

LA JOLLA PLAYHOUSE'S 2023 GALA TO TAKE PLACE ON MARCH 18, CO-CHAIRIED BY DEBBY JACOBS AND KAY GURTIN

EVENT TO FEATURE PERFORMANCES BY TWO-TIME TONY AWARD-WINNER SUTTON FOSTER

GALA HONOREES INCLUDE ACCLAIMED WRITER/DIRECTOR MOISÉS KAUFMAN AND
LONGTIME PLAYHOUSE TRUSTEE JEFFREY RESSLER, IN MEMORIAM

La Jolla, CA – La Jolla Playhouse's annual Gala will take place on Saturday, **March 18, 2023**, co-chaired by longtime supporters and Playhouse Trustees **Debby Jacobs** and **Kay Gurtin**. This stunning annual event supports the Playhouse's innovative New Play Development and Learning & Engagement programs.

The evening will feature a series of spotlight performances by Broadway powerhouse **Sutton Foster**, two-time Tony Award winner and star of TV's *Younger*. She also starred in La Jolla Playhouse's Broadway-bound musical *Thoroughly Modern Millie*. The evening will also include tributes to two Playhouse trailblazers: Tony Award nominee **Moisés Kaufman**, writer/director for the Playhouse's acclaimed productions of *Here There Are Blueberries* and *I Am My Own Wife*, among others; and longtime Playhouse Trustee and donor **Jeffrey Ressler**, who will be honored in memoriam.

The Gala will begin with a cocktail party at 6:00pm 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.

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 2023 Gala Committee includes Valerie Attisha, Denise Bevers, Randy Camp, Lisa Casey, Kim Chesbrough, Randy Clark, Liz Coden, Jamie Colby, Annie Ellis, Hanna Gleiberman, Luke Gulley, Dwight Hare, Tammie Kramer, Veronica Leff, Lynelle Lynch, Laura Spielman, Rachel Terrones, Carrie Vilaplana, Margarita Wilkinson and Lise Wilson.

Gala sponsors include: Presenting Sponsor: UC San Diego; Platinum Sponsors: Bank of America, Qualcomm, Show Imaging, UC San Diego and Van Cleef & Arpels; Gold Sponsors: Duane Morris and Wells Fargo; Silver Sponsors: Ascent Private Capital Management of U.S. Bank, Pathfinder Partners, PNC Bank, Seltzer Caplan McMahon Vitek, Sempra and US Private Wealth Management; plus additional corporate support from KPBS, Nordstrom and UC San Diego Health.

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Honoree Biographies

Jeffrey Ressler was one of La Jolla Playhouse's most dedicated and passionate supporters. A member of the Board for more than two decades, Jeffrey fervently championed new work, establishing the Jordan Ressler Charitable Fund of the Jewish Community Foundation in 2006 to support the development of new plays and musicals at the Playhouse. His love of theatre was matched only by his efforts to make the Playhouse a safe and supportive haven for artists. Jeffrey, along with his wife Vivien, contributed greatly to the fabric of the greater San Diego community through their generous philanthropic efforts at such organizations as the San Diego Jewish Community Foundation and the San Diego Center for Jewish Culture, and Vivien has continued that legacy of support in the community.

A celebrated La Jolla Playhouse artist, **Moisés Kaufman** has enjoyed a decades-long relationship with the theatre, having developed several productions at the Playhouse, including *The Laramie Project* (writer/director; Drama Desk Award nomination), Doug Wright's *I Am My Own Wife* (director; Obie Award, Tony, Drama Desk, Outer Critics Circle and Lucille Lortel Award nominations); *33 Variations* (writer/director; Tony Award nomination for Best Play), and most recently, the critically-acclaimed *Here There Are Blueberries* (writer/director). His Broadway credits include *Paradise Square*, the revival of Harvey Fierstein's *Torch Song*, Rajiv Joseph's *Bengal Tiger at the Baghdad Zoo*. In the West End: *Gross Indecency: The Three Trials of Oscar Wilde* (writer/director), *I Am My Own Wife*, *This Is How It Goes*. Film/TV credits include *The Laramie Project* (HBO, two Emmy Award nominations for writing and directing, Opening Night Selection at the 2002 Sundance Film Festival, Humanitas Prize). Moisés is also the Artistic Director of Tectonic Theater Project and a Guggenheim Fellow in Playwriting.

Gala Artist Biographies

Sutton Foster is an award-winning actor, singer and dancer who has performed in eleven Broadway shows – most recently the acclaimed revival of *The Music Man* – and originated roles in *The Drowsy Chaperone*, *Little Women*, *Young Frankenstein*, *Shrek The Musical*, along with her Tony Award-winning performances in *Anything Goes* and the Playhouse-born *Thoroughly Modern Millie*. She was first seen on television on *Star Search* at age 15 and has more recently appeared in *Bunheads*, *Psych*, *Johnny and the Sprites*, *Flight of the Conchords*, *Sesame Street*, *Law & Order SVU* and *Royal Pains*. From 2015 to 2021 she starred in TV Land's hit series *Younger*, created by Darren Star. As a solo artist, Sutton has performed all over the country as well as internationally with her musical director Michael Rafter, featuring songs from her debut solo CD "Wish" and her follow up CD "An Evening With Sutton Foster: Live at the Cafe Carlyle." She has graced the stages of Carnegie Hall, Feinstein's, Lincoln Center's American Songbook series, Joe's Pub and many others. Last fall, Sutton released her memoir *Hooked: How Crafting Saved My Life*. She holds an Honorary Doctorate degree from Ball State University where she also is on faculty as a teacher and advisor to the Department of Theatre and Dance.

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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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 110 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.

For more information about tickets and sponsorship opportunities for the 2023 La Jolla Playhouse Gala, please contact gala@ljp.org

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