



Staten Island Advance

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Staten Island's best theater company: Wagner College

2014 READERS' CHOICE AWARD

by LAUREN STEUSSY

More than 11,500 votes were cast in the “Best of Arts & Entertainment” categories of the 2014 Staten Island Readers’ Choice Awards.

And your “Best Theater Company” winner is: Wagner Theatre Department — One Campus Road, 718-390-3259; wagner.edu/theatre — with 1,296 votes.

It may be a college but it’s got some serious theater credit. Wagner is ranked the best theater program of any college in the country by the esteemed Princeton Review. This year was the first year since 2005 it earned the no. 1 ranking — but it wasn’t far behind in years past.

With that kind of reputation you can bet the productions are top notch. The department, created in 1968, has a long list of distinguished alumni, from Tony Award winner Randy Graff, to “Jersey Boys” film star Renee Marino.

Faculty in the department include actress and theater professor Michele Pawk, who is directing the current production of the Broadway musical, “Merrily We Roll Along.” A longtime working actress with an enviable resume, she was in an award-winning 1994 York Theater “Merrily” revival that many critics liked better than the original.

The department’s Stage One is also continuing its season with the Obie-winning play, “Stop Kiss” by Diana Son, running November 18 through 23.

Directed by Melissa Firlit, in her WCT debut, “Stop Kiss” is a powerful love story set in New York City that explores an unexpected attraction between new female friends.