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## **26<sup>th</sup> Annual Lucille Lortel Awards Ceremony** ***“Off-Broadway Rocks” is Ceremony Theme*** ***Presenters & Performances Announced***

(April 25, 2011) *New York* – The Lucille Lortel Awards announced today the details for the 26<sup>th</sup> Annual Lortel Awards Reception & Ceremony. The Awards Ceremony will be held on **May 1, 2011 at 7 p.m. EST** at **NYU Skirball Center**, 566 LaGuardia Place, at Washington Square. Members of the industry may purchase tickets through the Off-Broadway League, while public tickets are \$75.00 and are available via phone (212.352.3101), online (<http://skirballcenter.nyu.edu>) or in person at the Skirball Center’s Shagan Box Office (566 LaGuardia Place, Tuesday-Sunday, 12 p.m. to 6 p.m.).

The awards ceremony, themed “Off-Broadway Rocks”, directed by **Michael Heitzman** with musical direction by **David Holcenberg**, will feature performances by **Everett Bradley** (Hall & Oates - <http://www.everettbradley.com>), **Orfeh** (Love, Janis - <http://www.orfeh.com>), **The Bettys** (<http://thebettysrock.com>) and New York City’s own rock-n-roll nightlife impresario, **Michael T.** doing pieces from the Off-Broadway canon with a rock sound. The Lucille Lortel Awards are produced by the **Off-Broadway League** by special arrangement with the **Lucille Lortel Foundation**. The Lortel Awards are a benefit for The Actors Fund. Additional support is provided by the **Theatre Development Fund**.

This year’s Co-Hosts are the hilarious duo of **Samantha Bee**, from THE DAILY SHOW WITH JON STEWART, and **Zach Braff** of SCRUBS and GARDEN STATE. They will be joined on stage by notable presenters from the entertainment industry, including luminaries of the stage, screen and film. Lifetime Achievement Award recipient **Lynne Meadow** and Service to Off-Broadway Award recipient **Gary Glaser** will be honored during the ceremony for their contributions to Off-Broadway.

This year’s presenters include **Kevin Kline, Olympia Dukakis, Blythe Danner, AnnaLynne McCord, Natasha Lyonne, Hilarie Burton, Eddie Kaye Thomas, Annabella Sciorra, Kelly Rutherford, Michael T. Weiss, Mike Birbiglia, Lily Rabe, Josh Hamilton, Matthew Settle, Ron Rifkin, T.V. Carpio, Chris Benz, Valerie Harper, Arian Moayed, Terrence McNally, Anson Mount, Anthony Rapp, Sanjaya Malakar, Tammy Blanchard, Kate Shindle, Billy Porter, Seth Numrich, Christopher Hanke, Jeremy Strong and Patina Miller.**

“Off-Broadway Rocks!” is a celebration of musical theatre material done with a contemporary rock sound. This year’s show will kick off with a high-energy percussive performance from Grammy nominee Everett Bradley, who has toured with Billy Joel, Bon Jovi, and David Bowie. Orfeh will reprise a number from her starring turn in “Love, Janis,” and pop rock band The Bettys and Michael T., known for his work throughout the city with his glam rock parties/performances, “Oh! You Pretty Things” and “Mother\*\*ker” and seen in “Squeezebox! The Movie” will bring down the house with rock theatre numbers.

### **About the Co-Hosts:**

**SAMANTHA BEE:** Samantha Bee was born and raised in Toronto, Canada and understands that, yes, it's very clean there. Having no appreciable skill set or professional aspirations, she turned to acting and found it compatible with her lazy lifestyle. She began her career by doing numerous commercial campaigns, as well as participating in the all-female sketch troupe The Atomic Fireballs. In 2003 she joined the cast of THE DAILY SHOW WITH JON STEWART and now holds the title of Most Senior Correspondent, having systematically eliminated all those before her. In addition to her work on THE DAILY SHOW, Bee can be seen opposite her husband, Jason Jones in the film COOPER’S CAMERA, and in the films FURRY VENGEANCE opposite Brendan Fraser and in 20th Century Fox’s DATE NIGHT opposite Steve Carell and Tina Fey. Samantha’s first book I KNOW I AM BUT WHAT ARE YOU was released in paperback by Simon & Schuster in 2011, and she has a recurring role on the new season of HBO’s



BORED TO DEATH.

When Bee is not working she enjoys photographing her children in foolish outfits and correcting spelling errors on menus.

**ZACH BRAFF:** Zach Braff has distinguished himself from his peers—not only as an actor, but as a writer and director. With his feature writing and directorial debut, *GARDEN STATE*, Braff reveals himself in all three capacities—acting, writing and directing. The film garnered numerous awards.

Braff can be seen this Spring in Tribeca Films *THE HIGH COST OF LIVING* for director Deborah Chow. The drama revolves around a man and woman who meet after a tragic accident.

Braff's stage experience includes the Second Stage Theatre's production of *"Trust"* in 2010. This summer his first original play *"All New People"* will debut at The Second Stage Theatre. He was also seen in New York City's Public Theater productions of *"Twelfth Night"* and *"Macbeth"* with Alec Baldwin and Angela Bassett.

As an actor, Braff was nominated for a 2005 Primetime Emmy Award and a 2005, 2006 and 2007 Golden Globe award for his portrayal of Dr. John "J.D." Dorian in NBC's comedy "Scrubs." His filmography includes roles in *THE LAST KISS*, *THE EX*, *THE BROKEN HEARTS CLUB*, *GETTING TO KNOW YOU* and *MANHATTAN MURDER MYSTERY* in which he plays Woody Allen and Diane Keaton's son.

A native of New Jersey and graduate of Northwestern University's film program, Braff studied theater acting while writing and directing his own short films.

#### **About Director Michael Heitzman:**

**Michael Heitzman** is one of the Grammy-nominated songwriters of "Throw That Girl Around" from the Broadway musical *"Swing!"* His first musical *"Vices: A Love Story"* just ended two critically acclaimed runs at the Caldwell Theater in Boca Raton, FL where it was nominated for eight 2010 Carbonell Awards, including Best New Work and Best Musical. He is excited that *Vices* will be presented again this summer at Theatre Aspen. His musical *"Bingo"* (the winning musical) had a successful Off-Broadway run and continues to have numerous productions nationally and internationally. A 2009 Dramatist Guild Fellow, he and longtime writing partner Ilene Reid, are currently developing a musical adaptation of the Patrick Dennis novel, *Genius*. In addition, they have received a two-year residency with Indiana University Premiere Musicals where they are developing their original musical, *"Happily Ever Chloe."* In addition to having several TV and film scripts in development, he and Ms. Reid wrote for the NBC series *JUST DEAL* and their sitcom *SCOTT FREE*, developed with Barbra Streisand's production company Barwood Films and Kelsey Grammer's production company Gramnet, was purchased by Paramount Pictures. Michael Heitzman is a member of The Dramatists Guild, BMI and the Writer's Guild of America, East.

#### **About Musical Director David Holcenberg:**

Broadway: *"Bye Bye Birdie"*, *"The Story of My Life"*, *"Mamma Mia!"*, *"Good Vibrations"*, *"Seussical"*, *"Titanic"*, *"Showboat"*. David also music directed the US premiere of *"Ragtime"* (Los Angeles Drama Critics Circle Award: Distinguished Achievement in Music Direction) as well as *"Dessa Rose"* and *"The Glorious Ones"* at Lincoln Center Theater and the Toronto production of *"The Phantom of the Opera."* David has conducted at Carnegie Hall and on PBS for Irish tenor Ciaran Sheehan. His show *"Bingo"*, written with Michael Heitzman and Ilene Reid is playing nationally and internationally. David is currently the Music Supervisor for *"Mamma Mia!"* North and South America.

#### **About the Lucille Lortel Awards:**

The Lucille Lortel Awards for Outstanding Achievement Off-Broadway were created in 1985 by the Off-Broadway League. The Lortel Awards recognize excellence Off-Broadway by honoring the invaluable contribution of artists to the theatre community.



Representatives of the Off-Broadway League, Actors' Equity Association, Stage Directors & Choreographers Society, the Lucille Lortel Foundation in addition to theatre journalists and academics and other Off-Broadway professionals serve on the Voting Committee.

The awards may be given in the following categories: Play, Musical, Solo Show, Revival, Alternative Theatrical Experience, Director, Choreographer, Lead Actor and Actress, Featured Actor and Actress, Scenic, Costume, Lighting and Sound Design. The following honorary awards may also be given: Lifetime Achievement, Body of Work (awarded to an institution), the Edith Oliver Award for Sustained Excellence, Service to Off-Broadway Award and induction onto the Playwrights' Sidewalk in front of the historic Lucille Lortel Theatre in New York City.

For more information, please see [www.LortelAward.com](http://www.LortelAward.com)

#### **About the Lucille Lortel Foundation:**

Lucille Lortel Foundation was created by Lucille Lortel to foster excellence and diversity in the theatre, as well as to faithfully preserve the rich history and support the continued prosperity of Off-Broadway. The Foundation has several major programs, including its general operating support program that has provided millions of dollars to small to mid-size theatres in New York City, universities and theatre service organizations. The Foundation created and maintains the Internet Off-Broadway Data Base ([www.IOBDB.com](http://www.IOBDB.com)). For a listing of all of the Foundation's programs, previous Lortel Award nominees and recipients, information on the Lucille Lortel Theatre and Playwrights' Sidewalk and much more, please visit <http://www.lortel.org>.

#### **About Theatre Development Fund:**

Theatre Development Fund (TDF) has played a unique role in strengthening live theatre and dance in New York City for the past 40 years. This not-for-profit service organization's programs have filled 72 million seats at discount prices (with theatre lovers who would normally not be able to attend live performance) and returned over 1.6 billion dollars in revenue to thousands of theatre, dance and music productions. Best known for its TKTS Discount Booths, TDF's membership, voucher, access and education programs as well as its Costume Collection, help to make the unique experience of theatre available to everyone. For more information, go to: <http://www.tdf.org>.

#### **About The Actors Fund:**

The Actors Fund is a national human services organization that helps all professionals in performing arts and entertainment. The Fund – which provides programs and services for those on stage and on screen and everyone behind the scenes in theatre, film, TV, music, dance, radio and opera – is a safety net, providing social services and emergency assistance, health services and health insurance information, employment and training programs and housing support for those who are in need, crisis or transition. Learn more about what The Actors Fund does in helping over 10,000 people every year at [www.actorsfund.org](http://www.actorsfund.org).

#### **About the NYU Skirball Center:**

The Jack H. Skirball Center for the Performing Arts is the premier venue for the presentation of cultural and performing arts events for New York University and lower Manhattan. Led by executive producer Jay Oliva (President Emeritus, NYU) and senior director Michael Harrington, the programs of the Skirball Center reflect NYU's mission as an international center of scholarship, defined by excellence and innovation and shaped by an intellectually rich and diverse environment. A vital aspect of the Center's mission is to build young adult audiences for the future of live performance. [www.skirballcenter.nyu.edu](http://www.skirballcenter.nyu.edu).