

2023 -- H 5824

LC001708

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2023

HOUSE RESOLUTION

EXTENDING DEEPEST CONDOLENCES ON THE PASSING OF ADRIAN HALL

Introduced By: Representatives Ajello, Shekarchi, Blazejewski, Chippendale, Kennedy,
Shallcross Smith, Tanzi, Fogarty, Casimiro, and Bennett

Date Introduced: February 28, 2023

Referred To: House read and passed

1 WHEREAS, It is with sadness that this House has learned of the passing of Adrian Hall,
2 a legend in American theater, and the founding artistic director at Trinity Repertory Company;
3 and

4 WHEREAS, Adrian Hall grew up on a farm in the tiny town of Van, Texas, during the
5 Depression. In 1957, together with a group of talented and forward-thinking artists, he started the
6 Phoenicia Playhouse in upstate New York, just outside Woodstock. It was the beginning of what
7 would become a lifetime of innovation and acclaim; and

8 WHEREAS, In the early 1960s, Mr. Hall became the founding artistic director at Trinity
9 Repertory Company in Providence, which he helped establish, and is the person who was most
10 responsible for launching the theatre to national fame and helping to make the City a creative
11 hub. His boundary-breaking vision for the theater as a public square is perhaps his greatest
12 legacy; and

13 WHEREAS, In 1966, the Company received substantial funding from the newly founded
14 National Endowment for the Arts to fund the landmark Project Discovery program, which
15 allowed high school students from all over the State to attend professional live theater for free and
16 brought considerable attention to the Theater; and

17 WHEREAS, Mr. Hall successfully led the efforts to purchase and renovate the Emery's
18 Majestic Theater, providing Trinity with a larger space and in 1973, the company moved to its
19 present location at the Lederer Theater Center. In the late 1970s, Trinity established an actor and
20 director training program, the Trinity Rep Conservatory which evolved into the current

1 Brown/Trinity Rep MFA program; and

2 WHEREAS, For thirty years, Mr. Hall shaped the theater's artistic direction with his
3 distinctive and epic style. The audience and its experience became central to the "Trinity
4 aesthetic" and melded with Mr. Hall's creative genius, ultimately earning Trinity a Tony Award in
5 1981; and

6 WHEREAS, From 1983 through 1986, Mr. Hall ran two major theaters simultaneously,
7 Trinity Repertory and the Dallas Theater Center (DTC), which had been founded only three years
8 earlier; and

9 WHEREAS, In 1986, Mr. Hall left Trinity Rep. and moved full-time to Dallas, Texas,
10 where he eventually spent another three years establishing the DTC's first professional acting
11 ensemble and helping to build the Arts District Theater; and

12 WHEREAS, After leaving the Dallas Theater Center in 1989, Mr. Hall found himself in
13 high demand as a freelance director, working in San Diego, Seattle, Los Angeles, and New York;
14 and

15 WHEREAS, With a style that was often described as "visceral, exposed and starkly
16 flamboyant" Adrian Hall collected artists around him, always travelling with a tribe of fellow
17 theater-makers. He was celebrated for working with new American plays and establishing
18 resident acting companies, and for being a major influence in the first- and second-generation
19 regional theater movement of the 1960s through the late 1980s; and

20 WHEREAS, Mr. Hall's genius developed in seamless tandem with the peerless designer
21 Eugene Lee and together their aesthetic focused on what was theatrical, not filmic, and on how
22 individual, visceral gestures could evoke the range of human experience; and

23 WHEREAS, Describing the love of his life, Adrian Hall stated, "The theater is thousands
24 of years old," and "it has always been man's attempt to tell the stories that mean something to the
25 people there. And most of all, it's alive! It's right in front of them"; and

26 WHEREAS, Mr. Hall was one of the last, living connections to the off-Broadway
27 movement of the 1950s and to the history of the American resident theater movement and his
28 contributions to our State and to the evolution of the Arts and Theater will long be remembered;
29 now, therefore be it

30 RESOLVED, That this House of Representatives of the State of Rhode Island hereby
31 extends deepest condolences on the passing of Adrian Hall; and be it further

32 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to

- 1 transmit a duly certified copy of this resolution to Trinity Repertory Company.

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