

## MEDIA RELEASE

### *Eric Peterson makes his Soulpepper debut in Glengarry Glen Ross*

Toronto, ON – March 4, 2009 – Albert Schultz, Founding Artistic Director of Soulpepper Theatre Company, today announced the company's second offering in its 2009 season. David Mamet's scorching examination of Reagan-era America, the Pulitzer Prize-winning *Glengarry Glen Ross*, bursts onto the stage at the Young Centre for the Performing Arts from April 2 – May 9, 2009.

In Mamet's snapshot of the cut-throat world of real estate, a group of salesmen scramble to lie, cheat and steal their way to the top. In this desperate game of survival, insults and accusations fly in the rhythmic, colloquial style that is Mamet's signature.

*Glengarry Glen Ross* is inspired by Mamet's experiences working in a Chicago real estate office during the late 1960's. Mamet dedicated the play to celebrated dramatist Harold Pinter. The show had its world premiere in 1983 at The Cottesloe Theatre in London, England, to much critical acclaim. *Glengarry* then went on to win the Laurence Olivier Award for Best New Play (1983), Pulitzer Prize for Drama (1984), Drama Desk Award Outstanding Revival of a Play (2005), and Tony Award for Best Revival of a Play (2005). A film adaptation of *Glengarry* was released in 1992 with a star-studded cast, including, Jack Lemmon, Kevin Spacey, Ed Harris, Alan Arkin and Al Pacino.

David Storch directs a stellar cast of theatre artists, featuring Eric Peterson – in his Soulpepper debut – as Shelley Levene, Jordan Pettle as John Williamson, Peter Donaldson as Dave Moss, Founding Member William Webster as George Aaranow, Founding Artistic Director Albert Schultz as Richard Roma, Kevin Bundy as James Lingk, and Soulpepper Academy Graduate Stephen Guy-McGrath as Baylen.

Previewing April 2, 2009, *Glengarry Glen Ross* opens April 7 and runs until May 9 at the Young Centre for the Performing Arts, located at 55 Mill Street, Building 49, in the Distillery Historic District. Tickets range from \$28 – \$68 and are available by calling the Young Centre box office at 416.866.8666 or by visiting [soulpepper.ca](http://soulpepper.ca).

This production is sponsored by Middlefield Resource Funds. 2009 Soulpepper Lead Sponsors are Sun Life Financial, Scotiabank Group and Telus. Soulpepper gratefully acknowledges annual operating support from the Canada Council for the Arts, the Ontario Arts Council, and The Toronto Arts Council.

*Soulpepper Theatre Company is an artist-founded, classical repertory theatre company with a three-tiered mandate: to present the world's greatest stories in vital Canadian interpretations; to train a new generation of theatre artists; and to inspire and enrich youth through mentorship and access programs.*

## BACKGROUND NOTES

David Mamet believes the way men speak, how they speak, each word they say, each word they repeat, reveals everything about their character. People don't always say what they mean, according to Mamet, but they mean what they mean. He's a verbal pointillist and through his use of repetition and rhythm *Glengarry Glen Ross* builds a remarkable portrait of a group of men fighting quite literally for their lives. For this writer, the word is paramount. He's even said that the test of a good play is to read it on the radio. If it can be understood without any of the appointments of staging, then, he says it's good. If it can't, then the words are not strong enough, the writer has not done his job.

*Glengarry Glen Ross* could pass the radio test. It has almost no stage directions. Mamet is not perfectly clear about who is on stage when. But each word, each half syllable, each repetition, each dot, dash, comma and exclamation point, have been chosen with infinite skill and care and every actor on stage has to play each one differently. Mamet demands a lot of his actors, but as Albert Schultz said in his interview earlier this year, they relish the challenge. They love mastering the complex rhythms and verbal challenges of this text.

Observations about men drive the action. The feverish propulsive conversations reveal these men's unceasing competition with each other, their longing for each other's respect as well as their need for each other. Half the men in this office are in their forties and half in their fifties. The top dog in the former group is Richard Roma, a man at the peak of his persuasive powers, a man who gets what he wants and doesn't care how he gets it or who is crushed in the process. The characters in their fifties are clinging, barely, to their jobs, some, like Shelly Levene, fueled by the memory of their glory days, when they could "close", when they could sell any piece of real estate to anyone – if you believe their version of events. (They are salesmen, after all.) In this cutthroat world yesterday is long gone and there is no mercy for yesterday's man.

An early sequence between (fifty-year-old) Levene and (forty-year-old) Williamson, who runs the office, brilliantly expresses the two points of view as well as revealing the depth and precision of Mamet's writing. In this scene Shelly begs Williamson for a break, a leg up. He wants the coveted "good leads" – the names and numbers of real possible, potential clients (as opposed to names and phone numbers taken out of the phone book, which rarely yield results). Over the course of the scene we watch Shelly try absolutely every gambit he knows to get what he wants but Williamson is adamant:

*W: I can't do it, Shel. (pause)*

*L: I'll give you ten percent. (pause)*

*W: Of what?*

*L: Of my end what I close.*

*W: And what if you don't close.*

*L: I will close.*

*W: What if you don't close ... ?*

*L: I will close.*

*W: What if you don't? ... Then it's my job. That's what I'm telling you.*

## BACKGROUND NOTES CONTINUED...

Both of the pauses in the first two lines mean something. The first one gives Levene a moment to consider his next move: will he give up his argument or will he sink to the point of buying a lead. He sinks. The second pause gives Williamson a moment to consider taking the money. It's that pause that gives Levene a glimmer of hope, a lifeline. Finally he has Williamson's interest, he teeters on the brink of success. But Williamson doesn't quite sink. He says: "And what if you don't close." Though it is phrased like a question Mamet makes it clear that this line is not a question. It is punctuated by a period. It's a statement. Williamson doesn't think Shelly can close.

The word "close" is repeated five times and every repetition builds tension and cements the power dynamic between the two men. Levene seems more desperate at first but in the last line we see that Williamson is desperate too. Nobody in this world can afford to give anybody else a break, even if they might benefit financially from it. As this segment reaches its climax, every time Levene says the line he emphasizes the word will and every time Williamson replies he emphasizes the word don't. The words are simple, the situation is anything but, the stakes are as high as they can possibly be. In stage time this part of the scene takes less than half a minute to play. It is Mamet's skill as a writer, his remarkable grasp of rhythm and repetition, character and desire that make every moment in *Glengarry Glen Ross* as rich with information and as loaded with urgency as this nine-line excerpt. The result is an exhilarating, energized theatrical experience that, as Roger Ebert put it, "allows people to arrive in triumph at the ends of sentences we could not possibly have imagined."

### Tidbits: *Glengarry Glen Ross*

- ▶ David Mamet's adaptation of *Glengarry Glen Ross* went before the cameras in 1992. No major studio would finance it so it was independently produced.
- ▶ Major A-list actors vied hard to be involved. The cast included Al Pacino, Kevin Spacey, Ed Harris, Jack Lemmon, Alan Arkin and Alec Baldwin in a role created especially for him. They all took major pay cuts, apparently happily.
- ▶ Pacino was nominated for both a Golden Globe and an Academy Award for Best Supporting Actor for this film and Lemmon won a Volpi Cup for Best Actor at the Venice Film Festival.
- ▶ An obscenity count on the internet claims that the Moss character has the most expletives in the film, topping out at a healthy sixty-nine instances.
- ▶ In 2008 David Mamet wrote a play about the political process called *November*. That year he wrote an essay for *The Village Voice* about how it had affected him. It was titled: "Why I am No Longer a Brain-Dead Liberal."

*Notes by Soulpepper Associate Artist Paula Wing*

## BIOGRAPHY: DAVID MAMET

1947 – On November 30th David Alan Mamet is born, the only son of Bernard, a labour lawyer, and Leonore Mamet. He will later have a younger sister, Lynn.

1962 – He begins working at the Hull House Theatre and discovers his life's direction.

1964 – He studies literature and theatre at Vermont's Goddard College.

1969 – Young David earns his Bachelor's Degree and goes on to study acting in New York at the Neighbourhood Playhouse School of Theatre.

1971 – Mamet begins teaching drama at Goddard and writes several plays.

1972 – *The Duck Variations*, an early one-act, displays features that will crop up again and again in his plays: a fixed setting, few characters, a simple plot, and dialogue that captures, in a poetic way, the sound of everyday speech.

1974 – *Sexual Perversity in Chicago*, his next play, gains him great notices and he himself later adapts it for the screen as *About Last Night*.

1975 – *American Buffalo* receives the New York Drama Critics Circle Award and goes on to be produced all over the country.

1981 – He writes his first screenplay for *The Postman Always Rings Twice*. It stars Jack Nicholson and Jessica Lange but it is considered his least successful effort in this arena.

1982 – His second screenplay, an adaptation of the a novel, *The Verdict*, starring Paul Newman and Charlotte Rampling, is nominated for an Academy Award.

1983 – *Glengarry Glen Ross*, perhaps Mamet's most praised work, premieres at The Cottesloe Theatre in London England. It draws on Mamet's own real-life experiences working in this kind of office in the early 60's.

1984 – *Glengarry* opens first in Chicago at the Goodman Theatre and then transfers to Broadway where wins the Drama Critics Circle Award. It captures the Pulitzer Prize for Drama as well.

1985 – With his close friend, the actor William H. Macy, Mamet founds the Atlantic Theatre Company, which continues to operate two small theatres in the Chelsea neighbourhood of New York City.

1987 – He directs his first film, *House of Games*, set in the world of con artists, a world he will continue to explore in his next two films, *The Spanish Prisoner* and *Heist*.

1988 – His *Speed-the-Plow* goes to Broadway, where rock singer Madonna makes her stage debut as a woman whose presence threatens a close and longstanding male friendship.

1992 – *Oleanna*, Mamet's consideration of political correctness becomes a huge, multiply produced hit. Meanwhile his adaptation of *Glengarry Glen Ross* goes before the cameras.

1994 – His first novel, *The Village*, is published. In the coming years Mamet will write two more novels, as well as several warmly regarded books of essays.

1999 – His film *The Winslow Boy*, starring Ms. Pidgeon, is well received. He writes a book on acting called *True or False: Heresy and Common Sense for the Actor*.

2005 – He becomes a regular blogger on the *Huffington Post*. Many of his posts contain his own cartoons, all political satires laced with humour.

2006 – Soulpepper stages *American Buffalo*, starring Ted Dykstra, Michael Hanrahan and Jeff Lillico.

2008 – Mamet's latest film, *Redbelt*, comes out, a story about mixed martial arts.

*Notes by Soulpepper Associate Artist Paula Wing*

## ARTIST PROFILE: PETER DONALDSON

Glengarry Glen Ross actor Peter Donaldson sat down with assistant director Michael Murphy to discuss the approach to Mamet's text, its recent timeliness, and Donaldson's return to Soulpepper.

Michael Murphy: We haven't seen you on stage with Soulpepper since 1999, what lured you away from Stratford?

Peter Donaldson: It was time to do something different for a change. I had been at Stratford for a long time running and you can only do that for so many years before you start hitting a wall. And I was starting to hit a wall there. The change in leadership at the festival also was an opportunity for me to leave and not feel as though I was undoing any loyalties that I had there. You know I had a good season last year with Des McAnuff in two of his shows but I felt as though I needed to make a change for a bit.

MM: At its core, Glengarry Glen Ross is about the disintegration of the American Dream. How do you think this might be received by Canadian audiences?

PD: I don't think that's an issue really. I mean it probably is an issue, but I think it's an issue that we as Canadians deal with on a regular basis. We're always viewing our particular circumstances through an American lens an awful lot of the time. I also think that a writer like David Mamet is more global than he is American in some sense – that his plays and the way he writes is universal. I think that given the circumstances that we're living in at the moment, this play speaks to a much broader audience than it probably did when it was first written.

MM: Both Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman* and David Mamet's *Glengarry Glen Ross*, arguably each playwright's best known work, are about salesmen. Any thoughts on how they connect or overlap thematically?

PD: I suppose they do in a way. I think they both reflect their particular times. *Death of a Salesman* even though it is a crushing emotional experience watching or reading that play, there is a kind of melancholic feel to some of that play that *Glengarry Glen Ross* doesn't have. This play is much harder nosed and harder edged than *Death of a Salesman* – I'm not trying to put down *Death of a Salesman* in the least because I think it's a spectacular play – but *Glengarry Glen Ross* really reflects the hard times in which it was written. Economically it was a very tough period.

MM: Which has come full circle.

PD: Exactly. I think *Death of a Salesman* was written under different circumstances that weren't quite as nasty.

## ARTIST PROFILE CONTINUED...

MM: The play's title refers to two land developments: the Glengarry Highlands (which is the hot property at the time of the play's action) and Glen Ross Farms (which was popular fifteen years before that). Do you think it's meant to represent a passing of the torch from the old guard like your character Dave Moss to the young hotshot up and comers?

PD: My character actually has that discussion, "Remember when we were at Platt? Glen Ross Farms. Didn't we sell a bunch of that?" All of us have talked in rehearsals about how those were the good times, those were the heydays when you actually could sell land to people over the phone. That was Glen Ross farms, so in a way we're actually looking at the progression for all of these guys to the Glengarry Highlands point in their lives when they're obviously much more desperate than they were back then. And things have not worked out well for them over the years.

MM: I've heard some of the actors saying they've found the rhythms of Mamet's writing creeping into their own speech patterns. Have you had that happen as well?

PD: Not so much the rhythms, but I have to be careful what I say around home because I don't think my foul mouth would go over very well around the children. But it's another one of the reasons I wanted to leave Stratford for a while, because there I never get to say stuff like this. I'm always saying brilliant wonderful text, but not brilliant wonderful modern text like this.

MM: It's a long way off from Atticus Finch [which Peter played in To Kill a Mockingbird in 2007 at Stratford].

PD: That's right. It's a real joy to get your mouth around this kind of play and be foul mouthed for a change.

# THE SOULPEPPER STORY

## *Where We Began*

Soulpepper was established by twelve of Canada's leading theatre artists who shared a dream to create a classical repertory company in Toronto. The founding members were Martha Burns, Susan Coyne, Ted Dykstra, Michael Hanrahan, Stuart Hughes, Diana Leblanc, Diego Matamoros, Nancy Palk, Albert Schultz, Robyn Stevan, William Webster, and Joseph Ziegler. Their goal was to combine classical theatre, mentorship and training, and to keep artists at the centre of the organization. Soulpepper presented its inaugural season and launched its training and youth outreach initiatives in the summer of 1998.

## *How We've Grown*

In 1998 Soulpepper was a small artist run organization that presented a two-production summer season with a budget of \$700,000. Soulpepper has since produced more than 60 of history's great stories in Toronto, Ottawa, in Montreal and on the Wikwemikong Unceded Indian Reserve on Manitoulin Island. Soulpepper's budget has increased every year since to accommodate the growth of its operations. Now operating year-round, Soulpepper's annual budget exceeds \$7M. This ten-fold increase is a feat unrivalled in Canadian theatre history.

Under the visionary leadership of Artistic Director Albert Schultz, Soulpepper has established itself as a major contributor to the Canadian theatrical landscape and in its first decade has built:

- ▶ A 12 month season of more than 400 performances
- ▶ A passionate audience of over 80,000 each year
- ▶ An artistic ensemble of 150 established and emerging theatre artists
- ▶ A paid two-year full time residency for 10 Canadian theatre artists
- ▶ A robust portfolio of youth programs, reaching over 8,500 youth annually
- ▶ A 46,000 square foot state-of-the-art performing arts facility in Toronto's Distillery District

## *Where We Are Now*

Soulpepper is North America's only year-round classical repertory company, a prominent Canadian producer of original work from existing sources, a leading employer of artists in the city of Toronto and a partner in neighbourhood education initiatives.

## *2009 Soulpepper Associate Artists*

Derek Boyes  
Diego Matamoros  
Kelly McEvenue  
Weyni Mengesha  
Nancy Palk  
Mike Ross  
Lorenzo Savoini  
Guillermo Verdecchia  
William Webster  
Paula Wing  
Daniel Brooks, 2009 Charles & Marilyn Baillie Fellow

## *2009/10 Soulpepper Academy*

Ins Choi  
Tatjana Cornij  
Raquel Duffy  
Brendan Healy  
Matthew Kabwe  
Ken MacKenzie  
Gregory Prest  
Karen Rae  
Jason Rothery  
Brendan Wall.

## *Soulpepper Founding Members*

Martha Burns  
Susan Coyne  
Ted Dykstra  
Michael Hanrahan  
Stuart Hughes  
Diana Leblanc  
Diego Matamoros  
Nancy Palk  
Albert Schultz  
Robyn Stevan  
William Webster  
Joseph Ziegler

## *Critical Acclaim*

“The theatrical event of the decade has been the establishment, persistence and expansion of Soulpepper. Toronto theatre would be unthinkable without them.”—NATIONAL POST

“Great cities are known for the theatre companies they keep. In Toronto the one that has attracted critical attention and audience enthusiasm is Soulpepper.” — CHICAGO TRIBUNE

“Every now and then it takes Soulpepper to make us realize just what we’ve been missing.” —TORONTO STAR

“Schultz has built Soulpepper into something of a Swiss Army knife for the dramatic arts.” —TIME MAGAZINE

“One of the best reasons to stay in the city has been the rethinking of classic plays by the innovative company Soulpepper.” —THE NEW YORK TIMES

“Soulpepper Theatre Company has changed the face of theatre in Canada. It is the most exciting producer of classical theatre in the country.” —MACLEAN’S MAGAZINE

“The Toronto success story of the past decade has been Soulpepper” —NATIONAL POST

“We are supremely fortunate to have Soulpepper!” —TORONTO STAR

“Shakespeare done right. Refreshing...clever...hilarious!”—THE GLOBE AND MAIL

“It’s as good as theatre gets.”—NATIONAL POST

“Soulpepper has found the richness and complexity of life.”—THE GLOBE AND MAIL

“The acting talent on stage is simply astounding.”—THE GLOBE AND MAIL

“Soulpepper triumphs. Pure theatre you’ll never forget.”—TORONTO STAR

“Theatrical bliss!”—THE GLOBE AND MAIL

“Soulpepper is the finest theatre company in the history of Toronto!”—NATIONAL POST

## AWARDS

### *Dora Mavor Moore Awards*

- ▶ *Top Girls*: Outstanding Direction of a Play, Alisa Palmer (2008)
- ▶ *The Time of Your Life*: Outstanding Performance in a Leading Role, Joseph Ziegler (2008)
- ▶ *The Time of Your Life*: Outstanding Performance in a Featured Role, Stuart Hughes (2008)
- ▶ *Leaving Home*: Outstanding Performance in a Featured Role, Jane Spidell (2007)
- ▶ *Our Town*: Best Production (2006)
- ▶ *Translations*: Outstanding Performance in a Featured Role, Michael Simpson (2005)
- ▶ *No Man's Land*: Outstanding Performance, William Hutt (2003)
- ▶ *The Maids*: Outstanding Set Design (2003)
- ▶ *The Bald Soprano/The Lesson*: Outstanding Direction of a Play, Jim Warren (2001)
- ▶ *Platonov*: Best Production; Outstanding Performance, Diego Matamoros (2000)
- ▶ *Platonov*: Outstanding Direction of a Play, László Marton (1999)
- ▶ *Endgame*: Best Production; Outstanding Sound Design, Richard Feren (1999)
- ▶ Eight Dora Mavor Moore Award Nominations for Best Production: *Endgame* (1999); *Platonov* (2000); *A Chorus of Disapproval* (2003); *Absolutely Chekhov* (2003); *Our Town* (2006); *Leaving Home* (2007); *Top Girls* (2008)

### *Other Awards*

- ▶ 2008 Queen's University, Faculty of Arts and Science, Honorary Doctorate to Albert Schultz, in recognition of his contributions to Canadian theatre.
- ▶ 2008 DareArts Foundation Cultural Award to Albert Schultz, in recognition of his outstanding work in empowering and educating at-risk youth
- ▶ 2006 Toronto Arts Council Foundation William Kilbourn Award to Albert Schultz, for contribution to the cultural life of the city
- ▶ 2006 City of Toronto Barbara Hamilton Memorial Award to Albert Schultz, recognizing excellence and professionalism in the performing arts
- ▶ 2005 City of Toronto Barbara Hamilton Memorial Award to Martha Burns
- ▶ 2004 Leonardo da Vinci Award, to Albert Schultz, for creativity & innovation in the arts
- ▶ 2003 Salute to the City Award, to Albert Schultz, for outstanding contribution to the cultural life of Toronto
- ▶ 2002 Queen Elizabeth II Golden Jubilee Medal, to Albert Schultz, for outstanding contributions to the community
- ▶ 2002 Arts and Letters Club Award to Susan Coyne & Albert Schultz, recognizing worthy members of the artistic community
- ▶ 2001 M. Joan Chalmers National Award for Artistic Direction, to Albert Schultz
- ▶ 2000-2001 Masques Award for Best English Language Production, *Betrayal*
- ▶ 1999, 2001, 2002, 2003 Lieutenant Governor's Awards for the Arts, recognizing achievement in fundraising
- ▶ 1999 Mayor Mel and Marilyn's Youth Award, for mentoring emerging artists or youth

## *Production History*

1998: *The Misanthrope, Don Carlos*

1999: *Our Town, The Play's the Thing, A Streetcar Named Desire, Endgame, Platonov*

2000: *The Mill on the Floss, Platonov, Twelfth Night, Krapp's Last Tape, The School for Wives, Betrayal*

2001: *A Flea in Her Ear, Present Laughter, La Ronde, Uncle Vanya, The Bald Soprano/The Lesson, MacHomer*

2002: *Winter's Tale, A Chorus of Disapproval, Miss Julie, The Maids, Absolutely Chekhov, Uncle Vanya, The Beggar's Opera*

2003: *No Man's Land, Happy Days* (in association with DVxT), *Phèdre, She Stoops to Conquer, The Play's the Thing*

2004: *Waiting for Godot, Nathan the Wise, The Dumb Waiter/Zoo Story, Mirandolina, Translations, Hamlet*

2005: *The Wild Duck, Fool for Love, Hamlet, Olympia; The Long Valley* (with This is a Bird collective)

2006: *Our Town, The Government Inspector, American Buffalo, The Importance of Being Earnest* (co-production with the Saidye Bronfman Centre for the Arts), *The Real Thing* (co-production with the National Arts Centre), *The Chairs, King Lear, The Caretaker, A Christmas Carol*

2007: *The Threepenny Opera, John Gabriel Borkman* (in association with Theatre Columbus), *Leaving Home, Top Girls, The Time of Your Life, Three Sisters, Mary Stuart, Blithe Spirit*

2008: *Salt-Water Moon, The Odd Couple, As You Like It, 'Night, Mother, Uncle Vanya, The Way of the World* (co-production with the National Arts Centre), *Under Milkwood, Black Comedy/Real Inspector Hound, Ring Around the Moon, A Raisin in the Sun* (co-production with Theatre Calgary), *Top Girls, A Christmas Carol*

2009: *Travesties, Glengarry Glen Ross, Loot, Awake and Sing!, Of the Fields, Lately, Billy Bishop Goes to War, Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?, The Guardsman, Antigone, Parfumerie, Civil Elegies.*

## *Albert Schultz*

### ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Albert Schultz was born 1963 in Port Hope, Ontario and was drawn to acting through his mother's community theatre work. He trained at York University and the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art. Albert joined the Young Company at Stratford under Robin Phillips where he played several leading roles including a lauded turn as Romeo. Other early roles include the title characters in *Newhouse* for Necessary Angel in Toronto, *Hosanna* at The Grand Theatre in London, and *The Music Man* at the Citadel Theatre in Edmonton.

Beginning in 1992, Albert spent three years on CBC's hit television series *Street Legal*, followed by two seasons as the lead in the series *Side Effects*. His feature film work includes *Beautiful Dreamers*, *I Love a Man in Uniform*, *Maximum Risk*, *Balls Up*, *Under My Skin*, and most recently the lead in CTV's made for TV film *Shades of Black* (a biography of Conrad Black) which aired in December 2006. Albert also hosted the nationally televised Gemini Awards three times, was nominated for Best Comedy Writing and won a Gemini as Best Host.

Albert is the Founding Artistic Director of Soulpepper Theatre Company and General Director of the Young Centre for the Performing Arts. Under his visionary leadership Soulpepper has grown from a two play summer season to a 12 month season of more than 400 performances. Albert regularly directs and appears on stage with Soulpepper. As an actor, recent highlights include *Hamlet* (2004 & 2005), *Uncle Vanya* (2001, 2002 & 2008), *Our Town* (2006 & 2007), *The Real Thing* (2006) and *The Odd Couple* (2008). Albert also leads the Soulpepper Academy, a two-year full time training program for emerging theatre artists, and Soulpepper's youth outreach and access initiatives.

Albert's many honours include The City of Toronto Barbara Hamilton Memorial Award, the DareArts Foundation Cultural Award, The Toronto Arts Council William Kilbourn Award, the Salute to the City Award and the Joan Chalmers Award for Artistic Direction. As a volunteer, Albert has contributed to PEN Canada, Camp Oochigeas, the AGO and the Nature Conservatory of Canada. He is a member of the Steering Committee for the Canadian Arts Summit, the advisory board for Evergreen's Toronto Brickworks Development and the Telus Community Board. For his work on behalf of UNICEF, Albert received the Queen Elizabeth II Golden Jubilee Medal.

On June 2, 2008 Albert received an Honorary Doctorate from the Queen's University Faculty of Arts and Science in recognition of his contribution to Canadian Theatre.