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THE GAMM WINS SECOND ELLIOT NORTON AWARD *Awake and Sing!* Named "Outstanding Performance by a Small Company"

PAWTUCKET, RI (May 12, 2009) —**The Sandra Feinstein-Gamm Theatre** (The Gamm) was honored by the **Boston Theatre Critics Association** with its **second Elliot Norton Award** last night at a ceremony at Harvard University's Sanders Theatre. This season's production of Clifford Odets' ***Awake and Sing!*** directed by Gamm Resident Director **Fred Sullivan, Jr.** won in the category of "**Outstanding Performance by a Small Company.**" This was The Gamm's second consecutive Norton Award nomination and second win, having received the 2008 award in the category of "Outstanding New Script" for Paul Grellong's *Radio Free Emerson*, The Gamm's first-ever commission.

Set in the Bronx during the Great Depression, *Awake and Sing!* is the gritty, passionate and heartbreaking story of a working-class Jewish family coping with financial hardship and dreaming of a brighter future. Odets' 1935 multi-generational masterpiece ran from Jan. 15 through Feb. 15, 2009 at The Gamm.

Gamm Artistic Director Tony Estrella, who played the role of embittered war veteran Moe Axelrod in *Awake and Sing!*, said "It was privilege enough just to produce and act in Clifford Odets' masterpiece. The actors and designers, along with Fred Sullivan, the director, earned this honor by dint of their great talent, passion and remarkable commitment. Our second Norton Award in as many years is proof positive of the incredible growth of this institution and the sustained excellence of the artists and staff with whom it is my privilege to collaborate every day."

In accepting the award, Estrella was accompanied on stage by Sullivan who earlier in the evening received the award for "Outstanding Actor, Large Company" for his performances in *As You Like It* at Free Shakespeare (presented by Citi Performing Arts Center, Boston) and *Blithe Spirit* at Trinity Repertory Company, where Sullivan is a resident actor.

About The Gamm Theatre

Founded in 1984 as Alias Stage, the nonprofit **Sandra Feinstein-Gamm Theatre** performs great works of the classic and modern theater in an intimate setting that fosters the vital relationship between author, actor, and audience. The Gamm seeks to engage and enrich the community through affordable entertainment and educational programming. The Gamm is a member of **New England Area Theatre (NEAT)**, a bargaining unit of the Actors Equity Association.

About The Elliot Norton Awards

The Elliot Norton Awards are presented annually to recognize achievement in the Greater Boston theater community. The Norton Awards originated in the Norton Medal first bestowed in 1983 and since then awards now include Lifetime Achievement Award, the Norton Prize for Sustained Excellence, and more than a dozen awards to outstanding productions, performers, directors and designers. The awards were founded in honor of Elliot Norton, who served as drama critic for Boston newspapers for forty-eight years and as moderator of Elliot Norton Reviews on WGBH-TV from 1958-1982.

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