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**33<sup>RD</sup> ANNUAL LUCILLE LORTEL AWARDS**  
**TO BE HELD SUNDAY, MAY 6, 2018 AT NYU SKIRBALL CENTER**

*Playwright **Eve Ensler** to be presented with the Lifetime Achievement Award;*

***WP Theater** to be honored for Outstanding Body of Work;*

***Michael Friedman** to be posthumously inducted onto the Playwrights' Sidewalk*

**New York, NY (February 12, 2018)** – The Off-Broadway League today announced details for the 2018 Lucille Lortel Awards for Outstanding Achievement Off-Broadway. The 33<sup>rd</sup> Annual Lucille Lortel Awards will be handed out on Sunday, May 6, 2018 at NYU Skirball Center for Performing Arts, beginning at 7:00pm EST.

Among the special honors to be presented this year – award-winning Playwright **Eve Ensler** will be presented with the Lifetime Achievement Award. A Tony® and Obie Award-winning playwright, Ms. Ensler's newest, most personal work *In the Body of the World* opened on February 6<sup>th</sup> at Manhattan Theatre Club at New York City Center. Her new play *The Fruit Trilogy* will open Spring 2018 at Abingdon Theatre Company at the Lucille Lortel Theatre.

Lucille Lortel Award-winning composer **Michael Friedman** will posthumously be inducted onto the famed Playwrights' Sidewalk in front of the Lucille Lortel Theatre. He won the 2011 Lucille Lortel Award for Outstanding Musical for *Bloody Bloody Andrew Jackson*. He also received Lortel Award nominations as a composer and lyricist for *This Beautiful City*, *Saved*, *The Fortress of Solitude*, and *Pretty Filthy*.

**WP Theater** (formerly known as Women's Project Theater) will be honored for their Outstanding Body of Work. The organization, which was founded in 1978, is the nation's oldest and largest theater company dedicated to developing, producing, and promoting the work of female-identified and trans theater artists at every stage in their careers. Their latest show, the critically acclaimed *[PORTO]*, written by Kate Benson, is currently playing at WP Theater. The last time an institution was awarded the Outstanding Body of Work was Lincoln Center Theater in 2010.

Members of the general public are welcome to attend the 7:00 PM ceremony. Public tickets are \$75.00 and will be available starting April 3, via phone at 212-998-4941, online at [www.nyuskirball.org](http://www.nyuskirball.org) and in person at the Skirball Center's Shagan Box Office (556 LaGuardia Pl.) from Tuesday – Saturday from 12 – 6 PM, up until two hours before showtime.

**Important Dates**

March 31, 2018	2017-2018 Off-Broadway season ends
April 3, 2018	Nomination Meeting – Nominations announced
April 3, 2018	Public tickets go on sale
April 25, 2018	Nominees' Breakfast at Playwrights Horizons
May 6, 2018	Award Ceremony at NYU Skirball Center

The Off-Broadway League's Lortel Awards Producing & Administration Committee (Pamela Adams, Terry Byrne, Margaret Cotter, Carol Fishman, George Forbes, Danielle Karliner Naish, Michael Page, Catherine Russell, Lindsey Sag, Seth Shepsle, and Casey York) produces the Lortel Awards Ceremony. Acclaimed writer/director Michael Heitzman returns to direct the Lortel Awards for the ninth consecutive year. The Lucille Lortel Awards are produced by special arrangement with the Lucille Lortel Foundation. Additional support is provided by TDF.

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.

For updates and news about the ceremony and media releases, please visit [www.LortelAwards.org](http://www.LortelAwards.org). Follow the Lortel Awards (#LortelAwards) on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/OffBroadwayNYC> and like on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/LortelAwards>.

To download hi-res images of our honorees, please visit: <http://bit.ly/2BNHWEu>.

## **ABOUT OUR HONOREES**

### **EVE ENSLER**

Eve Ensler is the Tony® Award-winning playwright, activist, and author of the theatrical Obie award-winning phenomenon, *The Vagina Monologues*, published in 48 languages and performed in over 140 countries. The film adaptation of *The Vagina Monologues* aired on HBO in 2002. Her other performing credits include *The Good Body*, both the Broadway iteration and National Tour. Her plays include *Lemonade*, *Extraordinary Measures*, *Necessary Targets*, *OPC*, and *Emotional Creature*.

Her books include *Insecure At Last: A Political Memoir* and the *New York Times* bestseller *I Am An Emotional Creature*. Ensler is currently performing *In the Body of the World* at Manhattan Theatre Club, which she adapted for the stage from her critically acclaimed memoir and first debuted at the American Repertory Theater.

Ensler also co-produced the film *What I Want My Words to Do to You*.

Ms. Ensler is the founder of V-Day, the 20-year-old global activist movement to end violence against women and girls, which has raised over \$100 million. V-Day led her to also found One Billion Rising, the biggest global mass action to end violence against women in over 200 countries. She is a regular contributor for *The Guardian*. She was named one of *Newsweek's* "150 Women Who Changed the World" and *The Guardian's* "100 Most Influential Women."

### **MICHAEL FRIEDMAN**

Michael Friedman was an Obie Award-winning composer/lyricist. He was most well-known as the co-creator of the critically-acclaimed musical *Bloody Bloody Andrew Jackson*, which premiered in New York at The Public Theater and subsequently transferred to Broadway. Other credits include the musical *The Fortress of Solitude*, based on the book of the same name by Jonathan Lethem; *Unknown Soldier*, which premiered at The Williamstown Theatre Festival; and *Love's Labour's Lost*, which premiered at the Delacorte Theatre in Central Park. Michael was a founding Associate Artist of The Civilians, the acclaimed investigative theater company. His work with The Civilians included *Gone Missing*, *In the Footprint*, *The Great Immensity*, *Paris Commune* (co-written with Steve Cosson), *(I Am) Nobody's Lunch* and *This Beautiful City*, as well as the score for Anne Washburn's critically-acclaimed *Mr. Burns. The Abominables*, his collaboration with Civilians' Artistic Director Cosson, opened at Children's Theater Company in Minneapolis in September.

In the months leading up to the 2016 Presidential Election, Michael traveled the country creating a series of songs based on interviews he conducted. Those songs became his *State of the Union Songbook*, which was presented by *The New Yorker Radio Hour*.

Michael received a MacDowell Fellowship, a Princeton Hodder Fellowship, a Meet The Composer Fellowship and was a Barron Visiting Professor at The Princeton Environmental Institute in 2009. At the

time of his death, he was the Artist-in-Residence and Director of the Public Forum at The Public Theater and was also the Artistic Director of City Center *Encores! Off-Center*.

### **WP THEATER**

WP THEATER (Formerly known as Women's Project Theater) is the nation's oldest and largest theater company dedicated to developing, producing and promoting the work of female-identified and trans theater artists at every stage in their careers. For nearly four decades they have served as leaders at the forefront of a global movement towards gender parity, and the example they set and the artists they have fostered have grown into to a robust and thriving community of female writers and directors in theater and beyond.

WP empowers female-identified artists to reach their full potential and, in doing so, challenges preconceptions about the kinds of plays women write and the stories they tell. As the premier launching pad for the most influential women working in theater today, WP has had a significant impact on the field at large. Nearly every prolific female theater artist has been through our doors, including Eve Ensler, María Irene Fornés, Katori Hall, Pam MacKinnon, Lynn Nottage, Leigh Silverman, and Anna Deveare Smith. WP artists work regularly on and Off-Broadway, and collectively, have won all of the awards currently given for achievement in the field, including multiple Tony, Lortel, Obie, Drama Desk, Drama League, Lilly, and Whiting Awards; an Edward M. Kennedy Prize for Drama; and multiple Pulitzer Prizes. These powerful female artists found an early artistic home at WP, and are a testament to our role as a driving cultural force.

WP was founded in 1978 by visionary producer, Julia Miles, to address the significant under-representation of women in theater. Today, WP accomplishes its mission through several fundamental programs, including: the WP Lab, a two-year mentorship and new play development program for female-identified and trans playwrights, directors, and producers; the Playwright In Residence commissioning program; the Developmental series; and the Main Stage series, which features a full season of Off-Broadway productions written and directed by extraordinary theater artists.

### **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 in 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. Awards may be given in the following categories: Play, Musical, Solo Show, Revival, Alternative Theatrical Experience, Director, Choreographer, Lead Actor and Actress in a Play and Musical, Featured Actor and Actress in a Play and Musical, Scenic, Costume, Lighting, Sound, and Projection Design. The following honorary awards may also be given: Lifetime Achievement Award, Body of Work (awarded to an institution), the Edith Oliver 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](http://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](http://www.IOBDB.com)). For a listing of all 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](http://www.lortel.org).

### **ABOUT NYU SKIRBALL CENTER**

NYU Skirball, located in the heart of Greenwich Village, is one of New York City's major presenters of international work, and has been the premier venue for cultural and performing arts events in lower Manhattan since 2003. The 860-seat theater, led by Director Jay Wegman, provides a home for internationally renowned artists, innovators and thinkers. NYU Skirball hosts over 300 events annually, from re-inventions of the classics to cutting-edge premieres, in genres ranging from dance, theater and performance art to comedy, music and film.

## **ABOUT TDF**

Now in its 50<sup>th</sup> year of service, TDF is a not-for-profit service organization for the performing arts, dedicated to bringing the power of the performing arts to everyone. TDF's mission is to sustain live theatre and dance by engaging and cultivating a broad and diverse audience and eliminating barriers to attendance.

TDF fulfills its mission with a variety of programs that expand access, cultivate communities, and support the makers of the performing arts. Best known for its theatre going programs (including the TKTS Discount Booths and TDF Membership Program), net revenue generated by TKTS helps support TDF's accessibility (including open captioned, audio described and Autism Friendly performances), school (serving over 10,000 New York City students annually), community engagement and information programs – as well as the TDF Costume Rental and Research Programs – and have introduced millions of people to the theatre and helped make the unique experience of theatre available to everyone.

TDF envisions a world where the transformative experience of attending live theatre and dance is essential, relevant, accessible and inspirational. To learn more about TDF, go to [www.tdf.org](http://www.tdf.org).

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