglethorpe Theatre

Wade McCollum* as Wade *Water for Elephants* Alliance Theatre

James Allen McCune as Jimmy Ray Dobbs
Ensemble Theatre *Bright Star* Georgia

Golbanoo Setayesh as Natalie *Next to Normal* Jennie T. Anderson Theatre &
Atlanta Lyric Theatre

**Jacob Ryan Smith as Gabe
& Atlanta Lyric Theatre**

Next to Normal

Jennie T. Anderson Theatre

Lighting Design:

Andre C. Allen/Blacklight Productions Company	<i>The Wiz</i>	True Colors Theatre
Maranda DeBusk	<i>Lizzie</i>	Actor's Express
Bradley King^	<i>Water for Elephants</i>	Alliance Theatre
D. Connor McVey	<i>Guys and Dolls</i>	Atlanta Lyric Theatre
D. Connor McVey Oglethorpe Theatre	<i>Urinetown</i>	Actor's Express &

Music Direction:

John-Michael D'Haviland & Holt McCarley		<i>Next to Normal</i>
Jennie T. Anderson Theatre & Atlanta Lyric Theatre		
Matt Hinkley	<i>Water for Elephants</i>	Alliance Theatre
Christian Magby & LeRell Ross Theatre	<i>Bright Star</i>	Georgia Ensemble
Ann-Carol Pence	<i>Mary Poppins</i>	Aurora Theatre
Ashley Prince Oglethorpe Theatre	<i>Urinetown</i>	Actor's Express &

Principal Performer (10 nominees, 2 awards)

Marcello Audino as Sky Masterson *Guys and Dolls* Atlanta Lyric Theatre

**Mary Nye Bennett as Diana *Next to Normal* Jennie T. Anderson
Theatre & Atlanta Lyric Theatre**

Taylor Buice as Dan *Next to Normal* Jennie T. Anderson Theatre
& Atlanta Lyric Theatre

Chloe Cordle as Miss Adelaide *Guys and Dolls* Atlanta Lyric Theatre

Jaymyria Etienne as Sarah Brown *Guys and Dolls* Atlanta Lyric Theatre

Bryan Fenkart* as August/Charlie *Water for Elephants* Alliance Theatre

Megan K. Hill as Pennywise *Urinetown* Actor's Express &
Oglethorpe Theatre

Liza Jaine* as Alice Murphy *Bright Star* Georgia Ensemble
Theatre

Isabelle McCalla* as Marlena/June *Water for Elephants* Alliance Theatre

Ryan Vasquez* as Jacob *Water for Elephants* Alliance Theatre

Projection Design:

David Bengali^ *Water for Elephants* Alliance Theatre

Kimberly Binns *The Wiz* True Colors Theatre
Company

Kimberly Binns *Summer: The Donna Summer Musical* Aurora
Theatre

Maranda DeBusk *Lizzie* Actor's Express

Bobby Johnston *Next to Normal* Jennie T. Anderson Theatre
& Atlanta Lyric Theatre

Scenic Design:

Seamus M. Bourne^ Oglethorpe Theatre	<i>Urinetown</i>	Actor's Express &
Isabel & Moriah Curley-Clay^ Company	<i>The Wiz</i>	True Colors Theatre
Takeshi Kata^	<i>Water for Elephants</i>	Alliance Theatre
Stephanie Polhemus Theatre	<i>Bright Star</i>	Georgia Ensemble
Stephanie Polhemus	<i>Guys and Dolls</i>	Atlanta Lyric Theatre

Sound Design:

Jeremiah Davison Theatre	<i>Summer: The Donna Summer Musical</i>	Aurora
Caleb Hurst	<i>Guys and Dolls</i>	Atlanta Lyric Theatre
Bobby Johnston Theatre & Atlanta Lyric Theatre	<i>Next to Normal</i>	Jennie T. Anderson
Jessica Paz^	<i>Water for Elephants</i>	Alliance Theatre
Daniel Terry	<i>Mary Poppins</i>	Aurora Theatre

Ensemble:

***The Play That Goes Wrong* Aurora Theatre**

Marcello Audino*, Skyler Brown, Caleb Clark*, Arianna Hardaway, Chris Hecke, Jeff McKerley*, Candy McLellan*, Anthony Rodriguez

Designing Women 2020 Horizon Theatre

Beth Beyer, Robin Bloodworth*, Lane Carlock, Joanna Daniels*, Luis R. Hernandez, Eve Krueger*, Katherine Lanasa*, Tiffany Porter

Much Ado About Nothing Atlanta Shakespeare

Company

Mila Bolash, O'Neil Delapenha, Jaclyn Hofmann Faircloth, Nick Faircloth, Chris Hecke, Adam King, Amanda Lindsey McDonald, Daryl T Monson, Mary Ruth Ralston, Cameryn Richardson, David Rucker III, Charlie Thomas, Kelly Clare Toland, Tyra Watkins, Kenneth Wigley

Tiny Beautiful Things Theatrical Outfit

Robin Bloodworth*, Candy McLellan*, Maria Rodriguez-Sager*, Stephen Ruffin

The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (abridged)
Atlanta Shakespeare

Company

O'Neil Delapenha, Ebony Jerry, Trevor Perry

Featured Performer (10 nominees, 2 awards):

**Jeremy Aggers* as Doug *The Many Wondrous Realities of Jasmine Starr-Kidd*
Alliance Theatre**

Brandon Burditt* as Uncle Craig *The Many Wondrous Realities of Jasmine Starr-Kidd*
Alliance Theatre

Lamar K. Cheston* as Rich/Mr. Lee/Mike/Alex *Kim's Convenience* Aurora Theatre &
Horizon Theatre Company

Jay Jones* as TJ *The Hot Wing King* Alliance Theatre

Faina Khibkin as Elodie	<i>Prayer for the French Republic</i>	Actor's Express
Aliya Kraar as Molly	<i>Prayer for the French Republic</i>	Actor's Express
Antonia LaChé as Ensemble	<i>Mlima's Tale</i>	7 Stages
Adir Lev Mann as Daniel	<i>Prayer for the French Republic</i>	Actor's Express
Cara Mantella as Mary Jane	<i>Jesus Hopped the 'A' Train</i>	Actor's Express
Susan Shalhoub Larkin as Momo	<i>The Humans</i>	Theatrical Outfit

Lighting Design:

Liz Lee^	<i>Tesla vs. Edison</i>	Center for Puppetry Arts
Joseph P. Monaghan III^	<i>Prayer for the French Republic</i>	Actor's Express
Mary Parker	<i>Designing Women 2020</i>	Horizon Theatre
Ben Rawson^	<i>The Many Wondrous Realities of Jasmine Starr-Kidd</i>	Alliance Theatre
Toni Sterling	<i>The Play That Goes Wrong</i>	Aurora Theatre

Principal Performer (10 nominees, 2 awards):

Ross Benjamin* as Patrick	<i>Prayer for the French Republic</i>	Actor's Express
LaLa Cochran* as Deidre Blake	<i>The Humans</i>	Theatrical Outfit
Carolyn Cook as Marcelle	<i>Prayer for the French Republic</i>	Actor's Express
Bjorn Dupaty* as Cordell	<i>The Hot Wing King</i>	Alliance Theatre
Alan Edwards* as Erik Blake	<i>The Humans</i>	Theatrical Outfit
Cristian Gonzalez as Angel	<i>Jesus Hopped the 'A' Train</i>	Actor's Express
Ingrid Griffith as Shirley Chisholm and others <i>Unbossed & Unbowed</i>	<i>Out of Hand Theater</i>	<i>Shirley Chisholm:</i>
Sekou Laidlow* as Lucius	<i>Jesus Hopped the 'A' Train</i>	Actor's Express
Christina Leidel* as The Woman Theatre	<i>The Turn of the Screw</i>	Georgia Ensemble
Olubajo "Bajo" Sonubi as Mlima	<i>Mlima's Tale</i>	7 Stages

Projection Design:

Milton Cordero^	<i>Everybody</i>	Alliance Theatre
Caite Hevner^	<i>The Many Wondrous Realities of Jasmine Starr-Kidd</i>	Alliance Theatre
Jason Hines	<i>Tesla vs. Edison</i>	Center for Puppetry Arts
Daniel Pope Horizon Theatre Company	<i>Kim's Convenience</i>	Aurora Theatre &
Olubajo "Bajo" Sonubi	<i>Mlima's Tale</i>	7 Stages

Scenic Design:

Michael Carnahan^	<i>The Hot Wing King</i>	Alliance Theatre
Isabel & Moriah Curley-Clay^	<i>The Play That Goes Wrong</i>	Aurora Theatre
Isabel & Moriah Curley-Clay^ Company	<i>Designing Women 2020</i>	Horizon Theatre
Isabel & Moriah Curley-Clay^ Company	<i>Support Group for Men</i>	Horizon Theatre
Ryan Sbaratta	<i>Tesla vs. Edison</i>	Center for Puppetry Arts

Sound Design:

Christopher Darbassie	<i>The Many Wondrous Realities of Jasmine Starr-Kidd</i>	Alliance Theatre
Mikaela Fraser	<i>The Play That Goes Wrong</i>	Aurora Theatre
Bailey Gafeny & Johnathan Taylor / Multiband Studio	<i>Designing Women 2020</i>	Horizon Theatre
Winston Johnson Theatre	<i>The Turn of the Screw</i>	Georgia Ensemble
Sharath Patel^	<i>The Humans</i>	Theatrical Outfit

THEATRE FOR YOUNG AUDIENCES

Performance:

The Boy Who Kissed the Sky

Alliance Theatre

Deborah Bowman*, Alexandria Joy*, Aishé Keita*, Cedric Lamar*, Brandon L. Smith*, Mike Spee*, Adam Washington*

Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters

Synchronicity Theatre

Jonathan Bryant, Brandin Jay, Kendra Johnson, Brittani Minnieweather, Anthony Nash, Ja'Siah Young

Design:

The Boy Who Kissed the Sky

Alliance Theatre

Alan Yeong^ (costumes), Connie Yun^ (lighting), Miko Simmons (projections), Carey Wong^ (scenic), Chris Lane (sound)

Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters

Synchronicity Theatre

Dr. L. Nyrobi Moss (costumes), Maliya McCall (lighting), Gabrielle Stephenson (scenic), Johnathan Taylor (sound)

Direction:

The Boy Who Kissed the Sky

Alliance Theatre

Tim Bond+ (director), Eugene H. Russell IV (music director), Sonia Dawkins (choreographer)

Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters

Synchronicity Theatre

Taryn Janelle (director/choreographer), LeRel Ross (music director)

New Work:

The Boy Who Kissed the Sky

Alliance Theatre

Idris Goodwin (book), Eugene H. Russell IV & Divinity Roxx (music)

Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters

Synchronicity Theatre

Karen Abbott (book), LeRel Ross (music), Taryn Janelle (lyrics)

OUTSTANDING PRODUCTIONS

Musical:

<i>Bright Star</i>	Georgia Ensemble Theatre
<i>Guys and Dolls</i>	Atlanta Lyric Theatre
<i>Next to Normal</i>	Jennie T. Anderson Theatre & Atlanta Lyric Theatre
<i>Urinetown</i>	Actor's Express & Oglethorpe Theatre
<i>Water for Elephants</i>	Alliance Theatre

Play:

<i>Designing Women 2020</i>	Horizon Theatre Company
<i>The Play That Goes Wrong</i>	Aurora Theatre
<i>Prayer for the French Republic</i>	Actor's Express
<i>Tesla vs. Edison</i>	Center for Puppetry Arts
<i>Tiny Beautiful Things</i>	Theatrical Outfit

World Premiere:

<i>By My Will</i> by Douglas Post	Atlanta Shakespeare Company
<i>Flex</i> by Candrice Jones	Theatrical Outfit
<i>Oh, To Be Pure Again</i> by Kira Rockwell	Actor's Express
<i>Tesla vs. Edison</i> by Jason Hines	Center for Puppetry Arts

***Water for Elephants* by Rick Elice (book), Pigpen Theatre Co. (music and lyrics), based on the novel by Sara Gruen**

Alliance Theatre

Outstanding Social Justice:

The Hot Wing King Alliance Theatre

Jesus Hopped the "A" Train Actor's Express

Kim's Convenience Aurora Theatre & Horizon Theatre

Mlima's Tale 7 Stages

***Shirley Chisholm: Unbossed & Unbowed* Out of Hand Theater**

Theatre for Young Audiences:

***The Boy Who Kissed the Sky* Alliance Theatre**

Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters Synchronicity Theatre

* Member, Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States

+ Member, Stage Directors and Choreographers Society

^ Member, IATSE United Scenic Artists

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