



DEMAND PR

David Elzer Marketing AND Public Relations

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PRESS CONTACT: David Elzer 818-508-1754
davidelzer@me.com

MEDIA ALERT FOR THEATRE EDITORS AND REVIEWERS
AND CALENDAR LISTINGS

INDEPENDENT SHAKESPEARE CO. presents its

GRIFFITH PARK
FREE SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL 2016

with

RICHARD III
THE TEMPEST

***PERFORMANCES BEGIN SATURDAY, JUNE 25
at THE OLD ZOO in GRIFFITH PARK!***

May 24, 2016...Los Angeles... **INDEPENDENT SHAKESPEARE CO.** (ISC) is thrilled to return to the Old Zoo to celebrate the 13th year of presenting **FREE Shakespeare in Los Angeles Parks** for its 2016 season of its **GRIFFITH PARK FREE SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL**. This year ISC will present, for the first time in Griffith Park, two can't miss summertime experiences by William Shakespeare: **RICHARD III**, directed by Melissa Chalsma, with performances June 25 – July 24 and **THE TEMPEST**, directed by Matthew Earnest, with performances July 30 – September 4.

This season, the **GRIFFITH PARK FREE SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL** will also feature various opening acts, a Salon Series of talk-backs, an art workshop and education workshops to make this iconic Los Angeles event this summer's must-do, free, community get together! The Old Zoo is located in Griffith Park near the intersection of Crystal Springs Drive and Griffith Park Drive.

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Managing Director David Melville says, “This is our most ambitious summer: Not only are we bringing both **RICHARD III** and **THE TEMPEST** to Griffith Park for the first time, but both productions feature live music played by the company members themselves, extraordinary design, and one of the strongest casts we’ve assembled, featuring many ISC favorites as well as new faces.”

“We’re also extremely excited to welcome internationally recognized director Matthew Earnest (Co-Founder of The Lunar Stratagem, Associate Artist at Germany’s English Theater Berlin, Founding Artistic Director of deep ellum ensemble, former assistant director to Adrian Hall), as director of **THE TEMPEST**. It’s the first time his work has been seen in Los Angeles, and we’re thrilled to bring his unique sensibility to our wonderful Griffith Park audience.”

Comments Artistic Director Melissa Chalsma, “It’s exciting to see how our productions resonate across the generations. One picture of the modern world is that everyone is always connected to their phones and devices, but what’s heartening to us is the fact that thousands of people, young people in particular, seek out the experience of watching a play in the park. Digital platforms may bring them together, but it’s for a live, human experience that can’t be replaced with digital media. They give us their attention from the beginning of the play to the end, then want to come back and tell their friends about it. We’ve always been about populist entertainment and we hold it as a core principle that Shakespeare intended his plays for the masses, not just an intellectual elite or any particular age group or demographic. Because our festival is inclusive, Shakespeare in the park is becoming an iconic Los Angeles summer event, like going to the Los Angeles Dodgers or the Hollywood Bowl.”

In addition to the performances, education and engagement programs are presented for learners of all ages. Players in the Park/Teatristas en el parque are family education workshops presented on select evenings. These workshops are an interactive, energetic way to learn about the evening’s performance and to become more engaged in the overall live theater experience. For one special evening, Self Help Graphics will bring their Barrio Mobile Art Unit for an art-making workshop.

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Also returning this season is the Salon Series, pre-performance discussions led by experts in the field. Guests this year include Steven Leigh Morris, Executive Director of the LA Stage Alliance; John Frank, Senior Librarian with the Los Angeles Public Library and Ranger Mendibles, Park Ranger with the City of Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks.

Additionally, ISC is pleased to announce its Festival Arts Partners, local performing artists presenting pre-show performances. This season's guests will include: Invertigo Dance Theatre, La Victoria and The Silver Lake Chorus.

Specific dates for performances, education workshops and special events are listed on ISC's website: iscla.org

SCHEDULE AND PRICING

GRIFFITH PARK FREE SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL will begin June 25 with RICHARD III, followed by THE TEMPEST beginning July 30. All Performances are **FREE!** The festival is located in The Old Zoo at Griffith Park (near 4730 Crystal Spring Dr.) GPS Coordinates of the parking area: 34*8.034'N, 118*17.100'W Visit www.iscla.org or call (818) 710-6306 for directions and information.

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For more information, photos, press interviews or for press comps please contact David Elzer/DEMAND PR at 818-508-1754 or at davidelzer@me.com

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Calendar Listing:

Griffith Park Free Shakespeare Festival 2016

Begins: Saturday, June 25

Runs: Saturday June 25 – Sunday, September 4

Richard III: Saturday, June 25 – Sunday, July 24

The Tempest: Saturday, July 30 – Sunday, September 4

Performances are Wednesday, Thursdays, Fridays, Saturdays & Sundays at 7pm

Old Zoo, Griffith Park

All events are free to the public

For further information including a calendar, please visit www.iscla.org

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INDEPENDENT SHAKESPEARE CO. (ISC) produces accessible, imaginative performances of classical plays. We are the 2015 recipients of the LA Drama Critics Circle's highest honor, the Margaret Harford Award for sustained excellence in theater, a 2016 recipient of an NEA ArtWorks grant and a grantee recipient of Bloomberg Philanthropies' Arts Innovation and Management Program. Since 2010 we have produced the Griffith Park Free Shakespeare Festival with the Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks at the iconic Old Zoo. The growth in attendance of our free Shakespeare in the park program is extraordinary: at our first season (at Barnsdall Park in 2004), we played to fewer than 1,000 people; by 2015 our audience grew to over 47,000. Through classical theater we have attracted a community that is young (69% age 35 and under), diverse (45% identify as non-Caucasian and 75% are middle and lower income), and from all corners of Los Angeles. In 2012, we expanded our offerings with our indoor performance space, Independent Studio, where we present original work, re-imagined stagings of classics, readings, and classes. Beginning in 2016, ISC is implementing a growth plan that will see a dramatic increase in audience served, scope of programming and budget while maintaining our profound focus on our community. The plans include two structures: the Griffith Park Performing Arts Stage (a project of the City of Los Angeles, Department of Recreation & Parks) and a new performing arts space (re-invented to better serve our community of artists and audience). For more information call 818-710-6306 or visit www.iscla.org.

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