



# Grand Performances Triumphantly Crosses the Summer Season Finish Line with the Annual Gala Honoring Michael Alexander.

*Celebration commences on Saturday, September 23.*

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-----[Grand Performances](#) is pleased to announce the annual [Gala](#) will take place at 350 S Grand Avenue in Downtown Los Angeles on Saturday September 23 and will honor the organization's Founding Executive Director [Michael Alexander](#) and will feature a live musical tribute to Afrobeat legend Fela Kuti.

The program for the evening is as follows:

6:00 PM: Hosted Cocktails and Raffle

7:00 PM: Dinner, Honoree Presentation, Live Auction

8:30 PM: Benefit Concert: A Tribute to the Music of Fela Kuti

The dictionary definition of the word gala is: a festive celebration; especially: a public entertainment marking a special occasion. For Grand Performances, the annual gala, is indeed, a special event. The gala is our victory lap. It's the exclamation point and celebration after a fantastic season. It's honoring the past while looking to the future. But most importantly it is an opportunity to fundraise and support this seminal LA institution.

On this evening, Grand Performances will honor Founding Executive Director, Michael Alexander. To the great benefit of hundreds of thousands of people, Michael spent his career bringing people together through the arts. Michael is a firm believer that access to the arts is a right and not a privilege. California's beautifully integrated, multi-cultured population has reflected a strong appetite for creative diversity. That craving has been fed with insight, vision, humility, humor and passion. And yes, our lives are better for it. Simply listing his accolades and accomplishments is a weighty task and therefore, we've listed these separately. Although Michael is not leaving the arts community and merely transitioning to his next sure-to-be-successful endeavor, we expect to see many misty-eyed people at the Gala.

Since its inception 31 years ago, Grand Performances has supported African music, making it a staple of the organization's summer programming. There have been many popular artists throughout musical history but few ascend to the status of leaving a world-wide imprint that is recognized beyond music. Fela left a profound impact on pop culture in an indisputable manner and is on the short list of musical icons whose legacy established a global phenomenon (Afrobeat) and influenced people not only in his native country, but around the world. Grand Performances has always embraced global music and wanted Afrobeat and Fela represented as authentically as possible and therefore recruited Sahr Ngaujah who portrayed Fela on Broadway and Ethio Cali to provide the evening's music, along with a Supergroup of Los Angeles musicians who play with Kendrick Lamar, Robert Glasper, Aloe Blacc, Mexico 68, Jungle Fire and more.

The Grand Performances Gala promises to be an evening of celebration, community and reflection on what it means to be the proud cultural ambassadors of Los Angeles. Fancy joining us?

**MORE ON GRAND PERFORMANCES:** Celebrating its 31st year, Grand Performances' mission is to inspire community, celebrate diversity, and unite Los Angeles through free access to global performing arts. Hailed as the "Best Free Outdoor Summer Concert Series" by Los Angeles Magazine and called "a grand gift to the public... democracy in musical action" by the Los Angeles Times, Grand Performances presents high-quality music, dance, theater, and more during the summer at the breathtaking California Plaza in the heart of Downtown as well as at other venues throughout the year including the Los Angeles State Historic Park and Los Angeles World Airports.

Follow @GrandPerformances on Facebook, @GrandPerfs on Twitter and Instagram and our Youtube Channel at [youtube.com/grandperformances](http://youtube.com/grandperformances).

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