

LA JOLLA PLAYHOUSE'S 2022 GALA TO TAKE PLACE ON MARCH 19, CO-CHAIRLED BY DEBBY JACOBS AND KAY GURTIN

Event to Feature Performances by Broadway Powerhouses
James Monroe Iglehart and Daphne Rubin-Vega

Gala Honorees Include Longtime Playhouse Trustee Sheri L. Jamieson and
Tony-Nominated Actress and Playwright Charlayne Woodard

Underwriters' Party Highlighted by Exclusive Performance with
Tony Award Winner Idina Menzel

La Jolla, CA – La Jolla Playhouse's annual Gala will take place on Saturday, **March 19, 2022**, co-chaired by longtime supporters and Playhouse Trustees **Debby Jacobs** and **Kay Gurtin**. Proceeds from this stunning annual event support the Playhouse's innovative New Play Development and Learning & Engagement programs.

The evening will feature a series of spotlight performances by two Broadway powerhouses: **James Monroe Iglehart**, Tony Award winner for his role as the "Genie" in Disney's *Aladdin*, and star of the Playhouse's Broadway-bound musical *Memphis*; and **Daphne Rubin-Vega**, who recently starred in the film of *In the Heights*, earned a Tony Award nomination for her role as "Mimi" in the original Broadway production of *Rent*, and appeared in the Playhouse's acclaimed productions of *Miss You Like Hell* and *Faust*.

The evening will also include tributes to two Playhouse trailblazers, honoring the philanthropic contributions of Playhouse trustee **Sheri L. Jamieson**, who launched the Sheri L. Jamieson New Work Development Fund for La Jolla Playhouse, and the artistic excellence of Tony Award-nominated actor and playwright **Charlayne Woodard**, who has written and/or starred in numerous Playhouse productions, including the Playhouse's 2021/2022 season opener *The Garden*.

As an added highlight, Gala Underwriters with a qualifying gift will be treated to an exclusive performance by Broadway icon and Tony Award winner **Idina Menzel** (Broadway's *Wicked*, *Rent*, *Frozen* film) at the **Underwriters' Party** on January 13, 2022 at a spectacular private residence. Menzel is developing the new musical *Redwood* with La Jolla Playhouse, which she is co-writing with Kate Diaz and Tina Landau.

The Gala will begin with a cocktail party in the Sheila and Hughes Potiker Theatre Lobby and Taper Plaza in the Joan and Irwin Jacobs Theatre District. Guests will then move inside the Potiker Theatre, which will be transformed into a beautiful cabaret space with luxury booth seating. A specially-prepared menu crafted by Chef **Jeffrey Strauss/Pamplemousse Grille** will be paired with hand-selected wines to create an exquisite culinary experience.

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Throughout the evening, the space will come alive with musical performances by **Iglehart** and **Rubin-Vega**. The event will conclude with an after-party, where guests can continue to mix, mingle, dance and enjoy a special live performance by DJ and musician Alex Seaver, professionally known as **Mako**, along with cocktails by Snake Oil Cocktail Co. and late night bites and desserts.

For guests at the Commanderie and Sommelier ticket levels, the Playhouse has lined up a group of **Wine Hosts** to curate a true sensory experience from the hosts' private wine collections. Each host will take their Gala table on a journey of their choosing – be it by region, varietal or pairings.

In addition to Co-Chairs Debby Jacobs and Kay Gurtin, the **2022 Gala Committee** includes Denise Bevers, David Bialis, Hope Carlson, Lisa Casey, Michelle Chereque, Annie Ellis, Luke Gulley, Laura Spielman, Susan Tousi and Katie Wynn.

Lead sponsorship for the Gala is provided by Bank of America Private Bank, Pathfinder Partners, Qualcomm, Show Imaging and UC San Diego.

For more information about the 2022 Playhouse Gala, please contact gala@ljp.org.

Honoree Biographies

Sheri L. Jamieson has served on the Board of Trustees at the La Jolla Playhouse for nearly two decades. In 2019, her generous support helped establish the Sheri L. Jamieson New Work Development Fund for La Jolla Playhouse, an essential endowment fund that will safeguard the resources to support the Playhouse's longtime commitment to new work development in perpetuity, and secure its place as a vibrant and supportive home for artists to create the new and the next in American theatre. She is an alumna and longtime supporter of UC San Diego, including the Moores Cancer Center, Sulpizio Cardiovascular Center, the University Art Gallery and the Jacobs Medical Center. In 2020 she was honored with UC San Diego's True Triton Award. She also served as a founding member of the J. Paul Getty Villa Council and the Philodora Society at the Metropolitan Museum in New York City.

Charlayne Woodard has written and performed four acclaimed solo plays: the Playhouse-developed *Pretty Fire* (NAACP Award) and *The Night Watcher* (LA Drama Critics Award), as well as *Neat* (Irving and Blanche Laurie Theatre Vision Award), *In Real Life* (Drama Desk nomination, Audelco and NAACP Awards), and the Playhouse-commissioned *The Garden*. Her multi-character plays are *Flight* and *Phenom*. Recent acting credits include *Daddy* by Jeremy O. Harris; *Hamlet* (Gertrude); *The Substance of Fire* by Jon Robin Baitz; *The Witch of Edmonton* (Obie Award); *In the Blood* by Suzan-Lori Parks (Obie Award); *Fabulation* by Lynn Nottage and *Stunning* by David Adjmi. She has also appeared in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Shout Up a Morning*, *The Good Person of Setzuan* and *The Nightingale* at La Jolla Playhouse. On Broadway, she was in the original company of *Ain't Misbehavin'* (Tony and Drama Desk Award nominations). She is a regular on the FX series *Pose* and recurs on both *Prodigal Son* and *Sneaky Pete*. She trained at the Goodman School of Drama in Chicago, received an honorary Doctorate in Humane Letters from DePaul University, and is a member of The Actor's Studio.

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Gala Artist Biographies

Tony Award winner **James Monroe Iglehart** is a native of the San Francisco Bay area. He most recently appeared on Broadway in two productions simultaneously – in the smash-hit *Hamilton*, playing Lafayette/Jefferson, and with *Freestyle Love Supreme* as their special guest star. He made his Broadway debut in *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*. Iglehart then originated the role of Bobby in *Memphis* on Broadway before landing the role of Genie in *Aladdin*. For his work as the Genie, James won both the Tony Award and the Drama Desk Award for Best Featured Actor in a Musical. James made his sold-out solo debut at 54 Below in a show entitled “How the Heck Did I Get Here?” He was brought back for a sold-out return engagement shortly thereafter. James has brought his act to concert venues across the country. He recurred on the Netflix series *Maniac* opposite Jonah Hill and Emma Stone and *Unbreakable Kimmy Schmidt* as Coriolanus Burt, the rival of male protagonist Titus Andromedon, played by Tituss Burgess. James also guest-starred on *At Home with Amy Sedaris*, the Fox television shows *Perfect Harmony* and *Gotham* and on CBS’ *Elementary* and *The Good Wife*. He voices the role of Lance Strongbow on all three seasons of the hit Disney animated television show *Tangled*. He made his feature debut opposite Richard Gere, Peter Dinklage and Julliana Margulies in the *Three Christs* and next up will be seen in a supporting role in the Enchanted sequel *Disenchanted*, as part of “Robert’s” (Patrick Dempsey) crew. This, and all things, for his perfect wife Dawn.

Daphne Rubin-Vega is a two-time Tony and Drama Desk Award nominee and recipient of the Theater World, Obie and Blockbuster Awards. She starred in the Playhouse’s productions of *Miss You Like Hell* and *Faust*. She is perhaps best known for originating the roles of Mimi in *Rent* and Conchita in *Anna in the Tropics*, both Pulitzer Prize-winning Broadway shows for which she was nominated for the Tony Award. She also originated the roles of Inez in Quiara Alegría Hudes’ *Daphne’s Dive* at Signature Theatre, Rahmi in *Gum*, Sofia in Nilo Cruz’s *Two Sisters and a Piano*, Canary Mary in Suzan-Lori Parks’ *Fucking A* (Lucille Lortel nomination) and Lucy in *Jack Goes Boating* at the Public Theater, as well as starred in the Broadway revivals of *A Streetcar Named Desire*, *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* (Magenta) and *Les Miserables* (Fantine). Film credits include Daniela in the recent film of Lin Manuel Miranda’s *In the Heights*, Gloria Perez in *Wild Things*, starring Kevin Bacon and Matt Dillon (Blockbuster Award for Best Supporting Actress), Tia in *Flawless*, opposite Robert De Niro, and reprising the role of Lucy in the film version of *Jack Goes Boating*. Other screen credits include *Smash*, *Justice*, *Skeleton Woman* (New York Independent Film award), *Virgin*, *Sex and the City* and *I Like It Like That*. Rubin-Vega was a member of the girl group Pajama Party, whose single “Yo No Se” was #1 on the Billboard dance charts. They made two albums on Atlantic Records before she began writing and recording solo singles for the indie dance label Maxi. In 1997, She cut her first album of original music, “Souvenirs” on the subsequently defunct Mercury label and in 2006; she produced, performed, and primarily wrote “Redemption Songs” (Sh-K-Boom).

Los Angeles-based composer, songwriter and record producer **Alex Seaver** has made an immediate mark with a unique and versatile approach spanning genres and influences of music. The Juilliard-trained artist has earned 150-million combined streams to date as frontman for Pop/Electronic project **Mako**, while contributing music across film, television, video games, radio, and streaming services. As a performer, he has toured internationally with artist David Guetta, performed at the Coachella and Lollapalooza music festivals, in addition to headlining tours across North America and orchestral appearances at Carnegie Hall. Seaver’s work as a pop songwriter has earned him credits with Avicii, Steve Angello, Alan Walker, Madison Beer, R3hab, and Against The Current.

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Underwriters' Party Artist Biography

Idina Menzel is a powerhouse multi-hyphenate: a singer, an actress in film and TV, a songwriter, a Broadway star, and a philanthropist. She rose to fame for her role as Maureen in the hit Broadway musical *Rent*, and her career took off when she won a Tony Award for her role as Elphaba in the smash musical *Wicked*. Her voice can be heard as Elsa in Disney's Oscar® winning *Frozen*, the second highest grossing animated films of all time. The film's song "Let It Go," voiced by Menzel, became an instant international phenomenon, winning the Oscar® for Best Original Song and the Grammy® Award for Best Song Written for Visual Media. The track reached #5 on the Billboard Hot 100, making Menzel the first artist with both a Billboard Top 10 hit and a Tony Award for acting. She later reprised her leading role as Elsa in Disney's *Frozen 2*, which broke records to become the highest grossing animated movie of all time. Menzel can currently be seen in Amazon Studios' smash hit *Cinderella* and recently wrapped production for the *Enchanted* sequel, *Enchanted 2: Disenchanted*, alongside Amy Adams, Patrick Dempsey and Susan Sarandon. She also joined Adam Sandler in the Safdie Brothers' critically acclaimed and Film Independent Spirit Award-winning A24 film *Uncut Gems*. A skillful songwriter, Menzel's prolific recording career includes multiple cast albums and the solo albums: *Still I Can't Be Still*, *Here, I Stand*, *idina*, and her latest album, *Christmas: A Season of Love*, which was released October 2019 via Schoolboy Records/Decca Records. Her first holiday album, *Holiday Wishes*, was released in October 2014 and debuted at #1 on Billboard's Holiday Albums chart. Her third studio LP of original songs, *idina*, landed in the Top 30 on Billboard's Top 200 charts upon its release in 2016. Menzel received the Breakthrough Artist of the Year Award at Billboard's annual Women in Music event in 2014 and performed the National Anthem at Super Bowl XLIX. In January 2017, Menzel was seen in Lifetime's remake of *Beaches*, in which she portrays the role of CC, made famous by Bette Midler. Her other film credits include Disney's *Enchanted*, opposite Susan Sarandon, Patrick Dempsey and Amy Adams; Maureen in Chris Columbus' film version of *Rent* and Robert Towne's *Ask the Dust*, opposite Salma Hayek and Colin Farrell. On television, Menzel appeared in the recurring role of Shelby Corcoran on Fox's *Glee*. Menzel was previously seen on Broadway in the original production *If/Then*, for which she earned her third Tony nomination. In London, she premiered the Broadway hit *Wicked* and received the Theatregoers Choice Award for Best Actress in a Musical. She also starred in Michael John LaChiusa's musical, *See What I Wanna See* and in the West Coast premiere of Joshua Harmon's *Skintight*. Philanthropy is also important to Menzel, who co-founded the A BroaderWay Foundation in 2010, an organization dedicated to offering girls from underserved communities an outlet for self-expression and creativity through arts-centered programs. In 2014, Menzel was recognized as one of Variety's Power of Women honorees for her work with the organization.

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La Jolla Playhouse is a place where artists and audiences come together to create what's new and next in the American theatre, from Tony Award-winning productions, to imaginative programs for young audiences, to interactive experiences outside our theatre walls. Founded in 1947 by Gregory Peck, Dorothy McGuire and Mel Ferrer, the Playhouse is currently led by Tony Award winner Christopher Ashley, the Rich Family Artistic Director of La Jolla Playhouse, and Managing Director Debby Buchholz. The Playhouse is internationally renowned for the development of new plays and musicals, including mounting 105 world premieres, commissioning 60 new works, and sending 33 productions to Broadway – including the hit musical *Come From Away* – garnering a total of 38 Tony Awards, as well as the 1993 Tony Award for Outstanding Regional Theatre.