



THE CARBONELL AWARDS
SOUTH FLORIDA'S THEATER & ARTS HONORS

The Carbonell Awards Names Pulitzer Prize Winning Playwright Nilo Cruz as Recipient of Prestigious George Abbott Award 2024



(South Florida – May 16, 2024) Gary Schweikhart, president of the Carbonell Awards, South Florida's Theater & Arts Honors, today announced the recipient of this year's prestigious **George Abbott Award** which will be presented at the 47th annual Carbonell Awards Ceremony on **Monday, November 11**, at 7:30 p.m. at the **Lauderhill Performing Arts Center** at 3800 NW 11th Place, Lauderhill, FL 33311.

The George Abbott Award for Outstanding Achievement in the Arts

Nilo Cruz

Cuban American **Nilo Cruz** gained national prominence in 2003 when he won the Pulitzer Prize for drama for his play *Anna in the Tropics*, a Depression-era tale about migrant Cubans working in a Tampa cigar factory, for which he also received a Steinberg Award and Tony Award nomination. He

has become known for his ability to successfully weave strains of magic realism and other literary traditions into his works.

His plays include *A Park in Our House*; *Two Sisters and a Piano*; *A Bicycle Country*; *Hortensia and the Museum of Dreams*; *Lorca in a Green Dress*; *Hurricane*; *Sotto Voce*; *Bathing in Moonlight*; *Hotel Desiderium*; *Kisses through the Glass*; and *Thirst on Water Street*. His work has been seen at numerous theaters around the country and around the world in Canada, England, France, Australia, Germany, Belarus, Russia, Costa Rica, Colombia, Japan, China, Greece, Russia and Spain.

As a lyricist, he is a frequent collaborator with composer Gabriela Lena Frank. He has written the libretti for *The Conquest* requiem and *The Last Dream of Frida and Diego*, which just premiered in San Diego and San Francisco. Cruz also adapted Ann Patchett's 2001 novel *Bel Canto* for the Lyric Opera of Chicago, with Peruvian composer

Jimmy López, and he penned the *Dreamers* oratorio for Cal Performance in Berkeley, Calif.

In the world of film, he is one of the screenwriters of *Alina of Cuba*. He also adapted his play *Anna in the Tropics* for Mankind Entertainment.

Cruz, who received an M.F.A. from Brown University and an honorary doctorate degree from Whittier College, has thrice previously served as a playwright-in-residence: In 2000, for the McCarter Theatre, in Princeton, N.J.; in 2001, for the New Theatre in Coral Gables, Fla., which commissioned *Anna in the Tropics*; and in 2021, at UCLA through a Hearst Foundation Grant. Cruz has also taught drama at Yale, Brown, the University of Iowa, and the University of Miami. He is a member of the New Dramatists.

Quote from Nilo Cruz

“It is a great honor to be receiving this prestigious award in November,” says Nilo Cruz. “Like Mr. Abbott, I have dedicated my whole life to the theatre, and if I had to do it a second time, I would probably do the same thing.”

“I am thrilled to join the company of so many dedicated and distinctive theatre colleagues, who have received this grand honor in the past,” adds the playwright. “I was so happy when I got to present The Abbott Award last year to the incomparable Christine Dolen, and now I am being blessed with the same great gift. What can I say? I am blessed!”

Previous Abbott Award Recipients

Abbott Award winners since 2010 include longtime theatre critic and Carbonell Judge **Christine Dolen** (2023); internationally acclaimed composer and conductor **Michael Tilson Thomas**, cofounder and Artistic Director Laureate of the Miami Beach-based New World Symphony (2022); **Barbara & Lawrence E. Stein**, the founders of Actors’ Playhouse at the Miracle Theatre (2022); **Kelley Shanley**, President & CEO of the Broward Center for the Performing Arts (2020); playwright, actor and scenic designer **Michael McKeever**, co-founder of Miami’s Zoetic Stage (2019); **Gail Garrison**, founding artistic director of City Theatre’s Summer Shorts Festival (2018); former Kravis Center CEO **Judith Mitchell** (2016); **Shirley Richardson & Patricia E. Williams**, the co-founders of the M Ensemble, Florida’s leading African-American theater company (2015); **Scott Shiller**, former executive vice president of the Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts (2014); **Patrick Dupré Quigley**, founder, conductor and producing artistic director of Seraphic Fire (2013); **Mario Ernesto Sanchez**, founder and producing artistic director of Teatro Avante and the International Hispanic Theatre Festival of Miami (2012); **Jay H. Harris**, a member of The League of American Theatres and Producers (2011); and **Patrice Bailey**, Dean of Theater at New World School of the Arts (2010).

Carbonell Special Awards & Ceremony 2024

The Carbonell Awards will soon solicit nominations from members of South Florida’s theatre community for up to six additional Special Awards. The Carbonell Board of Directors will select and announce the recipients of these awards in August. In September,

the Board will announce this year's 120 Carbonell Award nominations in 20 competitive categories based on accumulated scores from the nonprofit organization's pool of nearly 50 experienced and diverse volunteer judges—with seven judges assigned to each show.

This season's Carbonell Awards will be presented at a glittery ceremony on November 11 that is South Florida's version of Broadway's Tony Awards®. Tickets are \$45 each (including a \$7 facility fee) and will go on sale after Labor Day.

About The Carbonell Awards

The Carbonell Awards fosters the artistic growth of professional theater in South Florida by celebrating the diversity of our theater artists, providing educational scholarships, and building audience appreciation and civic pride by highlighting achievements of our theater community. More than 20 professional theater companies in Broward, Miami-Dade and Palm Beach counties participate in the awards process every year. The Carbonell Awards also celebrate the accomplishments of local artistic leaders by presenting several Special Awards.

Along with New York's Drama Desk and Chicago's Joseph Jefferson Awards, the Carbonell Awards are among the nation's senior regional arts awards and predate others, including Washington, D.C.'s Helen Hayes Awards. The Carbonell Awards are named after Manuel Carbonell, an internationally renowned sculptor, who designed the original solid bronze and marble award in 1976. The signature trophy is given annually to all Carbonell Award winners. Over the last 47 years, the Carbonell family has donated more than \$250,000 in awards. For more information, please visit www.carbonellawards.org.