

**SAN FRANCISCO
SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL**

The background of the poster features a stylized, hazy city skyline with various skyscrapers. In the foreground, a wavy line, possibly representing water or a decorative element, is topped with a small snake head. The title text is superimposed on this background.

**ANTONY +
CLEOPATRA**

**FREE SHAKESPEARE
IN THE PARK 2026**

CANTONY + CLEOPATRA

**The show runs approximately 90 minutes;
there is no intermission.**

Content warning:

**This play takes place during war time and there are
theatricalized sounds of battle, depictions and
descriptions of violence, depictions of suicide,
threatened self-harm, and misogynoir references.**

CUPERTINO - Memorial Park Amphitheater

July 25 - August 9 • Saturdays & Sundays at 6:00 pm

REDWOOD CITY - Red Morton Park

August 15 - August 30 • Saturdays & Sundays at 6:00 pm

SAN FRANCISCO - McLaren Park's Jerry Garcia Amphitheater

**September 5 - September 13 • Saturdays, Sundays,
& Labor Day Monday at 2:00 pm**

SAN FRANCISCO - Sue Bierman Park

Sept 19 - September 27 • Saturdays & Sundays at 2:00 pm



Facebook (sfshakes)

YouTube (SFShakes)

Instagram (sfshakesfest)

CAST

Caesar/Messenger	Tyler Aguallo
Cleopatra	Elizabeth Carter*
Agrippa/Soothsayer.....	Michelle Navarrete*
Charmian/Octavia/Lepidus	Emily Newsome*
Antony.....	Jeremy Ohta Lee*
Enobarbus/Eros/Countryman	Deanalís Arocho Resto*

UNDERSTUDIES

Emily Newsome* (understudy to Elizabeth Carter); Christopher Prescott (understudy to Deanalís Arocho Resto and Tyler Aguallo); Deanalís Arocho Resto (understudy to Jeremy Ohta Lee); Alicia Stamps (understudy to Emily Newsome and Michelle Navarrete)

PRODUCTION STAFF

Director.....	Katja Rivera
Associate Director/Dramaturg	Karina Gutiérrez
Technical Director/Scenic, Web, & Graphic Designer/ Builder, Painter, Mover/Site Services	Neal Ormond
Artistic Director/Fight Director	Carla Pantoja
Fight Captain.....	Deanalís Arocho Resto*
Sound Designer	Michael Kelly
Costume Designer	Lyre Alston
Voice and Text Director.....	Kate Al-Shamma
Movement Director.....	Dallas Thomas
Intimacy Director.....	Maya Herbsman
Production Manager	Pratiksha Shah
AEA Stage Manager	April Ballesteros*
Deck Manager	Sam Hattersley
Script Workshop Managers.....	Carla Pantoja, Pratiksha Shah
Scenic Assistant	Alexandrite Camerino
Theatre Prop Designer & Wardrobe Supervisor	Heidi Button
Lead Sound Board Operator.....	Oliver Loll
Sound Technicians	Dorsey Crocker, Leslie Rodriguez
Hospitality Manager.....	Sylvia Abrams-Wolffsohn
Literary Intern.....	Setareh Greenwood
Stage Management Interns.....	Daniel Garza Lopez, Gulah Singh
Production Intern (Props).....	Emma Sieblink
Production Intern (Costumes)	Renee Carlson
Production Interns (Sound).....	Noah Jun Murase, Rory Porter
Production Interns (Hospitality).....	Sally Chun, Setareh Greenwood
Scenic Volunteer	Cora Shimetz

2026 SEASON SPONSORS



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NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR



What to say about this play?

Antony & Cleopatra and I go way back, all the way to the Spring of 1979, when I was in my first year at the Theatre Academy at Los Angeles City College. Feeling rather ambitious, I decided to take an additional course in Shakespeare taught by a dynamic teacher whose face I can clearly see, but whose name I have sadly forgotten. That semester, the first play we studied was *Antony & Cleopatra*, and I remember

being enthralled by the exquisite language and the tragedy of these two iconic and ill-fated lovers.

Fast forward to 2023, Carla Pantoja contacted me, asking if I'd like to submit to be considered for directing at SF Shakes. I decided to go big, and put forward this audacious script for consideration. And gulp, they chose me! That meant that I would be the first person to direct *Antony & Cleopatra* for SF Shakes, and I would need to edit this sprawling epic to a 90 minute script that could be performed by 6 actors! It was a daunting task, but so rewarding. Highlighting some characters, completely cutting others. It was about three months of work. That script, along with adjustments we've made as we've rehearsed, is what you will see performed today.

I've spent the last two years working with this beautiful and scrappy company, doing something I didn't even know that I wanted to do: make Shakespeare, and theater accessible to folks who otherwise might not have the means to see it. It has been an honor to collaborate with SF Shakes, as well as this oh so talented group of theater artists. What a lucky gal am I!

I would like to dedicate this play to the memory of my sister-from-another-mother, Sydney Gilner, who tragically died two years ago from early onset Alzheimer's. She was a brilliant human, and my decision to retitle my adaptation *Antony + Cleopatra* is an homage to her. (She was Script Supervisor on Baz Luhrman's *Romeo + Juliet*.) Sydney named me "Katja", taught me to drive stick, and took me to see my first

Shakespeare play, coincidentally, in a park. I literally would have been a very different person had I not met her, and her memory continues to bless me.

I hope you enjoy our offering today. All of us have poured love and sweat into this production, and now, as our audience, we invite you to enter the world of *Antony + Cleopatra*!

- Katja Rivera
Summer 2026



**Wonder what the set looks like
back stage?**

**Check out our interactive
set rendering!**



(Courtesy of set designer Neal Ormond)

Free Shakespeare in the Park

ACCESS

- **Cupertino** shows begin at 6pm
- **Redwood City** shows begin at 6pm
- **San Francisco** shows begin at 2pm

The show runs approximately 90 minutes and there is no intermission.

Seating is first come, first served. Aisles and walkways will be marked. These spaces must be kept clear at all times.

Lawn chairs are welcome.

Signage will designate the areas for tall chairs and short chairs.

Bench seating is available in Garcia Amphitheatre.

To ensure visibility for all patrons, umbrellas, tents and large shade structures are not allowed.

If you arrive late, take care not to walk in front of the stage.

Be prepared to sit where you can find space.

All venues are accessible for wheelchair users.

Unattended personal items, including bags, blankets, and ground covers may be removed when the show begins.

WHAT TO BRING

A performance may start out warm and get chilly. We recommend wearing layers!

There are only a few areas that may get shade. Use sunscreen and remember to stay hydrated. Please bring your own water.

You are welcome to bring your own picnic and snacks.

Blankets and ground covers are recommended.

Strollers are allowed, provided they are folded down during the performance and not blocking walkways or in the aisles.

FACILITIES

- **Cupertino:** restrooms are located behind the amphitheater.
- **Redwood City:** restrooms are located behind the playground.
- **McLaren Park, SF:** restrooms are located to the left of the stage.
- **Sue Bierman Park:** An ADA-accessible restroom is located in the southwest corner of the park, near the corner of Drumm and Clay Streets.

TRASH, COMPOST & RECYCLING

Trash, compost and recycling containers are located throughout the park.

Please dispose of your trash in the appropriate bin. Pack out what you pack in.

LOST & FOUND

After the performance, call the offices for San Francisco Shakespeare Festival at 415.558.0888. The Festival cannot assume responsibility for lost or stolen items.

DONATE

[Click here to donate online](#), or or drop a check or cash donation in the donation box, near the SF Shakes info table.

SYNOPSIS



CONTEXT

Thirteen years after the assassination of Julius Caesar, Rome is governed by the Second Triumvirate, an oligarchy of three men: Lepidus, Mark Antony, and Octavius Caesar, the late Julius Caesar's nephew and adopted heir.

The Roman Empire is divided between them. Lepidus presides over Africa, while Antony and Caesar rule east and west respectively. With mounting internal tension, the Triumvirate is forced to cooperate to defeat Sextus Pompey (son of Pompey the Great), the last significant opposition to the Triumvirs.

At the time our play begins, Mark Antony is in Egypt, the wealthiest of Rome's client kingdoms (sovereign states subordinated to Rome). Egypt is ruled by Cleopatra VII of the Hellenistic Ptolemaic Dynasty, a shrewd and intelligent stateswoman whose leadership has bolstered Egypt's wealth, power, and influence. Rome relies heavily on Egypt's resources, but is wary of its power.

ACT I

Antony, residing in Egypt at Cleopatra's side, receives news from Rome: Fulvia, his wife, is dead. Caesar summons him to Rome, and Antony begs Cleopatra's leave to go. She grants it begrudgingly, imploring Antony to remember their love for each other. Antony vows to do so, and departs. Meanwhile, Caesar receives reports of Antony's indulgences in Egypt. He condemns his lavish lifestyle and neglect of military duty, particularly as Caesar and Lepidus fight to keep Pompey at bay. As Antony travels to Rome, Cleopatra mourns his absence, sending floods of messengers after him.

ACT II

The Triumvirate convenes, with Lepidus playing peacekeeper between Antony and Caesar. Caesar accuses Antony of denying him aid in the civil wars that have plagued Rome, including those waged by Antony's brother and Fulvia. Likewise, he accuses Antony of supporting Fulvia's cause. Antony argues that Fulvia opposed Caesar against Antony's will to force Antony out of Egypt (away from Cleopatra). Enobarbus suggests they set aside their differences until Pompey is defeated, and Agrippa proposes a political alliance: Antony will marry Caesar's beloved sister, Octavia, to

encourage cooperation between the two men. Caesar warns of Cleopatra's ire at such a suggestion, as well as his own should Antony prove an unworthy husband. Antony brushes him off, agreeing to marry Octavia despite his enduring relationship with Cleopatra.

As Antony and Octavia prepare for their honeymoon in Athens, the Soothsayer warns of Caesar's good fortune, imploring Antony to keep his distance. Antony acknowledges the truth of the Soothsayer's words, and turns his thoughts once more to Egypt. In Egypt, Cleopatra reminisces on her many happy memories with Antony, but is interrupted by a messenger from Rome. She is desperate for news, relieved to hear Antony is well, but flies into a fury when she learns of his marriage to Octavia.

ACT III

Antony and Octavia leave for Athens, bidding Caesar a terse and tearful farewell. In Egypt, Cleopatra is comforted by reports of Octavia's appearance, manner, and speech, finding solace in her own superiority. In Athens, Antony learns that Caesar has slighted him in a public reading of Caesar's will, a significant and pointed dishonor. Antony encourages Octavia to travel to Rome so that she may keep the peace between himself and Caesar; as she does so, Antony returns to Egypt.

Enobarbus learns from Eros that in the wake of Pompey's defeat, Caesar has accused Lepidus of treason. The Triumvirate is broken. In Egypt, Antony casts off all pretense and is ceremonially enthroned beside Cleopatra, declaring themselves Emperor and Empress of Egypt, swaths of West Asia, and the Mediterranean. Incensed, Caesar takes this as a declaration of war.

Antony and Cleopatra's forces combine and prepare to fight Caesar at Actium, a Greek peninsula by the Ionian Sea. Enobarbus unsuccessfully argues against Cleopatra's presence, insisting it distorts Antony's priorities. Despite being utterly outmatched, Antony insists on meeting Caesar's nautical challenge. In the thick of battle, Cleopatra's fleet flees and Antony follows. The battle of Actium is a bitter loss to Antony. Many of his men are killed, others defect to Caesar, and those remaining are shaken.

In the wake of the battle of Actium, Charmian delivers messages to Caesar from Antony and Cleopatra, requesting his mercy. Caesar dismisses Antony's requests, but offers Cleopatra amnesty if she either expels Antony from Egypt, or kills him. Caesar sends Agrippa to Cleopatra's court to win her over, encouraging Agrippa to invent whatever may gain her allegiance. Antony, witnessing Cleopatra's conference with Agrippa, flies into a rage. Enobarbus, disgusted and dismayed with Antony's inconstancy, defects to Caesar's army.

ACT IV

Antony dares Caesar to single combat, which Caesar laughingly refuses. Antony prepares for battle by land, and emerges victorious. Realizing he has driven Enobarbus to defect, Antony sends Enobarbus' treasures to Caesar's camp in remorse. Overcome with shame and despair, Enobarbus seeks his own death.

Preparing for another battle, Caesar directs Agrippa to fill their front-line with the soldiers defecting Antony's army. Antony emerges victorious, but soon yields again to Caesar as his soldiers happily reunite with their defected comrades. Enraged, Antony rails against Cleopatra. Cleopatra, frightened at this change, locks herself in her monument and sends word that she is dead, hoping to shock Antony back to his senses and former affection.

But at the false news of Cleopatra's death, Antony sinks into despair and orders Eros to kill him. Unable to do so, Eros kills himself. Antony falls upon his own sword, but the injury he deals himself is not immediately fatal. The Messenger comes with news that Cleopatra lives, but is too late to save Antony; instead, he helps Antony to Cleopatra's monument. Dying in Cleopatra's arms, Antony begs her with his last breaths not to trust Caesar. Cleopatra holds him, and grieves.

ACT V

Caesar receives news of Antony's death, and tells Charmian to comfort Cleopatra with assurances of mercy. Worried Cleopatra will kill herself before she may be brought to Rome, Caesar sends Agrippa to pacify her. Refusing to comply with her Roman conquerors, Cleopatra declares that she will destroy herself rather than be led through Rome in defeat. A Countryman arrives bearing a basket of figs and concealed asps. Charmian helps Cleopatra into her royal finery, and Cleopatra sets the asps to her skin. Calling out to Antony, Cleopatra dies, stealing ultimate victory from Rome.

[Click to download the Antony+Cleopatra prologue and Script!](#)

DID YOU KNOW... William Shakespeare was part of a theater company called Lord Chamberlain's Men, who performed at a place called 'The Theatre'. After a dispute with the landlord, they took the building apart, rebuilt it across the river and named it the Globe. A large, open-air theatre, **the Globe accommodated people from all walks of life -- anyone could watch a performance there.** *Sound familiar?*

ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA - DRAMATURGICAL NOTE

Antony and Cleopatra is based on Plutarch's "Life of Mark Antony," which gained English popularity after translation in 1579. Plutarch's disdainful account of the Ptolemaic queen, written over 200 years after her death, leans heavily on Roman poets who celebrated her defeat. Elizabethan audiences may well have read Plutarch alongside English travel accounts depicting Egypt as a strange, barbarous land. Thus, Shakespeare's Cleopatra is filtered by Roman conquest and Elizabethan perceptions of race, gender, and power; she is Other, racialized and sexualized in equal measure. Shakespeare's portrayal of Egypt is distinctly orientalizing—a sensuous, languid cornucopia of delights that blends symbols and stereotypes of Egypt, Turkey, Morocco, and other MENA cultures with impunity. Yet, when positioned against the austere pragmatism of Rome, it is not clear that we are meant to root for Rome's victory. Like his Cleopatra, Shakespeare's Egypt defies definition: a threat to the West, yet deeply alluring. Both these perspectives are a construction of outsider-interpretation that do little to represent Egyptian heritage and history.

Our production is set in the late 1920s, moving between Italy and Egypt. Caesar looms within the rise of Italian fascism, mirroring Mussolini's rule. Driven by a sense of exclusionary superiority, both pursue the consolidation of power with near single-minded focus—an orientation all too common in today's world as well. Fascism draws heavily on an idealized portrait of the Roman Empire, championing Roman austerity, draconian gender roles, and dominating ambition. Just as Caesar seeks to expand his power through his wars against Pompey, his betrayal of Lepidus, and especially his conquest of Egypt, Mussolini pursued power to the point of dictatorship at home and genocide abroad (including in Libya, neighbor to Egypt). His policy of aggressive expansionism was directly inspired by Rome, blooming in earnest by the 1930s—just as we see Caesar establishing himself as sole authoritarian ruler of Rome by the end of our play.

Negotiations following the Egyptian 1919 Revolution against British occupation led Britain to recognize Egypt's sovereignty by 1922—though the British Empire retained significant levels of influence for decades after. This complex relationship with independence, influence, and subjugation is mirrored in Cleopatra's rule over an Egypt that must pay tribute to Rome. The rise in women's literacy, publications for women, and feminist theory that supported the 1919 Revolution find their echo in Cleopatra's reign

too, where arts and literature were richly championed. Under Cleopatra, women owned property and wielded equal rights in court— something Elizabethan England could not brag. Significant themes can be emphasized through setting, and the context of Egypt's struggle against empire and occupation lends weight to Cleopatra's status.

Aiming to emphasize the artistic creativity that bloomed during Cleopatra's reign, director Katja Rivera has also incorporated music, dance, and style elements inspired by the Harlem Renaissance. This synthesis contributes to play-Cleopatra's air of undefinable variety, while nodding to the ever-present threat of American fascism faced by African-American communities in the 1920s. While Egyptian art and culture flourished in the 1920s in its own right, the representation of African-American art instead provides a juxtaposition between indigenous and transplanted culture, echoing the separation in Cleopatra's day between the Egyptian people and their Macedonian Greek queen.

- Setareh Greenwood, Literary Intern



A few notes about William Shakespeare!

Shakespeare was born in 1564, during England's Tudor period. He was one of eight children born to John Shakespeare, a well-to-do glove-maker and leather worker, and his wife, Mary Arden, an heiress from a wealthy family.

In 1582, he married Anne Hathaway, a farmer's daughter. They had three children – a daughter named Susanna, and twins, Judith and Hamnet.

He was part of a theatre company called Lord Chamberlain's Men, who regularly performed at a place called 'The Theatre'. But after a dispute with the landlord, they took the building apart, rebuilt it across the river and named it the Globe.

His plays were big hits and had the royal seal of approval. Both Queen Elizabeth I and James VI of Scotland and I of England would often hire Shakespeare's company to come and perform at the royal court.

Cleopatra's Court



Charmian



Cleopatra



Countryman



Messenger

Lepidus supports
Caesar, but is
betrayed by him

Lovers

Enobarbus
defects to
Caesar



Lepidus



Caesar

Siblings



Antony



Enobarbus



Agrippa



Octavia

Married
(Political
Alliance)



Eros



Soothsayer

Caesar's Retinue

Antony's Retinue

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Welcome to San Francisco Shakespeare Festival's Season of Empire, where we explore what happens when a far reaching country, at war with itself, grasps for control beyond its border and destabilizes the entire region. Are we bearing witness to the rise of an Empire or the fall of one?



This production in collaboration with director Katja Rivera has been three years in the making. In 2023, when I began as artistic director of San Francisco Shakespeare Festival, I dreamed of a different way of hiring directors and building a multi-year relationship with creative teams. That year, SF Shakes held an open director call, asking directors what THEY wanted to direct with us. Katja was among that first group, proposing two plays that featured strong female characters. Cleopatra was one of them.

This is the first time in SF Shakes' 44 year history that we have produced *Antony and Cleopatra*, and I cannot be more excited for Katja's vision. Katja sets this story in the mid 20s, where the chaos and heartbreak of World War I gives way to an expansion of thought, art, and creativity, reflected in the beautiful costumes and props in our production. But at the same time, the weeds of Fascism and Authoritarianism begin to take hold until they choke off any progress made in the years prior, which she shows in the Roman forces overrunning Egypt.

Within the political posturing beats the highly personal journey of Cleopatra's. Historically, she was of Macedonian Greek descent making her closer in looks with that of the Romans, but in Shakespeare's play, he references the color of her skin as being 'tawny' or darker than the Romans, making a point to highlight her 'otherness'. Most of the Romans, including Antony, mention how she is different in looks and demeanor. She is described as overly sexual in controlling Antony, a nag, a wench, too mannish, jealous, and the list goes on. Not only are we witnessing how these sexist tropes are used to describe and minimize this female leader, but because of the references to her tawny skin, her otherness, misogynoir is at play- putting Antony's faults directly into her lap as someone who has beguiled him with her sexuality but is also too tempestuous to make good decisions. She is at once too bold and not bold enough. She is desired and reviled with every political decision she makes.

Today, we are seeing some of these same themes play out. A leader turning on former allies to wrest control for himself, paving a path towards the creation of an empire at the expense of entire nations. I'm moved to see similarities within the national theater community with the recent departure of acclaimed artistic director, Hana Sharif from the Arena Stage, one of several black women who have left creative leadership positions in recent years due to misogyny and double standard of pressure put on them to both lead but not too much, else they bump into boundaries set in the past.

Katja Rivera's production of this beautiful *Antony + Cleopatra* is meeting the moment we are living in now and reflecting back what we are experiencing.

- Carla Pantoja, Artistic Director



Congratulations to Katja Rivera on completing her “Quad”

SF Shakes productions are unique in the bay area arts ecosystem. We have a touring show that travels and performs for months from February-May, and our Free Shakespeare in the Park, which also travels, performing for two-three weekends before moving to the next community from July-September. A typical bay area production closes after a four week run. We are just getting started. When I had the opportunity to direct my first Shakespeare on Tour, I remember asking then artistic director, Rebecca Ennals to direct the tour again, as I wanted to apply all the things I learned towards a better tour experience for the creative team and the actors. What if directors came in as assistant directors first? Watching and learning these unique production needs before they are asked to direct? This would mean a multi year relationship with SF Shakes and the program, building on the observations, learning, and conversations between directors and SF Shakes. If a director wanted, they could assistant direct then direct Shakespeare on Tour and assistant direct then direct Free Shakespeare in the Park or reverse the order. I call this The Quad.

Katja Rivera is the first director to complete all four in this new iteration. And I am so grateful! Katja committed to the entire process, assisting and then directing, leading to this moment, where she has cut one of Shakespeare's most dense plays into a 6 actor 90 minute version.

Let's Talk About...

In the Spring of 2024, SF Shakes launched a series of online panel discussions featuring acclaimed Shakespeare scholars, offering keen insights and fresh perspectives on Shakespeare and his writing.

The sessions are hosted by SF Shakes Board Member Dan Rabinowitz and Artistic Director Carla Pantoja.

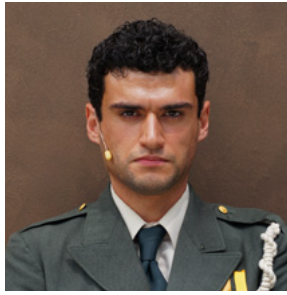
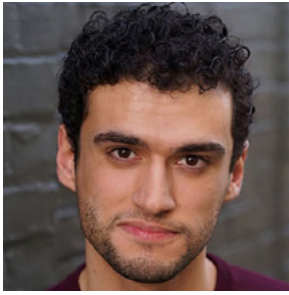


***To receive updates on upcoming panels
[register on our notice list!](#)***

Watch the recent Let's Talk About...*Antony and Cleopatra* panel discussions with Stanford's Dr. Roland Greene and Dr. Lue Douthit, Senior Dramaturg and Co-Founder of Play On Shakespeare, as well as any of the previous ["Let's Talk About..." discussions!](#)



Antony and Cleopatra - CAST



TYLER AGUALLO (CAESAR/MESSENGER)

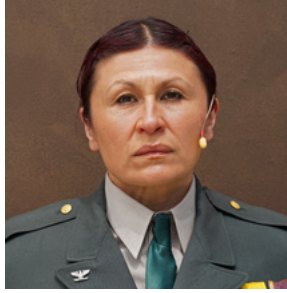
Tyler (he/him) is thrilled to return to SF Shakes for *Antony & Cleopatra*. You may have seen him in the park last summer as Valentine in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*. His other recent theatre credits include *Gods & Monsters* (New Conservatory Theatre), *Dracula* (SF Playhouse), and *Frankenstein* (Theatre Lunatico). Tyler has also trained globally at the Prague Shakespeare Company in Prague, Czechia, and the Lir Academy in Dublin, Ireland. Some of his film credits include award-winning short films; *Premium Casket* (2024) and *A Quarter of Silence* (2022), and feature films; *Mary Kwon Mary Kwon* (2026) and *Dark Feathers* (2024). He received his BA in Theatre Arts at San Francisco State University in May 2024.



ELIZABETH CARTER (CLEOPATRA)

Elizabeth (she/her) is a longtime SF Bay Area actor/director. Her acting credits include *You Never Can Tell*, *Othello*, *As You Like It*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Richard II*, for California Shakespeare Theater, *The Crucible* and *The Convert* for Marin Theatre Co. where she was nominated for both SFBATCC and TBA Awards, *Fences*, *Joe Turner's Come and Gone* at Lorraine Hansberry Theatre, *Nickel and Dime*d at TheatreWorks, *The Merry Wives of Windsor* for SF Shakespeare Festival, and *The Black Rider* at Shotgun Players. At the Aurora Theatre Co. she has been seen in *Trouble in Mind*, *Wittenburg*, where she was nominated for a SFBATCC Award and *The Heir Apparent* and the original cast of the acclaimed *Eureka Day!* Elizabeth continues to direct regionally and is a SDCF Lloyd Richards New Futures Resident Director and current Lucas Arts Fellow.

Antony and Cleopatra - Cast



MICHELLE NAVARRETE* (AGRIPPA/SOOTHSAYER)

Michelle (she/her) is a proud Salvadoreña, San Francisco-based actor, theatre artist, and educator. She is thrilled to return to the San Francisco Shakespeare Festival family after appearing last season in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*. She began her theatre training at A.C.T.'s Young Conservatory before earning her BFA in Acting from Marymount Manhattan College and performing and producing theatre in New York City. A versatile Bay Area performer, her credits include work with California Shakespeare Theater, SF Playhouse, Golden Thread Productions, Center REP, TheatreFirst, Bay Area Children's Theatre, and Custom Made Theatre. Notable roles include Abuela Claudia (*In the Heights*), Miriam (*Returning to Haifa*), Pilar (*Far Far Better Things*), and Aunt Spiker (*James and the Giant Peach*). Endless love and gratitude to her family, friends, and ancestors. IG: @chingona19 | YouTube: @michellenavarrete19



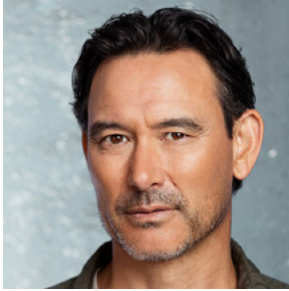
EMILY NEWSOME* (CHARMIAN/OCATAVIA/LEPIDUS)

Emily (she/her) is an actor and teaching artist based in San Francisco. Previous credits include *Sally and Tom* (Luce/Sally) at Marin Theatre, San Francisco Shakespeare Festival's *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* (Sylvia/Outlaw), *Froggy* (Voice of Froggy) at Center Repertory Company, *Fallen Angels* (Jane Banbury) at Aurora Theatre Company, and American Conservatory



Antony and Cleopatra - Cast

Theatre's *A Christmas Carol* (Belle/Mary). Emily holds a BFA in Acting from UC Santa Barbara, and is a proud co-founder of Berkeley Shakespeare Company.



JEREMY OHTA LEE (ANTONY)

Born and raised in the East Bay, Jeremy is thrilled to be making his San Francisco Shakespeare Festival debut. A former KRON4 multimedia journalist, Jeremy has worked as both a Murrow award-winning television journalist and an actor in New York City and Hawaii. Recent roles at the Palace Theater on Hawaii Island include Brutus in *Julius Caesar* and Billy Flynn in *Chicago* for HEART Hilo. Television credits include *ER*, *Royal Pains* and *The Onion* on IFC. Jeremy is a graduate of UCLA's School of Theater, Film and Television.

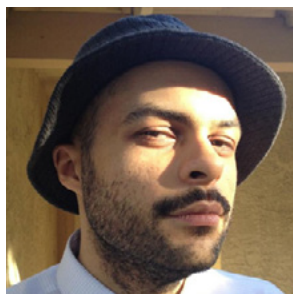


DEANALÍS AROCH RESTO*

(ENOBARBUS/EROS/COUNTRYMAN)

Deanalís (they/he/she) is a proud queer Boricua artist, born on/raised by Susquehannock land in northeastern Turtle Island. They are delighted to be returning to Free Shakes In the Park after playing Posthumus in *Cymbeline* in 2023. Other favorite Bay Area credits include: Emcee, *Cabaret* (Oakland Theater Project); Chadwick, *Co-Founders* (American Conservatory Theater); Jesus, *Jesus Christ Superstar* (Berkeley Playhouse); Jacques, *As You Like It* (San Francisco Playhouse); Leslie, Rachel Lark's *Coming Soon* (Z Space). "Deepest gratitude to all my beloveds and the ancestors who stay looking out. May empire crumble, and from Turtle Island to Palestine, may we all be liberated and loved."

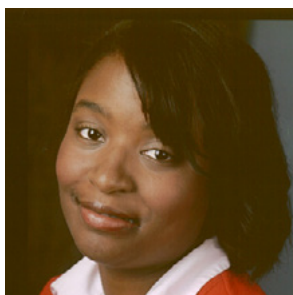
Antony and Cleopatra - Cast



CHRISTOPHER PRESCOTT CARTER

(U/S: ENOBARBUS / EROS / COUNTRYMAN / CAESAR / MESSENGER)

Christopher (he/him) is a prolific actor. He has worked with such theatre companies as Stanford Repertory Theatre in *Moby Dick Rehearsed*, and Theatreworks in *Big River*. He appeared in the original stage production of *The Kite Runner*. He is working with Fever in *The Jury Experience* as well as *Murder on the Seaside* and American Immersion Theater in *Death of Gangster*. He is the recipient of the Hal Todd Award for Excellence in Acting (2010), as well as a Theatre Bay Area Award for Best Ensemble (2015). This production marks his fourth season with the San Francisco Shakespeare Festival.



ALICIA STAMPS

(U/S: CHARMIAN / OCTAVIA / LEPIDUS / AGRIPPA / SOOTHSAYER)

Alicia (she/her) is Vocalist and Bay Area native who studied Theatre Arts (with the concentration of ActiAlicia is honored to make her SF Shakes return! She performed in their Shakespeare on Tour productions of *Julius Caesar*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *As You Like It* and *The Tempest*. A Founding Resident Teaching Artist with SF Shakes, Alicia received her BFA from Cornish College of the Arts. You last saw her as Baneatta Mabry in AASC's production of *Chicken and Biscuits*. Favorite roles include 'Mother' in NCTC's production of *We Are Continuous* and 'Esther Mills' in *Intimate Apparel* at The Pear Avenue Theater. She thanks you for supporting live theatre and dedicates all performances to her mother Dee and Vince. Be sure to visit her at Brenda's Meat and Three!

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KATJA RIVERA (DIRECTOR) Katja (she/her) is a Theater Artist, Bodyworker and Abuela. She is originally from Los Angeles, and studied theater at LACC Theatre Academy and Drama Studio London at Berkeley. Bay Area acting credits include: Shotgun Players, Magic Theatre, Theatre Rhinoceros, Center Rep. Directing credits include Shotgun Players, Theatre Cultura, Douglas Morrison, CustomMade, RPE (Danville), SF Playground and TheatreFIRST. She is a long-time company member of Shotgun Players, an associate producer with PlayGround-SF and a member of Latinx Mafia. Recent directing credits include: *Yerma* (Shotgun Players) *La Vida Loca* (Theatre Cultura), *References To Salvador Dali Make Me Hot* (Custom Made Theatre).

KARINA GUTIÉRREZ (ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR / DRAMATURG) Karina (she/her) is a Bay Area-based director, dramaturg, and scholar. She has worked with BRAVA, Crowded Fire, Huntington Theatre, Magic Theatre, Marin Theatre, La Lengua, PlayGround, Playwright's Foundation, Shotgun Players, Townhall Theatre, West Edge Opera, and Word for Word. She serves on the Latinx Theatre Commons Steering Committee and is a board member at Crowded Fire Theatre Board President and Theatre Bay Area. Karina received her Ph.D. in Theatre and Performance Studies from Stanford University, where she was awarded the Carl Weber Prize for integration of Creative Practice and Scholarly Research. She is currently an Assistant Professor in the Department of Theatre, Dance, and Performance Studies at the University of California, Berkeley.

NEAL ORMOND (TECHNICAL DIRECTOR / SCENIC, WEB. & GRAPHIC DESIGNER / BUILDER, PAINTER, MOVER / SITE SERVICES) Neal (he/him) has been the Technical Director of San Francisco Shakespeare Festival since 2017, serving also as webmaster, graphic designer, scenic designer, master carpenter, and managing infrastructure and venue logistics. A 2001 graduate of Stanford University, he subsequently founded NAO Design and spent the next decade expanding into the realms of web, graphic, product, sound, scenic, and automotive design, lighting, furniture, signage, pyrotechnics, robotics, and architecture. From there he spent four years as Manager of Art and Technology at the advertising conglomerate Publicis. Upon joining the ranks of SF Shakes, Neal found it to be a tremendous match for all these miscellaneous skills! At the onset of the COVID pandemic he developed SF Shakes' "Unified Virtual Space" method of compositing more than a dozen live, remote actors into a shared virtual space onscreen, the first such undertaking worldwide. Future plans include the first-ever production of *Free Shakes* in Space. For more info see nealormond.com.

LYRE ALSTON (COSTUME DESIGNER) Lyre (he/him/she/her) is a costume, wig, and makeup designer working within the Bay Area. This is Lyre's first season with SF Shakespeare, and designed costumes for their Spring 2026 tour of *Julius Caesar*. As both a lover of Shakespeare and of creating accessible theatre, he is thrilled to participate in the production. Some previous work in the bay includes *The Addams Family* and *Annie* (2025) at Berkeley Playhouse, *Hadestown* at The Throckmorton Theatre (2025), and *Panto at The Presidio* (2021-2025). Please enjoy the show!

HEIDI BUTTON (THEATRE PROP DESIGNER & WARDROBE SUPERVISOR) In her former life, Heidi (she/her) toured Europe as an aerialist. She spent 9 years at SF Circus Center, & co-directed their Youth Program spring 2020. Spring 2024 semester she received her BA in theatre from SF State, while serving as Emergency Props Department Coordinator. Early 2025 she has designed props for *Cuckoo Edible Magic* from SF BATCO, and *Fairway* from Contra Costa Civic Theatre. Besides SF Shakes, 2025 contracts

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include Lorraine Hansberry Theatre and the Oakland Theater project. In 2023, Heidi designed for *Nollywood Dreams* at SF Playhouse, & *In The Evening By The Moonlight* for Lorraine Hansberry Theatre Company.

DALLAS THOMAS (MOVEMENT DIRECTOR) Dallas (he/him) returns to Free Shakespeare in the Park, having been Movement Director for 2025's *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*. As Director of Arts Education and Engagement at the African American Shakespeare Company, he brings a wealth of dance training in hip-hop, jazz, contemporary, and musical theater. Since arriving in the Bay Area in 2016, Dallas has thrived in both the performing arts and education fields, excelling as a teaching artist and program director. Beyond his professional role, Dallas co-owns and directs a youth dance non-profit (STUDIO 121) alongside his husband, united by their mission to extend high-quality performing arts opportunities to underprivileged communities and support aspiring artists of color in their journey to become performing art educators. Dallas's ultimate aspiration is to create an inclusive platform that empowers diverse talents to flourish in the realm of performing arts.

MAYA HERBSMAN (INTIMACY DIRECTOR) Maya (she/Maya) is an award-winning Bay Area based intimacy director and coordinator, director, and educator. She returns to Free Shakespeare in the Park, having been Intimacy Director for 2025's *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*. She works in theatre, film, and opera, and has over 100 professional credits across those mediums. Maya has been the first intimacy professional at theaters across Northern California including Berkeley Repertory Theatre, San Francisco Opera, Theatreworks Silicon Valley, San Francisco Playhouse, California Shakespeare Theater, Shotgun Players, Crowded Fire Theater, Z Space, NCTC, Hillbarn Theatre, and numerous others. Recent favorite credits include *It's True It's True It's True* (Marin Theatre), *The Handmaid's Tale* (San Francisco Opera), and *Didi* (Focus Features).

KATE AL-SHAMMA (VOICE AND TEXT COACH) Kate Yust Al-Shamma, Ph.D., teaches performance skills with the aim of building confidence in all participants. Kate currently serves Georgetown University as Curriculum Advisor and Professor for Summer Sessions, and the University of San Francisco as an adjunct professor. She is a former Theatre Program Director and Associate Teaching Professor at Georgetown University. For 25 years, Kate has been a theatre director and teacher of acting, voice, movement, and professional speaking. She has a 500-hour yoga teacher certification and incorporates physical release techniques into all coaching. Her research is grounded in three major areas: the mythopoeisis of Pantheatre Paris, France; the somatic release work of Shakespeare & Company in Lenox, Massachusetts; the Neuroscience of Traumatic Stress of Bessel van der Kolk.

CARLA PANTOJA (ARTISTIC DIRECTOR / FIGHT DIRECTOR) Carla (she/they) born and raised in the South Bay, is an actor, fight director, teaching artist, intimacy director, and mom of two. She has been a Resident Artist of San Francisco Shakespeare Festival since 2014 and served as Director of Vision for the 2021 Free Shakespeare in the Park production of *Pericles*, *Prince of Tyre*, directing episodes 2 and 4. In 2020, she was in the acting company at Oregon Shakespeare Festival, returning in 2022 as the festival's first female fight director. Carla is an associate instructor for Dueling Arts International and serves on their governing body as Vice President. She is also a proud member of Making Good Trouble, an anti-racist training cohort based in the Bay Area. Carla has directed SF Shakes' Shakespeare on Tour production of *Romeo and Juliet* and *Comedy of Errors*

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and Assistant Directed the 2017 Free Shakespeare in the Park production of *Hamlet*. She played Paulina in Free Shakespeare in the Park's *The Winter's Tale*, Tybalt in *Romeo and Juliet*, and Kate in *The Taming of the Shrew*. She's performed with Cal Shakes, Shotgun Players, Crowded Fire, Playground, Lorraine Hansberry Theatre, and the SF Mime Troupe in the Bay Area to name a few.

PRATIKSHA SHAH (PRODUCTION MANAGER) Pratiksha (she/her) is not just a production manager but a true visionary genius behind the scenes. This means balancing a million tasks while staying on top of everything that's going on – rehearsal schedules, hiring crews and designers, contracts, and payrolls to name a few. Pratiksha graduated from Foothill Theater Conservatory and has been an active part of the theater world for over 10 years. She fell in love with Shakespeare during school and joined San Francisco Shakespeare Festival at the onset of the pandemic in January 2020. In her short tenure with SF Shakes she has supported and mastered: fully virtual productions (*King Lear*), episodic virtual hybrid productions (*Pericles*), and in-person productions in four different park locations (*The Tempest* and *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*). In her spare time, she produces shorts, commercials, web series, features and so much more!

APRIL BALLESTEROS* (AEA STAGE MANAGER) April (she/her) is an actor, director, educator, and stage manager. She is the Associate Artistic Director of Theatre Cultura and worked in the Artistic Learning Department at the California Shakespeare Theater for 7 years. She has worked with SF Playhouse, Lorraine Hansberry Theatre, SFBATCO, and Shotgun Players, to name a few. She earned a BA in Theatre Arts from California State University, East Bay, and hails from East Los Angeles. With every project she does, she hopes to empower and uplift BIPOC voices and stories.

MICHAEL KELLY (SOUND DESIGNER) Michael (he/him) is an audio specialist, with works appearing internationally and here at home in the Bay. He returns to Free Shakespeare in the Park, having been Audio Engineer for 2025's *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*. He headed the audio department for multiple seasons at Cal Shakes and serves as the sound supervisor now at Shotgun Players, where he designed the west coast premiere of *Natasha, Pierre, and the Great Comet of 1812* (SFBATCC nomination 2023). Other recent venues include Stanford, UC Berkeley, Town Hall, Cutting Ball, Playground, Ferocious Lotus, Oakland Theater Project, and Marin Theatre Company.

OLIVER LOLL (LEAD SOUNDBOARD OPERATOR) Oliver (he/him) discovered his love of sound design while training to be an actor at Chico State University. After his love of theater was violently ripped backstage, he pursued (and was bestowed) his MFA in Theatrical Design from Texas Tech University. Since then, he has donned many hats in the realm of live audio. This show marks his first with SF Shakes, and he is delighted to be a part of this production!

SAM HATTERSLEY (DECK MANAGER) Sam is thrilled to be joining SF Shakes for their production of *Antony and Cleopatra*! Hailing from SoCal, Sam earned their B.A. in Theatre from SFSU. Some of Sam's most recent technical credits include serving as ASM for *M. Butterfly* and *Into the Woods* at San Francisco Playhouse.

ALEXANDRITE CAMERINO (SCENIC ASSISTANT) Alexandrite (he/they) is a multidisciplinary artist residing in the Bay Area, working as a carpenter, scenic

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painter, and actor. He was last seen at SF Shakes playing Miranda in *The Tempest* '24. In the off-season, he's working towards his BA in Theatre Arts; otherwise, they can be found gnawing on trees in the forest- collecting lumber for the next set build- and making small furniture for their small set models and smaller fairies. @alex_camerino.

SYLVIA ABRAMS-WOLFFSOHN (HOSPITALITY MANAGER) Sylvia is a theater maker local to the Bay Area. They attended OSA then UCLA majoring in Theater as an actor and director. Sylvia currently works as a house manager, serving audiences at SF Shakes, Berkeley Rep, and the Marsh. They also work in the box office at CalPerformances and the Marsh. When not at the theater, Sylvia enjoys abstract water color painting and spending time with her cat.

CORA SHIMETZ (SCENIC PAINT VOLUNTEER) Cora (any/all) has worked as Assistant Props Designer for *Into the Woods* and Lead Props Designer for *Clue* at Cal Poly Humboldt where she is entering her junior year. In 2024 she received a Certificate of Meritorious Achievement from the Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival for her props work. Cora worked as a props intern on both *Cymbeline* (2023) and *The Tempest* (2024) and is happy to return this year to continue her work with the festival.

TOBY LEAVITT (EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR) (she/her) joined the company in 1999. After a brief stint in banking, Toby made the unconventional transition to theater producing and has never looked back. Prior to the Festival, she served as General Manager of Chicago's Court Theater. Her accomplishments in audience development have been recognized by the Arts Marketing Center of Chicago and the Marshall Fields Foundation. She received her BA and MBA from the University of Chicago and completed the "Leadership, Organizing and Action" class through the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, Executive Education.



Want to take home a complimentary poster featuring the artwork designed for Antony+Cleopatra?

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The Republic Strikes Back!



(L to R) A young Shakespeare Fan, District 3 Supervisor Danny Sauter, Assemblymember Matt Haney, and SF Shakes Board Member Dan Rabinowitz at the 2026 Gala!



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Cast and creative team of Free Shakespeare in the Park's
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