

RANDALL ARNEY

Artistic Director

Growing up in central Illinois, it was hard for Randall Arney to imagine that one day he would be part of the company that would be standing on stage accepting a Tony Award for Best Play. But as an ensemble member and later the artistic director of Steppenwolf Theatre, that award was one of many defining moments in Arney's career.

As a theater student at Illinois State University (ISU), Arney and his group of friends not only acted as part of their studies, but took their craft into the community. Many of Arney's college friends ultimately went on to form Steppenwolf Theatre Company. In 1981, Arney was recruited for a role in the company's production of *Balm in Gilead*, and then in 1984, he joined his friends as a steady ensemble member.

After three years as an ensemble member appearing in such works as *Born Yesterday*, *Ghost in the Machine*, *The Homecoming*, *Frank's Wild Years*, *You Can't Take It With You*, *Fool for Love*, *Coyote Ugly* and *True West*, Arney took on the role of artistic director at Steppenwolf Theatre in 1987. Under his leadership, the relatively young company embarked on an unprecedented fundraising campaign to build a state-of-the-art multi-theater complex in the Lincoln Park neighborhood of Chicago (Steppenwolf's current home). In addition, Arney began the relationship with Steppenwolf and Broadway with the transfers of *The Rise and Fall of Little Voice*, *The Song of Jacob Zulu* (six Tony Award nominations) and *The Grapes of Wrath* (winner of the aforementioned Tony Award) during his tenure.

Arney left the office of artistic director in 1995 to pursue his acting and directing career in Los Angeles, which included roles in *Normal*, *Weapons of Mass Distraction* (both for HBO), *Grey's Anatomy* (ABC) and *Judging Amy* (CBS). After briefly returning to Steppenwolf to direct *The Beauty Queen of Leenane*, Arney returned to LA in search of a west coast theater to mount the production. What he found was a new job as artistic director of the Geffen Playhouse.

Arney accepted the position in 1999 and has since been overseeing the artistic direction of the theater as well as directing specific productions. Over the years these include: David Mamet's *Speed the Plow*, Arthur Miller's *All My Sons*, Richard Greenberg's *Take Me Out*, Stephen Jeffreys' *I Just Stopped by to See the Man*, Rebecca Gilman's *Boy Gets Girl*, David Rambo's *God's Man In Texas*. Adrian Pasdar's and Marcus Hummon's *Atlanta* and Conor McPherson's *The Weir* and *The Seafarer*.

While his job at the theater and directing take up the majority of his time, Arney will still occasionally moonlight in television roles, so you never know where he might turn up ...