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TONY AWARD-WINNING DIRECTOR

MICHAEL MAYER

TO RECEIVE PRESTIGIOUS

"MR. ABBOTT" AWARD

STAGE DIRECTORS AND CHOREOGRAPHERS FOUNDATION (SDCF)
TO CELEBRATE
TONY AWARD-WINNING DIRECTOR MICHAEL MAYER
FOR OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTIONS TO BROADWAY

TOM HULCE
JOHANNA PFAELZER
JORDAN ROTH
AND
ELLENORE SCOTT
WILL SERVE AS CO-CHAIRS



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New York, NY (October 29, 2026) – **Stage Directors and Choreographers Foundation (SDCF),** the not-for-profit foundation of Stage Directors and Choreographers Society (SDC), announces that Tony Award-winning director **Michael Mayer** will be honored with SDCF's 2027 "Mr. Abbott" Award, given to a director or choreographer in recognition of their outstanding contributions to

Broadway. The award will be presented at the Foundation's Gala on Monday, March 22, 2027, at 6:00 PM at Gotham Hall in New York City.

Chairing the 2027 "Mr. Abbott" Award Gala are **Tom Hulce**, **Johanna Pfaelzer**, **Jordan Roth** and **Ellenore Scott**. **Lorin Latarro** will direct the evening, and **Dick Scanlan** serve as writer. Proceeds from the Gala will benefit the programs of SDCF.

Says Gala Co-Chair Tom Hulce, "I first became aware of Michael Mayer's extraordinary work in 1998, when I saw his acclaimed productions of *Side Man*, *A View from the Bridge*, and *Stupid Kids* in one amazing season. Over the next 25+ years, it has been my great good fortune to work with Michael on almost a dozen projects, each one lifted by his artistic imagination, meticulous craftsmanship, and an instinct to celebrate our humanity in all its glorious variety. I look forward to all his work yet to come—and to celebrating his work and artistry with our community as he receives the much-deserved SDCF "Mr. Abbott" Award."

Currently in rehearsal for the original musical *Galileo*, which will open at the Shubert Theatre on December 6 and premiered at Berkeley Repertory Theatre in 2024, Mayer is also represented Off-Broadway by *Little Shop of Horrors* at the Westside Theatre. The revival recently became the longest-running production in the show's history. His other recent Broadway credits include *Chess, Swept Away,* and *Funny Girl.* Mayer won the 2007 Tony Award for Best Direction of a Musical for the groundbreaking Broadway production of *Spring Awakening*. For more than three decades, he has directed some of the most celebrated plays and musicals on Broadway in a career that also spans opera, film, and television.

"Michael Mayer has spent his extraordinary, entirely freelance, career expanding our sense of what is possible onstage," stated SDCF President **Leigh Silverman**. "He has created work that changed the theatrical landscape and inspired generations of both artists and audiences to imagine differently. He has been a powerful advocate for SDC, an Executive Board member and his steadfast commitment to mentorship has been essential to our SDCF community. Michael embodies both the core values and vast artistic achievements of the esteemed "Mr. Abbott" Award and it is an honor to celebrate him this year."

The "Mr. Abbott" Award, presented by SDCF on behalf of directors and choreographers to one of their peers, is named in honor of the late renowned director George Abbott.

"While I could never hope to fill the great George Abbott's shoes, receiving the "Mr. Abbott" award from my peers is a true honor," said Michael Mayer. "My heart is overflowing with gratitude to the directors and choreographers who have impacted my aesthetic, and indeed my life, with their work. I'm profoundly grateful to SDCF for this recognition."

Past recipients of the **"**Mr. Abbott" Award include last year's honoree, Bartlett Sher, and Christopher Ashley, Michael Bennett, Arvin Brown, Vinnette Carroll, Graciela Daniele, Gordon Davidson, Agnes de Mille, Zelda Fichandler, Cy Feuer, Bob Fosse, Peter Gennaro, Garson Kanin, James Lapine, Kenny Leon, Gillian Lynne, Joe Mantello, Kathleen & Rob Marshall, Marshall W. Mason, Lynne Meadow, Jerry Mitchell, Mike Nichols, Trevor Nunn, Jack O'Brien, Harold Prince, Lloyd Richards, Donald Saddler, Gene Saks, Andrei Serban, Susan Stroman, Daniel Sullivan, Julie Taymor, Tommy Tune, George C. Wolfe, Jerry Zaks, as well as Victoria Traube, the first-ever recipient of a Special "Mr. Abbott" Award.

ABOUT MICHAEL MAYER

Michael Mayer has worked in a broad spectrum of media from theatre and opera to television and film. His credits include the Broadway revivals of *Chess* and *Funny Girl*, the hit Off-Broadway revival of *Little Shop of Horrors, Swept Away, A Beautiful Noise, Burn This, Head Over Heels, Hedwig and the Angry Inch* (Tony Award – Best Musical), *Spring Awakening* (Tony Award – Best Musical; Tony, Drama Desk, and Outer Critics Circle Award – Best Director), *American Idiot* (Bookwriter; Drama Desk Award – Best Director), *Thoroughly Modern Millie* (Tony Award – Best Musical), *Side Man* (Tony Award – Best Play), *A View from the Bridge* (Tony Award – Best Revival), *The Terms of My Surrender, Everyday Rapture, You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown*, and *Triumph of Love*. Off-Broadway credits: *We Chose to Go to the Moon* at Carnegie Hall, *21 Chump Street*, *Chess, Love, Love, Love, Brooklynite, 10 Million Miles*, and *Stupid Kids*. National tour of *Angels in America*. His opera credits include *Rigoletto*, *La Traviata, Aida,* and the world premieres of Nico Muhly's *Marnie*, and Jeanine Tesori's *Grounded* at the Met. Producing credits include *Liberation* (Tony Award), *Chess*, *Swept Away*, and *Galileo*. Film credits: *A Home at the End of the World* (Excellence in Filmmaking - National Board of Review, GLAAD Nomination), *FLICKA*, *The Seagull*, *Single All the Way*, *Wig*. Television credits: "Smash" (Pilot and Season One) and "Alpha House." Awards and fellowships include the inaugural Daryl Roth Creative Spirit Award, Drama League, Jefferson, Ovation, Alan Schneider, and Carbonell Awards; Fox Foundation Fellowship, Two Drama League Fellowships, TCG/NEA Directing Fellowship. He serves on the Board of the Stage Directors and Choreographers Society and Berkeley Repertory Theatre.

For more information about the "Mr. Abbott" Award and other SDC Foundation programs, please call Laura Peete, SDC Foundation Director, at 646.524.2226.

ABOUT STAGE DIRECTORS AND CHOREOGRAPHERS FOUNDATION

Founded in 1965, **Stage Directors and Choreographers Foundation (SDCF)** celebrates, develops, and supports professional stage directors and choreographers throughout every phase of their careers. SDCF works to build a theatrical community that reflects the cultural, racial, and gender diversity of our nation by creating opportunities for artists of all backgrounds to bring their full, authentic selves to their work as creative leaders in the theatre. SDCF's goals are to provide opportunities to practice the crafts of directing and choreography; to gather and disseminate craft and career information; to promote the profession to emerging talent; to provide opportunities for exchange of knowledge among directors and choreographers; to increase the awareness of the value of directors' and choreographers' work; and to convene around issues affecting theatre artists. sdcfoundation.org

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