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Cupertino Library Foundation Becomes Major Sponsor for Free Shakespeare in the Park at Memorial Park

The Cupertino Library Foundation, whose mission is to provide financial and creative support for diverse educational and cultural programs, is a new major sponsor of Free Shakespeare in the Park at the City of Cupertino's newly revitalized Memorial Park. The Foundation's sponsorship helps support this summer's production of *Cymbeline*, provided to the community at no charge.

Board President Kiran Varshneya said "The Foundation looks to support programs that enhance literacy, support quality of life, and bridge diverse communities and cultures. Free Shakespeare does all of this." Although this is the first year of the Foundation's support for Free Shakespeare in the Park it was a natural progression having provided support for the Film Series at the Cupertino Senior Center, the 'Opera San Jose' event at the Cupertino Library earlier this year and 'Courtyard Concert - Grateful Brass' at the Cupertino Library to be held on 30th July 2023.

Due to contracting budget concerns the City of Cupertino has asked SF Shakespeare Festival to fundraise for the Free Shakespeare program. To that end, SF Shakes has launched a fundraising campaign to strengthen the sustainability of this beloved program in Cupertino. The Cupertino Library Foundation is the first organization to pledge their financial support and additional contributions are being sought - for more information and to donate, visit sfsakes.org.

Free Shakespeare in the Park is only possible through careful collaboration and coordination. Financially, the largest costs of putting on a play are associated with mounting the production, of designing and building and rehearsing the play. By sharing the annual summer production with multiple cities - with Cupertino being the marquee city in the south bay - each city contributes only a small but critically important portion of the costs of the program. The scale of the program also allows San Francisco Shakespeare Festival - a nonprofit organization - to attract philanthropic funding from regional funders such as the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation and national funding from the

National Endowment for the Arts.(In addition to Cupertino, *Cymbeline* plays in Redwood City, San Francisco, and Orinda - see dates and times below.)

Cupertino's Memorial Park is the longest consecutively running venue that the Festival's Free Shakespeare program has performed in. Although the program first started in San Francisco in 1983, shows have taken place in various parks throughout the city (currently it performs in San Francisco's McLaren Park). The first season in Memorial Park was in 1995 and Free Shakespeare in the Park has become a highly anticipated annual tradition there ever since.

Cymbeline will be performed at Cupertino's newly revitalized Memorial Park Amphitheater. Shows take place July 22 to August 6 on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays at 6:00 pm. The performance will run approximately 90 minutes without intermission.

Cymbeline, Shakespeare's epic romantic adventure, is believed to be one his final plays and is widely considered one of his greatest achievements. It features a dazzling mix of comedy, tragedy, and fairy tale that concludes with inventive scenes of revelation and joyous reconciliation. The play was selected by the Festival's Resident Artists, who felt that the play's sweeping story would help remind us of the power of live theater and the joy of coming together to share an epic experience.

In this tale King Cymbeline has banished Posthumus, a man of low stature, who has secretly married his daughter, Princess Imogen. A series of unimaginable misadventures ensue that test the strength of their commitment to each other. This will be the company's second production of *Cymbeline*, having previously staged it in 2011. Director Maryssa Wanlass is interested in the fairytale quality of this story, and wants to lean into the archetypal characters and set the play in an alternate universe fantasy realm. Casting reflects the many communities for which SF Shakes performs, and the main love story between Imogen and Posthumus will be told with a queer lens. Expect big performances, music, delicious villains and ultimately a family-friendly coming of age story.

2023 is San Francisco Shakespeare Festival's 41st season of Free Shakespeare in the Park. Since its beginning, the Festival has been bringing the words and themes of William Shakespeare to audiences throughout the Bay Area and beyond, regardless of their age, ethnicity, financial status, or level of education. The San Francisco Shakespeare Festival believes that Shakespeare experienced in a communal setting -- whether outdoors, in a classroom, in a theater, or live online -- elates the soul, inspires the mind, and unifies those who sit beside each other

41st Season Free Shakespeare in the Park production of *Cymbeline*

Cupertino, Memorial Park Amphitheater, Stevens Creek Blvd and Mary Ave

- Saturday, July 22 at 6:00 pm (Preview)
- Sunday, July 23 at 6:00 pm (Preview)
- Friday, July 28 at 6:00 pm (Preview)
- Saturday, July 29 at 6:00 pm (Opening)
- Sunday, July 30 at 6:00 pm
- Friday, August 4 at 6:00 pm
- Saturday, August 5 at 6:00 pm
- Sunday, August 6 at 6:00 pm

Redwood City, Red Morton Park, Vera Ave and Valdota Rd

- Saturday, August 12 at 6:00 pm (Preview)
- Sunday, August 13 at 6:00 pm (Opening)
- Saturday, August 19 at 6:00 pm
- Sunday, August 20 at 6:00 pm
- Saturday, August 26 at 6:00 pm
- Sunday, August 27 at 6:00 pm

San Francisco, McLaren Park, Jerry Garcia Amphitheater

- Saturday, September 2 at 2:00 pm (Preview)
- Sunday, September 3 at 2:00 pm (Preview)
- Monday (Labor Day), September 4 at 2:00 pm (Opening)
- Saturday, September 9 at 2:00 pm
- Sunday, September 10 at 2:00 pm

Orinda, The Bruns Amphitheater

- Saturday, September 16 at 4:00 pm (Preview)
- Sunday, September 17 at 4:00 pm (Opening)
- Saturday, September 23 at 4:00 pm
- Sunday, September 24 at 4:00 pm

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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Free Shakespeare in the Park attracts standing room audiences at Cupertino's Memorial Park Amphitheater

[\(click to download image\)](#) / Photo: John Western



Set for 2023 Free Shakespeare in the Park production of *Cymbeline* at Cupertino's Memorial Park Amphitheater

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