



Deaf West Theatre
Ed Waterstreet, Artistic Director
5112 Lankershim Blvd
North Hollywood, CA 91601
818-762-2998 V/VP

DEAF WEST THEATRE RECIPIENT AT 2009 CSUN NCOD AWARDS CEREMONY

North Hollywood, CA (November 19, 2009) ---- Deaf West Theatre (DWT) received the Bulwer Award for Innovative Leadership at the California State University-Northridge/National Center on Deafness (CSUN NCOD) Second Annual Stars Gala on November 14, 2009.

The award is the latest honor for DWT, which successfully brought American theater to new heights with a national tour and collaborations with reputable presenting venues. With its groundbreaking musical adaptation *Big River: The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (2001-2005), DWT popularized the ASL musical form with three regional productions, a national tour, a production in Japan, and a Broadway run that garnered two Tony nominations, Tony Honors for Excellence, and a Drama Desk Award. Prior to that, in 2000 when DWT introduced the ASL musical, DWT became the first intimate theater company in the history of the LA Stage Ovation Awards to win both Best Play (*A Streetcar Named Desire*) and Best Musical (*Oiver!*). Also that year, DWT won the distinguished "Polly Warfield Award for Most Outstanding Season" from the Los Angeles Drama Critics Circle. With more theater production awards than any deaf theatre in the nation, DWT has earned the distinction of America's premiere sign language theater.

The evening included a banquet and a De'VIA Art Auction featuring works by preeminent deaf and hard of hearing artists. DWT Artistic Director Ed Waterstreet served as the auctioneer along with Marlee Matlin, the film and television star and a loyal patron of DWT.

About Deaf West Theatre

Deaf West Theatre, Inc., (DWT) was founded in 1991 by Artistic Director, Ed Waterstreet, to improve and enrich the cultural lives of the 1.2 million deaf and hard of hearing individuals who live in the Los Angeles area. DWT is recognized as the premiere sign language theatre in the United States and has consistently set the standard for innovation in deaf theatre. It is the only resident deaf theatre in the western United States and only one of few successful sign language production companies in the country. DWT provides exposure and access to professional theatre, filling a void for deaf artists and audiences. Serving the cultural, educational, social and employment needs of its constituents, DWT is an institution for the discovery and exploration of artists' identities and stature as professionals in the performing arts. Through the medium of Sign Language Theatre, a legacy of deaf culture is created, shared, and preserved which greatly influences mainstream perspectives about the culture and ability of the deaf. www.deafwest.org