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For Immediate Release:

Pageant of the Masters Celebrates 90 Years of Living Pictures *2023 Theme: "Art Colony: In the Company of Artists"*



*Pageant of the Masters re-creation of "Oyster Gatherers" by John Singer Sargent
From the 2023 production "Art Colony: In the Company of Artists"*

LAGUNA BEACH, CA — The Pageant of the Masters, the Festival of Arts of Laguna Beach's world-famous theatrical celebration of art through the magic of *tableaux vivants* (living pictures), presents "**Art Colony: In the Company of Artists.**" In honor of the Pageant's 90th anniversary, this summer's production acknowledges the deep connections and memorable stories of artists assisting one another throughout the world and throughout history. Tickets for the **2023 Pageant of the Masters** are available online at www.PageantTickets.com or by calling (800) 487-3378.

This year's Pageant of the Masters marks nine decades since the first "living pictures" were presented in 1933. Director Diane "Dee" Challis Davy plans to keep this theatrical summer phenomenon fresh and inspirational for new and returning Pageant audiences to enjoy. Presented under Laguna Beach's starry-summer night sky, the 2023 Pageant also features live, original music and narration, breathtaking theatrical illusions, and some surprises, all presented in the 2,600-seat amphitheater of the Irvine Bowl.

FESTIVAL of ARTS **PAGEANT of the MASTERS**

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“My goal for this year was to select a majority of artwork that has never been presented by the Pageant,” stated Director Challis Davy. “This theme has been a challenging one so far. I feel like I'm starting with a clean slate – or a blank canvas – and we're taking a leap of faith not exactly knowing how it will evolve into a show. As always, I want to incorporate elements of theatrical performance and spectacle to make the show entertaining as well as educational.”

There's a reason the idea of a lone-wolf artist driven to work in isolation against heavy odds is a cliché. It's because for many who choose the path of art, it's true. At the Pageant of the Masters, during her tenure as director, Challis Davy has honored many artists with memorable recreations of their work as “living pictures.” As she was assembling the artworks to be included in the 2023 production, however, she shifted her focus to another vision of the world of art, where artists offer support and inspire one another, and often choose to work and live together. The art colony established in Laguna Beach in the early years of the 20th century was the primary inspiration for the 2023 Pageant theme: “Art Colony: In the Company of Artists.” This summer audiences can expect a much more diverse and surprisingly theatrical celebration of how artists have embraced or created communities where they can live and work, both separately and together.

Challis Davy continued, “I'm interested in what makes a place an ‘art colony.’ What are the essential ingredients to establish an art colony? Is there ineffable magic in the landscape, the light or the sky that draws artists? Is it a commitment to cooperation, camaraderie and shared love of art or something else?”

When asked about new places she intends to take audiences, Challis Davy responded enthusiastically, “Taos, New Mexico, for one. And East L.A.!” Turning to artists making their first appearances in 2023, Challis Davy mentioned African American sculptor Meta Fuller and the painter Aaron Douglas, then offered, “I also think art teachers and mentors inspired me. Robert Henri, who wrote *The Art Spirit*, studied at the Académie Julian in Paris, then became a mentor to a new generation of American artists back in New York, and later traveled to Taos in the Southwest.”

Audiences can expect to see “Alone and Together (Under the Freeway)” by Chicano artist David Botello, “Lift Every Voice and Sing” by African American sculptor Augusta Savage, and Native American paintings by Bert Geer Phillips. Also featured in “Art Colony: In the Company of Artists” are artworks by French artists Pierre-Auguste Renoir and Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, sculptor Luca della Robbia and paintings by Laguna Beach artist Roger Kuntz.

Challis Davy addressed the 90th anniversary of “living pictures” at the Festival of Arts and how the Pageant has managed to sustain its success. “Ninety years have proven we can't have a show without our volunteers. If they are having fun backstage, I think volunteers will keep coming back. It's nice to see young moms and dads – whom I have known since they were children – bringing their own kids to the casting call.”

Turning to the production, she continued, “We're now competing for the attention of audiences who are more receptive to kinetic live performance and video enhancements. And they all have electronic devices! But we continue to be very proud of our live orchestra and original musical compositions from a group of very talented and accomplished composers. Add to that the element of surprise and a certain amount of unpredictability in programming, and we're excited to see the audiences happy to join us in the Irvine Bowl every night.”

The 2023 Pageant of the Masters production “Art Colony: In the Company of Artists” is July 7 – September 1, 2023 with advance tickets starting \$35 per person. To stay up to date on all things

Pageant of the Masters and Festival of Arts, follow the Festival on social media at @FestivalPageant and visit www.foapom.com.

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ABOUT THE PAGEANT OF THE MASTERS

Presented by the Festival of Arts of Laguna Beach

Honored with the 2020 Thea Classic Award from the Themed Entertainment Association, the Pageant of the Masters is arguably one of the most unique productions in the entire world. Audiences are amazed and enchanted by ninety minutes of *tableaux vivants* ("living pictures"), incredibly faithful recreations of classical and contemporary works of art, with real people posing to look exactly like their counterparts in the original pieces. A live narrator guides the patrons through the story of each living picture accompanied by a full orchestra.

DATES & TIMES

July 7 – September 1, 2023
Performances Nightly at 8:30pm

TICKET INFORMATION

Advance Tickets \$35 and up
A Pageant Ticket also acts a season pass to the Festival of Arts Fine Art Show

SPONSORS

The Festival of Arts and Pageant of the Masters are sponsored in part by
Volvo Cars, KOST Radio 103.5, Waldorf Astoria Monarch Beach Resort & Club and **Irvine Spectrum Center**.

LOCATION

Irvine Bowl at the Festival of Arts
650 Laguna Canyon Road, Laguna Beach, CA 92651

FOR INFORMATION & TICKETS

(800) 487-3378
www.PageantTickets.com