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CONTACT: Lizbeth Path  
Tel: +1 626-444-4424  
[lizbeth@silenttearsmusical.com](mailto:lizbeth@silenttearsmusical.com)

## **Broadway Stars Shine in *Loving the Silent Tears*** Globals Talents Unite for Sold-Out Benefit Musical

Here on the west coast we may get the sun, but we don't always get to see the stars shine—Broadway stars, that is. What a rare treat to see so much top theatrical talent under one roof with an impressive collection of credits such as *The Phantom of the Opera*, *The Sound of Music* and *Cats*. Helmed by Michael Jackson choreographer **Vincent Paterson**, a highly sought-after Tony-nominated director with a background that ranges from opera to music videos, this one-night-only musical extravaganza received a standing ovation at the 6,300-seat Shrine Auditorium on October 27. The celebrity red carpet included everyone from Hollywood celebrities to international consul generals.

How could the show be anything less than spectacular with Tony winner **Debbie Gravitte** (*Jerome Robbins' Broadway*), who also captivated audiences in *Chicago* and *Les Miserables*. Also adding her sweet timbre to the show was Tony-nominated **Liz Callaway** (*Baby*), the singing voice from the animated movies *Anastasia*, *Beauty and the Beast*, and *Lion King II*.

Sharing the stage was young dancer/actor/singer/musician **Kiril Kulish**, who won a Tony at age fifteen for Best Leading Actor in *Billy Elliot the Musical*. Another breathtaking Broadway veteran was Tony-nominated **Patti Cohenour** (*The Mystery of Edwin Drood*), who has also performed in *The Phantom of the Opera* and *The Sound of Music*.

The amazing vocal talent also included 2-time Grammy-winning artist **Jon Secada**, who debuted a new song he composed for the musical, and Grammy-winning icon **Jody Watley**. The event's guest speaker was dancer/singer/actor **George Chakiris**, who won an Oscar for his role as Bernardo in *West Side Story*.

The evening was emceed by TV host and former Miss USA **Susie Castillo**, award-winning actor **Corey Feldman**, actress **Kelly Packard**, and 2-time Emmy-winning actor **Kristoff St. John**. In keeping with the spirit of compassion, all of them are vegans or vegetarians.

Award-winning playwrights **Cynthia Ferrell** and **Frank Evans** worked on the book for "Loving the Silent Tears," which told the story of an older, bereaved woman named Joy (played by Patti Cohenour from Broadway's original "The Phantom of the Opera") and an ambitious young man named Pete (played by Luke Eberl from "Planet of the Apes"). Through a magical train and its mysterious and jovial conductor (Junior Case), they journey through rich and varied cultures, where they encounter the singers of each distinct culture who express an aspect of their inner journeys.

The singers included Grammy-winning reggae legends **Black Uhuru**, Arab singer **Camellia Abou-Odah**, French singer **Flo Ankah**, actor **Junior Case**, award-winning actor **Luke Eberl**, Vietnamese pop star **Hồ Quỳnh Hương**, Italian tenor **Mark Janicello**, Korean pop star **Brian Joo**, award-winning Israeli singer **Liel Kolet**, Irish soprano **Katie McMahon**, Korean singer

**Heather Park**, award-winning Brazilian singer **Fabiana Passoni**, Persian superstar **Siavash Shams**, and Chinese platinum pop star **Kay Tse**.

Helping to take the audience through sixteen different countries without ever leaving their seats were Emmy-winning set designer **John Iacovelli** (*Peter Pan*) and award-winning costume designer **Sharell Martin** (*Chicago*).

Emmy-winning choreographer **Bonnie Story** (*High School Musical*) headed an incredible dance ensemble of thirty-plus, including dancers fresh off of a Cirque du Soleil show.

Patti Cohenour, who played one of the main acting characters, said, *“I can’t say enough about the dancers. Vincent Paterson, Bonnie Story – they’re all remarkable artists. I love Luke and Junior. And with Vincent’s ability to bring this huge extravaganza together and build it on the actors, it’s been a very special experience.”*

The musical was based on a collection of poems called *Silent Tears*, written by **Supreme Master Ching Hai**, world-renowned spiritual teacher, humanitarian and artist. A group of diverse eminent composers set the heartfelt verses to music: 2-time Oscar winning composer **Al Kasha** (*The Poseidon Adventure*), 6-time Grammy winner and 2-time Oscar nominee **Jorge Calandrelli** (*Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*), Emmy winner **Doug Katsaros** (*Footloose*), 2-time Grammy winner and Oscar nominee **Henry Krieger** (*Dreamgirls*), Tony and Emmy winner **Don Pippin** (*Oliver!*), Grammy winner **Nan Schwartz** (*Harry Potter*), and Oscar and 2-time Grammy winner **David Shire** (*Saturday Night Fever*).

The event commemorated the 19th Anniversary of Supreme Master Ching Hai Day to honor her worldwide philanthropic work and peace advocacy. California State Senator **Curren Price** conveyed commendatory remarks about Supreme Master Ching Hai’s longstanding humanitarian contributions. Supreme Master Ching Hai was unable to attend but gave a warm video greeting, in which she said, *“To all involved in this musical event, blessed be your dedication to make this world a more enjoyable place, cheering up the masses and giving thanks to Heaven and Earth in this way.”*

In the caring spirit of Supreme Master Ching Hai Day, Supreme Master Ching Hai made generous donations totaling \$300,000 to the charities Broadway Cares / Equity Fights AIDS, Animal Defenders International, and Worldwide Veterinary Service, on the artists’ behalf.

In addition, the caring, plant-based lifestyle was promoted in alignment with the overall message of peace and cultural understanding. The guest speaker George Chakiris said during his speech, *“Supreme Master Ching Hai’s message is that all beings...have the right to live in peace and dignity on this beautiful planet; and that each person can do his or her part to save lives, better our planet, and be heroes. And my personal way to be a hero and save these important lives is to be a vegetarian.”*

Attendees were also invited to a pre-show art exhibition of the Master’s uplifting creative works. After the event, there was a VIP banquet that was catered with delicious vegan food.

*Loving the Silent Tears* was not only a five-star production, it was a multi-star-studded show of grand proportions!

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