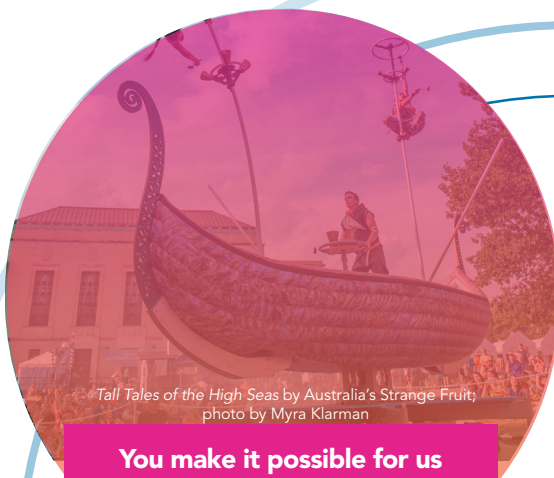


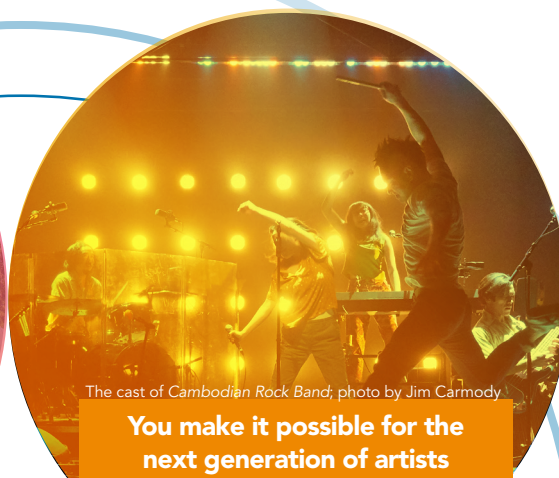


2019/2020 SEASON IMPACT REPORT



Tall Tales of the High Seas by Australia's Strange Fruit;
photo by Myra Klarman

**You make it possible for us
to WOW San Diego.**



The cast of Cambodian Rock Band; photo by Jim Carmody

**You make it possible for the
next generation of artists
to tell the stories that the
world needs to hear.**



**You make it possible for
students to see their first play.**



**You make it possible for military
personnel to create new
memories with their families.**

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Mission & Vision Statement

La Jolla Playhouse advances theatre as an art form and as a vital social, moral and political platform by providing unfettered creative opportunities for the leading artists of today and tomorrow. With our youthful spirit and eclectic, artist-driven approach we will continue to cultivate a local and national following with an insatiable appetite for audacious and diverse work.

In the future, San Diego’s La Jolla Playhouse will be considered singularly indispensable to the worldwide theatre landscape as we become a permanent safe harbor for the unsafe and surprising. The day will come when it will be essential to enter the La Jolla Playhouse village in order to get a glimpse of what is about to happen in American theatre.

A MESSAGE FROM PLAYHOUSE LEADERSHIP



Thank you for your generous support of the 2019/2020 Season. As a safe harbor for the unsafe and surprising, we are proud to deliver thrilling and memorable theatrical moments to you – our donors – every day.

The past season featured incredible new work. Our subscription series brought six original, diverse and empathetic stories to the stage, each sharing a unique perspective about the human experience. Last October, our Without Walls (WOW) Festival took place at ARTS DISTRICT Liberty Station. Over four fantastic days, thousands of guests enjoyed 23 unique immersive theatre experiences, many for free!

Our Education and Outreach programs enriched classrooms all over San Diego County, introducing students to the joy of live theatre. The 2020 Performance Outreach Program (POP) Tour, in partnership with National Disability Theatre (NDT), shared *Emily Driver’s Great Race Through Time and Space* with over 10,000 students. We were extremely proud to bring this play, created by and about the disability community, to thousands of children across the county.

Finally, your support made theatre accessible to new audiences. We welcomed a cohort of eight new participants to our Veterans Playwriting Workshop and hosted 125 guests to Military Family Day. Last fall, nearly four hundred high school students joined us for a student matinee of *Cambodian Rock Band*. We also increased accessibility for patrons by installing new hearing loops in both the Mandell Weiss and Mandell Weiss Forum Theatres.

There are so many inspiring stories. For all the details of your impact, we encourage you to review this report to learn how your charitable giving transformed lives through theatre.

Although physically closed, our staff have been busy creating our new digital stage! Projects include new WOW productions, virtual education classes for children and adults, interviews with artists and more. We are also in the process of constructing actionable plans to make our institution a more diverse, mission-driven theatre, giving further voice to BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) artists, staff and audiences.

Thank you for your commitment to the Playhouse. As a regional non-profit theatre, your support is vital in ensuring that exceptional art remains on our stages and in the community, especially now. We look forward to the day when we can reopen our doors and welcome you back to the Playhouse.

With gratitude,

Christopher Ashley,
The Rich Family Artistic Director
of La Jolla Playhouse

Debby Buchholz,
Managing Director
of La Jolla Playhouse

CREATING

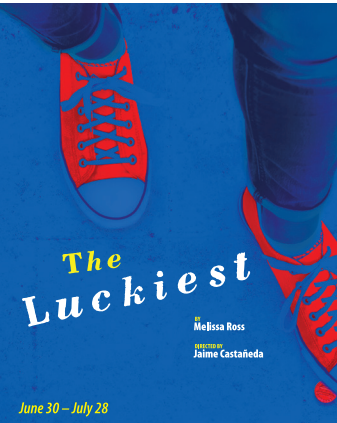
THE SEASON

“There’s a sense of a moment at the Playhouse that the new work development here is firing on all cylinders.”

– Christopher Ashley, The Rich Family Artistic Director of La Jolla Playhouse and 2017 Tony Award winner for Best Direction of a Musical

The Playhouse is committed to developing new work and providing unfettered creative opportunities to the leading playwrights, directors, actors and designers of today and tomorrow. Each season presents compelling stories that inspire passionate conversations and unlock the transformative power of theatre. There was certainly much to discover in our 2019/2020 Season, as the six main-stage productions for the year included *Put Your House in Order*, *The Luckiest*, *The Coast Starlight*, *Kiss My Aztec!*, *Cambodian Rock Band* and *Fly*. Additionally, we produced our fourth biennial Without Walls (WOW) Festival and toured our POP Tour, *Emily Driver’s Great Race Through Time and Space* to schools throughout San Diego County.

An estimated 100,000 individuals attended these events and performances.



PLAYWRIGHT SPOTLIGHT – LAUREN YEE

Lauren Yee, whose *Cambodian Rock Band* was a critically-acclaimed and award-winning audience favorite, is currently one of the most-produced playwrights in America. We were excited to welcome this Alumna of UC San Diego’s M.F.A. program back to our campus during the 2019/2020 Season.



Joe Ngo, Brooke Ishibashi, Jane Lui and Moses Villarama in *Cambodian Rock Band*. Photo by Jim Carmody.

Cambodian Rock Band shares how the Khmer Rouge’s brutal regime cut short the Cambodian rock scene of the 60’s and 70’s. Although heartbreaking, it is also a play about redemption, as the music and stories from that time continue to survive today. Lauren wanted to ensure that the Khmer community was present to hear their story and was deeply encouraged by the dedication of La Jolla Playhouse to organize and host a special performance for several hundred members of Southern California’s Khmer community. Lauren even participated in a post-show gathering and talkback with the audience, which capped off a beautiful, emotional and healing day. The collaboration between Lauren and the staff from the Playhouse to serve the community through theatre was incredible!



We eagerly anticipate working with Lauren again on her world-premiere play, *Mother Russia*.

“When I was a grad student at UC San Diego, I was continually inspired and delighted by the depth and breadth of what the Playhouse is doing. Today, I am grateful for the artistic home I’ve been able to find at La Jolla Playhouse.”

– Lauren Yee, *Cambodian Rock Band*



Lauren Yee celebrates *Cambodian Rock Band* with members of the Khmer community.

WITHOUT WALLS (WOW) FESTIVAL

The Playhouse's Without Walls (WOW) Festival is a dizzying variety of immersive and site-specific theatre that attracts energetic art lovers, thrill seekers and families. The festival features local, national and international artists engaging with audiences in vibrant, interactive experiences. Full of diverse offerings, WOW shows all have one thing in common – they are an invitation to rethink theatre through intriguing and playful experiences.

Last October, La Jolla Playhouse's biennial WOW Festival was held at ARTS DISTRICT Liberty Station. Over the course of four days, seven international, three national, and 12 local arts groups partnered with the Playhouse to "wow" San Diego. More than 17,000 San Diegans experienced 23 projects, many of which were free and the rest costing no more than \$20 per ticket. This festival is an introduction for many to theatre and the Playhouse. We look forward to continuing WOW Festivals and projects in the years to come!

Here are some highlights from the 2019 WOW Festival:



Written in Stone by Backyard Renaissance Theatre Company, San Diego



Peregrinus by Teatr KTO, Poland



Tall Tales of the High Seas by Australia's Strange Fruit



Hall Pass by Blindspot Collective, San Diego

ARTIST SPOTLIGHT – DAVID ISRAEL REYNOSO



"It's exciting to gather artists from around the world who are really challenging assumptions and boundaries of what theatre can do. Normally, you'd need to travel to Edinburgh or Spain or somewhere else to see these exciting theatre festivals. To have it happen here in San Diego is unbelievable."

– David Israel Reynoso, San Diego artist, current La Jolla Playhouse Artist-in-Residence, 2017 and 2019 WOW Festival participant, and 2020 Digital WOW Series creator

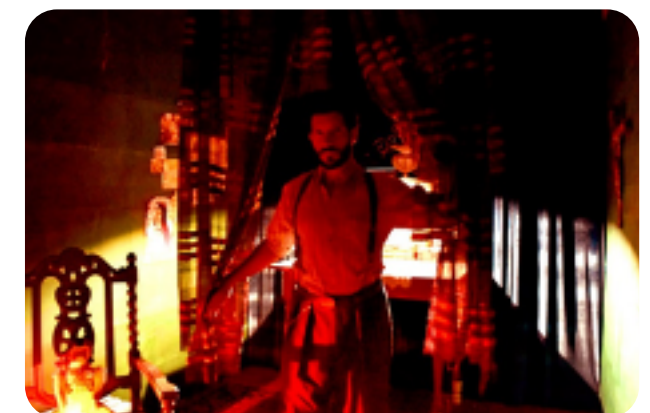
La Jolla Playhouse is proud to serve as a home for artists from all fields – playwrights, directors, designers and actors – who return to the Playhouse again and again to develop their work and expand their skills. One of the exciting ways the Playhouse fosters these artistic relationships is by offering an annual residency to an artist and another residency to a theatre company.

The Playhouse recently named renowned immersive artist and award-winning scenic and costume designer, David Israel Reynoso, as the 2020/2021 Artist-in-Residence. A San Diego resident, David and his company Optika Moderna created the productions of *Las Quinceañeras* and *Waking La Llorona* for the Playhouse's 2019 and 2017 Without Walls Festivals. He has also designed costumes and/or sets for for the recent Playhouse productions of *Queens*, *Tiger Style!* and *Healing Wars*, and won an Obie Award for his costume design for the immersive hit *Sleep No More* in New York.

David is creating a new piece for our 2020 Digital WOW Festival. His project will bring audience members on an inventive, multi-sensory virtual journey without ever leaving their living room. Guests unlock an online secret portal to meet Optika Moderna's mysterious opticians revealing their latest procedure: *Portaleza*. This kinetoscopic wormhole expedition engages audiences' senses in unexpected ways. This world premiere will evoke all the visual lushness, theatrical surprise and one-on-one connection of Optika Moderna's acclaimed style, but re-envisioned through the lens of a digital space.



Las Quinceañeras



Waking La Llorona

LEARNING

PERFORMANCE OUTREACH PROGRAM (POP) TOUR

Every year, for over 30 years, La Jolla Playhouse has commissioned and toured an original play for young audiences to schools, libraries and community centers. For many students, this is their first theatrical experience! To prepare them, teachers receive Playhouse-created lesson plans and have the option to invite a Playhouse teaching artist to lead a pre-show workshop.

This year's POP Tour, *Emily Driver's Great Race Through Time and Space*, created in partnership with National Disability Theatre, traveled all across San Diego County sharing the story of 12-year-old Emily and her quest for a wheelchair. Throughout the play, Emily learns the power of speaking up and how one voice can inspire others to create a more accessible world. Although interrupted by school closures in mid-March, the POP Tour completed the majority of its tour with 49 performances at 37 sites which was seen by 10,888 students out of the anticipated 15,000.

"Thank you so much for your play. I especially liked the scene when Emily and her mom finally got Hugh to give her the wheelchair. Hugh realized that everybody needs help sometimes."

– Aurora G., Bell Middle School



Jaye Wilson, Farah Dinga and Cass Pfann in *Emily Driver's Great Race Through Time and Space*. Photo by Jamie Scott Lytle.



Costume designs for *Emily Driver's Great Race Through Time and Space* by Mallory Kay Nelson.

Story of Impact

This year's POP Tour brought transformative change to the community. When the POP Tour visited Sequoia Elementary, the cast and crew had to assemble the set and the props on the floor because the school did not have an accessible ramp or lift to the stage. Although the principal was grateful for the team's quick thinking, he was saddened by the actors' experience. He immediately reported this incident to the San Diego Unified School District, asking for resources to make their auditorium accessible. They are now building an

accessible ramp up to the stage. This is so important because currently, there is a young student enrolled there who uses a wheelchair and participates in the school's weekly choir group. Each week, the teacher must lift the girl's chair up to the stage. Fortunately, this student will soon be able to access the stage by using the brand new ramp!

Donor Spotlight

This year's POP Tour had a budget that was about 20% larger than standard. The increased budget was a result of the Playhouse's commitment to ensure that proper accessibility requirements were met. With this larger budget came the need for increased funding. Two families, Robin and Larry Rusinko and Jack and Caroline Raymond, stepped up to give a collective \$30,000 to incentivize new or additional funding with a matching challenge. In response, 151 individual donors came together and collectively raised \$133,512 for the 2020 POP Tour. Their leadership was essential in reaching our goal and making this year's POP Tour a success.

CONNECTING

Military Engagement Activities

San Diego's military community plays a vital role in our lives, and the Playhouse is proud to play one in theirs. Over 600 complimentary tickets were given out to members of the military community during the 2019/2020 Season. Programs like Military Night Out, Military Family Day and the Veterans Playwriting Workshop provide military members and their loved ones important moments of connection and reflection.



Enjoying Military Night Out!



Sharing Shairi's Story

When we announced La Jolla Playhouse would be offering a free playwriting workshop for veterans, U.S. Air Force Veteran Shairi Engle was among the first to join. At the time, she was beginning to develop her voice as a storyteller and loved theatre but had never written a play. Through the program, Shairi received amazing resources, working closely with a cohort of veterans, Playhouse staff, teaching artists and experts in new play development. The words came pouring out, and her story, *Tampons, Dead Dogs and Other Disposable Things*, was finally down on paper.

With the encouragement of her friends and mentors at the Playhouse, Shairi submitted her play to a competition held by Arts in the Armed Forces (AITAF), a non-profit co-founded by actor and US Marine Corps Veteran Adam Driver. Each year, AITAF selects one play to receive their prestigious Bridge Award, and in 2019, Pulitzer Prize and Tony Award winner Tony Kushner (*Angels in America*) chose Shairi's play as the winner! Since then, her piece has received two workshops (one at The Public Theater and one at the Playhouse) and she is now enjoying mentorship by Pulitzer Prize finalist Heidi Schreck (*What the Constitution Means to Me*).

In deep appreciation of the Playhouse, Shairi is now giving back to us, advising the newest group of Veteran Playwrights.

"Not to put too fine a point on it, but the Veterans Playwriting Workshop saved my life. While I went through a PTSD treatment program at the VA Hospital, I was also attending the writing workshop. It always struck me that the exit sign for the hospital off the I-5 also pointed to La Jolla Playhouse, which is where the real therapy took place."

– Shairi Engle, Veteran Playwriting Participant and AITAF 2019 Bridge Award Winner

PLAYHOUSE PARTNERS – GIVING THEIR TIME

The Playhouse Partners are the volunteer organization for La Jolla Playhouse. Founded in 1988, the group's mission is to promote the Playhouse, donate time and services, and to strengthen Playhouse ties with the community.

In the 2019/2020 Season, there were 166 Partners who volunteered a total of 6,844 hours! In addition to giving their time, many of the Playhouse Partners are donors and collectively raised funds to sponsor the POP Tour assembly of *Emily Driver's Great Race Through Time and Space* at Fletcher Elementary School.

Playhouse Partners assist Company Management by organizing "Tech Dinners" for everyone who is working hard through the weekend to launch a play or musical. At Tech Dinners, Partners provide a home-cooked meal for the company during one of the final days of rehearsals. The actors and creative team are always so appreciative of the Partners for their efforts to take care of them.

Additional volunteer hours are provided to support the Front of House team, where Playhouse Partners assist by welcoming patrons, providing information, dispensing assisted hearing devices and answering customer service questions at the Patrons Booth. Playhouse Partners also work in the front office to file, answer calls at the reception desk and assist with special projects for mailings or events.



"I love the privilege of being a Playhouse Partner! My favorite activities are working the front desk during the week, where I get to interact with Playhouse staff, and our famous Tech Dinners, where we serve a home-cooked meal to the hard-working cast and crew of every show. Being a Partner gets me as close to the stage as I'll ever get!"

- Andrew Boyd, President of the Playhouse Partners



LEGACY

All of the programs listed in this packet are possible due to the tremendous support of members of The Revelle Legacy Society. Every planned gift makes a lasting impact, building our endowment to benefit and sustain the bright future of La Jolla Playhouse.

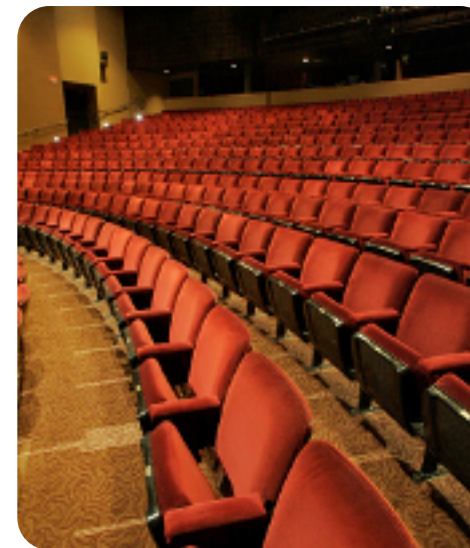
Endowment

The Playhouse is thankful to Sheri L. Jamieson and Irwin and Joan Jacobs for their leadership and transformational giving to secure the future of new work development at La Jolla Playhouse. In grateful appreciation, we launched the Sheri L. Jamieson New Work Development Fund, which will perpetually support us in creating new work and funding commissions, residencies, workshops and readings.



"I am honored to be able to play a role in establishing a fund for La Jolla Playhouse that I believe secures our mission now and for future generations. It will be the cement that binds our programs and our commitment to doing the new and the next, which will invite creatives to create and audiences to experience and connect for generations."

- Sheri L. Jamieson

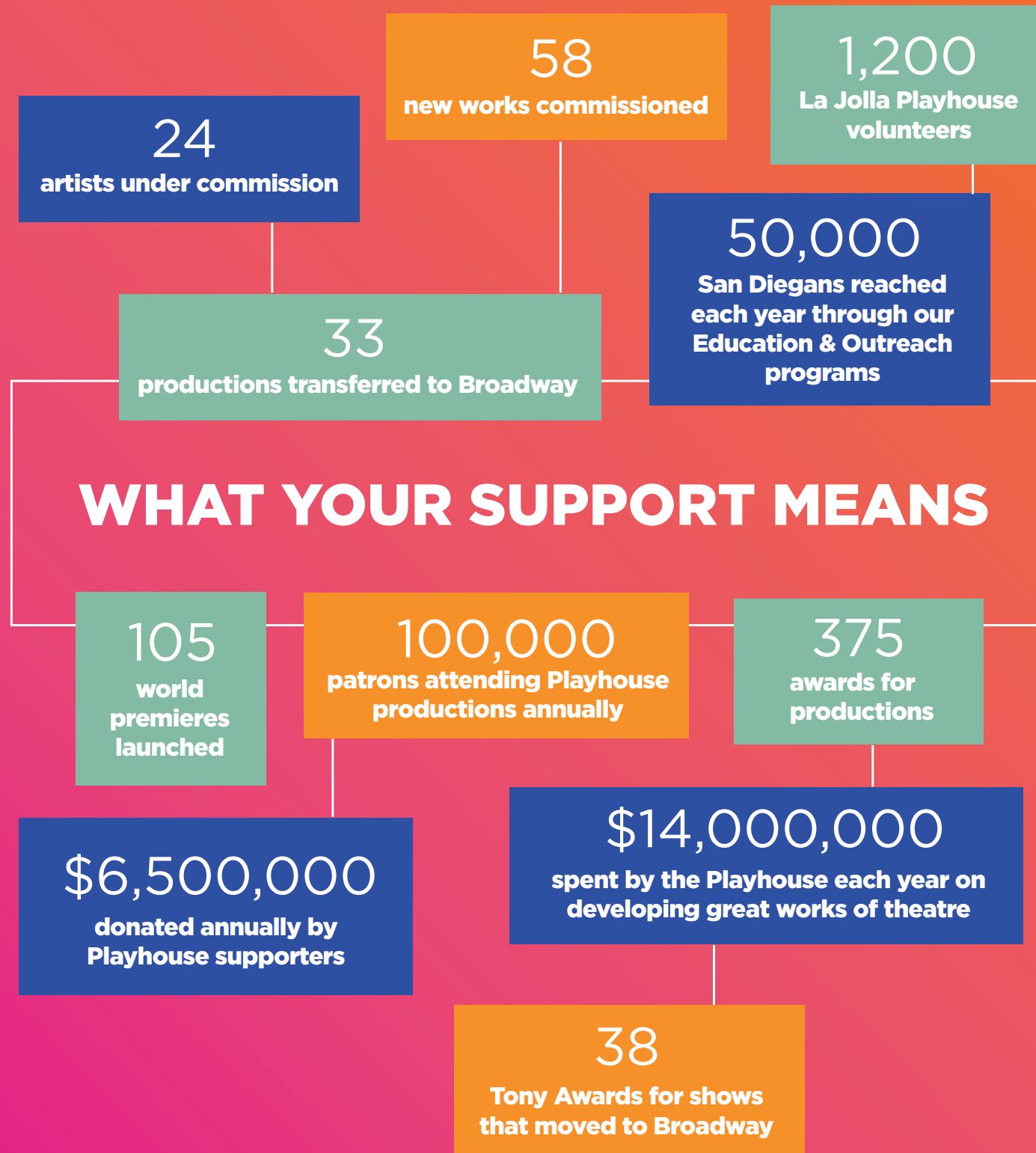


Planned Giving

In 2011, Judy Benson and her husband Roger stopped attending the Playhouse. They made this heartbreaking decision after it became increasingly difficult for Roger to hear. The decision was not easy, as theatre was something they both loved. When it came time to think about his legacy plans, Roger decided to remember the Playhouse. Last year, after Roger passed, we learned he had bequeathed \$10,000 to the Playhouse. With Judy's guidance, the donation was designated to help the Playhouse install a hearing loop system, a technology which allows hearing impaired audience members to more easily hear the dialogue on stage. With support from the Bensons, along with capital improvement grants from Las Patronas, Supervisor Kristin Gaspar of District

3 and Supervisor Nathan Fletcher of District 4, the hearing loop is now installed in both the Mandell Weiss and Mandell Weiss Forum Theaters -- making it easier for many to enjoy theatre once again.

PLAYHOUSE BY THE NUMBERS



MEMORABLE MOMENTS



The Jacobs family celebrates with Pete Townshend at the TOMMY Benefit concert.



Co-Chairs of Innovation Night (Mike Krenn, Ed Dennis, Mary Walshok, Tim Scott, Denise Bevers and Randy Clark) are all smiles on their big night!



The cast and creative team of *The Coast Starlight*.



Post-show fun at Military Family Day.



Dea and Osborn Hurston (Trustee, US Bank) celebrate Opening Night of *Fly*.



Lynelle Lynch, Dwight Hare, Stephanie Bergsma and Wendy Gillespie.



The cast of *Kiss My Aztec!*.



Silvija and Brian Devine (Artistic Director Circle Sponsors) celebrate Opening Night of *The Coast Starlight*.



The cast and creative team of *The Luckiest*.



Kids playing in Boats during the WOW Festival.



The cast and creative team of the 2020 POP Tour, *Emily Driver's Great Race Through Time and Space*.



Christopher Ashley and Debby Buchholz with Chancellor Pradeep Khosla, UC San Diego.



Larry and Robin Rusinko (Show Sponsors, *The Luckiest*) celebrate Opening Night with Karen Quinones (Trustee) and her daughter, Carmen.



The cast of *Fly*.



For more memories and photos, visit the galleries uploaded on La Jolla Playhouse's Facebook page.



The cast and creative team of *Put Your House in Order*.

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Special Events Manager

Erica Kao
Special Events Coordinator

HISTORY OF THE PLAYHOUSE

La Jolla Playhouse was founded in 1947 by Gregory Peck, Dorothy McGuire and Mel Ferrer and was revived in 1983 by Des McAnuff. Christopher Ashley now serves as The Rich Family Artistic Director, and Debby Buchholz serves as Managing Director. La Jolla Playhouse is an internationally-renowned not-for-profit theatre situated on the University of California, San Diego campus. Each year, 100,000+ patrons attend performances at the Playhouse and thousands of children and adults participate in the theatre's Education and Outreach programs.



Playhouse Founders Gregory Peck, Dorothy McGuire and Mel Ferrer

With 33 Broadway transfers, 105 world premieres and a Tony Award for Christopher Ashley, La Jolla Playhouse's innovative productions have merited over 300 major honors, including 38 Tony Awards for plays originating at La Jolla Playhouse and the Tony Award for Outstanding American Regional Theatre (1993). Playhouse-originated plays have transferred to Broadway, Off-Broadway and to regional theatres including American theatres like the Kennedy Center, the Humana Festival, and to international venues in London, Brussels, Rotterdam and Moscow.

TOGETHER
we create what's
NEW & NEXT
in American Theatre

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La Jolla Playhouse
Attn: Philanthropy Department
P.O. Box 12039
La Jolla, CA 92039

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