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Pasadena Playhouse's "Opening Night Gala" Celebrates the Theatre's Rebirth

Over 350 guests swarmed an extended stage that thrust far into the house, celebrating the Playhouse's extraordinary exodus



Roger Engemann with his wife, Playhouse Board Chair Michele Dedeaux Engemann, and Dr. Warren Stout

Photos and Video by JAMES MACPHERSON
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Celebrating its meteoric emergence from bankruptcy and an uncertain fate a mere 15 months ago into a secure and vibrant theatre today, the Pasadena Playhouse transformed its auditorium into a Grand Ballroom for its April 1 benefit gala.

"This has been an incredible year for The Pasadena Playhouse and I cannot think of a better place to celebrate our journey, except in our beautiful and wonderful theatre," said Michele Dedeaux Engemann, Chairman of the Board of The Pasadena Playhouse. Engemann welcomed over 350 guests, who enthusiastically swarmed the extended stage that thrust out above the theatre seats, far into the house.

Artistic Director Sheldon Epps, who flew back from New York where he is co-directing a musical on Broadway, told the crowd the Playhouse's lights are shining again – and borrowing from a song just played, said "The Best is Yet to Come."

"We are pleased to be able to celebrate the great Pasadena Playhouse in a unique and extraordinary way," said Stephen Eich, Executive Director of The Pasadena Playhouse. Eich proclaimed the Playhouse alive and vital and introduced the night's entertainment.

A little over a year after they stood on the same stage, some tearfully, to commiserate as the Playhouse went dark, many of the same supporters were in the night's crowd, reveling in the Pasadena Playhouse's rebirth. For more about the Playhouse and upcoming shows, see www.pasadenaplayhouse.org.



Playhouse Executive Director Stephen Eich with Jon Andersen, Playhouse Board of Trustees Member Martha Williamson and Isabel Andersen



Playhouse Vice Chairman Sheila Grether-Marion with Board of Trustees Member Peggy Ebright



Darrell D. Miller, Playhouse Artistic Director Sheldon Epps, and John Hall



Frank Brooks and Playhouse Emeritus Board Member Betty Ann Brooks

The image contains two promotional graphics. The top one is a flyer for a "hillsides 100 members only social" event. It features a chandelier illustration and text: "Friday, November 4, 2011 6:30 - 9:30 PM At the newly opened aka Dan American Bistro! 41 Hugos Alley, Pasadena, CA 91106 Complimentary to H100 Members". It also includes the Hillsides 100 logo and a website URL. The bottom graphic is a bowling promotion for "300 PASADENA" with the text "BOWL YOUR brains OUT EVERY MONDAY NIGHT. \$15 FOR SHOES & UNLIMITED BOWLING!". It shows a yellow bowling ball and a blue brain.



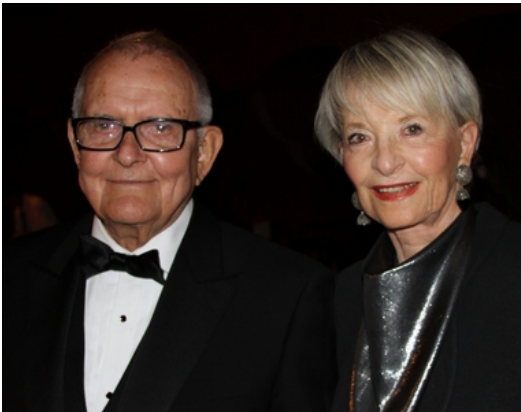
Betsey Tyler with Chris Sisley and Ken Garen



Jane and Chris Popovich



Diego Serrano and Coté de Pablo



Tom Hatten (who graduated from the Pasadena School of Acting which was housed in the Playhouse in 1950) and Bunny Stivers





Peter and Meredith Coors



Bill and Brenda Galloway



Peter Mandell and Dr. Greta Mandell



Thomas Castaneda and Richard Van Ernst

photos courtesy of Dana Ogden Photography © 2010

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