

For Immediate Release

Press Contact: Marilyn Langbehn
510.548.3422 x118
510.910.3129 cell
mlangbehn@calshakes.org

**California Shakespeare Theater Artistic Director Jonathan Moscone
Named First-Ever Recipient of Zelda Fichandler Award
by Stage Directors and Choreographers Foundation**

**Bay Area arts leader honored for “transforming the regional arts landscape
through his singular creativity and artistry”**

Berkeley, CA – California Shakespeare Theater Artistic Director **Jonathan Moscone** has been named the inaugural recipient of the **Zelda Fichandler Award** by the Stage Directors and Choreographers Foundation (SDCF), the not-for-profit foundation of Stage Directors and Choreographers Society (SDC). The award, which carries with it a \$5,000 cash prize, was presented on Sunday, December 6 at SDC’s 50th anniversary west coast celebration by Gordon Davidson, founding artistic director of Los Angeles’s Center Theatre Group,

“I am a little stunned and very honored to get this award. I am grateful to SDC for recognizing the work of those of us in the regional theater, and I hope to do well by this award, and to live up to ideals of Zelda Fichandler as I continue my work at California Shakespeare Theater,” said Mr. Moscone.

Named after Zelda Fichandler, one of the founders of the American regional theater movement, the Award recognizes an outstanding director or choreographer who is transforming the regional arts landscape through his singular creativity and artistry in theater. It heralds both accomplishment to date and promise for the future, and artistic vision and deep investment in a region outside of New York. It was established as part of SDC’s current 50th anniversary season is SDCF’s first award devoted to regional theater, where the majority of professional theater directors and choreographers in the United States now work.

Jonathan Moscone will soon begin his tenth season as Artistic Director of California Shakespeare Theater where his work has earned him Bay Area Critics Circle and Dean Goodman Choice Awards for Best Direction and Production. His productions of *Man and Superman*, *The Life and Adventures of Nicholas Nickleby*, *Ghosts* (Berkeley Rep), *Twelfth Night*, and *The Seagull* have all been named among the ten best productions by the *San Francisco Chronicle* and other area newspapers. He recently directed *Eurydice* at Milwaukee Rep and the world premiere of Richard Nelson’s *How Shakespeare Won the West* for Huntington Theatre; other regional credits include Berkeley Repertory Theatre, Intiman Theatre, San Jose Repertory Theater, Dallas Theatre Center, Goodspeed Musicals, Triangle Opera, Portland Stage Company, and Magic Theatre. Mr. Moscone is an adjunct faculty member at A.C.T.’s MFA program, the recipient of a Stanford Graduate School of Business Center for Social Innovation Fellowship, and currently serves on the board of LoveLife Foundation and on the advisory board of Redwood High School, both in Oakland. He has also served as a grant review panelist for the Massachusetts Cultural Council, Theater Communications Group, and the National Endowment for the Arts.

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The Award will serve as a complement to the “Mr. Abbott” Award, presented annually in New York to recognize lifetime achievement, and the Joe A. Callaway Award, given for excellence in direction and choreography in non-Broadway productions in New York. The three awards are the only awards given to theater directors and choreographers by their peers.

The Award will be given regionally on a rotating basis. This year it was awarded to a director or choreographer who has made and who continues to make a significant contribution to theater in the Western region (which comprises Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Texas, Utah, Washington, Wyoming). In subsequent years the Award will honor achievement in three other designated regions: Central, Eastern, and Southern.

Zelda Fichandler dedicated her early career to the establishment of America’s regional theater movement. In 1950 she founded Washington D.C.’s Arena Stage and in 1968 she produced *The Great White Hope*, which became the first production to transfer from a regional theater to Broadway, winning the Tony and the Pulitzer Prize, and launching the careers of James Earl Jones and Jane Alexander. Her production of *Inherit the Wind* toured Soviet St. Petersburg and Moscow and Arena Stage was the first American theater company sponsored by the State Department to do so. When Ms. Fichandler retired as producing artistic director of Arena Stage in 1990, she had achieved the longest tenure of any non-commercial producer in the annals of the American theater. Ms. Fichandler is Chair Emeritus of New York University’s acclaimed graduate acting program. She has received the George Abbott Award, The Acting Company’s John Houseman Award, the Margo Jones Award, and the National Medal of Arts, and in 1999 she became the first artistic leader outside of New York to be inducted into the Theatre Hall of Fame.

Founded in 1965, Stage Directors and Choreographers Foundation exists to foster, promote and develop the creativity and craft of stage directors and choreographers. SDCF’s goals are to provide opportunities to practice the crafts of directing and choreography; to gather and disseminate craft and career information; to promote the profession to emerging talent; to provide opportunities for exchange of knowledge among directors and choreographers; and to increase the awareness of the value of directors’ and choreographers’ work.

Stage Directors and Choreographers Society is a national theatrical labor union whose mission is to foster a national community of professional stage Directors and Choreographers by protecting the rights, health and livelihoods of all of its members; to facilitate the exchange of ideas, information and opportunities, while educating the current and future generations about the role of Directors and Choreographers and providing effective administration, negotiations and contractual support.

Photos are available upon request.

ABOUT CAL SHAKES

Founded in 1974, California Shakespeare Theater is a fully professional, critically acclaimed theater known for its innovative productions of the plays of William Shakespeare and other reimagined classics. Under the leadership of Artistic Director Jonathan Moscone and Managing Director Susie Falk, Cal Shakes is committed to being a leading community citizen by nourishing the imaginations of audiences, artists, and learners of all ages. Cal Shakes makes boldly imagined and deeply entertaining interpretations of Shakespeare and the classics; provides in-depth, far-reaching artistic learning programs for learners of all ages and circumstances; and brings disparate communities together around the creation of new American plays that reflect the cultural diversity of the Bay Area.

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