

2014 OUTSTANDING ARTS ORGANIZATION AWARD:

Playwrights Theatre/ John Pietrowski

This remarkable arts organization, led by Artistic Director John Pietrowski, has had a profound impact fostering theatre, playwriting and creative writing throughout New Jersey and beyond. Cited multiple times by the New Jersey State Council on the Arts for excellence and recipient of a Governor's Award for outstanding service to the arts and arts education, Playwrights Theatre fulfills its mission through two programs, the New Play Development Program and Educational Programming (including the New Jersey Writers Project, Creative Arts Academy, New Jersey Young Playwrights Contest and Festival; and Poetry Out Loud).

A testament to Playwrights' success as a new play development theatre is the large number of new plays which have undergone its development process and then have moved on to production at local, regional, radio and Off-Broadway stages, such as Seth Rozin's *Two Jews Walk Into a War*, Rufus Caleb's *The Rehearsal* (partially funded by the NEA) and Dolores Whiskeyman's *Radium Girls* (partially funded by the NEA and voted the "Best New Play in New Jersey" by *The Star-Ledger*), among many others. Additionally, the Playwrights Theatre stage has featured actors such as Allison Janney, David Strathairn, and Julie Harris, among others.

Playwrights' educational programs have become a national model for comprehensive all-inclusive creative writing curricula. Its New Jersey Writers Project sponsors creative writing residencies in poetry, prose, playwriting, theatre, visual arts, professional development workshops and assemblies of student-written work and reaches 15,000 students a year throughout New Jersey,.

Artistic Director John Pietrowski has been at Playwrights Theatre since its inception twenty-five years ago, and in his current position as Artistic Director for the past twenty years. An experienced and professional actor and director with credits throughout New Jersey, New York and on NPR, Pietrowski is also a playwright, most recently authoring *Dura Mater* which was workshopped at Johns Hopkins. Additionally, John was the Program Coordinator of the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation Theatre Program for Teachers and Playwrights from 1988-94 and he teaches theatre history and stage management at Fairleigh Dickinson University. A graduate of Northwestern University's Performance Studies Department, he also holds a Masters of Public Administration in non-profit management (Seton Hall University), where his master's thesis became the basis for New Jersey's Arts Education Census Project. Additionally, he serves as Secretary of the New Jersey Theatre Alliance, Treasurer of the Madison Arts and Culture Alliance and the Treasurer of the National New Play Network.

Therefore, for its quarter century of outstanding work nurturing playwriting and playwrights, its education programming which has become a national model and for John Pietrowski's exceptional leadership as Artistic Director, actor, director, mentor and teacher, it is our pleasure to present Playwrights Theatre and John Pietrowski with Morris Arts' 2014 Outstanding Arts Organization Award.

We invite John Pietrowski of Playwrights Theatre to receive the award.

March 27, 2014