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**Oceanside Theatre Company Opens 2026 With World Premiere
of Dark Comedy Musical, *Dead Moose***

*New Work by San Diego Artist Tyler Tafolla Premieres January 23, 2026
at the Historic Sunshine Brooks Theater*

(Oceanside) January 7, 2025 - [Oceanside Theatre Company](#) (OTC at the Brooks) opens 2026 with the world premiere of a bold new musical by San Diego artist Tyler Tafolla. [Dead Moose](#) — a darkly comedic musical— arrives January 23 at the historic Sunshine Brooks Theater (217 N. Coast Highway, Oceanside, CA), inviting audiences into a surreal, heartfelt journey led by the unexpected voice of a very opinionated (and very deceased) moose. As OTC continues championing original work and rising Southern California artists, this premiere marks a standout moment for the region’s next generation of storytellers.

Developed locally and presented in co-production with Tafolla Productions, *Dead Moose* blends sharp humor with emotional depth as it follows Job, an eighteen-year-old whose life is upended after a near-fatal collision with a moose. As he confronts trauma, faith, identity, and loss, Job is guided—often unhelpfully—by the nagging voice of the moose itself, creating an unexpectedly vulnerable and darkly comedic path toward healing.

“Death is a weighty subject to base a musical on, and *Dead Moose* took nearly ten years to write because I had to reflect on my own experiences and feelings about mortality,” said Tafolla. “It was a vulnerable journey, guided by one central question: when you’re that close to death, how much do you really know about life?”

The musical has been in development since Tafolla first introduced selections in a 2018 Los Angeles songwriter showcase. A 2025 concert reading at the City Heights Performance Annex—produced by Tafolla and Kevin “Blax” Burroughs, OTC's Artistic Director — brought the piece to regional attention and laid the groundwork for this fully realized world premiere.

“When I first saw *Dead Moose* as a concert reading, there was a moment where I closed my eyes and could already envision it as a fully realized production at OTC,” said Burroughs. “I knew immediately this was a piece we needed to produce.”

Directed by Tyler Tafolla, with musical direction by Van Angelo and choreography by Chloe Chenfeld, the world premiere brings together a dynamic ensemble of established San Diego artists. The cast includes Danny Holmes, Chase Lowary, Salima Gangani, Audrey Deubig,

Joshua Powers, and Lyric Boothe, blending performers returning from the concert reading with artists making their OTC debut. Several familiar OTC faces are returning, including Holmes and Gangani, who appeared as Gabe and Natalie in OTC's 2024 production of *Next to Normal*, and Powers, who starred as Melchior in OTC's recent production of *Spring Awakening*.

The creative team reflects a deeply hands-on approach to the development of this world premiere. Tafolla also serves as the production's scenic and projection designer, with OTC Artistic Director Kevin "Blax" Burroughs leading the lighting design, underscoring the collaborative, in-house nature of the production's growth. Longtime OTC collaborators Zoë Trautmann (*Next to Normal*, *Stranger Sings*, *Once On This Island*, *Spring Awakening*) returns as costume designer, alongside Nate Cargill (*Stranger Sings*, *Spring Awakening*) as the production's props designer and set dresser. Keelyn McDermott makes her OTC debut as stage manager.

"*Dead Moose* is inspiring, euphoric, funny, and deeply heartfelt," Burroughs added. "It truly is a rollercoaster. The artists we've assembled for the world premiere are a special group, and I am honored that the Brooks Theater gets to be the home for this intimate and imaginative work."

"We're not trying to answer the questions about life outright for the audience," Tafolla added. "Our hope is to create a safe space where people can begin that conversation for themselves. Musical theatre allows us to share something deeply personal together — a communal experience that can be moving, even healing — and a reminder that no one is alone."

With funny, unsettling, and deeply human moments, *Dead Moose* explores how meaning emerges from chaos through memory, humor, and music. Tickets are on sale now at OceansideTheatre.org or through the OTC Box Office at (760) 433-8900.

Show Details

Dead Moose

Book, Music, and Lyrics by Tyler Tafolla

January 23 - February 1, 2026

Sunshine Brooks Theater (217 N. Coast Highway, Oceanside, CA, 92054)

OceansideTheatre.org | 760-433-8900

Tickets: \$20-\$40

Fridays at 8 pm, Saturdays at 3 pm (except first weekend) & 8 pm, Sundays at 3 pm

Special Events

Preview Night – Friday, January 23, 2026 at 8 PM

Opening Night – Saturday, January 24, 2026 at 8 PM

Military Matinee with Post-Show Talkback – Sunday, January 25, 2026 at 3 PM

Student Night – Saturday, January 31, 2026 at 8 PM

Content Disclaimer: *Dead Moose* is not recommended for audiences under the age of 14. Content includes themes of suicide, abuse, death, religious trauma, body shaming, homophobia and racism. This production contains flashing lights and projections, haze and loud music.

Full bios and headshots of the cast and creative team can be found at <https://oceansidetheatre.org/dead-moose/>.

About Oceanside Theatre Company

Oceanside Theatre Company (OTC), the resident company of the historic Sunshine Brooks Theater in downtown Oceanside, is a cornerstone of the Oceanside California Cultural District. OTC presents professional theatre, live music, and visual arts, along with year-round educational programs and youth outreach initiatives. Learn more at oceansidetheatre.org or follow [@oceansidetheatrecompany](#) on social media.

Oceanside Theatre Company press releases and photos can be found at:
[OceansideTheatre.org/news-press/press-releases/](https://oceansidetheatre.org/news-press/press-releases/)