



Review: META awards

## Description

# Awards are a show unto themselves

By Byron Toben

The Montreal English Theatre Awards (META) hosted their third annual Oscar-like gala on October 26 at the magnificent Rialto theatre. About 300 attendees jammed the floor for the boisterous event. Here is the list of nominees and winners (in bold). The review follows.

## And the winner is...

### Outstanding Lead Performance – Actor

**Eloi Archambaudoin — Hosanna (Tableau D’Hôte Theatre)**

Damien Atkins — We Are Not Alone (The Segal Centre for Performing Arts & Crow’s Theatre)

Greg Ellwand — Travesties (The Segal Centre for Performing Arts)

Matt Miwa — The Tashme Project: The Living Archives (Tashme Productions)

### Outstanding Lead Performance – Actress

**Lucinda Davis — random (Black Theatre Workshop & Imago Theatre)**

Virgilia Griffith — Gas Girls (Black Theatre Workshop)

Julie Tamiko Manning — The Tashme Project: The Living Archives (Tashme Productions)

Brigitte Robinson — The Graduate (The Segal Centre for Performing Arts)

### Outstanding Supporting Performance – Actor

Julian Bailey — The Glass Menagerie (Hudson Village Theatre)



Adam Capriolo — Twelfth Night (Repercussion Theatre)  
**Davide Chiazzese — Hosanna (Tableau D'Hôte Theatre)**  
Chimwemwe Miller — Gas Girls (Black Theatre Workshop)  
Paul Rainville — Twelfth Night (Repercussion Theatre)

## Outstanding Supporting Performance – Actress

Award sponsored by Canadian Actors' Equity Association

Lisa Horner — Belles Soeurs: The Musical (produced by Copa de Oro Productions, presented by The Segal Centre for Performing Arts)  
Chala Hunter — Travesties (The Segal Centre for Performing Arts)  
Gitanjali Jain — Twelfth Night (Repercussion Theatre)  
Cat Lemieux – Triplex Nervosa (Centaur Theatre Company)  
**Jennifer Roberts — Chloe's Choice The True But Not Entirely Reasonable Holiday Fable of Chloe Rebecca Ramadan, Aged 9 4/5 (Geordie Productions)**  
Jane Wheeler – The Graduate (The Segal Centre for Performing Arts)

## Outstanding Direction

Micheline Chevrier — random (Black Theatre Workshop & Imago Theatre)  
René Richard Cyr — Belles Soeurs: The Musical (produced by Copa de Oro Productions, presented by The Segal Centre for Performing Arts)  
**Mike Payette — Hosanna (Tableau D'Hôte Theatre)**  
Jacob Tierney — Travesties (The Segal Centre for Performing Arts)  
Matthew Tiffin — The Glass Menagerie (Hudson Village Theatre)

## Outstanding Ensemble

33 Variations – Ian Baird, Sean Curley, Marie-Noelle Dufour, Nir Guzinski, Bryan Libero, Stephanie McKenna, Emma McQueen & Joy Ross-Jones (Brave New Productions)  
Don Quixote de Lac Brome – Davide Chiazzese, Mary Harvey & Mike Hughes (Theatre Lac Brome)  
Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde – Vanessa Carter, Lucas Chartier, Alex Goldrich, James Harrington, Martin Law & Allie Shapiro (Persephone Productions)  
Forever Plaid – Chris Barillaro, Gab Desmond, Michael Daniel Murphy & Jonathan Patterson (Copa de Oro Productions & The Segal Centre for Performing Arts)  
**The Mighty Carlins — Chip Chuipka, Alain Goulem & Mike Hughes (ASM Performing Arts)**

## Outstanding Set Design

Jean Bard — Belles Soeurs: The Musical (produced by Copa de Oro Productions, presented by The Segal Centre for Performing Arts)  
Julie Fox — We Are Not Alone (The Segal Centre for Performing Arts & Crow's Theatre)  
Lara Kaluza — Hosanna (Tableau D'Hôte Theatre)  
James Lavoie — The Tashme Project: The Living Archives (Tashme Productions)  
**Pierre-Étienne Locas — Travesties (The Segal Centre for Performing Arts)**



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## Outstanding Costume Design

### **Louise Bourret — Travesties (The Segal Centre for Performing Arts)**

Méridith Caron — Belles Soeurs: The Musical (produced by Copa de Oro Productions, presented by The Segal Centre for Performing Arts)

Evita Karasek & Michèle Gagné — Twelfth Night (Repercussion Theatre)

Noémi Poulin — Hosanna (Tableau D'Hôte Theatre)

Susana Vera — The Graduate (The Segal Centre for Performing Arts)

## Outstanding Lighting Design

Nicolas Descôteaux — Travesties (The Segal Centre for Performing Arts)

David Perrault Ninacs — The Tashme Project: The Living Archives (Tashme Productions)

### **Kimberly Purtell — We Are Not Alone (The Segal Centre for Performing Arts & Crow's Theatre)**

Martin Sirois — random (Black Theatre Workshop & Imago Theatre)

Peter Vatsis — The Glass Menagerie (Hudson Village Theatre)

## Outstanding Sound Design

### **Peter Cerone — random (Black Theatre Workshop & Imago Theatre)**

Rob Denton — Hosanna (Tableau D'Hôte Theatre)

Gabriella Hook & Harry Standjofski — The Invisible Man / L'homme invisible (Third Way-Troisième Voie & Théâtre de la Manufacture)

Thomas Ryder Payne — We Are Not Alone (The Segal Centre for Performing Arts & Crow's Theatre)

## Outstanding Original Composition

Devon Bate — Corpus (Teesri Duniya Theatre)

### **Matthew Barber & Justin Rutledge — The Graduate (The Segal Centre for Performing Arts)**

Rob Denton — Gas Girls (Black Theatre Workshop)

Gabriella Hook & Harry Standjofski — The Invisible Man / L'homme invisible (Third Way-Troisième Voie & Théâtre de la Manufacture)

Alan Menken — The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz: The Musical (The Segal Centre for Performing Arts)

## Outstanding New Text (Original or Adaptation)

Damien Atkins — We Are Not Alone (The Segal Centre for Performing Arts & Crow's Theatre)

Neil Bartram & Brian Hill — Belles Soeurs: The Musical (produced by Copa de Oro Productions, presented by The Segal Centre for Performing Arts)

### **Julie Tamiko Manning & Matt Miwa — The Tashme Project: The Living Archives (Tashme Productions)**

Marcus Youssef — Chloe's Choice The True But Not Entirely Reasonable Holiday Fable of Chloe Rebecca Ramadan, Aged 9 4/5 (Geordie Productions)

## Outstanding Contribution to Theatre



George Allister & Patrick Andrew Boivin: Video Design — The Tashme Project: The Living Archives (Tashme Productions)

Matthew Barber & Justin Rutledge: Live Music — The Graduate (The Segal Centre for Performing Arts)

Nadine Desrochers: Translation — Billy (The Days of Howling) (Talisman Theatre)

**Zach Fraser: Puppet & Mask Design — The Nisei and the Narnauks (Persephone Productions)**

Gabriella Hook & Harry Standjofski: Live Music — The Invisible Man / L'homme invisible (Third Way-Troisième Voie & Théâtre de la Manufacture)

Noémi Poulin: Video Design — Corpus (Teesri Duniya Theatre)

## Outstanding Emerging Artist

Laurence Gagnon Lefebvre: Set Design — Corpus (Teesri Duniya Theatre)

**Virgilia Griffith: Performance — Gas Girls (Black Theatre Workshop)**

Donnub Jafarzadeh: Performance — Game Changers (Geordie Productions)

Marjolaine Provençal: Set Design — Twelfth Night (Repercussion Theatre)

Jennifer Roberts: Performance — Chloe's Choice The True But Not Entirely Reasonable Holiday Fable of Chloe

Rebecca Ramadan, Aged 9 4/5 (Geordie Productions)

Charlotte Rogers: Performance — Chloe's Choice The True But Not Entirely Reasonable Holiday Fable of Chloe

Rebecca Ramadan, Aged 9 4/5 (Geordie Productions)

## Outstanding Community Production

Disney's Beauty and the Beast — West Island Theatre Association (WISTA)

**Hairspray the Broadway Musical — Côte Saint-Luc Dramatic Society (CSLDS)**

The Mousetrap — Lakeshore Players

Not Now, Darling — Lakeshore Players

The Pirates of Penzance — Lakeshore Light Opera

## Outstanding PACT Production

Belles Soeurs: The Musical — produced by Copa de Oro Productions, presented by The Segal Centre for Performing Arts

random — Black Theatre Workshop & Imago Theatre

**Travesties — The Segal Centre for Performing Arts**

We Are Not Alone — The Segal Centre for Performing Arts & Crow's Theatre

## Outstanding Independent Production

Billy (The Days of Howling) — Talisman Theatre

The Dumb Waiter — Theatre Esperance

**Hosanna — Tableau D'Hôte Theatre**

The Mighty Carlins — ASM Performing Arts

The Tashme Project: The Living Archives — Tashme Productions

In addition to the aforementioned juried awards, the following awards were also presented:



## **Unsung Hero of the Theatre (UHOT)**

**Howard Mendelsohn** — Production Manager, Centaur Theatre Company

## **Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)**

**Geordie Productions** — Artistic Director, Dean P. Fleming

## **Review**

### **In the beginning...**

This review will list some of the highlights below, but first features the background and quantum leap into pizzazz of this glittery event.

In the beginning was MECCA, not the holy city but the acronym for Montreal English Critics Community Awards. It was created in 1998 by the late Myron Galloway and Gaëtan Charlebois, judged only by critics, and sending winning certificates by mail. In 2006 it went live, the year Galloway died at 86. An actor and writer, he had been the theatre critic for the Montréal star (folded in 1979) and then Food and Entertainment reporter for the Suburban.

MECCA held ceremonies at the Sala Rosa and later at Théâtre Ste-Catherine, by which time it was organized and hosted by Mirror theatre critic Neal Boyce and CKUT “upstage” legend Estelle Rosen. Guest M.C. actor Don Anderson often presided.

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Beginning in 2012 and championed by then Quebec Drama Federation director Jane Needles, a movement to have a peer group of judges. actors, technicians, writers, producers was created. Much honoured actor Leni Parker and director Amanda Kellock as well as many others were instrumental in setting this up, just as sports and film have separate awards judged by the player peers or coaches or reporters. MECCA had filled a gap and folded in 2011.



## Highlights of the third annual MECCA

Now, on to the third annual META based on nominees from shows from 31 August 2014 to 1 September 2015.

### Music

As in the first two editions, Nick Cartenter composed novelty and bridge music, and played piano assisted by a great trio: Shawn Campbell (bass), Glenn Roy (trombone) and Brett Watson (drums).

### Hosts

Last year the elegant and the glamorous Holly Gauthier Frankel and suave Marcel Jeannin were the main hosting duo. This year, those duties were taken over, without missing a beat by vivacious singer/dancer Gitanjali Jain and cool U.K. arrival actor James Loye. They wowed the house with an original ditty about the varied joys of Montreal.



Ms Jain was resplendent in a silky red gown. Mr. Loye wore black formal wear with a giant bow tie. Part of their patter had him refusing to dance and vowing to eat his top hat if he succumbed to so doing.

Nine other well known duos announced the nominees and, with Academy award style envelopes, the winners, who traipsed up to the stage to receive their META cylinders (no figurative statues or cups). The first such duo was versatile Danny Brochu and recent Order of Canada recipient Elsa Bolam, founder of Geordie Children's theatre. They received rousing applause as a huge percentage of the pros in the audience got their post school start in that program.

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After the intermission, Ms Jain reappeared in a glittery silver gown while Mr. Loye had somehow become barefooted. This costume change fitted in with a little divertissement wherein Ms Jain displayed her dancing skills and did indeed entice Mr. Loye to dance. One complaint — he not only did not eat his hat but neither he nor any one else mentioned this omission. We will have to check with writers Alexis Diamond and Michael Mackenzie about this deviation from their clever script. The smooth overall direction by Mike Payette moved the show right along so maybe no one else noticed but me.

## The big winners

The big winners when the evening was over (but all the nominees were also winners – as in sports, lots of parity in this league) in terms of number of awards collected were:

Segal Centre — 4 (3 for Travesties and 1 for The Graduate) and Tableau d'hôte — 4 (all for Hosanna )  
Black Theatre Workshop — 2 (for random) as did Geordie (Chloe's Choice and a special new award for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion)

The metas does observe distinctions between professional theatres (PACT), independent productions and community productions. School productions are not considered.

PACT winner — Travesties

Independent — Hosanna

Community — Hairspray

Other special moments:

Howard Mendelssohn, long time production manager at the Centaur, received an "unsung hero of the theatre" nod.

A sad moment interrupting the jollity was a tribute to local theatre community persons who have recently shuffled off this mortal coil, many elderly. The youngest was Stephen Pietrantoni who had founded CETM (Centre of Education and Theatre in Montreal) to develop musical comedy.

Recap on most popular individual awards:

Lead actor — Eloi Archambeaudoin — Hosanna

Lead actress — Lucinda Davis — random

Supporting actor — Davide Chiazzese — Hosanna

Supporting actress — Jennifer Roberts — Chloe's Choice



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Ensemble — Chip Chuipka, Alain Goulem, Mike Hughes — The Mighty Carlins  
Director — Mike Payette — Hosanna  
Emerging artist — Virgilia Griffith — Gas Girls

Hope to see all same time, next year!

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*Byron Toben is the immediate past-president of the Montreal Press Club.*

### **Category**

1. Art | Culture
2. Review

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1. arts / culture
2. Byron Toben
3. theatre

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