

LA JOLLA PLAYHOUSE GALA TO TAKE PLACE ON MARCH 23, CO-CHAired BY JOAN JACOBS, DEBBY JACOBS AND LINDSEY JACOBS

**EVENT TO FEATURE PERFORMANCES BY ARIANA DEBOSE,
TONY AWARD-NOMINATED STAR OF PLAYHOUSE-BORN
SUMMER: THE DONNA SUMMER MUSICAL**

La Jolla, CA – La Jolla Playhouse’s annual Gala will take place on Saturday, March 23, co-chaired by **Joan Jacobs, Debby Jacobs** and **Lindsey Jacobs**. This stunning annual event supports the Playhouse’s new play development, education and outreach programs, as well as programs benefiting military families.

The evening will feature a series of performances by Tony Award nominee **Ariana DeBose**, star of the Playhouse-born Broadway hit *SUMMER: The Donna Summer Musical*. DeBose also appeared on Broadway in *A Bronx Tale*, *Pippin* and the original cast of *Hamilton* and was recently cast as Anita in Stephen Spielberg and Tony Kushner’s upcoming film adaptation of *West Side Story*.

“We are truly honored to have three generations of the Jacobs family chair this year’s event. They make up a powerhouse team, leading a powerhouse event, headlined by Ariana DeBose, the Tony Award-nominated star of our 2017 Broadway-bound *SUMMER: The Donna Summer Musical*,” said **Playhouse Artistic Director Christopher Ashley**.

The Gala will also include a brief tribute to three Playhouse trailblazers: **UC San Diego Chancellor Pradeep K. Khosla**, Tony Award-nominated choreographer **Kelly Devine** (*Come From Away*, *Escape to Margaritaville*) and **Luke Gulley** of Show Imaging, who has aided in the design and creation of the Playhouse’s spectacular Opening Nights and other events for the past six years.

The Gala will begin at 6:00pm with a cocktail party in the Sheila and Hughes Potiker Theatre Lobby and Taper Plaza. Guests will then move into the Potiker Theatre, which will be transformed into a Vegas-style cabaret space, complete with luxury booth seating. The specially-prepared, seasonal menu crafted by Chef **Jeffrey Strauss/Pamplemousse Grille** will be paired with hand-selected wines to create an exquisite culinary experience. Throughout the evening, the Potiker Theatre will come alive with exclusive live musical performances by DeBose. The event will conclude with an after-party from 10:00pm to midnight, where guests can continue to mix, mingle, dance and enjoy a special live performance with internationally-renowned EDM artist **Mako**, an open bar by Snake Oil Cocktail Co. and late night bites from Pamplemousse Grill.

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For guests at the \$5000 Commanderie and \$2500 Sommelier ticket levels, the Playhouse has lined up a group of **Wine Hosts** to curate a true sensory experience from their private wine collections. Each host will take their Gala table on a journey of their choosing – be it by region, varietal or pairings. Wine Hosts include Gail and Ralph Bryan, Lisa and David Casey, Debby and Hal Jacobs, Joan and Irwin Jacobs, Stacy Jacobs and John Plewes, Genevieve and Paul Jacobs, Sheri Jamieson, Lynelle and Bill Lynch, Margret and Nevins McBride, Vivien and Jeffrey Ressler, and Lise Wilson and Steve Strauss.

Lead sponsorship for the Gala is provided by **Gurtin: Municipal Bond Management, a PIMCO company, Merrill Lynch, Van Cleef & Arpels** and **Show Imaging, Inc.**

Proceeds from the Gala support the Playhouse’s acclaimed Education and Outreach initiatives, as well as its New Play Development programs, such as Page To Stage, DNA New Work Series, Without Walls program and artist commissions. This year the Gala will also benefit the Playhouse’s outreach initiatives to the military community, such as the Veterans Playwriting Workshop and Military Date Nights. For information and tickets (ranging from \$750 to \$5000) to the Playhouse Gala, please contact gala@ljp.org.

Gala Biographies

Ariana DeBose earned a 2018 Tony Award nomination for her performance as “Disco Donna” in the Playhouse-born Broadway production of *SUMMER: The Donna Summer Musical*. She recently appeared as Jane in Chazz Palminteri’s *A Bronx Tale* directed by Jerry Zaks and Robert De Niro. Her other credits include *Hamilton* (Off-Broadway and original Broadway cast), Leading Player in the Tony-winning revival of *Pippin*, Mary Wilson of the Supremes (Diana Ross cover) in *Motown*, Nautica in Andy Blankenbuehler’s *Bring It On: The Musical* and Sondheim’s *Company* with the NY Philharmonic. Her TV credits include: *Blue Bloods* (CBS), *The Breaks* (VH1), *So You Think You Can Dance* Top 20 Season 6 (Fox) and *One Life*. DeBose was recently cast as Anita in Stephen Spielberg and Tony Kushner’s upcoming film adaptation of *West Side Story*.

Kelly Devine’s Playhouse credits include *Escape to Margaritaville*, *Come From Away*, *Peter and the Starcatcher*, *Zhivago* and *Private Fittings*. Her Broadway credits include *Come From Away* (Tony Award nomination), *Escape to Margaritaville*, *Doctor Zhivago*, *Rocky* (Tony, Drama Desk and Outer Critics Award nominations) and *Rock of Ages*. International: *Rocky* (Germany), *Rock of Ages* (West End, UK tour, Toronto, Australia; Helpmann & Green Room Awards). Opera: *Faust* (The Met & ENO), *Wozzeck* (San Diego Opera). Off-Broadway: *Rock of Ages*, *Fat Camp*, *Frankenstein*, *Anne Wrecksick*. Regional: *Come From Away*, *Toxic Avenger*, *A Christmas Story*, *Bloody Bloody Andrew Jackson*. Stratford Shakespeare Festival: *Cabaret*, *Romeo and Juliet*. Select film and television credits include: *Mozart in the Jungle*, *Wormwood* and *Untouchables* starring Nicole Kidman and Bryan Cranston.

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Luke Gulley's relationship with La Jolla Playhouse began more than seven years ago when his company began producing opening night events. He has been a keynote speaker at such prestigious events as Biz Bash L.A., talking about his journey as a 15-year-old business owner and designer. He was then asked to build the infrastructure for the first Without Walls (WOW) Festival in 2013 at the age of 16. Since 2012, he has been an integral part of all La Jolla Playhouse events; consultations, event technical support and sponsorships. After the sale of his company at the age of 19, he has continued to be involved in all aspects of Playhouse events and festivals. As an Account Executive specializing in Event Design, Consulting and Support at Show Imaging, Gulley works exclusively with most of the major non-profit organizations in San Diego, including Las Patronas, Salk Institute, Feeding San Diego and Alzheimer's San Diego. He also works very closely with UC San Diego, University of San Diego, as well as many high-profile clients including Porsche, Ferrari, and many more.

Pradeep K. Khosla, UC San Diego's eighth Chancellor, is an internationally-renowned electrical and computer engineer recognized for his seminal contributions in secure software, intelligent robot systems and design. He provides vision and strategy for the university, leading a campus with more than 35,000 students, six undergraduate colleges, five academic divisions, five graduate and professional schools, a preeminent Health System and the prestigious Scripps Institution of Oceanography. Khosla has positioned UC San Diego to define the future of the public research university by activating the institution's first-ever Strategic Plan and launching the Campaign for UC San Diego—an ambitious and bold \$2 billion endeavor—aimed at transforming the university, physically and intellectually. Khosla has expanded college access and affordability for underserved populations, initiated campus-wide interdisciplinary research initiatives to foster collaboration and solve societal challenges, and strengthened university and community relationships and partnerships to drive regional impact. Khosla previously served as Dean of the College of Engineering at Carnegie Mellon University. Several awards have recognized his leadership in education and research: the ASEE George Westinghouse Award for Education, the W. Wallace McDowell award from IEEE Computer Society, and the ASME Computers in Engineering Lifetime Achievement Award. He is an elected member of the National Academy of Engineering.

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. His venture into composing for video games can be heard in collaboration with the Riot Games' hit *League of Legends*, most recently evolving into performances at their *Worlds* events, including a headlining appearance at the recent games in Beijing, China. As a commercial composer, he has written for international campaigns with Coca-Cola, Dodge, and Fruit of the Loom, and is published by Sony/ATV.

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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. Currently led by 2017 Tony Award-winning Artistic Director Christopher Ashley and Managing Director Debby Buchholz, the Playhouse was founded in 1947 by Gregory Peck, Dorothy McGuire and Mel Ferrer. Internationally-renowned for the development of new plays and musicals, the Playhouse has mounted 95 world premieres, commissioned 50 new works, and sent 32 productions to Broadway – including the currently-running hit musical *Come From Away* – garnering a total of 38 Tony Awards, as well as the 1993 Tony Award for Outstanding Regional Theatre.

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