

THE HELEN HAYES AWARDS POLICIES & PROCEDURES

(revised August 2020)



THE HELEN HAYES AWARDS

The story of the Helen Hayes Awards begins in the early 1980s, when theatre producers Bonnie Nelson Schwartz and Arthur Cantor, along with esteemed Washington drama critic Richard Coe, founded the Washington Theatre Awards Society. Their goal: to recognize and encourage the excellence of Washington's professional theatres. At the time there were fewer than 10 professional theatres in the nation's capital, but they included the preeminent Arena Stage, one of the country's leading not-for-profit regional companies, and the historic National Theatre.

To celebrate this small but fine bevy of theatres, and spur the growth of others, the Society established the annual Helen Hayes Awards, named for the First Lady of the American Theatre. Indeed, in May 1984, the legendary actress, who was born in the District in 1900 and first appeared onstage at the Belasco Theatre, across from the White House, presided over the inaugural presentation of the Helen Hayes Awards.

The Awards Society succeeded in its mission to help create one of the nation's most vibrant theatre communities, and in 2011 theatreWashington was born, to oversee the awards and also meet the need for additional advocacy and educational services. Today, professional theatres in the Washington metropolitan area number more than ninety and offer an enticing range of classical plays, original musicals, productions for young audiences, and new work by emerging dramatists.

The Helen Hayes Awards honor the Washington Metropolitan Area's extraordinary theatrical diversity.

HELEN HAYES AWARDS CATEGORIES

The Helen Hayes Awards are presented annually each spring, for eligible productions that opened during the previous calendar year.

HELEN and HAYES Categories apply to RESIDENT PRODUCTIONS only, defined as *one that has been developed, contracted and produced specifically for one or more theatres in the Washington, D.C. Metropolitan Area, for which 50% or more of all production and design elements were created for this production at this theatre(s), and meeting all other eligibility criteria (see page 12). A production that does not meet these criteria will be considered a Visiting Production (see page 6).*

- Only the cast members as of a production's opening performance in the Washington, D.C. Metropolitan Area are eligible for acting awards, including Ensemble awards.
- An Ensemble is defined as four or more actors and refers to the full cast.
- An Eligible Theatre's artistic director, or his or her designee, is solely responsible for determining if an actor is to be considered in the Lead or Supporting category. But judges will consider and score any acting company as an Ensemble, in addition to scoring individual artists.
- If an Eligible Theatre wishes that a projection/media designer's work be considered by the judges, it may include the designer when submitting production ballot information, to be included either in the Set Design or Lighting Design category. The judges will collectively consider the designer's work.
- For Outstanding Costume, Lighting, Set, and Sound Design awards, scores submitted by all the judges on the HELEN Play and HELEN Musical panels, or the HAYES Play and HAYES Musical panels, will be combined.
- If an Eligible Theatre wishes to have sound designers or composers considered for the Outstanding Sound Design award, it may include those artists when submitting production ballot information for the category of Sound Design. The judges will collectively consider the artist's work.

HELEN CATEGORIES

The Helen recognizes outstanding work in resident theatre productions where less than 51% of a cast operates under an Actors Equity Association (AEA) contract and no more than 3 AEA actors are in the cast. For the purpose of these awards categories, a resident theatre production is one that has been developed, contracted and staged for a specific Washington, D.C. Metropolitan Area theatre.

Outstanding Play

Outstanding Director of a Play

Outstanding Lead Performer in a Play

Outstanding Supporting Performer in a Play
Outstanding Ensemble in a Play
Outstanding Choreography in a Play

Outstanding Musical
Outstanding Director of a Musical
Outstanding Musical Direction
Outstanding Lead Performer in a Musical
Outstanding Supporting Performer in a Musical
Outstanding Ensemble in a Musical
Outstanding Choreography in a Musical

Outstanding Costume Design
Outstanding Lighting Design
Outstanding Set Design
Outstanding Sound Design

HAYES CATEGORIES

The Hayes recognizes outstanding work by an Eligible Theatre operating under an AEA agreement; a production where 51% or more of the cast are operating under an AEA contract; or a production in which 4 or more cast members are working under an AEA contract. For the purpose of these awards categories, a resident theatre production is one that has been developed, contracted and staged for a specific Washington, D.C. Metropolitan Area theatre.

Outstanding Play
Outstanding Director of a Play
Outstanding Lead Performer in a Play
Outstanding Supporting Performer in a Play
Outstanding Ensemble in a Play
Outstanding Choreography in a Play

Outstanding Musical
Outstanding Director of a Musical
Outstanding Musical Direction
Outstanding Lead Performer in a Musical
Outstanding Supporting Performer in a Musical
Outstanding Ensemble in a Musical
Outstanding Choreography in a Musical

Outstanding Costume Design
Outstanding Lighting Design
Outstanding Set Design
Outstanding Sound Design

VISITING PRODUCTIONS

Outstanding Visiting Production
Outstanding Performer, Visiting Production

A visiting production is one that has been developed, contracted and produced specifically for one or more theatres outside of the Washington, D.C. Metropolitan Area, either before or after its Washington engagement. A production for which the lead producer (as defined by the percentage of production costs funded) is a commercial entity or for which a future commercial production is scheduled and/or has been announced publicly prior to its opening performance in the Washington, D.C. Metropolitan Area will be considered a Visiting Production.

- A revival or remounting of a Visiting Production is not eligible for awards recognition if the same work is staged less than 10 years after the closing of the previous presentation of the production, at the same or another theatre.

THEATRE FOR YOUNG AUDIENCES

Outstanding Production, Theatre for Young Audiences

- *A production is eligible for this award if it is intended for audiences age 12 and under. An Eligible Theatre's artistic leadership is solely responsible for deciding if a production should be considered in this category, in which case the production is not eligible for consideration in any Outstanding Play or Musical Category.*
- *Theatre for Young Audiences nominees and recipients are determined by the combined scores of HELEN play and musical judges or HAYES play and musical judges, depending upon how the production is identified.*

CO-PRODUCTIONS

- A production created by two or more Eligible Theatres, performed in one or more locations in the Washington, D.C. Metropolitan Area, will be considered a Co-Production and judged as one production, with awards recognition for all the Eligible Theatres involved.
- A production created by an Eligible Theatre with a theatre outside the Washington, D.C. Metropolitan Area will be considered eligible, subject to all other applicable criteria, whether or not its first performance takes place within or outside the Metropolitan Area.

- When two companies in the Washington, D.C. Metropolitan Area co-produce, but only one of the companies is an Eligible Theatre, the joint production must still meet the 16-performance and single-location requirements, although either company's performance location will be acceptable. But only the Eligible Theatre may be a Helen Hayes Awards recipient.
- All participants must set production dates before the first production goes into rehearsal; playbills and marketing materials at each theatre must credit all the productions.
- Productions meeting the above criteria are eligible for consideration in all resident award categories including Original New Play or Musical or Original New Play or Musical Adaptation.

REVIVALS AND RE-MOUNTINGS

A revival or remounting is a production restaged by the theatre company that produced it within the previous 10 years.

An Eligible Theatre's artistic leadership is responsible for verifying that a revival or remounted production may qualify for awards recognition:

- A revival or remounting is eligible for awards recognition if the same work is staged more than 10 years after the closing of the previous production, at the same theatre and by the same company.
- A revival or remounting is also eligible for awards if the production is led by a different creative team; at least 50 percent of the production elements are new; and at least 50 percent of the cast is new.
- If the text of the revival or remounting is substantially different from that of the original production, the show may also qualify for awards recognition.

WORLD PREMIERES (RESIDENT PRODUCTIONS)

The Charles MacArthur Award for Outstanding Original New Play or Musical
Outstanding Original Play or Musical Adaptation

An Original New Play or Musical is one born entirely from the playwright's imagination--did not exist until the dramatist imagined it--. This original new work is being staged for the first time anywhere, in any language, and the Eligible Theatre and the playwright have a contractual arrangement customary for such a presentation.

An Original New Play or Musical Adaptation is inspired by, based on or derived from pre-existing published material, such as a novel or short story, a film, musical, ballet, opera or operetta, a poem, children's story, or an established artist's body of work. Again, the adaptation is being presented for the first time anywhere, in any language, and the Eligible Theatre and the playwright have a contract that is customary for such a presentation.

- A musical revue that is derived from previously existing music or song catalogues but is being given an original presentation may be considered for the **Outstanding Original New Play or Musical Adaptation** award. However, if the title of the play or musical refers to another play or musical on which the production is based, the current production cannot be considered for an award in the Original New Play or Musical category.
- If a play or musical has been presented previously, it may still qualify in the Outstanding Play or Musical Adaptation category or the Outstanding Original Play or Musical Adaptation category, provided that earlier productions were developmental or part of a festival of plays-in-process, with minimal production elements; that productions had fewer than 10 performances before 99 persons or less; and that producers did not solicit media reviews.
- If the phrase “World Premiere” was used in conjunction with a prior production in any of its playbills or marketing materials, the work cannot be considered in the New Play categories.
- A collection of plays or musicals ticketed as a single production will usually be judged as a single production.

ROLLING WORLD PREMIERES

Rolling world premieres occur when a new work is developed with multiple creative teams in different communities and the productions open within a span of 12 months.

For an Eligible Theatre’s production to qualify as a Rolling World Premiere in the categories of Outstanding Original New Play or Musical, or Outstanding Original New Play or Musical Adaptation, it must meet the following criteria:

- Two or more theatres must participate in the partnership; all participants must set production dates before the first production goes into rehearsal; playbills and marketing materials at each theatre must credit all the productions; the playwright must participate in the Washington theatre’s production process.
- Productions meeting the above criteria are eligible for consideration in all resident award categories including Original New Play or Musical or Original New Play or Musical Adaptation.

THE JOHN ANIELLO AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING EMERGING THEATER COMPANY

The award is named for the late John Laurentzen Aniello Jr., who supported numerous Washington cultural institutions and served as a judge for the Helen Hayes Awards. The award is given at the discretion of the Emerging Theatre Committee of the Advisory Committee, to recognize excellence in promising new theatre companies following their first years of operation and before they become eligible to participate fully in the Helen Hayes Awards process.

HELEN HAYES RECOMMENDED

To help promote a production while it is still running, it may receive the designation of Helen Hayes Recommended (HHR), based on voting on the production ballot. The objective is to give theatres another tool to attract audience members.

- On the ballot, the judge will check an additional box for HHR:
 - YES – I would recommend this production
 - NO – I would not recommend this production

- HHR will be determined by an affirmative vote of at least 60% of the ballots cast. Judges are scheduled early in a production's run in order for this designation to be useful to the theatre in their promotions.

- Once HHR is determined either way, theatreWashington will notify the theatre and provide HHR graphics for use, as well as notate this designation on theatrewashington.org.

- Even if the HHR designation is not given, any individual artist associated with that production or the production itself, may still receive a nomination and/or award. HHR voting and production balloting are separate.

BECOMING AN ELIGIBLE THEATRE

To be considered for participation in the Helen Hayes Awards, a professional theatre company may be a not-for-profit institution or a commercial enterprise; community theatres and theatre programs in academic institutions are not eligible. A potential Eligible Theatre must submit a New Theatre Application to theatreWashington, be reviewed for two years as an Emerging Theatre and fulfill eligibility criteria.

Eligibility Criteria

- The production must be staged within the Washington, D.C. Metropolitan area, defined as the District of Columbia; Montgomery and Prince Georges Counties in Maryland; Arlington and Fairfax Counties in Virginia; City of Alexandria, VA; City of Fairfax, VA; City of Falls Church, VA; the Route 29 corridor from Washington, D.C. through Columbia, MD; and the Route 50 corridor from Washington, D.C. through Annapolis, MD.
- The theatre or producer must financially compensate all artists for their work on the production. By participating in the Helen Hayes Awards process, each theatre or producer affirms that information about artist compensation is complete.
- The theatre or producer must have acquired the legal right(s) to present the production. By participating in the Helen Hayes Awards process, each theatre or producer affirms that information about performance rights is accurate and complete.
- The production must have at least 16 performances at a single location for paying audiences. Half of these performances must take place on weekdays between 10 AM and 9 PM or on weekends between 10 AM and 11 PM. If a production is originally scheduled to play fewer than 16 performances, but the number is increased to 16 or more, the production may be eligible for awards consideration. But in this case, the additional performances must occur for at least 14 days beyond the date on which theatreWashington is notified and there must be at least 8 performances during this extension. If a theatre is forced to cancel performances due to unpreventable circumstances and will not give the requisite 16, it must notify theatreWashington. The theatre may then ask to maintain the production's eligibility if a quota of the judges have already seen a performance. Additionally, if a theatre is forced to cancel performances due to unpreventable circumstances that hinder judge attendance, and the theatre has an available recording of the production, judges may view that recording in order to submit scores so that the production garners the minimal requirement of at least five ballots to remain eligible.

EMERGING THEATRES

An Emerging Theatre is one that has not previously participated in the Helen Hayes Awards process.

To participate as an Emerging Theatre, an organization must submit the New Theatre Application, which will be reviewed by the Emerging Theatre Committee of theatreWashington's Advisory Committee. If approved, the Emerging Theatre automatically becomes an Eligible Theatre.

- During each of the two years following its initial successful application, an Emerging Theatre will be eligible for the discretionary John Aniello Award for Outstanding Emerging Theatre Company, provided that the company presents at least 9 performances of at least one eligible production and meets all other Eligible Theatre requirements.
- Beginning with the third year after a successful application, an Emerging Theatre will be eligible for full Helen Hayes Awards consideration, subject to annual confirmation that it meets the general eligibility requirements.
- If a theatre fails to achieve awards eligibility during its two-year review period, that theatre may be given an additional consecutive year to acquire eligibility. But during this third year, the theatre will not be eligible for the Aniello Award or reviewed for any other purpose. If the theatre fails to achieve eligibility during the third year, it may begin the two-year review process again, but it will no longer be eligible for the Aniello Award.
- An Emerging Theatre will provide 2 tickets for each of at least 5 members of the Emerging Theatre Committee of the Advisory Committee for its eligible productions.
- Following completion of the two-year eligibility period, the theatre will complete a short questionnaire providing information about the company to inform the Emerging Theatre Committee's review process.
- The Emerging Theatre Committee will review submitted questionnaires and productions for all eligible theatres to determine nominees for the John Aniello Award to be announced with the Helen Hayes Award nominations.

MAINTAINING ELIGIBILITY

The benefits of maintaining eligibility for the Helen Hayes Awards include being part of a nationally recognized theatre community.

- To retain eligibility, a theatre must present at least one eligible production during each of two consecutive calendar years, and theatreWashington will advise the company if it risks losing eligibility status. In that case, the company will still be listed as an Eligible Theatre for an additional year, but its productions will not be considered for awards. A theatre may re-acquire eligible status during this third year by presenting at least one eligible production, and once a theatre re-establishes its eligibility, the following year's productions may again be considered for awards.
- If a theatre lets three years go by without an eligible production, it will be removed from the Eligible Theatre list. However, a theatre may reestablish eligibility by successfully completing the application process for Emerging Theatres, and again go through the two-year verification process governing the John Aniello Award, and during those two years the theatre will not be eligible for the Aniello Award or reviewed for any other purpose.
- If a theatre does not choose to re-establish its eligibility, its status with respect to placement in the theatreWashington roster, and its access to services and promotion on the showSelector, will be determined by the guidelines of the theatreWashington website.

SELECTING JUDGES FOR THE HELEN HAYES AWARDS

Every year, the leadership of each Eligible Theatre has the responsibility for identifying, nominating, reviewing, and selecting awards judges, all of whom serve three-year terms. The leadership of theatreWashington is also responsible for identifying and nominating potential judges and reviews all of the nominees for conflicts of interest or other concerns. The leadership of each eligible theatre casts one ballot to ultimately select the judges that serve on the awards panels. The final vote is confidential.

Each candidate will be invited to submit an application by a specific deadline. theatreWashington may choose to interview some or all of the candidates individually for concerns such as conflict of interest. All the candidates' applications will then be available for review by the leadership of all of the Eligible Theatres being adjudicated.

The leadership of each Eligible Theatre casts one ballot, and may vote only for judges on awards panels which apply to the majority of that theatre's productions (Helen or Hayes). All eligible theatres vote for judges for the New Play Panel.

An independent auditing firm will collect the ballots and tally the votes. Candidates who receive the highest number of votes will be impaneled as follows:

- HELEN Play Panel: 9 judges
- HELEN Musical Panel: 7 judges
- HAYES Play Panel: 9 judges
- HAYES Musical Panel: 7 judges
- NEW PLAY Panel: 7 judges

When the judges have been chosen, theatreWashington will contact each successful candidate, to confirm that she or he will serve and fulfill all the requirements. TheatreWashington will thank the candidates; send the names of judges to the Eligible Theatres; and announce the names on its website and in other media.

If a theatre becomes aware of a conflict of interest after judges have been selected and announced, the theatre's artistic director should promptly notify theatreWashington in writing and explain why the judge in question might be unable to adjudicate fairly. If theatreWashington agrees that there is a conflict of interest, the judge will not be assigned to evaluate that theatre's productions.

COMMUNICATING WITH THEATREWASHINGTON

- Within 30 days of a production or season being announced, but no later than November 30 preceding the Awards year, each Eligible Theatre must post its productions to theatreWashington's website, theatreWashington.org.
- For each production, an Eligible Theatre must complete a Production Page on the website, to identify a production's artist personnel and awards category.
- As early as possible, but no later than the first of the month prior to the month in which a production begins, an Eligible Theatre must provide theatreWashington with the dates and times of at least 5 suggested performances that judges are invited to attend on the HHA Ballot & Judge Scheduling Page on the website. If a theatre has any preferences or limitations regarding ticket distribution, this is the time to let theatreWashington know, and reasonable requests will be honored if at all possible. In addition, if a theatre misses the deadline, a production can still be judged, provided that a minimum of 16 performances will be presented after 21 days from the date when the theatre sends ticket availability to theatreWashington.
- When an Eligible Theatre presents a new play or musical (original or newly adapted), it must complete the New Play Application 10 weeks before the production opens, so that the Adjudication Committee of the Board of Governors can review and approve the application. Within 24 hours of the show's closing, the theatre must submit the final production script for review by the New Play judges to complete their balloting.
- If a theatre does not fulfill the communication requirements outlined above, the production in question will not be eligible for Awards consideration.

PROVIDING TICKETS FOR THE JUDGES

- An Eligible Theatre is expected to provide theatreWashington with two tickets for each judge assigned to a particular eligible production. If a theatre has any preferences or limitations regarding ticket distribution, they should let theatreWashington know when posting dates for judges to attend, and reasonable requests will be honored if at all possible.
- Judges' tickets should be for one or more performances during the early dates of a production's run. Unless it is unavoidable, perhaps because a run is short or judges are unable to attend a performance after a show has opened, judges should not attend a preview.
- Once a judge is scheduled to see a performance, per an agreement between theatreWashington and the Eligible Theatre, neither organization may unilaterally change that agreement.

THE ADJUDICATION PROCESS

- Each eligible production will be identified as either a *Resident Production* (A production that, as of its opening performance, has been developed, produced, and contracted for a specific Washington, D.C. Metropolitan Area theatre, including Rolling World Premieres and CoProductions as defined in the Policies & Procedures) OR a *Visiting Production* (A production that, as of its opening performance, has been developed, produced, and contracted specifically for one or more theatres outside of the Washington, D.C. Metropolitan Area, prior to or following its Washington, D.C. Metropolitan Area engagement). A production for which the lead producer (as defined by the percentage of production costs funded) is a commercial entity or for which a future commercial production is scheduled and/or has been announced publicly prior to its opening performance in the Washington, D.C. Metropolitan Area will be considered a *Visiting Production*.
- Each Play or Musical (Original or Adaptation), shall be attended both by NEW PLAY judges and by HELEN or HAYES (whichever is applicable) judges. HELEN or HAYES judges will adjudicate all production and acting elements. NEW PLAY judges will adjudicate only the script and score; scripts are due from the theatre within 24 hours of the production's closing to then be sent to the NEW PLAY judges to complete their balloting (for productions with little to no dialogue, the theatre and the playwright will be encouraged to include whatever language would be useful to a judge to evaluate their submitted script since it will likely be more of descriptive outline of the work rather a traditional dialogue script).
- For each award category, each judge will score each artist or the production itself, as applicable, on a scale of 0 – 10. All judges are specifically instructed that their scoring shall not be made in comparison to any other production or individual piece of work.
- In order for a production to be judged fairly, judges file ballots having seen the same cast and the same script as their colleagues. Theatres should notify theatreWashington in advance of any cast changes or extensive script changes.
- If an actor is replaced for a performance, or in the production, after the opening, and the judges are unable to view the original actor in a role, that role will be eliminated from awards consideration. The judges will, however, continue to evaluate other awards categories, including Ensemble.
- If unpreventable circumstances make it impossible for artistic elements to be fully executed during a performance, the Eligible Theatre should notify theatreWashington, which will make its best effort to insure that a quorum of ballots (five) necessary for adjudication of a fully realized performance can be gathered. However, if a quorum cannot be achieved due to performance interruption, the show or artistic element will be ineligible for awards consideration. Addendum: In 2020, in that the coronavirus crisis caused theatres to cut short some productions, the organization's statistician recommends allowing productions with only four ballots to remain eligible and be included in the 2020 tabulations citing that the differential between each

representing 25% of the score (for 4 ballots) vs 20% (for 5 ballots) is minimal and consistency in scoring can be maintained.

- theatreWashington will retain an independent auditing firm to (a) collect, tabulate, and analyze all judge scores to determine the statistically appropriate Awards nominees and recipients in all categories (including “second look” ballots, described below) and (b) strictly maintain the confidentiality of all ballot information.
- The scores from all judges on each of the five panels will determine the nominees in each category; the nominees shall be the five artists or productions receiving the highest total scores in each respective category, while the nominees in the Outstanding Performer categories (excluding Visiting Performer) shall be the ten performers receiving the highest total scores in each respective category. In the event of any tie among the highest total scores in any category, a tie-breaking system may be applied.
- Following the public announcement of the Awards nominees, the judges on each of the five panels will convene for a “second look” at that panel’s respective nominees. During each panel’s “second look” session, it shall discuss the merits of each nominee’s work and each judge shall then confidentially rank (from one to five) each nominee in each category in order of personal assessment of outstanding merit. Judges will rank only the work they attended. The artist (or production) with the highest point total in a category shall receive the Helen Hayes Award, with two recipients with the highest point totals in the Outstanding Performer categories (excluding Visiting Performer) receiving the Helen Hayes Award. In the event of a tie among the highest total scores in any category, a tie-breaking system may be applied.

The policies and procedures governing The Helen Hayes Awards are annually updated and approved by the Board of Directors of theatreWashington, based on recommendations submitted by the Advisory Committee.

For more about the responsibilities of the Helen Hayes Awards judges, please read the Guide for Judges, below.

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