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Jordan Kahn Wins "Best Dish" at StarChefs Gala

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Jordan Kahn's compressed strawberry pastry
Photo: Hadley Tomicki

Last week, StarChefs held its Southern California "Rising Star" honors at The Fairmont Hotel and united a long list of L.A. and San Diego's boundary-pushing chefs to cook on the spot. From Ray Garcia's bacon-wrapped bacon and Jason Knibb's jerk pork belly to Michael Voltaggio's melt-in-your-mouth wagyu short rib cooked sous vide with tallegio and Rivera's Del Maguey barbacoa cocktails, guests like Thomas Keller, David Myers, and Stefan Richter, among the hundreds, sampled a spread of today's greatest hit dishes. So which recipe made the biggest impression?

After tallying guest votes for the night's best bite, Jordan Kahn, formerly of Michael Mina's XIV, was crowned winner for "Best Dish", the first time a pastry chef has taken the honor in years. Kahn's dessert display, as seen above, resembled an extraterrestrial crime scene of blue splatters across white cubes. Inside the delicate shells was Kahn's concoction of compressed native strawberries, beet, cacao fruit, elderflower, and violets, a visual delight of floral flavor that managed to beat out other honorees like Umami Burger, Animal's oxtail poutine, Bouchon's sweetbreads, and Church and State's roasted bone marrow. Even though we preferred to bust our own bellies with Voltaggio's sublime meat, Kahn's recipe was doubtlessly the most attention-grabbing.

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