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**“BACKSTAGE AT THE GEFFEN” RAISES MORE THAN \$1.3 MILLION
TO BENEFIT ARTS AND EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND NEW PLAY DEVELOPMENT**

**HARRY BELAFONTE AND LILY TOMLIN WERE HONORED
AT THE 17TH ANNUAL FUNDRAISER**

**SURPRISE GUEST APPEARANCES INCLUDED BEN AFFLECK, KATHY BATES, JANE FONDA,
DANNY GLOVER, JENNIFER HOLLIDAY, STEPHEN STILLS AND MORE**

LOS ANGELES (May 20, 2019) – Geffen Playhouse raised more than \$1.3 million for the theater’s education, community engagement and artistic initiatives at its 17th annual *Backstage at the Geffen* fundraiser held May 19, it was announced today. **Danny Glover** (*Lethal Weapon* franchise, *The Color Purple*, *Dreamgirls*) presented the Artistic Impact Award for **Harry Belafonte**, which was accepted by daughter Gina Belafonte on his behalf, and **Jane Fonda** (*Grace & Frankie*, *Book Club*, *9 to 5*) presented the Distinction in Theater Award to **Lily Tomlin**.

The evening of unscripted, unannounced performers and storytellers was hosted by **Julia Sweeney** and featured personal behind-the-scenes anecdotes from Academy Award and Golden Globe Award winner **Ben Affleck** (*Argo*, *Good Will Hunting*); Academy Award, Golden Globe Award and Emmy Award winner **Kathy Bates** (*Misery*, *Fried Green Tomatoes*); **Rosemarie DeWitt** (*La La Land*, *Mad Men*); Geffen Playhouse Artistic Director **Matt Shakman** and musician **Chris Stills**; as well as musical performances by actor and singer/songwriter **Matt Doyle**; Tony Award and Grammy Award winner **Jennifer Holliday**; Grammy Award winner and Rock and Roll Hall of Fame inductee **Stephen Stills**; a performance by lauded spoken word/hip-hop artist **Marnino Toussaint**; and a special dance choreographed exclusively for *Backstage at the Geffen* by Emmy Award winner **Mia Michaels** and renowned dancer **Desmond Richardson**, also directed by Michaels and performed by Richardson.

Backstage at the Geffen recognizes the accomplishments of leaders in the artistic community, supports the theater’s mission to produce original, quality work and raises funds for its award-winning education and community engagement programs, which bring live theater to more than 15,000 underserved youth, seniors and veterans annually.

City National Bank served as Title Sponsor for its 10th consecutive year. Presenting Sponsors included Audi of America returning for its 14th year, and K Period Media returning for its third year.

Serving as Honorary Co-Chairs were Sidney Poitier, Quincy Jones, Cher, Barbra Streisand, Mellody Hobson, George Lucas and Bette Midler. Event Co-Chairs included Adi Greenberg, Loretta Everett Kaufman and Linda Bernstein Rubin.

Backstage at the Geffen was produced by Kevin Bright, Gil Cates Jr. and Matt Shakman.

A post-show reception featured spirits and cocktails sponsored by Sipsmith London and Effen Vodka.

ABOUT GEFFEN PLAYHOUSE

Geffen Playhouse has been a hub of the Los Angeles theater scene since opening its doors in 1995. Noted for its intimacy and celebrated for its world-renowned mix of classic and contemporary plays, provocative new works and second productions, the not-for-profit organization continues to present a body of work that has garnered national recognition. Named in honor of entertainment mogul and philanthropist David Geffen, who made the initial donation to the theater, the company was founded by Gilbert Cates and is currently helmed by Executive Director Gil Cates, Jr., Artistic Director Matt Shakman and Board Chair Howard Tenenbaum. Proudly associated with UCLA, the Geffen welcomes an audience of more than 130,000 each year, and maintains extensive education and community engagement programs, designed to involve underserved young people and the community at large in the arts.

www.geffenplayhouse.org

ABOUT CITY NATIONAL

With \$51.1 billion in assets, City National Bank provides banking, investment and trust services through 71 offices, including 19 full-service regional centers, in Southern California, the San Francisco Bay Area, Nevada, New York City, Nashville, Atlanta, Minneapolis and Washington, D.C. In addition, the company and its investment affiliates manage or administer \$71.7 billion in client investment assets. City National is a subsidiary of Royal Bank of Canada (RBC), one of North America's leading diversified financial services companies. RBC serves more than 16 million personal, business, public sector and institutional clients through offices in Canada, the United States and 33 other countries. For more information about City National, visit the company's website at cnb.com.

ABOUT AUDI OF AMERICA

Audi of America, Inc. and its U.S. dealers offer a full line of German-engineered luxury vehicles. AUDI AG is among the most successful luxury automotive brands, delivering about 1.812 million vehicles globally in 2018. In the U.S., Audi of America sold nearly 224,000 vehicles in 2018. 2019 marks 50 years for the brand in the U.S. Visit audiusa.com or media.audiusa.com for more information regarding Audi vehicles and business topics.

ABOUT K PERIOD MEDIA

K Period Media is a Los Angeles-based production company committed to developing, financing, and producing quality films and content for a variety of platforms. Founded by Kimberly Steward in 2013, the company is dedicated to finding and making socially-relevant, story-driven projects with mainstream appeal. To date, its films include Luca Guadagnino's re-imagining of the horror thriller *Suspiria* with Amazon Studios which had the highest per screen average opening of 2018; the acclaimed 2016 feature *Manchester by the Sea*, which was nominated for six Academy Awards®, including Best Picture; and the award-winning documentary *Through a Lens Darkly: Black Photographers and the Emergence of a People*. Upcoming, K Period Media has *The True Adventures of Wolfboy* starring Jaeden Martell, John Turturro, Chris Messina, Eve Hewson and Chloe Sevigny and they recently announced they are producing the Keira Knightley untitled spy drama and the drama *Charlatan* starring Matt Damon.

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IMAGES CAN BE DOWNLOADED FROM THE FOLLOWING LINK:

<https://invision.dfstudio.com/go/im/b401899a-e861-4bad-8616-cc27bf3bc9d5>

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