



*Arts Orange County is the leader in building appreciation of, participation in, and support for the arts and arts education in Orange County, California.*

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## **Arts Orange County Announces 21<sup>st</sup> OC Arts Awards Honorees**

June 24, 2021 – IRVINE, CALIFORNIA – The Orange County arts community will gather on Tuesday, October 19, 2021, in the Samueli Theater at Segerstrom Center for the Arts in Costa Mesa, to honor its stars at the 21<sup>st</sup> Orange County Arts Awards, hosted by the county's non-profit arts council, Arts Orange County.

This year's *Helena Modjeska Cultural Legacy Award* for lifetime contributions to the Orange County arts community will recognize: **Jonelle Allen**, an award-winning actress known for her work on Broadway, in film and television, as well as a beloved arts educator; **The Laguna Playhouse**, one of the West Coast's oldest continuously operating theatre companies, now completing its 100<sup>th</sup> season; **Tom Titus**, arts journalist now retiring as the theatre critic for The Daily Pilot where he has championed local theatre for 55 years.

An *Achievement Award for Outstanding Public Art* will be given to the visionary **FLIGHT at Tustin Legacy Murals**, a project of owner/developer **LPC West**, **RIOS** architects, and the **City of Tustin**, who commissioned three nationally-known artists to create multi-story murals: **Shag (Josh Agle)**, **Bunnie Reiss**, and **John Park**.

The *Emerging Arts Leader Award* will be given to **Maurizio Hector Pineda**, director and curator of S/A. Exhibitions, operator of the new gallery at the Santa Ana Arts Collective affordable artists residence.

A *Special Award* will be presented to the **Orange County Board of Supervisors** in recognition of their extraordinary allocation of more than \$5.8 million in federal COVID relief funds to the local arts community.

2021 marks the 21<sup>st</sup> edition of the Orange County Arts Awards (held annually except for 2020) and the twelfth time that the Orange County Arts Awards will take place at Segerstrom Center for the Arts. Preceding the ceremonies, honorees and sponsors will enjoy a pre-event reception and dinner at Leatherby's Café Rouge before joining all ceremony guests for the evening's program in the Samueli Theater.

Emcees for this year's event are **Marleena Barber**, Director of VSA Orange County, an organization that provides arts, education, and cultural opportunities by, with, and for people with disabilities, making the arts accessible to people of all abilities, and **Richard Stein**, President & CEO of Arts Orange County.

"Arts Orange County proudly honors the people and organizations that have profoundly impacted the creative life of our community," commented Stein. "Each year, we look forward to recognizing those in the arts who have contributed to Orange County over the course of a lifetime and those who have made a more recent impact. This is an evening that celebrates our diverse artistic community, where we honor and thank those whose dedication to the arts enriches and benefits so many throughout Orange County."

More information may be found at <https://artsoc.org/events-and-programs/21st-annual-orange-county-arts-awards/>

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**Jonelle Allen**

### ***Helena Modjeska Cultural Legacy Award – Artistic Visionary***

Jonelle made her acting debut in the first of several Broadway productions at age 6 (with Helen Hayes) and tap danced with Sammy Davis Jr. on TV when she was 8. She appeared in the original production of "HAIR" at New York's Public Theatre, after which her mentor Joseph Papp cast her as Silvia in the 1972 Broadway musical "Two Gentlemen of Verona," for which she received New York Drama Critics, Drama Desk, Theatre World and Outer Critics Circle Awards as well as a Tony Award nomination. For 6 seasons she played Grace, the restaurant owner, on CBS TV's "Dr. Quinn, Medicine Woman." She was a series regular on "Palmerstown," "Berenger's," and "Generations" and appeared in guest starring roles on "Cagney and Lacey," "Hill Street Blues," and "ER," among others. In 2021, she starred in an episode of the Fox TV series "9-1-1." A dedicated arts educator, she taught for 8 years at Saddleback College. Born in Harlem, Jonelle is a 42 year-long resident of Orange County.

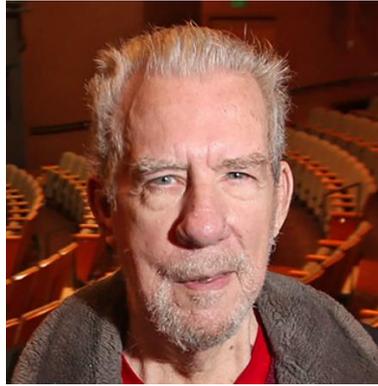


**The Laguna Playhouse**

### ***Helena Modjeska Cultural Legacy Award – Arts Organization***

One of the oldest continuously operating theatre companies on the West Coast, founded on October 22, 1920 in a Laguna Beach living room, the Playhouse first began as a community theatre, later evolving into an acclaimed professional theatre company. It has premiered many notable works and produced two national tours ("Copenhagen" and "The Belle of Amherst" starring Julie Harris) which took it to 40 cities around the U.S.

Its Youth Theatre has received two national awards. The Playhouse has been a proving ground for many outstanding artists over the years, including Harrison Ford, Mike Farrell and Toni Tennille, and it hosted South Coast Repertory's productions during SCR's very first season.



**Tom Titus**

***Helena Modjeska Cultural Legacy Award – Visionary Arts Journalist***

Tom Titus has been the principal theatre writer and critic for *The Daily Pilot (Los Angeles Times)* for 55 years, writing insightful articles and reviews—and always using his role to convey his joy of theatre and to champion its importance in our community. During his long tenure, he reviewed every play produced by South Coast Repertory except for one (due to illness). This year, Tom announced his retirement.

***Special Award***



**Orange County Board of Supervisors**

Andrew Do, Chair, Supervisor, District 1

Doug Chaffee, Vice Chair, Supervisor, District 4

Lisa Bartlett, Supervisor, District 5

Katrina Foley, Supervisor, District 2

Donald P. Wagner, Supervisor, District 3

We recognize the Orange County Board of Supervisors for their extraordinary gesture of support for our arts community during the COVID-19 pandemic through the allocation of \$5 million in American Rescue Plan Act Funds and nearly \$1 million in CARES Act Funds for arts relief grants to artists, nonprofit arts organizations, and arts-related businesses.

## *Achievement Award for Outstanding Public Art*



### **FLIGHT at Tustin Legacy Murals**

LPC West, Owner/Developer

RIOS, Architect

City of Tustin

Artists:

Shag (Josh Agle)

Bunnie Reiss

John Park

In 2016, a partnership between the City of Tustin and LPC West (Lincoln Property Company) laid out a plan for the future of the former Tustin Marine Corps Air Station site. Together with the architecture firm RIOS they designed a mixed-use project, FLIGHT, and then offered its large multi-story structural walls as gigantic canvases for murals to three extraordinary artists. The murals were unveiled in 2019.

## *Achievement Award for Emerging Arts Leader*



### **Maurizio Hector Pineda**

Maurizio is the founding director/curator of S/A. Exhibitions, the storefront gallery in the new Santa Ana Arts Collective, an affordable housing residence for previously homeless artists. An emerging leader with a distinctive artistic vision, Maurizio returned to Santa Ana where he grew up after completing his studies and working in several early-career curatorial positions that gained him attention. The inspired exhibitions he has curated since the gallery opened in 2020 are energizing our community.

*Emcees*



**Marleena Barber**

Director, VSA Orange County  
Consultant, Visual & Performing Arts, Orange County  
Department of Education



**Richard Stein**

President & CEO of Arts Orange County