

LA JOLLA PLAYHOUSE ANNOUNCES CAST AND CREATIVE TEAM FOR WORLD PREMIERE OF *THE HEART*

Set in San Diego, Thrilling New Musical to Be Helmed by Playhouse Artistic Director Christopher Ashley, Featuring Award-Winning Cast and Creative Team

La Jolla, CA – La Jolla Playhouse announces the cast and creative team for its world-premiere musical ***The Heart***, based on “Réparer les Vivants” by Maylis de Kerangal; book and additional lyrics by **Kait Kerrigan** (Broadway’s *The Great Gatsby*); music and lyrics by **Anne Eisendrath** and **Ian Eisendrath** (Music Supervisor for *Come From Away*); choreographed by **Mandy Moore** (*La La Land*); and directed by Tony Award winner **Christopher Ashley**, the Rich Family Artistic Director of La Jolla Playhouse (*Come From Away*); running **August 19 – September 21** in the Sheila and Hughes Potiker Theatre. For tickets and information, please visit lajollaplayhouse.org.

The cast features **Heidi Blickenstaff** (Playhouse’s *Freaky Friday*; Broadway’s *Something Rotten*) as “Claire,” **Lincoln Clauss** (Playhouse’s *Fly*) as “Thomas Driscoll,” **Bre Jackson** as “Cordelia Owl,” **Max McKenna** as “Juliette,” **Kenita Miller** as “Marianne Lamar,” **Paul Alexander Nolan** (Playhouse’s *Escape to Margaritaville*; Broadway’s *Water for Elephants*) as “Dr. Breva,” **Zachary Noah Piser** (Playhouse’s and Broadway’s *Redwood*) as “Simon Lamar,” **Wren Rivera** as “Marthe” and **Jason Tam** as “Sean Lamar,” along with understudies **Selena “Lena” Ceja**, **Cody Ingram**, **Nevada Riley**, **Brandon Keith Rogers** and **Joy Yandell-Hall**.

The creative team includes **Robert Brill**, Scenic Designer; **Sarafina Bush**, Costume Designer; **Amanda Zieve**, Lighting Designer; **Gareth Owen**, Sound Designer; **Lucy Mackinnon**, Video Designer; **Alberto “Albee” Alvarado**, Hair Designer; **Ian Eisendrath**, Music Supervisor and Arranger; **Wendy Bobbitt Cavett**, Music Director; **Juan Ariza** and **Elin Sandberg**, Orchestrations and Music Production; **The TRC Company**, **Tara Rubin CSA** and **Hannah Reinert**, Casting; **Jess Slocum**, Stage Manager; and **Alexa Burn**, **Karla Garcia** and **Amanda Salmons**, Assistant Stage Managers.

When a young surfer’s life is cut short, it means a second chance for a stranger. Over the course of 24 suspenseful hours in San Diego, we follow one precious heart on its vital, life-saving journey, and meet the people whose lives are impacted along the way. With a gripping book by Kait Kerrigan (*The Great Gatsby*) and a thrilling electronic score by Anne Eisendrath and Ian Eisendrath (music supervisor of *Come From Away*), *The Heart* is directed by our own Tony Award-winning director Christopher Ashley and choreographed by Mandy Moore (Taylor Swift’s Eras Tour, *La La Land*). Based on the highly lauded novel by Maylis de Kerangal, *Réparer les Vivants*, this breathtaking new musical is an enlightening, edge-of-your-seat ride.

“I am so delighted to work with this superb cast and creative team to bring *The Heart* to the Playhouse stage,” said **Christopher Ashley**, the Rich Family Artistic Director of La Jolla Playhouse. “Told through a propulsive, EDM-infused score, this deeply moving new musical expertly weaves a mesmerizing tale of both tragedy and hope, with explosive energy and profound poignancy.”

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Kait Kerrigan is an award-winning book writer, lyricist, and playwright. Broadway: *The Great Gatsby* (book). West End: *The Time Traveller's Wife* (additional lyrics with a score by Joss Stone and Dave Stewart). Off-Broadway: *The Mad Ones* (book and lyrics), *Henry and Mudge* (book and lyrics). Additional regional credits include the musicals *Indigo* (book), *Justice* (lyrics), *Earthrise* (lyrics); the plays *Father/Daughter*, *Imaginary Love* and *Disaster Relief*. Her immersive house party *The Bad Years* (book and lyrics) had two sold-out pop-up productions in Brooklyn. Digital: *A Killer Party* (screenplay with co-writer Rachel Axler). She co-produced albums for *The Great Gatsby*; *The Mad Ones*; *Kerrigan-Lowdermilk Live*; and *Our First Mistake*, which hit #1 on the digital singer-songwriter charts. Her songs include the viral hits "Run Away with Me" and "Go Tonight." Awards: Kleban Award for libretto, Jonathan Larson Award for lyric-writing, Most Promising Lyricist Award from the Theatre Hall of Fame, Edgerton Award for *Father/Daughter*, residencies at Page 73, Dramatists Guild Fellows, Rhinebeck, Goodspeed's Johnnie Mercer Project, and MacDowell. She is an alumna of Barnard College and the BMI Musical Theatre Workshop and a member of the Dramatists Guild.

Anne Eisendrath is an electronic music producer and singer/songwriter. A classically trained musician, Anne attended the University of Michigan where she completed a degree in vocal performance. Anne spent a decade as a musical theatre performer and professional singer in Seattle, and after the birth of her third child, Anne turned her artistic attention to songwriting and music production. As a composer/lyricist, Anne combines her intense love of electronica with her obsession with poetry, story and classical music. She has recently contributed songs to Bethany Hall's one-woman comedy show *About Those Miscarriages and Other Messes I've Made*, featured Off-Broadway and also in the 2024 Montclair Film Festival. In addition to her musical theatre composition, she writes, records, produces and performs her own brand of theatrical synth-pop as the artist "Anniee."

Ian Eisendrath is an Olivier Award-winning, Grammy-nominated music supervisor, music producer, arranger and music director for theatre, film and television. Film/Television: Executive Music Producer for Disney's *Snow White*, *K-POP: Demon Hunters* (Sony Pictures Animation); *Only Murders in the Building* Season 3 (Hulu); *Spirited* (Apple); *Lyle, Lyle Crocodile* (Sony); *Diana: The Musical* (Netflix); Fox TV's *A Christmas Story Live*; and *Come From Away* (Apple TV+). Selected Theatre: Music Supervisor and Arranger for the Broadway, Toronto, North American, Australian and UK companies of *Come From Away*, *Diana: The Musical* (Broadway), *A Christmas Story* (Broadway and National Tour), and multiple projects at La Jolla Playhouse, Seattle Repertory Theatre, Pacific Northwest Ballet, Seattle Symphony, ACT, TUTS, Ordway, Casa Mañana, and the Banff Centre for the Arts. Ian was the Director of New Work Development and the Music Supervisor at the 5th Avenue Theatre in Seattle from 2003 to 2016. University of Michigan Music graduate.

Mandy Moore is an American choreographer, dancer, producer and dance instructor. She is known for her work on the United States reality television series *So You Think You Can Dance*, having appeared on the show every year since the third season, and *Dancing with the Stars*. She choreographed the 2016 film *La La Land* and has also worked on commercials and various musical productions, such as Taylor Swift's The Eras Tour. She has created dance numbers for the Academy Awards, Golden Globe Awards, Emmy Awards and Grammy Awards ceremonies. She has been nominated seven times for a Primetime Emmy Award for Outstanding Choreography, winning in 2017 for her work on *Dancing with the Stars*, in 2018 for her work on *So You Think You Can Dance*, and in 2020 for *Zoey's Extraordinary Playlist*.

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Tony Award winner **Christopher Ashley** has served as La Jolla Playhouse's Rich Family Artistic Director since 2007. During his tenure, he directed the world premieres of *Come From Away*, *3 Summers of Lincoln*, *Babbitt*, *The Untitled Unauthorized Hunter S. Thompson Musical*, *Diana*, *Memphis*, *Escape to Margaritaville*, *The Squirrels*, *A Dram of Drummhicit*, *Restoration and Chasing the Song*, as well as *His Girl Friday*, *As You Like It*, *Glengarry Glen Ross*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Freaky Friday* and *Xanadu*. He also spearheaded the Without Walls (WOW) initiative, the DNA New Work Series and the Theatre-in-Residence program. Ashley directed *Come From Away* for AppleTV+ and *Diana: The Musical* for Netflix. Other screen credits include the feature films *Jeffrey* and *Lucky Stiff*, and the American Playhouse production of *Blown Sideways Through Life* for PBS. Broadway credits include *Come From Away* (Tony and Outer Critics Circle Awards), *Diana: The Musical*, *Escape to Margaritaville*, *Memphis* (Tony Award nomination), *Xanadu*, *Leap of Faith* (Drama Desk Award nomination), *All Shook Up* and *The Rocky Horror Show* (Tony, Drama Desk, Outer Critics Circle Award nominations). He also helmed productions of *Come From Away* in London (Olivier Award nomination), Toronto, Australia and on national tour. Other national tours include *Escape to Margaritaville*, *Memphis*, *Xanadu*, *All Shook Up* and *Seussical: The Musical*. Additional New York stage credits include *Blown Sideways Through Life*, *Jeffrey* (Lucille Lortel and Obie Awards), *The Most Fabulous Story Ever Told*, *Valhalla* (Lucille Lortel Award nomination), *Regrets Only*, *Wonder of the World*, *Communicating Doors*, *Bunny, Bunny*, *The Night Hank Williams Died* and *Fires in the Mirror* (Lucille Lortel Award), among others. He is the recipient of the Princess Grace Award, the Drama League Director Fellowship and an NEA/TCG Director Fellowship.

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 plays and musicals, including mounting 120 world premieres, commissioning 70 new works, and sending 37 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: ***The Heart***
Based on “Réparer les Vivants” by Maylis de Kerangal
Book and Additional Lyrics by Kait Kerrigan
Music and Lyrics by Anne Eisendrath and Ian Eisendrath
Choreographed by Mandy Moore
Directed by Christopher Ashley

WHEN: **August 19 – September 21** (Press Dates: August 31, September 3, 4)
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: Music Supervisor and Arranger: Ian Eisendrath
Music Director: Wendy Bobbitt Cavett
Orchestrations and Music Production: Juan Ariza and Elin Sandberg
Scenic Designer: Robert Brill
Costume Designer: Sarafina Bush
Lighting Designer: Amanda Zieve
Sound Designer: Gareth Owen
Video Designer: Lucy Mackinnon
Hair Designer: Alberto “Albee” Alvarado
Casting: The TRC Company, Tara Rubin CSA and Hannah Reinert
Stage Manager: Jess Slocum
Assistant Stage Managers: Alexa Burn, Karla Garcia, Amanda Salmons

Cast:

<i>Claire</i>	Heidi Blickenstaff
<i>Thomas Driscoll</i>	Lincoln Clauss
<i>Cordelia Owl</i>	Bre Jackson
<i>Juliette</i>	Max McKenna
<i>Marianne Lamar</i>	Kenita Miller
<i>Dr. Breva</i>	Paul Alexander Nolan
<i>Simon Lamar</i>	Zachary Noah Piser
<i>Marthe</i>	Wren Rivera
<i>Sean Lamar</i>	Jason Tam

Understudies: Selena “Lena” Ceja, Cody Ingram, Nevada Riley,
Brandon Keith Rogers, Joy Yandell-Hall

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BACKGROUND:

When a young surfer's life is cut short, it means a second chance for a stranger. Over the course of 24 suspenseful hours in San Diego, we follow one precious heart on its vital, life-saving journey, and meet the people whose lives are impacted along the way. With a gripping book by Kait Kerrigan, and directed by Tony Award winner Christopher Ashley, *The Heart* is based on the highly lauded novel by Maylis de Kerangal, *Réparer les Vivants*, featuring a unique, thrilling electronic score by Anne Eisendrath and Ian Eisendrath. This breathtaking new musical is an enlightening, edge-of-your-seat ride.

TICKETS:

lajollaplayhouse.org; (858) 550-1010

SPONSORS:

Marlene and Gary Cohen; Sheri L. Jamieson; Karen and Jeff Silberman; Show Imaging;
Recipient of an Edgerton Foundation New Play Award;

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