

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

STATE THEATRE NEW JERSEY BENEFIT RAISES OVER \$500,000

New Brunswick, NJ (May 16, 2018)—On May 12, 2018 the **State Theatre New Jersey Benefit Gala**, featuring Grammy Award®-winning band **Kool & The Gang**, raised over **\$500,000** for the not-for-profit performing arts center. Proceeds from the Benefit Gala support State Theatre New Jersey’s acclaimed artistic and educational programs.

This year’s Benefit Gala featured a performance by the band **Kool & The Gang**, who have influenced the music of three generations and with over 70 million albums sold worldwide their funk and jazz arrangements have made them one of the most sampled bands of all time. The band performed hits such as “Too Hot,” “Ladies Night,” and “Celebration.”

“We were thrilled to have a Grammy Award®-winning band from New Jersey as our Benefit Gala performer this year,” commented **State Theatre New Jersey Gala Co-Chairs John Fitzgerald and John Reissner**. “It was a remarkable evening in support of the State Theatre’s mission of providing arts education programs to inform and build future audiences. We want to say thank you to the Gala Committee, Board, staff, and volunteers for their extraordinary dedication in making this event one to remember!”

The **State Theatre 2018 Benefit Gala** recognized three honorees this year—Corporate honoree, **Bank of America**; Patron honorees, **Douglas and Diane Garback of The Garback Agency**; and Leadership in the Arts honorees, **Betty Wold Johnson**.

The attendees at the Black-Tie Dinner Dance at New Brunswick’s The Heldrich Hotel included community, arts, business, and civic leaders from central New Jersey and around the state. In addition to the concert, Gala festivities included a dinner reception, a silent auction with over 70 items, open bars, Viennese dessert buffets, dancing, and live music provided by the band Jersey Joint.

The State Theatre 2018 Benefit Gala committee included (*Vice-Chair of the State Theatre New Jersey Board of Trustees, Gala Co-Chair*) **John S. Fitzgerald** of Dunellen; (*Gala Co-Chair*) **John Reissner** of Tinton Falls; (*Gala Vice-Chair*) **Linda Piscadolo** of Somerset; (*Trustee, Gala Vice-Chair*) **Matt Taylor** of Marlboro; (*Gala Vice-Chair*) **Tracy Taylor** of Marlboro; (*Trustee,*

Corporate Co-Chair, American Benefits Consulting) **Craig J. Guiffre** of Scotch Plains; (*Corporate Co-Chair, MetLife*) **Timothy J. Brown** of Flanders; **Dee Abedradoh** of Kendall Park; **Tina Ahmadi** of Matawan; **Lisa Berlin** of Highland Park; **Hiam Boraie** of Milltown; **Cathy Gombas** of East Brunswick; **Eileen Harkins** of New Brunswick; (*Trustee*) **Bill Herman** of Clifton; (*Trustee*) **Gurdon Hornor** of Belle Mead; **Heather Hornor** of Belle Mead; **Gabriel Lavigne** of Colts Neck; **Richard T. McDonald** of Millstone Township; **Donna Miyamoto** of Whitehouse Station; **Salvatore Romano** of Somerset; and **Maggie Stavrianidis** of Somerset.

The Emerald Gala Sponsors included: American Benefits Consulting, Johnson & Johnson, and MetLife.

The Diamond Gala Sponsors included: Aetna; Bob and Joan Campbell; and Alma Scott.

Platinum Partners included: Bank of America; Magyar Bank; and Prudential.

About State Theatre New Jersey

The theater exists to enrich people's lives, contribute to a vital urban environment, and build future audiences by presenting the finest performing artists and entertainers and fostering lifetime appreciation for the performing arts through arts education. State Theatre New Jersey's programs are made possible by funds from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts, a partner agency of the National Endowment for the Arts. Grant funding has been provided by the Middlesex County Board of Chosen Freeholders through a grant award from the Middlesex County Cultural and Arts Trust Fund. United is the official airline of the State Theatre.

STATE THEATRE NEW JERSEY

Creating Extraordinary Experiences Through the Power of Live Performance

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PHOTOS AND INTERVIEWS FURNISHED UPON REQUEST

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Information in this release is current as of May 16, 2018.

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