



# GEORGE CHRISTY



Steve Cohn Photography

Honoree Roberta Haft with emcee Michele Lee during the Angels' Night Biannual Gala benefiting the Center Theater Group in Century City



Dr. David Boyer with wife Susan



Honoree Patty Glaser



Maggie Simon with honoree Tracie Bennett and Jolene Schlatter. Maggie performs her cabaret act at the Catalina Bar and Grill on November 11 and 12.



CTG Artistic Director Michael Ritchie with honoree Brendell Gottlieb

performing to Tom Griep's Orchestra. And honoring "angels" the likes of philanthropist **Brendell Gottlieb**, entertainment attorney **Patty Glaser**, the hard-working **Roberta Haft**, who loves her backyard llamas and peacocks. In times past, Roberta mentioned that one llama goes gaga sniffing perfumes – "such a sweetheart ... do you think he's gay?"

**Tracie Bennett**, whose riveting portrayal of Judy Garland in *End Of The Rainbow* this year at the Ahmanson will be long remembered, was presented with the Distinguished Artist Award by **Michael Ritchie**. In thanking all, Tracie quoted Mum's advice "to be brief, sincere, and be seated."

**Ava** and **Chuck** were missed, **Ava** regrettably indisposed for the evening, with **Chuck** attending to her comfort at home. Nonetheless, their enthusiasm for our cultural continuity was reflected in the crowd. Among the many were the evening's co-chair **Kim Peterson**, CTG's director of development **Yvonne Bell**, whose fundraising staff totals 21 and who arrived with her Scottish kilt-wearing husband **Derek Bell**, the helicopter pilot covering news for CBS and Channel 9.

Other CTG supporters: **Stan Frilech**, **Karla** and **Bill Ahmanson**, **Maggie** and **Jack Simon**, with whom **Tracie Bennett** houseguests, **Steve Stabler**, **Jolene** and **George Schlatter**, **Cecile** and **Norm Krevoy**, **Tim Regler**, **Frank Mottek**, Prince **Frederic**, who's wed to **Zsa Zsa Gabor**, **Mary** and **Fred Willard**, **Carol** and **Stephen Roundtree**. **Sam Mudie**, **Howard Rosoff**, **Derrek** and **Amanda** and **Alexis Haft**.

Tablesful of gold, silver, platinum and bronze angel donors filled the ballroom. As did the flocks of patron saints who contributed to the silent and live auctions, with the evening's "take" rising to \$1 million. Through the years, **Ava** and her CTG Affiliates have raised \$7 million.

doctor's career. celebrated

**Ava** and husband **Chuck Fries**, the "Godfather of the Television Movie," are prominent collectors as well, their Beverly Hills mansionette's a repository for new and established artists. **Ava** corrals the talents, many now friends, to contribute their works for auction. An original idea in behalf of her Angels' Night fundraisers, which she established 20 years ago to support CTG's productions. Along with its educational division which introduces young people from childhood to pre-teens into the magic and power of theater.

Long ago we crowned **Ava** the CTG's "Queen of Angels," and long may she reign with her creative fundraising prowess. Husband **Chuck** continues to executive produce their rewarding and glamorous evenings.

A city without the arts is a lost city. A city without soul. And midway during the evening, CTG's artistic director **Michael Ritchie** thanked the city fathers for coming together 50-years ago to create our world-renowned Music Center. Which has given us the Ahmanson Theater, Mark Taper Forum and the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion for world-class presentations. Of theater, opera, music and dance events.

**Michele Lee** emceed this week's Angels' Night program with its Roaring Twenties theme, featuring the Crystal Dancers

Another night, Spago never looked more beautiful with its luminous lighting and romantic white decor, and **Gelila Puck** never looked more beautiful in **Ralph Rucci** couture. **Gelila** and **Wolfgang Puck** were welcoming *Vogue Italia* editor **Franca Sozzana** to Beverly Hills for an exquisite dinner that included 300 guests. Among them were **Kanye West** with **Kim Kardashian**, **Eva** and **Michael Chow**, stylist **Rachel Zoe**, **Joe Jonas**, **Amy Smart**, **Maria Sharapova**, **Devon Aoki**, **Liz Goldwyn**, **Ben Silverman**, auctioneer **Simon de Pury** with wife **Michaela**, **Babyface Edmonds** and opera's **Vittorio Grigolo** performed.

More than a million dollars was raised to benefit the Dream for Future Africa Foundation, founded in 2010 by the Ethiopian-born **Gelila**. "Our primary focus is an economic sustainability for African families, whose children are thrust into the working world without training," she says. "We just celebrated the opening of the Vocational Training Center in the Ethiopian village of Aleltu, offering diplomas from courses in communication technologies, the garment trades (sewing and design), hotel and tourism ... we believe this will create a middle class for Africa."

"Yesterday was **Gelila's** birthday," announced **Wolfgang**, "so I said let's stay in bed. But she was out of the house in a flash, working nonstop to create this perfect night. Another big reason to love her!"

We visited with Motown titan **Berry Gordy**, **Suzanne de Passe**, **Smokey Robinson**, **Quincy Jones**, designer **Waldo Fernandez**. Also with Spago's veteran major domo, **Tom Kaplan**, more handsome

than ever, who opened the initial Spago on Horn Avenue in 1982. **Tom** oversees the Spago empire in Las Vegas and is wed to beauty **Elizabeth** from Austin, Texas. She and **Tom** are the parents of four-month-old **Austin**.

We sat with **Denise Flanders**, the manager of the Dorchester Group's Hotel Bel-Air with its popular Wolfgang Puck Dining Room. She arrived with her food and wine director **Stephane Lacroix**.

**Denise** is a native of Greensburg, Pennsylvania, a brief drive from that "most livable" city of Pittsburgh with its fine universities and museums and where those three rivers converge: the Allegheny, Monongahela and Ohio. We should note that **Denise's** hotel career dazzles. From overseeing New York's Pierre to Chicago's Four Seasons to Seattle's Olympic, and the list goes on. She enjoys walking our Los Angeles canyons, and strolling the beaches on sunny days.

Author **William Stadiem** was a tablemate. **Bill's** mom, **Beatrice**, has resided at the Fireside Convalescent Hospital in Santa Monica for eight years, where a family member of ours has also been looked after. By the bright and indefatigable staff that includes rehab director **Jessica Pohlkamp**, occupational therapist **Jessica Hendrick**, speech pathologist **Kira Morris**.

The Fireside is legendary for its rehab successes, and **Bill** gives the Fireside "a thumbs up." He lives nearby, and brings Mom home every afternoon for lunch. **Bill**, how lucky can you get?

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Spago Archives

Italia Vogue editor Franca Sozzana was feted by Wolfgang and Gelila Puck at Spago to raise funds for the Dream for Future Africa Foundation.

BEVERLY HILLS COURIER