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27th Annual Lucille Lortel Awards Honorees Announced

***Richard Frankel to Receive the Lifetime Achievement Award
Richard Foreman to be inducted onto the famed Playwrights' Sidewalk
The FDNY to be honored for Service to Off-Broadway***

Ceremony to be held 7:00pm on Sunday, May 6, 2012 at NYU Skirball Center

New York, NY (March 9, 2012) – The Off-Broadway League today announced the date and location for the 2012 Lucille Lortel Awards for Outstanding Achievement Off-Broadway, as well as this year's honorary award recipients. The 27th Annual Lortel Awards will be handed out on Sunday, May 6, 2012 at NYU Skirball Center, beginning at 7:00pm EST.

This year's recipient of the Lifetime Achievement Award is **Richard Frankel** who, together with his partners Tom Viertel, Steve Baruch, Marc Routh and Laura Green, has produced and managed some 90 productions on and Off-Broadway, in London and around the world. Mr. Frankel began his career Off-Broadway as a technician, stage manager and later as a press agent and marketing director in not for profit theatres. As Managing Director of Circle Repertory Company he helped develop many world premieres by leading American writers and supervised the transfer of several productions to commercial runs Off-Broadway. His commercial Off-Broadway productions have included *Stomp*, *Penn and Teller*, *Driving Miss Daisy*, *Love Letters*, and many others. His Broadway productions include *The Producers*, *Hairspray*, *Angels in America*, *Smokey Joe's Café*, and many revivals, including *A Little Night Music*, *Company*, *Sweeney Todd* and *Gypsy*. His upcoming productions include *Leap of Faith* and *Flashdance* on Broadway, *Old Jews Telling Jokes* Off-Broadway and the opening of a new theatre district supper club called 54 Below that opens June 5th with Patti LuPone.

Award-winning American playwright and avant-garde theater pioneer, **Richard Foreman**, will be honored with his induction onto the famed Playwrights' Sidewalk, in front of the historic Lucille Lortel Theatre. Mr. Foreman has written, directed and designed over fifty of his own plays, both in New York City and abroad. He has received the annual Literature award from the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters, a "Lifetime Achievement in the Theater" award from the National Endowment for the Arts, the PEN Club Master American Dramatist Award, a MacArthur "Genius" Fellowship, and in 2004 was elected officer of the Order of Arts and Letters of France. Foreman is the founder and artistic director of the Ontological-Hysteric Theater. This year he'll return to the theatre scene after a brief hiatus and has several major productions in the works.

In 2011, the Off-Broadway League created the Service to Off-Broadway Award to celebrate leaders that serve the Off-Broadway community. This year's recipient of this award is the **Fire Department of the City of New York (FDNY)**. The award will be presented in recognition and gratitude for all the work the FDNY does to protect the numerous Off-Broadway Theatres and Productions each year, helping keep the staffs, actors and patrons safe.

This year, members of the general public are again welcome to view the 7:00pm ceremony. Public tickets are \$75.00 and will be available starting March 30, 2012, via phone at 212.352.3101, online at www.nyuskirball.org and in person at the Skirball Center's Shagan Box Office, at 556 LaGuardia (Tuesday – Sunday from 12 – 6pm).

Nominees from the 2011 – 2012 season will also be feted with a cocktail party in their honor on Monday, April 16, 2012.

Representatives of the Off-Broadway League, Actors' Equity Association, Stage Directors & Choreographers Society, the Lucille Lortel Foundation, in addition to theatre journalists and academics and other Off-Broadway professionals, serve on the Voting Committee. The Lucille Lortel Awards is produced by special arrangement with the Lucille Lortel Foundation. Additional support provided by Theatre Development Fund.

The Off-Broadway League's Lortel Awards Producing & Administration Committee (Terry Byrne, Denise Cooper, Margaret Cotter, George Forbes, Melanie Herman, Catherine Russell, Steven Showalter, and Carl D. White) produces the Lortel Awards Ceremony.

For updates and news about the ceremony, hosts, presenters and media releases, visit www.LortelAwards.org. Follow the Lortel Awards on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/#!/LortelAwards> and become a fan on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/LortelAwards>.

Important Dates

March 31, 2012	2011 – 2012 Off-Broadway season ends.
March 29, 2012	Nomination Meeting. Nominees announced via press release at 5PM EST.
March 30, 2012	Public tickets go on sale.
April 16, 2012	Nominees Cocktail Reception.
May 6, 2012	Award Ceremony at NYU Skirball Center.

About the Lucille Lortel Awards

The Lucille Lortel Awards for Outstanding Achievement Off-Broadway were created in 1985 by the Off-Broadway League. The Lortel Awards recognize excellence Off-Broadway by honoring the invaluable contribution of artists to the theatre community. Representatives of the Off-Broadway League, Actors' Equity Association, Stage Directors & Choreographers Society, the Lucille Lortel Foundation in addition to theatre journalists and academics and other Off-Broadway professionals serve on the Voting Committee. The awards may be given in the following categories: Play, Musical, Solo Show, Revival, Alternative Theatrical Experience, Director, Choreographer, Lead Actor and Actress, Featured Actor and Actress, Scenic, Costume, Lighting and Sound Design. The following honorary awards may also be given: Lifetime Achievement, Body of Work (awarded to an institution), the Edith Oliver Award for Sustained Excellence, Service to Off-Broadway Award and induction onto the Playwrights' Sidewalk in front of the historic Lucille Lortel Theatre in New York City. For more information, please see www.LortelAwards.org.

About the Lucille Lortel Foundation

Lucille Lortel Foundation was created by Lucille Lortel to foster excellence and diversity in the theatre, as well as to faithfully preserve the rich history and support the continued prosperity of Off-Broadway. The Foundation has several major programs, including its general operating support program that has provided millions of dollars to small to mid-size theatres in New York City, universities, and theatre service organizations. The Foundation created and maintains the Internet Off-Broadway Data Base (www.IOBDB.com). For a listing of all of the Foundation's programs, previous Lortel Award nominees and recipients, information on the Lucille Lortel Theatre and Playwrights' Sidewalk, and much more, please visit www.lortel.org.

About NYU Skirball Center

The Jack H. Skirball Center for the Performing Arts is the premier venue for the presentation of cultural and performing arts events for New York University and lower Manhattan. Led by executive producer Jay Oliva (President Emeritus, NYU) and senior director Michael Harrington, the programs of the Skirball Center reflect NYU's mission as an international center of scholarship, defined by excellence and innovation and shaped by an intellectually rich and diverse environment. A vital aspect of the Center's mission is to build young adult audiences for the future of live performance. www.nyuskirball.org.

About Theatre Development Fund (TDF)

TDF, which recently received a 2011 Mayor's Award for Arts and Culture, is the largest nonprofit performing arts service organization in the United States, returning over \$130 million to hundreds of productions annually through a variety of programs. It is dedicated to developing diverse audiences for live theatre and dance and strengthening the performing arts community in New York City. Created in 1968, TDF's programs have provided over 80 million people with access to performances at affordable prices. Best known for its TKTS Discount Booths, TDF's membership, outreach, access and education programs – as well as its Costume Collection – help to make the unique experience of theatre available to everyone. <http://www.tdf.org/>.

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