



For immediate release

CENTER THEATRE GROUP'S "A TRANSPARENT MUSICAL" LGBTQIA+ NIGHT BRINGS COMMUNITY TOGETHER

"A Transparent Musical" LGBTQIA+ Night was made possible with support from the California Mental Health Services Authority and Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health as part of the Take Action LA for Mental Health campaign to serve Greater Los Angeles.

Nearly 700 theatregoers gathered on Friday, June 2, at **Center Theatre Group/Mark Taper Forum** for **"A Transparent Musical" LGBTQIA+ Night** — a selected performance dedicated to the LGBTQIA+ community to come together in celebration of this world premiere production in a safe and unencumbered space. The event also emphasized the wellbeing and mental health of the LGBTQIA+ community, as the production explores one's transition and their family's transition when a family member comes out as transgender.

The event was funded by the Take Action LA Grant from the California Mental Health Services Authority and the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health. Guided by Center Theatre Group's mission to serve the diverse audiences of Los Angeles, this community engagement event helped kick off Pride Month, including a pre-show reception at The Music Center's Jerry Moss Plaza followed by a performance of "A Transparent Musical," as well as a post-show reception.

"Our night for the queer community lives as one of the most magical nights of the run. Magical and necessary. The electricity and emotion were palpable," shared composer and lyricist for "A Transparent Musical" Faith Soloway. "[The audience was] with the show in a way no other collective audience had been, expressing connection and celebration from beginning to the end. The give-and-take of that night was something I will never forget and feel so lucky to have been a part of."

The night began by greeting audience members at the Jerry Moss Plaza. Two organizations had booths: JQ International and Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health to provide mental health resources to audience members as well as the opportunity to learn about LGBTQIA+ community affinity spaces. Those in attendance also had the opportunity to take a picture in front of the "A Transparent Musical" neon sign. After the show, RuPaul Drag Race's Peppermint, also a cast member of "A Transparent Musical," kicked off the

post-show reception, which featured food, a 360 photobooth, and a DJ, to come together to not only celebrate this production but be in community with one another.

“A Transparent Musical’s’ LGBTQIA+ Night was a transformative night in the theatre for me,” said Center Theatre Group’s Ticket Sales Director Shawn Robertson. “As an openly gay man who works at Center Theatre Group and a theatre major, I have seen a lot of theatre in my life. The energy was electric and to see the faces of trans and nonbinary audience and staff members seeing themselves on stage and hearing stories that reflect their lives was a joy I have never experienced before in the theatre. Telling big, and messy stories of a community that has been under attack isn’t just the right thing to do – it is what we must do at this time. I felt so lucky to be in the theatre that night to be surrounded by such love and joy.”

The California Mental Health Services Authority is a Joint Powers of Authority (JPA) formed in 2009 by counties throughout the state to work on collaborative, multi-county projects that improve behavioral health care for all Californians. By pooling resources, forging partnerships, and leveraging technical expertise on behalf of counties, CalMHSA develops strategies and programs with an eye toward transforming community mental health; creates cross-county innovations; and is dedicated to addressing equity to better meet the needs of our most vulnerable populations. As a JPA, CalMHSA is not a state agency but is held to many of the same standards as other public entities, such as the Brown Act for all of its meetings.

The Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (LACDMH), with a budget of approaching \$3 billion, is the largest county-operated mental health department in the United States, directly operating programs in more than 85 sites, and providing services through contract programs and LACDMH staff at approximately 300 sites co-located with other County departments, schools, courts and various organizations. Each year, the County contracts with close to 1,000 organizations and individual practitioners to provide a variety of mental health-related services. On average, more than 250,000 County residents of all ages are served every year.

Center Theatre Group, one of the nation’s preeminent arts and cultural organizations, is Los Angeles’ leading not-for-profit theatre company, which under the leadership of Managing Director / CEO Meghan Pressman and Producing Director Douglas C. Baker, and in collaboration with the four Associate Artistic Directors, Lindsay Allbaugh, Tyrone Davis, Neel Keller, and Kelley Kirkpatrick, programs seasons at the 736-seat Mark Taper Forum and 1,600 to 2,100-seat Ahmanson Theatre at The Music Center in Downtown Los Angeles, and the 317-seat Kirk Douglas Theatre in Culver City. In addition to presenting and producing the broadest range of theatrical entertainment in the country, Center Theatre Group is one of the country’s leading producers of ambitious new works through commissions and world premiere productions and a leader in interactive community engagement and education programs that reach across generations, demographics, and circumstances to serve Los Angeles. Founded in 1967, Center Theatre Group was led by Founding Artistic Director Gordon Davidson until 2005 when Michael Ritchie was the

artistic director until his retirement in 2021; Snehal Desai has been appointed the organization's next artistic director and will begin in August of 2023. Center Theatre Group has produced more than 700 productions across its three stages, including such iconic shows as "Zoot Suit;" "Angels in America;" "The Kentucky Cycle;" "Biloxi Blues;" "Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992;" "Children of a Lesser God;" "Curtains;" "The Drowsy Chaperone;" "9 to 5: The Musical;" and "Bengal Tiger at the Baghdad Zoo."

CenterTheatreGroup.org

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