

NEWS / FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Monterey County Film Commission

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Film Commission's "Big Night Gala at Pebble Beach" Brings "The Magic of Hollywood" with Academy Awards® Telecast, celebrity guest Carol Lawrence, and magician Rich Ferguson

(Monterey, CA – Jan. 29, 2009) -- The Monterey County Film Commission plans a night to remember as it presents its 19th annual "Big Night Gala" on Sunday, Feb. 22, 2009, in the ballroom at the Inn at Spanish Bay in Pebble Beach, starting at 4:30 p.m.

In addition to celebrating Hollywood's biggest night of movies with the Academy Awards® telecast on big screens, the evening is packed with more excitement and glamour than ever including celebrity guest actress-singer Carol Lawrence, a Hollywood and Broadway legend.

This year's theme is "The Magic of Hollywood." Mixing it up with guests will be award-winning strolling magician Rich Ferguson, whose sophisticated sleight-of-hand and upscale visuals will keep guests guessing "how did he do that?" Ferguson does magic effects, has appeared in commercials with people playing Poker, and has consulted at the World Series of Poker. He's produced numerous DVDs pertaining to poker, entertainment and magic. His hands are frequently seen on commercials involving coin and card tricks, and he's appeared in "All the Best," "Camp Hollywood," and "Murder by Numbers."

The event begins with a red carpet arrival walk and champagne, just prior to Hollywood's celebrity red carpet action which will be telecast in the ballroom. The black-tie optional evening features a four-course gourmet dinner with a choice of fire-grilled rib eye steak or herb-marinated chicken breast over butternut squash risotto. Premier wine sponsor is Scheid Vineyards.

Lawrence, an accomplished actress, dancer and singer, has had numerous roles in Broadway productions, including the immortal role of Maria in "West Side Story." She was nominated for Tony and Grammy Awards, and has her own star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame. She will be accompanied at the gala by her son, Chris Goulet.

A silent auction during the event will offer celebrity and film memorabilia, Mexico travel, artwork, and Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca packages. Several items will be available for advance online bidding on the film commission's website, www.FilmMonterey.org, beginning Feb. 2.

The public is invited to attend, and to call for reservations at 831-646-0910. Tickets are \$195 per person, with discounts for members of Reel Friends of the Film Commission. Proceeds help the

non-profit Monterey County Film Commission continue its efforts to bring an economic boost to local communities and Monterey County through the film industry.

For more information see www.FilmMonterey.org or email info@filmmonterey.org.

The event co-chairs are Monterey County Film Commission board members, Rose Clark and Taum Dell'Armo.

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The Monterey County Film Commission is a nonprofit organization, created by the Monterey County Board of Supervisors in 1987. It works to market Monterey County as a destination for the motion picture, television and related industries, for the purpose of stimulating economic development, creating jobs, providing and supporting educational opportunities in those areas.