



California Center
for the Arts, Escondido
F O U N D A T I O N

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RELEASE DATE: August 4, 2023
For Immediate Release

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California Center for the Arts, Escondido Foundation and CCAE Theatricals, Inc Announce formation of Independent Non-Profit Organization

Escondido, California (August 4, 2023) - California Center for the Arts, Escondido Foundation (CCAEF) and CCAE Theatricals, Inc. announce the transition of the, now former, in-house theatrical producing program known as CCAE Theatricals into an independent non-profit organization. The Dorris Staples Theatrical Conservatory program for aspiring theater professionals will now be housed under CCAE Theatricals, Inc.

The unforeseen challenges of the world pandemic and post-pandemic climate created unprecedented financial impacts for the artistic industry. The CCAEF is proud to have weathered this difficult time. In looking to adopt more sustainable models, the CCAEF made the difficult decision to simultaneously remove CCAE Theatricals from being an in-house program while also offering the support of becoming a separate entity and the Resident Theater of CCAEF. CCAE Theatricals looks forward to a close partnership with the CCAEF.

The CCAEF staff who have transitioned over to the new CCAE Theatricals, Inc. are Julianna Crespo as Executive Director, J. Scott Lapp as Artistic Director, Jordan Beck as Managing Producer and Tom Abruzzo as Director of Education & Engagement.

Commenting on this momentous occasion, Sara Matta, Board President of California Center for the Arts, Escondido Foundation, said, "We are thrilled to witness the establishment of CCAE Theatricals as an independent organization. This move represents our unwavering commitment to advancing the performing arts and reinforces our belief in the power of theater to inspire, educate, and advance society. We are confident that CCAE Theatricals will flourish in its new capacity and are excited we are able to continue to support them as they enrich the cultural landscape of Escondido and the greater region."

Gina Lopez, CEO of the CCAEF stated, "Over the years, the California Center for the Arts, Escondido Foundation has served as a cultural beacon, nurturing artistic talent and fostering creativity through its diverse range of programs and events. Among its many successes was the addition of CCAE Theatricals as an in-house theater company which has since earned acclaim for its world-class performances and award-winning original productions. As the demand for high-quality theatrical experiences continued to

grow, the decision to establish CCAE Theatricals as an independent entity came naturally. This transition will allow CCAE Theatricals to pursue its artistic vision with increased flexibility, efficiency, and creative freedom.”

Leadership of the newly formed CCAE Theatricals, Inc. shared, “This transition signals a bright, new chapter for our mission driven work. We are grateful to all of the donors, grantors, patrons and supporters who have been an instrumental part of every story we have been privileged to tell from the stage. We especially thank the David T. and Dorris E. Staples Foundation, the Irving Z. and Anne D. Siegel Foundation, and the California Center for the Arts, Escondido Charitable Trust. This transition creates the opportunity for focused strategic planning with an emphasis on equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility - while building upon the groundwork laid by the California Center for the Arts, Escondido Foundation. We are committed to listening and responding to the needs of our community and industry. We are united in our drive to embrace transformative thinking and practices - imbued with anti-racist value systems and the amplification of under-represented perspectives. We look forward to sharing our exciting next steps very soon, including a board recruitment process, new website, and donor events.”

CCAIE Theatricals, previously The Barn Stage Company, began partnering with the CCAEF in 2018 on programming. In February of 2020 the board of CCAEF unanimously voted to acquire the organization and create an in-house theatrical producing arm of CCAEF. Between 2020 and 2023, these in-house productions earned praise from theater critics and won four awards from the San Diego Theatre Critics Circle. These awards included Best New Production and Best Director (J. Scott Lapp) for the original commissioned production of *Witnesses* (July 2022). In July of 2023, CCAIE Theatricals produced another world premiere musical, *Bottle Shock! The Musical*. Now as a nonprofit organization, CCAIE Theatricals is able to accept donations directly. The dedicated teams at the CCAEF and CCAIE Theatricals assure our joint patrons, supporters, and artists of a seamless transition with uninterrupted programming and access to services.

About California Center for the Arts, Escondido:

The California Center for the Arts, Escondido is a premier arts and cultural hub dedicated to enhancing the lives of individuals through engaging experiences in the visual and performing arts. Nestled in the heart of North County San Diego, the center offers a diverse array of programming, including exhibitions, concerts, theatrical performances, educational initiatives, and community events.

About CCAIE Theatricals, Inc.:

CCAIE Theatricals, Inc. is based in Escondido, California and is driven by a mission to preserve, strengthen, and advance Musical Theater as a social and cultural platform by nurturing compelling, high-caliber theatrical artistry. As both a laboratory for theatrical exploration and a producer of plays that expand the boundaries of theatrical form, we support innovative projects that are aesthetically, thematically, and methodologically diverse for diverse audiences.

The Dorris Staples Theatrical Conservatory was established as a workforce development program for aspiring theater professionals in response to the urgent need for representation within historically elite theater spaces. Thanks to the generosity of the David T. and Dorris E. Staples Foundation and the Conrad Prebys Foundation, the program creates pathways and expands access to careers in theater arts as a means to ensuring the industry belongs to everyone.

All information is accurate at the time of release but is subject to change.

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