

Town Hall's "Angels in America" Wins Best Play Award

THT's Part II 'Perestroika' production opens Feb. 27

Submitted by Linda Drucker



"Angels in America: Millennium Approaches" cast on stage to receive the Outstanding Production of the Year award. Photos Mike Kirwan



Town Hall Theatre cast of "Company" performs at the Jan. 16 Shellie Awards in Walnut Creek.

Town Hall Theatre of Lafayette was honored with a record-breaking seven Shellie Awards, including an award for the Outstanding Production of the Year, for its 2015 production of "Angels in America: Millennium Approaches." The awards were bestowed at a lavish black-tie ceremony Jan. 16 at the Leshler Center For The Arts in Walnut Creek. Patterned after the Tony awards, the Shellies have honored outstanding achievement in the

performing arts for the last 37 years in Contra Costa County, and for the third year in a row, Town Hall Theatre has been selected from among 10 local theatre companies to receive the prestigious Outstanding Produc-

tion of the Year award.

"I'm thrilled that theatre professionals selected Town Hall to receive the highest honor of the night," said the company's board president Lauren Rosi. "These accolades confirm what we already knew: that Town Hall consistently provides our community with a first class artistic experience."

Four of the awards Town Hall won were for its jaw-dropping production of "Angels in America: Millennium Approaches" in February 2015. "Millennium" is the first part of Tony Kushner's epic Pulitzer-winning masterpiece about the unfolding of the AIDS epidemic in America. In addition to the Outstanding Production award, "Angels" won awards for Best Director (Joel Roster), Best Supporting Actor (Dennis Markam), and Best Supporting Actress (Kerri Shawn). The awards for "Angels" come as Town Hall prepares to launch its conclusion of Kushner's saga, "Angels in America: Perestroika," which will open in February at Town Hall.

"For a 'riskier' endeavor, it's incredible to see the play received so warmly," said Artistic Director Joel Roster. "And with 'Perestroika' just around the corner, it's fair to say that we're just getting warmed up."

Town Hall also won two awards for its production of the musical "Company" from October 2014: Best Supporting Actress (Suzie Shepard) and Best Lighting Design (David Lam). Town Hall Theatre Managing Director Dennis Markam, who has filled multiple roles at the company over the past seven years, received a special Contribution to the Arts award.

Numerous local government officials, including Lafayette Vice Mayor Mike Anderson and the mayors of Walnut Creek, Concord, San Ramon, Antioch and Brentwood, attended the glitzy awards ceremony. In introducing himself, Anderson noted that he was "from the little city of



Dennis Markam Best Supporting Actor In A Play



Lafayette Vice Mayor Mike Anderson presenting Shellie Award for Musical Direction

Lafayette, home of the great Town Hall Theatre."

Town Hall's next production "Angels in America: Perestroika," which is R-rated, opens on Saturday, Feb. 27. Included in the show's program will be a summary of events of "Millennium," leading up to the start of "Perestroika." For those desiring further information on Part I, staged readings of "Millennium" will be taking place on Saturday afternoons during the run of "Perestroika." Tickets for both Part I and Part II, which cost \$25 to \$32, can be purchased online at www.townhalltheatre.com or by calling the box office at (925) 283-1557.

NCL Celebrates Volunteerism and Leadership Development

Submitted by Lauren Webster



Photo Jackie Welch

The National Charity League, Inc. - Acalanes Area Chapter, which performed over 10,000 hours of hands-on volunteerism in 2015, hosted its prospective member and all-chapter meetings Jan. 10 at Moraga Valley Presbyterian Church. This local philanthropy organization fosters leadership development and encourages cultural experiences in girls who live in the Lafayette, Moraga and Orinda areas. For more information, visit www.nclacalanesarea.org.

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