

2015 Equity Election Results

Kate Shindle elected President of the union; all other officers reelected and 16 elected to Council

Kate Shindle led the slate of officers elected to three-year terms in Equity's 2015 national election. In addition, 16 members — 11 from the Eastern Region, 2 from the Central Region and 3 from the Western Region — have been elected to Council.

Ballots were tabulated on May 21, 2015. There were 6,182 total valid ballots cast, of which 3,397 were cast electronically.

Following are the results:

OFFICERS

President

Kate Shindle
Not elected: Nick Wyman, Larry Cahn

Western Regional Vice President

Doug Carfrae
Not elected: Donal Thoms-Cappello

The following candidates were nominated with no opposition and, pursuant to Rule VI(E)6 of the Nominations and Election Policy, they have been deemed elected.

1st Vice President

Paige Price
Rebecca Kim Jordan

2nd Vice President

Ira Mont

3rd Vice President

Sandra Karas

Secretary/Treasurer

Melissa Robinette

Eastern Regional Vice President

Dev Kennedy

Central Regional Vice President

Dana Ivey

Principal

Tonya Pinkins

Maureen Moore

Kate O'Phalen

Judy Rice

Kristine Nevins

Joanne Borts

Sid Solomon

Not elected: Jeff Blumenkrantz, Scott Evans, Christopher Gurr, Scott McGowan, Buzz Roddy, Karen D. Howell, Todd Buonopane, Matt DeAngelis, Joe Zaloom, Craig A. Meyer, Wally Dunn, Tom Helmer, John Christopher Jones, Stas' Kmiec'

Stage Manager

Ruth E. Kramer

Amber White

Not elected:

Paige Price

Zittel, Eric H. Mayer

The following candidate was nominated with no opposition and, pursuant to Rule VI(E)6 of the Nominations and Election Policy, has been deemed elected.

Chorus

Bill Bateman

CENTRAL REGION

The following candidates were nominated with no opposition and, pursuant to Rule VI(E)6 of the Nominations and Election Policy, they have been deemed elected.

Chorus

Ariane Dolan

Stage Manager

Malcolm D. Ewen

WESTERN REGION

The following candidates were nominated with no opposition and, pursuant to Rule VI(E)6 of the Nominations and Election Policy, they have been deemed elected.

Chorus

Mary-Pat Green

Jeff Marlow

Barbara N. Roberts

Not elected: Cynthia Marty, Jeffrey Christopher Todd, John Herzog, Mary Gutzi, Edgar Landa, Jeffrey B. Landman, Kyle Nudo

Theater Breaking Through Barriers Continues to Provide Work for Performers With Disabilities

Nicholas Viselli is the new Artistic Director

By Helaine Feldman

“The stage is the way to change the world,” said Ike Schambelan, founder and artistic director of Theater Breaking Through Barriers (formerly Theater By the Blind) until his death on February 3, 2015. Nicholas Viselli, who joined the company in 1997 and has been named to continue Schambelan's work, agrees with the late artistic director's sentiment. “Ike Schambelan's contributions to our profession, the disabled community and the world-at-large have been profound,” he says.

Viselli began his tenure as artistic director with the company's production of *The Unexpected Guest*, an Agatha Christie mystery, with a cast of nine, including two actors who are legally blind, two actors who are amputees, one actor who uses a wheelchair because of multiple sclerosis, one who has a spine injury that has affected his gait and one performer who has cerebral palsy.

“It is our ultimate goal to alter the perceptions of disability, which have been hard-wired into us for centuries,” said Viselli. “In our world, one immediately



The cast of Agatha Christie's *The Unexpected Guest*, including (L to R) Pamela Sabaugh, Scott Barton, Melanie Boland, Ann Marie Morelli, Lawrence Merritt and David Rosar Stearns.

associates disability with pity, fear, helplessness and dependence. This perception is incorrect because in the same breath we admire and idolize those in society who are strong, resilient and adaptable, which pretty much describes every disabled person I know. As artists, we are in the best possible position to prove this point because art is all about adapting, bending perceptions and effecting intellectual and, more significantly, emotional change. Art comes from a different place. It transcends physical limitations. In our profession, disability is a characteristic which only matters as much as we want it to matter.”

Schambelan was not

disabled, nor is Viselli, although his wife, Ann Marie Morelli, also a company member, is a wheelchair-user. The company is not only a showcase for Performers with Disabilities, it is a professional theater company that includes able-bodied actors as well. “Our performers are professional actors,” stressed Viselli. TBTB's mission statement says it is “dedicated to advancing actors and writers with disabilities and changing the image of people with disabilities from dependence to independence.”

It accomplishes this goal by hiring and including writers and Equity actors with disabilities to work in Off-

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Production Contract Negotiations Begin In July

The Production Contract negotiations will begin in July. The current contract is set to expire September 27, 2015. Final preparations for the negotiations

will take place throughout June.

Covering Broadway, national and tiered tours, the Production Contract is the union's premier contract. In the 2013-2014 season, the contract generated

64,708 workweeks and is the highest earnings generator for Equity members.

Equity's Negotiating team will be co-chaired by First Vice President Paige Price and Third

Vice President Ira Mont and includes members who have worked under the Production Contract. Executive Director Mary McColl will be the chief negotiator.

#EquityWorks: Theater News & Notes

Anaheim, CA - Equity has renewed its **Letter of Agreement with 3D Theatricals** with salary increases.

Boulder, CO - Equity has renewed its **Letter of Agreement with Colorado Shakespeare Festival** with salary increases.

Carmel, IN - **Actors Theatre of Indiana** has renewed its **SPT Rider** for

another two years, increasing its **Equity member contracts** and **workweeks** by 24, over the next two seasons.

Fremont, CA - **Made Up Theatre**, specializing in sketch and improvisational comedy in the Bay Area, is producing its first professional, scripted production on an **MBAT Agreement**.
Minneapolis, MN -

TigerLion Arts, a transitional **SPT** producer, has worked with Equity to mount a small regional tour to local arboretums and outdoor venues with its original play, *Nature*. The production will employ five Equity members resulting in nearly 100 workweeks for members.

New York, NY - Founded by David Mamet and William H. Macy, **Atlantic Theater**

Company marks its **30th anniversary season** Off-Broadway this year.

New York, NY - **Signature**

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Area Liaison Hotline system

Call 877-AEA-1913

Equity has a national toll-free hotline system for members who live in area liaison and office cities. The number is 877-AEA-1913 (honoring the year of Equity's founding). Each Area Liaison city has its own extension, where members can access news and information in their region.

(1) Dial 877-AEA-1913

(2) Dial your city extension:

811 Atlanta
812 Austin/San Antonio
813 Boston
814 Buffalo/Rochester
815 Chicago
816 Cincinnati/Louisville
817 Cleveland
818 Dallas/Fort Worth
819 Denver
820 Detroit
821 Florida – Central
822 Florida – South
823 Houston
824 Kansas City
825 Las Vegas
826 Los Angeles
827 Milwaukee/Madison
828 Minneapolis/St Paul
829 Nashville
830 New Orleans
831 New York
832 Philadelphia
833 Phoenix/Tucson
834 Pittsburgh
835 San Diego
836 San Francisco
837 Seattle
838 St. Louis
839 Washington DC/Baltimore

Barriers

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Broadway productions, presenting plays dealing with disability issues, and producing a Ten-Minute Play Festival while inviting well-known playwrights to participate. Or, in short, by presenting and creating diverse stories and telling them with an authentic voice. Characters who are blind are played by actors who are blind; characters who use wheelchairs are played by performers who use wheelchairs. In 2011, several of the festival's plays traveled to Croatia, thus bringing TBTB's work to an international audience. In 2012, to mark the 22nd Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act, TBTB was invited to perform at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C.

"I've been with TBTB since 1997, back when it was Theater By the Blind," says Equity member Pamela Sabaugh. "Though I am legally blind, I never considered myself a 'blind' actor, but rather an actor, first and foremost. TBTB, I felt, shared in this belief. Though our mission certainly is to advance the work of performers with disabilities — and changing perceptions — it has always been an integrated company of talented and diverse artists who are defined by the artistry they share, rather than whether or not they happen to have a disability. That's not to say we haven't had the chance to incorporate disability into the overall aesthetic of a production, or create work that's been informed and enhanced by the disabled experience. But what has been most positive for me, is having had the chance to work, time and time again, on some extraordinary material, with gifted professionals."

"I am, I think, the only company member who has actually become disabled over my time with TBTB," says Ann Marie Morelli. "I have MS and am now a wheelchair-user. It was in 2008 that we changed the name to Theater Breaking Through Barriers and made it

known that we served performers of all disabilities. We are still an integrated company of performers with and without disabilities, and I believe that this is the only way to bring performers with disabilities to the mainstream. We show that our artists are able to work alongside each other and even make the audience forget that there is any 'disability' being represented because we have a great respect and comfort with each other as performers, not as 'disabled' performers. We are children, brothers, sisters, husbands, wives, aunts, uncles, parents, and as a disabled performer, I believe that I can bring a different perspective to theater because of my daily challenges in life. Art does not come from my legs; it doesn't come from someone's eyes or ears or any tangible physical attribute that we consider normal. It is much deeper. It is



Nicholas Viselli

human."

Equity member Anita D. Hollander says that Theater Breaking Through Barriers has given her the great pleasure of doing several shows and touring in Croatia and Japan. Hollander also serves as National Chair of the SAG/AFTRA National PWD Committee, Co-Chair of the NY Local SAG/AFTRA PWD Committee and on the AEA/Broadway League Coalition for more diversity and inclusion in Broadway and regional theaters. "It is in the audition," she said, "where we can truly raise consciousness and give people ideas that will lead to our getting more work."

"Broadway is still a stubborn nut to crack in the performer department although audience accessibility has improved and more people with disabilities are attending shows," she added. "Regional theaters have done much better. Mixed Blood in Minneapolis; Deaf West in L.A.; Phamaly Theatre Company in Denver; Goodman Theatre in Chicago; Urban Improv in Boston; Surflight and Ocean Professional Theatre in New Jersey; and Barrow Street, Nicu's Spoon and TBTB in New York have all cast PWDs. Over my 30-year career, I have seen the progress that can be made by never giving up. It's an exhausting pursuit, but worth it in the end."

Viselli agrees that the mission to raise awareness for

Congratulations to Equity's 2015 Tony Award-Nominated Members

Best Book of a Musical & Best Original Score

Lisa Kron, *Fun Home*

Best Choreography

Joshua Bergasse, *On the Town*

Best Original Score

Sting, *The Last Ship*

Best Performance by an Actor in a Leading Role in a Play

Steven D. Boyer, *Hand to God*
Bradley Cooper, *The Elephant Man*
Ben Miles, *Wolf Hall: Parts One & Two*
Bill Nighy, *Skylight*
Alex Sharp, *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*

Best Performance by an Actress in a Leading Role in a Play

Geneva Carr, *Hand to God*
Helen Mirren, *The Audience*
Elisabeth Moss, *The Heidi Chronicles*
Carey Mulligan, *Skylight*
Ruth Wilson, *Constellations*

Best Performance by an Actor in a Leading Role in a Musical

Michael Cerveris, *Fun Home*
Robert Fairchild, *An American in Paris*
Brian D'Arcy James, *Something Rotten!*
Ken Watanabe, *The King and I*
Tony D. Yazbeck, *On the Town*

Best Performance by an Actress in a Leading Role in a Musical

Kristin Chenoweth, *On the Twentieth Century*
Leanne Cope, *An American in Paris*
Beth A. Malone, *Fun Home*
Kelli O'Hara, *The King and I*
Chita Rivera, *The Visit*

Best Performance by an Actor in a Featured Role in a Play

Matthew Beard, *Skylight*
K. Todd Freeman, *Airline Highway*
Richard McCabe, *The Audience*
Alessandro Nivola, *The Elephant Man*
Nathaniel Parker, *Wolf Hall: Parts One & Two*
Micah Stock, *It's Only a Play*

Best Performance by an Actress in a Featured Role in a Play

Annaleigh Ashford, *You Can't Take It With You*
Patricia D. Clarkson, *The Elephant Man*
Lydia Leonard, *Wolf Hall: Parts One & Two*
Sarah Stiles, *Hand to God*
Julie White, *Airline Highway*

Best Performance by an Actor in a Featured Role in a Musical

Christian Borle, *Something Rotten!*
Andy Karl, *On the Twentieth Century*
Brad Oscar, *Something Rotten!*
Brandon Uranowitz, *An American in Paris*
Max Von Essen, *An American in Paris*

Best Performance by an Actress in a Featured Role in a Musical

Victoria Clark, *Gigi*
Judy Kuhn, *Fun Home*
Sydney Lucas, *Fun Home*
Ruthie Ann Miles, *The King and I*
Emily Skeggs, *Fun Home*

Special Tony Award for Lifetime Achievement in the Theatre

Tommy Tune

Special Tony Award

John Cameron Mitchell

performers with disabilities is a difficult one, but he believes that we have never been in a better position to effect positive change than we are right now.

"I have watched TBTB grow into a solid, highly respected Off-Broadway company, the only one of its kind, dedicated to advancing the work of artists with disabilities by presenting first-class art. While theater is truly a collaborative art, our need to invent and pioneer

fresh ways to present our artists — to prove our fundamental point that disability does not diminish the quality of the art or the artist — raises the power of collaboration to a much higher level in our arena. We've proven this time and time again with all of our work. It is now time to forge ahead and continue raising the bar. The table has been set and we all gratefully look forward to what lies ahead."

Attention Los Angeles Members:

The small group meetings about the new internal membership rules and agreements originally announced for June are postponed to the fall. The schedule for the Production Contract negotiations has been pushed up and those negotiations will now begin immediately after the July 4th holiday. Because of this change, the final preparations for the negotiations will now be condensed into the month of June.



EQUITY NEWS

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