

CELEBRITY PLAYGROUND

BY MICHAEL SHULMAN

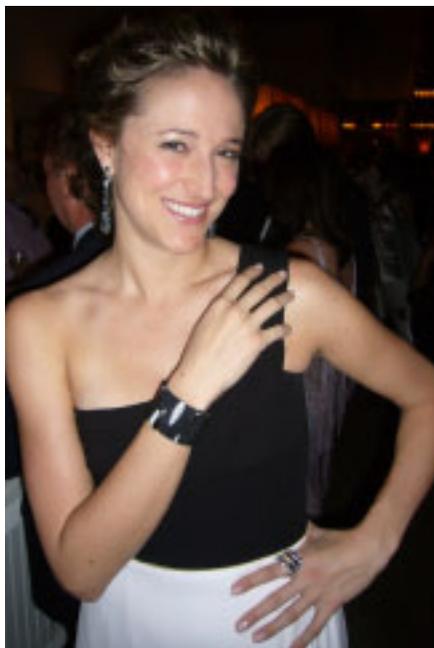
The Power of Love

Keep Memory Alive Brings Out the Stars for a Night to Remember

When one stops to consider that virtually everything in Las Vegas is done with a “Bigger! Faster! More, more, more!” attitude, it’s reassuring to know that this extends to our philanthropic endeavors, as well. Case in point: the annual Power of Love gala that raises money (and lots of it) for Keep Memory Alive, the foundation for the Lou Ruvo Brain Institute, a “unique research resource devoted to promoting healthy ‘vital aging’ for all citizens of Nevada and enhance the quality of life for a burgeoning number of people.”

The 2007 Power of Love gala took place on Saturday, February 10th, at the MGM Grand conference center. Upon entry, guests found themselves in the midst of a vast silent auction taking over the entire lobby and consisting of nearly 150 items: fine art by artists Tim Bavington, Tony Curtis, LeRoy Neiman and Greg Gorman; sports memorabilia and tickets; luxury goods and accessories from purveyors that included Dior, Tod’s, Hermès, Ralph Lauren Purple Label, Etro and Sergio Rossi; jewelry like a choker of baroque Tahitian pearls assembled specifically for this event by “Pearl Emperor” Robert Wan, diamond chandelier earrings from Fred Leighton, and a diamond lariat necklace from Jewelry by Rosalina; and a gaggle of top-drawer timepieces by such haute horologists as de Grisogono, Cartier, Tourneau, Corum, IWC, Breitling and Rolex.

Those who were able to lift their gaze from the auction items might have noticed celebrities from the worlds of music, film, television, art and design, including actors Lorraine Bracco (*The Sopranos*), Laurence Fishburne (*Bobby*), Kevin Spacey (*Superman Returns*) and Teri Hatcher (*Desperate House-*



Clockwise from top: Nicole Ruvo at the MGM Grand for Keep Memory Alive's Power of Love gala to benefit the Lou Ruvo Brain Institute; Teri Hatcher and boyfriend Stephen Kay; Lorraine Bracco.



PHOTOGRAPHS BY DENISE TRUSCELLO

KEEP MEMORY ALIVE

Clockwise from right: Elaine Newton at the MGM Grand for Keep Memory Alive's Power of Love gala to benefit the Lou Ruvo Brain Institute; Elaine Wynn and Larry Ruvo; Sydney Pollack.

wives), director Sydney Pollack (*Tootsie*), pop star Hilary Duff, jeweler Stephen Lagos, artist Romero Britto and architect Frank Gehry (who designed the Lou Ruvo Brain Institute currently under construction).

After an hour of sipping, bidding, mingling, gossiping, etc., the assembled masses (well over 1,000 guests) made their way into the ballroom, where they were treated to food by a quartet of the world's best chefs—Joël Robuchon, Mario Batali, Wolfgang Puck and David Robins (my faves were the cannelloni and the lamb). Hats off to the chefs, because I have a hard enough time cooking for one person—I can only imagine the logistics of cooking for 1,000!

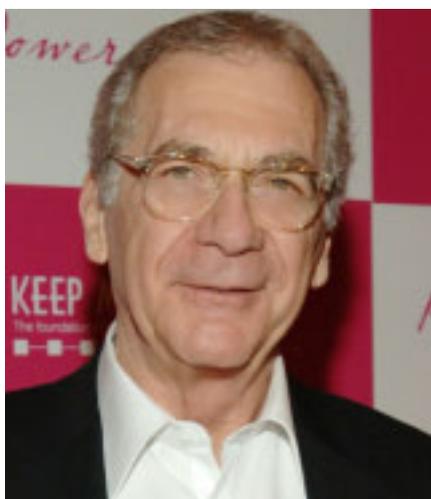
After dinner, it was time for some comedy, courtesy of Brad Garrett (*Everybody Loves Raymond*, *'Til Death*), who can perhaps best be described as this generation's answer to Don Rickles. Special kudos should go out to the guests in the front row—folks with names such as Black, Tiberti, Murren, Cloobek—and everyone else who had Garrett's wit aimed at them and went along with the joke. Bravo!

An incredible live auction followed, with items that included a shopping trip with Teri Hatcher (which brought in a cool quarter-million dollars), lunch with Hilary Duff, a vacation on David Copperfield's private Bahamian island, dinner with Dame Julie Andrews, a custom-made piece of jewelry designed by Stephen Lagos, a trip to New York including dinner at Rao's with Jon Bon Jovi, and a visit to the Old Vic to see Kevin Spacey—I could go on, but I don't have the space.

And speaking of Kevin Spacey, as a special surprise, the multitasking two-time Academy Award winner took to the stage and wowed the crowd with a fantastic musical tribute to classic Las Vegas entertainers Bobby Darin and Dean Martin. By the time the evening of delicious Dom Pérignon, dazzling, diamond-dripping dames and some dead-on Darin and Dino was over, \$22 million had been raised to battle Alzheimer's, Huntington's, Parkinson's, ALS and other memory disorders—diseases that have touched us all. Congratulations to Camille and Larry Ruvo, the board of Keep Memory Alive, Anna Robins and everyone else involved in an event that firmly places Las Vegas on the world map of philanthropy. ♠



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NEWTON: WYNN; MICHAEL SHULMAN; POLLACK: DENISE TRUSCELLO.