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## Milwaukee Arts Board names 20<sup>th</sup> Annual Artists of the Year

Dale Gutzman and John Riepenhoff were named Artists of the Year, the [Milwaukee Arts Board](#) announced today. Awards of \$1,500 each will be presented to the recipients at a March reception.

Gutzman, an actor, director, playwright, producer, and educator/mentor, has been a Milwaukee theater fixture for 50 years. He was a protégé of theater legends Robert Pitman of Alverno College and Clair Richardson of Skylight Music Theatre, where Gutzman directed, wrote, and performed in dozens of productions. He founded the highly successful Off The Wall Theatre, repeatedly cited among the “Year’s Best” by the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel. Over his long career he mentored dozens of actors from local/regional stages to Broadway to prime-time television to film, including two-time Tony winner Mark Rylance.

“Few Milwaukee theater professionals have the length of history, breadth of experience, and depth of influence as Dale Gutzman,” said David Flores, the arts board member who nominated him.

Riepenhoff is a Milwaukee native, an artist, curator, co-owner of The Green Gallery, and co-organizer of The Milwaukee International and Dark Fairs. He is “an inventor of artistic platforms for the expression of others.” His work has been widely exhibited locally, nationally and internationally. This year he was selected to participate in the exhibition *State of the Art: Discovering American Art Now* at the Crystal Bridges Museum, where he participated in a panel [“Decentralizing Art-Making in America.”](#)

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## **MAB ARTISTS OF THE YEAR – ADD ONE**

In her nomination remarks Emilia Layden said Riepenhoff “is an art advocate and de facto cultural ambassador for the City of Milwaukee. He is deeply committed to advancing the work of local artists and regional artistic practice. As co-owner of The Green Gallery, he frequently invites artists from around the world to experience the vibrant cultural landscape of Milwaukee. In doing so he initiates exchange and cross pollination of ideas, promoting Milwaukee as a cultural hub on par with other major artistic centers.”

The Artists of the Year program was inaugurated in 1995 by Wayne Frank, then alderman and Milwaukee Arts Board Chair. Funds used to launch the first award included a memorial bequest in honor of Milwaukee artist and MAB member Jim Chism. Additional funds for the award come from those arts board members who donate the stipend paid for their meeting attendance.

Past recipients include: Evelyn Patricia Terry, Barbara Leigh, Bill Theisen, Reginald Baylor, Roy Staab, Antler, Debra Loewen, Richard Taylor, Yevgeniya Kaganovich, John Ruebartsch, Dinorah Marquez, C. Michael Wright, Lee Erickson, Ruth Schudson & Monty Davis, Sarah Price, Jason Yi, Marie Kohler, Ray Chi, JoAnna Poehlmann, Raoul Deal, Berkeley Fudge, Mark Bucher, Kevin Stalheim, Marina Lee Meyer, Ferne Yangyeitie Caulker, James & Rose Pickering, Reynaldo Hernandez, Jill Sebastian, Terese Agnew, and John Schneider.

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