

News Release

Media Contact Only:

John Western, Marketing Director

415/865-4422

jwestern@sfsakes.org



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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San Francisco Shakespeare Festival Announces Dates and Cast for “A Midsummer Night’s Dream”

Free Shakespeare in the Park will have earlier evening start time;

Thursday shows added in Cupertino

San Francisco, CA – San Francisco Shakespeare Festival is proud to announce the performance dates and cast for their Free Shakespeare in the Park production of *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*. After producing *Hamlet* in 2017 to celebrate their 35th Anniversary Season, the company is turning to funnier fare with one of Shakespeare’s most beloved comedies. Free Shakespeare in the Park will also have an earlier start time of 7:00 pm for its evening performances this year, making it easier for families with younger children to enjoy the entire family-friendly production. Also, due to the popularity of Free Shakespeare in the Park, the Cupertino schedule of shows has added two Thursday performances.

The production, directed by Artistic Director Rebecca J. Ennals, will feature Stephen Muterspaugh* as Theseus/Oberon, Livia Gomes Demarchi as Hippolyta/ Titania, James Lewis as Philostrate/Puck, Lauren Spencer* as Helena, Patricia Austin* as Hermia/Fairy, Ed Berkeley as Demetrius, Akaina Ghosh as Lysander/Fairy, Michael Ray Wisely* as Nick Bottom, Michael Asberry* as Egeus/Peter Quince, Sean Garahan as Francis Flute/Mustardseed, Melanie Marshall as Tom Snout/Peaseblossom, Rosemarie Kingfisher as Robin Starveling/Cobweb, Julie Douglas as Snug/Mote. Gina White, Colleen Scallen, and Abigail Milnor-Sweetser perform the roles of Attendant/Fairy. The visually stunning show features costumes designed by Hyun Sook Kim, masks created by Kendra Johnson, sets designed by Neal Ormond, and movement choreography by Amelia Adams.

“Having explored Shakespeare’s darker side over the past few years with titles like *Hamlet*, *The Winter’s Tale*, and *Romeo and Juliet*, we’re thrilled to bring an upbeat comedy to our Free Shakespeare in the Park audiences this year,” says Ennals. “It’s the perfect play to watch outdoors on a summer evening or afternoon, and our company hasn’t staged it since 2007.” Ennals adds that she’s excited to have found such a talented cast that upholds the company’s continual dedication to both gender and racial diversity. The cast includes familiar faces from past Free Shakespeare in the Park productions, including members of the Festival’s Resident Artist company (Muterspaugh, Spencer, and Garahan), as well as talent new to the company.

A Midsummer Night’s Dream follows the misadventures of four young lovers, a group of aspiring actors, and a team of mischievous fairies as they all enter the woods outside Athens on a summer night. The ensuing hilarity and chaos create an evening filled with love and laughter. The production will travel to Pleasanton, Cupertino, Redwood City, and two San Francisco locations. Bring your family and friends, a blanket, and a picnic to enjoy professional theater at no charge in a beautiful park setting near you!

*denotes a member of Actors’ Equity Association

2018 Performance schedule for *A Midsummer Night's Dream*:

Pleasanton's Amador Valley Community Park, Santa Rita Road and Black Avenue

- Saturday, June 30 at 7:00 pm – Preview
- Sunday, July 1 at 7:00 pm – Preview
- Saturday, July 7 at 7:00 pm – Preview
- Sunday, July 8 at 7:00 pm – Opening
- Saturday, July 14 at 7:00 pm
- Sunday, July 15 at 7:00 pm

Cupertino's Memorial Park Amphitheater, Stevens Creek Blvd and Mary Avenue

- Saturday, July 21 at 7:00 pm – Preview
- Sunday, July 22 at 7:00 pm – Opening
- Thursday, July 26 at 7:00 pm
- Friday, July 27 at 7:00 pm
- Saturday, July 28 at 7:00 pm
- Sunday, July 29 at 7:00 pm
- Thursday, August 2 at 7:00 pm
- Friday, August 3 at 7:00 pm
- Saturday, August 4 at 7:00 pm
- Sunday, August 5 at 7:00 pm

Redwood City, grounds of Sequoia High School, 1201 Brewster Avenue at Broadway

- Saturday, August 11 at 7:00 pm – Preview
- Sunday, August 12 at 4:00 pm – Opening
- Saturday, August 18 at 7:00 pm
- Sunday, August 19 at 4:00 pm
- Saturday, August 25 at 7:00 pm
- Sunday, August 26 at 4:00 pm

San Francisco's Presidio, Main Post Parade Ground Lawn

- Saturday, September 1 at 2:00 pm – Preview
- Sunday, September 2 at 2:00 pm – Preview
- Monday, September 3 (Labor Day) at 2:00 pm – Opening
- Saturday, September 8 at 2:00 pm
- Sunday, September 9 at 2:00 pm

San Francisco's McLaren Park, Jerry Garcia Amphitheater, 40 John F. Shelley Drive

- Saturday, September 15 at 2:00 pm – Preview
- Sunday, September 16 at 2:00 pm – Opening
- Friday, September 21 at 10:00 am
- Saturday, September 22 at 2:00 pm
- Sunday, September 23 at 2:00 pm - CLOSING

Admission is free. For more information, call the San Francisco Shakespeare Festival at (415) 558-0888 or visit www.sfshakes.org

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Note to Editor: Artists and staff are available for interviews at (415) 558-0888.

About San Francisco Shakespeare Festival

The mission of the San Francisco Shakespeare Festival is to make the words and themes of Shakespeare accessible to everyone, regardless of age, ethnicity, financial status, or level of education. We accomplish this through the presentation of **Free Shakespeare in the Park** and a wide array of education programs: **Shakespeare On Tour**, **Tailor-Made Residencies**, **Bay Area Shakespeare Camps**, **Midnight Shakespeare**, and **Shakespeare for All**. *Shakespeare On Tour* performs an abridged Shakespeare play at schools, libraries, and community centers all over the state. *Tailor-Made Residencies* connects teaching artists with classroom teachers for in-class theatre enrichment, specifically tailored to their learning objectives and their students. *Bay Area Shakespeare Camps* for ages 4-6, 7-13 and 12-18 are two-week theatre camps held throughout the Bay Area. *Midnight Shakespeare*, the Festival's after-school program for underserved and low-income youth, serves participants in San Francisco, Oakland, San Jose and Antioch. *Shakespeare For All* in three Central Valley communities, Salida, Madera, and Chowchilla, gives residents a chance to stage community productions of Shakespeare's plays with the assistance and guidance of theater professionals.