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Contact: Theresa Kennedy  
716-803-4281 (cell) | [Tkennedy@sheas.org](mailto:Tkennedy@sheas.org)

## Shea's Performing Arts Center Announces 2024 WNY Entertainment Hall of Fame Inductees

Patrick Fagan, Stephen McKinley Henderson, Lorna Hill & Albert  
Nocciolino Honored for Contributions to the Performing Arts

Shea's Performing Arts Center announced 2024 inductees into the WNY Entertainment Hall of Fame. This year's recipients include Patrick Fagan, Stephen McKinley Henderson, Lorna Hill, and Albert Nocciolino. The award recognizes and celebrates the talent and contributions of those who have achieved illustrious careers in the performing arts and entertainment industry. The Hall of Fame program is being reintroduced after a 21-year hiatus.

"I am honored to celebrate the extraordinary talent and lifelong dedication of our newest inductees into the WNY Entertainment Hall of Fame," **said Shea's Performing Arts Center Board Chair Jonathan Dandes.** "Their passion, creativity, and contribution to Shea's have left a lasting mark on the WNY theatre community and this induction not only recognizes their remarkable achievements but also serves as a lasting tribute to the power of the arts to inspire and transform."

### **Patrick Fagan**

Serving as President and CEO of Shea's Performing Arts Center, Finance Director for the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra, Interim CEO for Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy, and adjunct professor at SUNY Buffalo, Erie, and Fredonia, Patrick Fagan's impact is deeply woven into the Western New York landscape. During his 16 years as Shea's President, he established a collaborative environment among arts organizations, grew the annual fund and attendance, raised funding to add Shea's Smith Theatre to the performing arts campus, and established the Western New York Entertainment Hall of Fame. Perhaps the most transformative impact came from Fagan's vision and stewardship of the Shea's Buffalo

Theatre stage expansion project which opened Shea's up to Broadway's biggest touring productions and continues to make Shea's Buffalo a premier destination in the entertainment industry.

"I am very proud, but also very humble, for being recognized for playing a major role in laying the foundation so Shea's could become one of the leading presenters of Broadway shows in the country," **said Patrick Fagan.**

### **Stephen McKinley Henderson**

Stephen McKinley Henderson's versatility across various mediums, including the big screen, television, and stage, showcases an exceptional range of talent. His work appears in six Oscar nominated films such as Denzel Washington's ***Fences*** and numerous iconic television series including ***Law & Order***. The award-winning actor has been recognized for his Broadway and Off-Broadway artistry, earning two Tony Award nominations, and career achievement awards from the National Black Theatre Festival, the Drama Desk Awards, and Gershwin Theatre's American Theatre Hall of Fame. In Western New York he has performed at Studio Arena Theatre, now Shea's 710 Theatre, more than a dozen times, and taught for three decades under the University at Buffalo Department of Theatre & Dance.

**Stephen McKinley Henderson said,** "Buffalo's storied theatre legacy ranges from vaudeville to pre-Broadway tryouts. I came to town as a journeyman actor in the 1980's seeking work in local theatre that at that time included a respected regional repertory house. I was employed and nurtured at The Studio Arena and welcomed by the vibrant theatre community. It is a cherished honor to be part of the re-establishment of a Buffalo theatrical tradition with these inductees."

### **Lorna Hill**

An actor, director, poet, playwright, and activist, Lorna Hill's visionary approach to storytelling has provoked reflection, inspired action, and captivated audiences. As founder and Artistic Director of Ujima Theatre Company, she lived up to Ujima's definition of "collective work and responsibility" by providing a thriving environment for the growth of diverse audiences, enlightened learning, and opportunity for rising African American talent. A recipient of many local and national awards including the Associated Press Award for production of the radio show ***Uncrowned Queens: Voices of African American Women***, and The Otto Award for the development of innovative and socially challenging theatre. Hill pushed creative boundaries, fostered the next generation of artists, and faithfully served the Buffalo community she loved.

"She was a trailblazer in the way she approached theatre, African American theatre, and opportunities for the African American story to be told," **said Amilcar Hill, son of Lorna Hill.** "Her goal with theatre and everything she did was to make the entire community better. She always called it the beloved community and that was what her work was about."

## **Albert Nocciolino**

As President & CEO of NAC Entertainment, Albert Nocciolino's work has lit up stages across Northern Pennsylvania and Western New York. His incredible record of over 100 Broadway and touring productions produced and co-produced includes timeless classics including ***Some Like it Hot*** as well as fresh new work like ***& Juliet***. Nocciolino is a pioneer in the industry, earning several Tony Awards, and taking on leadership roles with The Broadway League, the National Touring Theatre Council, and the Independent Presenters Network. As Shea's Performing Arts Center's Broadway presenting partner for over 35 years, Nocciolino's instinct for audience connection has helped to touch the hearts and minds of thousands of Shea's patrons each year, delivering sell-out performances which bolster the strength of Buffalo's historic theatre and enrich the Western New York economy and community.

"Being inducted into the WNY Entertainment Hall of Fame is an incredible honor. For many years, I have been fortunate to work alongside many talented individuals who contribute to the performing arts in Western New York, a community that values creativity and expression," **said Albert Nocciolino**. "This recognition is a testament to the dedication and passion that drives us all in the entertainment industry. I am deeply humbled to be part of this legacy."

The WNY Entertainment Hall of Fame was first established by the Shea's Board of Trustees in 1987 and inducted sixteen iconic Western New York performers between 1989 and 2003. Previous awardees include: comic entertainer Lucille Ball; Tony-award winning actor James Whitmore; Broadway performer, choreographer and director Michael Bennett; master of musical commentary Mark Russell; radio pioneer Buffalo Bob Smith; Grammy-winning jazz musician Grover Washington, Jr.; Emmy-award winning actress Nancy Marchand; leading playwright A.R. Gurney; Broadway director George Abbott; actor and director Conrad John Schuck; Tonto acting legend Jay Silverheels; *The Wizard of Oz* score composer Harold Arlen; Tony and Emmy-award winning actress Christine Baranski; vaudeville comedy writer Al Boasberg; and television and film writer and producer Tom Fontana.

"The Hall of Fame is designed to celebrate the contributions of locally connected entertainment professionals, showcase their achievements, and inspire the next generation of performing arts industry pathfinders." **said Brian Higgins, President & CEO of Shea's Performing Arts Center**.

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