

LA JOLLA PLAYHOUSE ANNOUNCES COMPLETE CAST AND CREATIVE TEAM FOR *VELOUR: A DRAG SPECTACULAR*

**World-Premiere Co-Production with Tectonic Theater Project
Co-Created by Acclaimed Artists Sasha Velour and Moisés Kaufman**

La Jolla, CA – La Jolla Playhouse announces the complete cast and creative team for its world-premiere production of *Velour: A Drag Spectacular*, by **Sasha Velour** and **Moisés Kaufman**, directed by **Moisés Kaufman**, in a co-production with **Tectonic Theater Project**. *Velour: A Drag Spectacular* will run **August 13 – September 15** in the Playhouse's Sheila and Hughes Potiker Theatre. Tickets and information are available at lajollaplayhouse.org.

Created by groundbreaking drag artist Sasha Velour (*Smoke & Mirrors*, *NightGowns*, *The Big Reveal Live Show*) and legendary theatre artist Moisés Kaufman (*Here There Are Blueberries*, *The Laramie Project*), *Velour: A Drag Spectacular* is a sweeping, coming-of-age tale interwoven with the radical history of drag and queer expression. Inspired by Velour's origin story as a small-town, genderfluid child turned globally-renowned drag superstar, the show unfolds through a dazzling blend of innovative projection mapping, video animation, awe-inspiring lip-sync performances, and bold personal storytelling. Known for her emotional and shocking performance art, Velour harnesses the power of drag spectacle to immerse the audience in queer fantasia all while revealing her deepest fears and joys. From the often confusing yet joyous search for belonging, to the deep wells of grief that catapult us to face our inner truths, *Velour: A Drag Spectacular* is a tour de force, rich with humanity, beauty, and above all else – DRAG.

The cast features **Sasha Velour**, along with **Ezra Reaves**, **Moscato Sky**, San Diegan **Amber St. James**, and understudy **Shaun Tuazon**.

The creative team includes **David Rockwell**, Scenic Designer; **Diego Montoya Studio**, Costume Designer; **Amanda Zieve**, Lighting Designer; **Palmer Hefferan**, Sound Designer; **Ettie Pin**, Projection Designer; **House of Velour**, Video Creation; **Angela Phillips**, Aerial Designer; **Stephen Oremus**, Music Supervisor; **Ann C. James**, Sensitivity Specialist; **tbd casting co.**; **Stephanie Yankwitt, CSA/Jacole Kitchen**, Casting; **Jacob Russell**, Stage Manager; and **Topaz Cooks**, Assistant Stage Manager.

"*Velour: A Drag Spectacular* marks the continuation of our rich, decades-long relationship with one of the luminaries of American theatre, Moisés Kaufman, and his company, Tectonic Theater Project. Moisés's partnership with Sasha Velour – one of the most entertaining, visionary talents in the drag art form – promises a unique and jaw-dropping performance that charts Sasha's origin story alongside the history of drag," said **Christopher Ashley**, the Rich Family Artistic Director of La Jolla Playhouse.

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Sasha Velour is a Drag Race winner who's always played by her own rules. As a drag queen, she creates and stars in theatrical productions that have played iconic theaters across the U.S. and Canada, Europe, Australia, and South America. Her first one-queen tour, *Smoke & Mirrors* (2019 - 2022), coupled drag with high-concept projection art, and was seen by nearly 100,000 attendees on three continents. The show was hailed by PAPER as an "intensely personal production" that "shows what a top-of-her-game queen Velour really is, both as an artist and as a storyteller." Her most recent one-queen follow-up, *The Big Reveal Live Show* (2023 - 2024), began as a way to support her debut book, but morphed into an over-the-top, reveal-filled production which dazzled crowds across Europe this spring. It became the first drag show to play at Charleston's Spoleto Festival (and to a sold-out 1,800-seat opera house). Velour is also one of the hosts of Peabody Award-winning series *We're Here*, Season 4 (HBO), which won the Critics Choice Award for "Best Structured Series" in June. The season ended with a now-viral, emotional and powerful number by Velour where she performed in an Oklahoma church to Kesha's "Praying." In 2023, Harper published her book, *The Big Reveal: An Illustrated Manifesto of Drag*, which serves as the foundation of this world-premiere play. The LA Review of Books said the book would "canonize her as not only one of the best drag queens of her generation but also one of the definitive voices on the history and art of drag." Her interview on *Good Morning America* in support of the book landed her a GLAAD Award nomination for "Outstanding Live TV Journalism - Segment or Special" and led to additional appearances including *PBS Newshour* and a special interview with pop superstar Dua Lipa. Velour also is the first and only drag queen to illustrate a self-portrait to grace the cover of *The New Yorker* (June 2023). Her widely-known and oft-imitated drag revue, *NightGowns*, resumed performances with a sold-out residency in New York City earlier this year and raised nearly \$30,000 for mutual aid relief.

Moisés Kaufman's Broadway credits include *Paradise Square* (10 Tony Award nominations), the revival of Harvey Fierstein's *Torch Song*, Rajiv Joseph's *Bengal Tiger at the Baghdad Zoo* with Robin Williams, the revival of *The Heiress* starring Jessica Chastain, *33 Variations* starring Jane Fonda (Tony nomination for Best Play) and Doug Wright's *I Am My Own Wife* (Obie Award; Tony and Drama Desk Awards; Outer Critics Circle and Lucille Lortel Award nominations). West End: *Gross Indecency*, *I Am My Own Wife*, *This Is How It Goes*. Off-Broadway/Regional: *Here There Are Blueberries* (2024 Pulitzer Prize Finalist for Drama, Tectonic Theater Project/La Jolla Playhouse, Shakespeare Theatre Company, New York Theatre Workshop), *Seven Deadly Sins* (Drama Desk Award for Unique Theatrical Experience, Tectonic Theater Project/Madison Wells Live), *One Arm* by Tennessee Williams (Tectonic Theater Project/The New Group); *The Laramie Project* (writer/director; Theater in the Square, Drama Desk nomination); *The Laramie Project: Ten Years Later* (writer/director; Alice Tully Hall); *Gross Indecency: The Three Trials of Oscar Wilde* (writer/director; Lucille Lortel Award for Best Play, Outer Critics Circle Award for Best Off-Broadway Play and Joe A. Callaway Award for Direction); *Macbeth* with Liev Schreiber (Delacorte Theater); *Master Class* with Rita Moreno (Berkeley Rep). Opera: *El Gato Con Botas* (New Victory Theater). Film/TV: *The Laramie Project* (HBO; Emmy noms for writing and directing, Opening Night Selection at the 2002 Sundance Film Festival, National Board of Review Award, Humanitas Prize); *The L Word*. Kaufman is the Artistic Director of Tectonic Theater Project, a Guggenheim Fellow in Playwriting and an Obie Award and Lucille Lortel Award winner. In 2015, he was awarded the National Medal of Arts from President Barack Obama, which he accepted in a ceremony at the White House.

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Based in New York City and guided by founder and artistic director Moisés Kaufman and executive director Matt Joslyn, **Tectonic Theater Project** develops new plays using the company's trademarked theater-making method, Moment Work, and through a rigorous process of research and collaboration in a laboratory environment. Since its founding in 1991 the company has created and staged over twenty plays and musicals, including *Gross Indecency: The Three Trials of Oscar Wilde*, *The Laramie Project*, Doug Wright's Pulitzer Prize-winning *I Am My Own Wife*, the Tony Award-winning *33 Variations*, and the Drama Desk Award-winning *Seven Deadly Sins*. Tectonic Theater Project's newest world-premiere play, *Here There Are Blueberries*, launched at La Jolla Playhouse and played at New York Theatre Workshop this past spring and was the 2024 Pulitzer Prize for Drama Finalist.

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 works, including mounting 120 world premieres, commissioning 70 new works, and sending 36 productions to Broadway, garnering a total of 42 Tony Awards, as well as the 1993 Tony Award for Outstanding Regional Theatre.

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FACT SHEET

WHAT: *Velour: A Drag Spectacular*
By Sasha Velour and Moisés Kaufman
Directed by Moisés Kaufman
Co-production with Tectonic Theater Project

WHEN: **August 13 – September 15** (previews: August 13 - 17)
Tue/Wed/Thu/Fri at 7:30pm; Sat at 2pm & 8pm; Sun at 1pm & 7pm

WHERE: **Sheila and Hughes Potiker Theatre, La Jolla Playhouse**
2910 La Jolla Village Drive, La Jolla, CA 92037

WHO: Scenic Designer: David Rockwell
Costume Designer: Diego Montoya Studio
Lighting Designer: Amanda Zieve
Sound Designer: Palmer Hefferan
Projection Designer: Ettie Pin
Video Creation: House of Velour
Aerial Designer: Angela Phillips
Music Supervisor: Stephen Oremus
Sensitivity Specialist: Ann C. James
Casting: tbd casting co.; Stephanie Yankwitt, CSA/Jacole Kitchen
Stage Manager: Jacob Russell
Assistant Stage Manager: Topaz Cooks

Cast: Sasha Velour, with Ezra Reaves, Moscato Sky, Amber St. James
Understudy: Shaun Tuazon

BACKGROUND:

Created by groundbreaking drag artist Sasha Velour (*Smoke & Mirrors*, *NightGowns*, *The Big Reveal Live Show*) and legendary theatre artist Moisés Kaufman (*Here There Are Blueberries*, *The Laramie Project*), *Velour: A Drag Spectacular* is a sweeping, coming-of-age tale interwoven with the radical history of drag and queer expression. Inspired by Velour's origin story as a small-town, genderfluid child turned globally-renowned drag superstar, the show unfolds through a dazzling blend of innovative projection mapping, video animation, awe-inspiring lip-sync performances, and bold personal storytelling. Known for her emotional and shocking performance art, Velour harnesses the power of drag spectacle to immerse the audience in queer fantasia all while revealing her deepest fears and joys. From the often confusing yet joyous search for belonging, to the deep wells of grief that catapult us to face our inner truths, *Velour: A Drag Spectacular* is a tour de force, rich with humanity, beauty, and above all else – DRAG.

SPONSORS: Weston Anson, Denise and Lon Bevers; Kay and Bill Gurtin
Pam Wagner and Hans Tegebo; Show Imaging

TICKETS: lajollaplayhouse.org; (858) 550-1010

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