



**DEMAND PR**  
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MEDIA ALERT FOR THEATRE EDITORS AND REVIEWERS  
AND CALENDAR LISTINGS

INDEPENDENT SHAKESPEARE CO. presents

## **RICHARD III**

By William Shakespeare

Directed by Melissa Chalsma

*Limited Engagement Opens Thursday, June 30  
at the Old Zoo in Griffith Park!*

June 3, 2016...Los Angeles... This summer INDEPENDENT SHAKESPEARE CO. presents an electrified interpretation of Shakespeare's indelible anti-hero, **RICHARD III**, featuring David Melville as Richard and directed by Independent Shakespeare Co.'s Artistic Director, Melissa Chalsma. **RICHARD III** will begin previews at THE GRIFFITH PARK FREE SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL on Saturday, June 25 at 7pm and will open on Thursday, June 30 at 7:00pm and perform through Sunday, July 24 at the Old Zoo in Griffith Park. All ISC Summer Shakespeare productions are FREE to the public! **RICHARD III** is the first of two productions being presented at this year's GRIFFITH PARK FREE SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL. **THE TEMPEST** will play July 30 – September 4.

For over 200 years, the most produced play in the world was Colley Cibber's adaptation of Shakespeare's **RICHARD III**. Through the ages, classical actors (including David Garrick and Edmund Booth) refitted it for their versions of the indelible anti-hero. Independent Shakespeare Co. pulls the best from the past and combines it with an entirely modern take for this electrified re-imagining of the tale of a man driven to pursue power by any means.

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Comments Artistic Director Melissa Chalsma, “As we considered the vexing issues of presenting Shakespeare’s final play in a nine-play story (kind of like jumping into “Game of Thrones” in the final season) we turned to Colley Cibber’s 18<sup>th</sup> century version. Although we’ve restored much of the text to Shakespeare’s original (and added back in some characters) we’ve retained Cibber’s condensing of the story, and even several of his ingenious original scenes. Much of Cibber’s dramaturgy was to contemporize the play for an audience; in our version, we are incorporating live music (a distinctly Shakespearean element), but in our case the music is rock. This, alongside modern-inflected costumes will encourage audiences to draw parallels to their own world: Shakespeare’s object lesson in what happens when tyranny goes unrestrained is as timely today as it was 400 years ago.”

With an increase in the number of performances this season, ISC expects to serve its largest audience to date. Comments ISC Board Chair Eduardo A. Braniff, “The board of directors is enormously energized by seeing our community growing every season. Every new and returning audience member is proof that we are delivering on our mission to bring Los Angeles together and to address the inequity of access to the arts.”

### **ABOUT THE CREATIVE TEAM AND CAST**

**MELISSA CHALSMA** (Director) is the co-founder and Artistic Director of Independent Shakespeare Co. (ISC). Under her leadership, along with co-founder David Melville, the company created the Griffith Park Free Shakespeare Festival, which has grown into the largest theater event of its kind in Los Angeles. In 2015, ISC received the Los Angeles Drama Critics Circle’s highest honor, the Margaret Harford Award for sustained excellence in theater. She directs and acts in many ISC productions. ISC roles include Beatrice in *Much Ado About Nothing*, Lady Macbeth in *Macbeth*, Rosalind in *As You Like It*, Titania in *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* (as well as directing), Hermione in *The Winter’s Tale* and Beatrice in *Much Ado About Nothing*.

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As director: Oliver Goldsmith's *She Stoops to Conquer*, *Hamlet*, *The Comedy of Errors*, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, *The Two Gentleman of Verona*, *Romeo & Juliet*. She has performed in theaters across the country, on Broadway (including the American premiere of Harold Pinter's *Moonlight* with Jason Robards, Blythe Danner, and Liev Schreiber), and in the UK.

In her ten years as a college faculty member she taught at Moorpark College, Pepperdine University, and California State University, Northridge. Drawing on her experience as an educator, she has guided the company in the development of educational programming for schools, as well as workshops directed toward families that take place before performances in Griffith Park.

The cast of **RICHARD III** will feature: David Melville as Richard, Fiona Cheung, Joseph Culliton, William Elsman, April Fritz, Lorenzo Gonzalez, Mary Goodchild, Aisha Kabia, Jack Lancaster, Tatiana Louder, Victor Manso, Nathan Nonhof, Katie Powers-Faulk, Evan Lewis Smith, Bernadette Sullivan, Klean Ung and Brandon Wong.

Season Production Design is by Caitlin Lainoff. Season Lighting Design is by Bosco Flanagan. Costume Design is by Garry Lennon. Original music composed by David Melville. Musical direction is by Chris Porter.

### **SCHEDULE AND PRICING**

**RICHARD III** will preview on Saturday, June 25 at 7:00pm and will open on Thursday, June 30 at 7:00pm and perform through Sunday, July 24 at the Old Zoo in Griffith Park. All ISC Summer Shakespeare productions are FREE to the public. For more information, please call (818) 710-6306 or online at [www.iscla.org](http://www.iscla.org)

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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](mailto:davidelzer@me.com)

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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](http://www.iscla.org).*

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## Calendar Listing:

**THE GRIFFITH PARK FREE SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL  
PRESENTS WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE'S**

### **RICHARD III**

Directed by Melissa Chalsma

**OPENS THURSDAY, JUNE 30 THROUGH SUNDAY, JULY 24!**

**ALL PERFORMANCES ARE AT 7PM!**

Previews are:

Saturday, June 25

Sunday, June 26

Wednesday, June 29

**OPENING/PRESS NIGHT: Thursday, June 30 at 7pm**

Pre-show Salon Series discussion led by director, Melissa Chalsma: Sunday, July 3 at 5pm

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**Performance dates:**

**Friday, July 1**  
**Saturday, July 2**  
**Sunday, July 3**  
**Wednesday, July 6**  
**Thursday, July 7**  
**Friday, July 8**  
**Saturday, July 9**  
**Sunday, July 10**  
**Wednesday, July 13**  
**Thursday, July 14**  
**Friday, July 15**  
**Saturday, July 16**  
**Sunday, July 17**  
**Wednesday, July 20**  
**Thursday, July 21**  
**Friday, July 22**  
**Saturday, July 23**  
**Sunday, July 24**

**Directions to the Old Zoo at Griffith Park are also available on the website.  
Free, ample lot and street parking.**

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