ANNUAL REPORT 2019

UNIQUELY LOS ANGELES

INDEPENDENT SHAKESPEARE CO.

Bukola Ogunmola & David Melville
in Twelfth Night
We bring Los Angeles together through exuberant, surprising productions of classical plays and new works.

We address the inequity of access to the performing arts through free and low-cost programming.

We create theater that is dynamic, inclusive, and accessible; enriching our community and reaching new theater audiences.
Each summer, our Griffith Park Free Shakespeare Festival is the place for all Angelenos to discover live theater. 2019 included:

- 43 performances of Twelfth Night and Pericles
- Special events including music, dance, audience discussions led by guest speakers, and civic engagement opportunities.

45,000 people attended performances: the Festival proves that Shakespeare can be the catalyst for the largest, most diverse theater audience in the city.

In our indoor home, the ISC Studio, we create experimental versions of classical plays, as well as develop new works. 2019 events were:

- Julius Caesar
- Anita Berber is Dead! an original musical
- iambic lab, a festival of new works, obscure classics, and salon discussions
- A Christmas Carol With Charles Dickens, the 15th Anniversary Season

ISC performs and teaches throughout Los Angeles. Through partnerships with municipal entities as well as other non-profits, ISC artists can be found in schools, museums...and even on your commute.
YOU GAVE YOUR TIME!
Volunteers donated over 1,750 hours of their time to ISC.

YOU SHARED!
77% of first-time attendees "heard about ISC from a friend."

YOU GAVE your money!
70% of our donations come from individuals like you.

HATS OFF TO YOU!
(LET’S HAVE A LOOK AT ALL YOU DID IN 2019....)

YOU JOINED IN!
51 brave audience members joined us onstage to compete in the knight’s challenge during performances of Pericles.

YOU GAVE YOUR TIME!
Volunteers donated over 1,750 hours of their time to ISC.

YOU SHARED!
77% of first-time attendees “heard about ISC from a friend.”

(HEY, NOW...WE SAID HATS OFF!)
“I first encountered the Independent Shakespeare Company at a performance of Henry V at Los Angeles’ Odyssey Theater in 2002. About ten actors, no sets, no costumes, just a Company brave enough to take the opening monologue seriously, “Think when we talk of horses, that you see them printing their proud hoofs i’ the receiving earth; For ‘tis your thoughts that now must deck our kings.” I later saw an equally stripped down performance of the Scottish Play at CSUN’s Studio Theater, supported only by the strength of the text and the incredible passion of the actors.

Next came the summer performances at Barnsdall Park where the constant helicopter traffic to Children’s Hospital led to the pre-show announcement, “This is the only theater in LA where we don’t care if you silence your cell phones.”

Our son started attending after the move to Griffith Park, first the comedies, but, when at age 9, he was transfixed for an entire Hamlet, we knew he was hooked for life. He is now 16 and proudly tells his teachers he has seen 24 of the Bard’s plays. He loves how ISC makes Shakespeare friendly, welcoming, inviting and exciting for viewers of all ages.”
2019 was my first summer working with Independent Shakespeare Co., and it was such a unique experience. I’ve never been a part of a production that has attracted such a wide range of demographics. The Griffith Park Free Shakespeare Festival allows families and friends to spend their evening watching work that is both entertaining and accessible to people of all walks of life. It’s beautiful to see all of those faces in the audience. It truly feeds my soul.

BRENT CHARLES, who spent the 2019 summer playing Lysimachus in PERICLES and the sea captain in TWELFTH NIGHT

AT THE GRIFFITH PARK FESTIVAL: ARTIST STORY
A guiding commitment of the Griffith Park Free Shakespeare Festival is to engage new audience members and excite first-time theater goers about the possibilities of theater. In 2019, we partnered with the following organizations to host their constituents at the park for performances. Highlighted partners engaged in a series of workshops before and after their attendance at the Festival. This deeper engagement initiative was supported by the California Arts Council.

### Community Partners

- A Place Called Home
- American Academy of Dramatic Arts
- Amity Foundation
- Anti Recidivism Coalition (ARC)
- Arts for Incarcerated Youth Network
- Bravo Medical Magnet
- Chaffey High School
- FamilySource Center/Youth Policy Institute
- Flintridge Center
- Girl Scouts of Greater LA - Troop 616
- Glendale College - Mass Communications Department
- KIPP Scholar Academy
- LA County Department of Arts & Culture Staff
- LA County High School of the Arts
- Legacy LA
- Los Angeles Council District 13 Staff
- Los Angeles Council District 4 Staff
- Los Angeles Valley College
- Marshall High School
- SAG-AFTRA Foundation
- Shakespeare Center LA
- SOHO House
- Stella Adler
- The Shakespeare Institute
- UCLA Department of Computational Medicine
- University Value Prep High School
- USC School of Dramatic Arts Summer Program
- Walden House

Audience members get their Shakespeare on during a Players in the Park/Teatrístos en el parque pre-show workshop for learners of all ages.
“During the run of Julius Caesar we had different school groups come through, but my favorite night was when a group of veterans came. We had a talk back, and afterwards I got to chat with some of them one-on-one. One gentleman told me he was a history buff, and that he had read a lot about Caesar, but that the show was the first time he felt like he really understood the context. He said seeing the performance made him see the human aspects of the story, and that it made the history more immediate and accessible. Although the play takes liberties with the history it meant a lot to hear that there was a connection not just to the play, but history, and most importantly that it shone a light on the present moment.”

FAQIR HASSAN, WHO PLAYED BRUTUS IN THE 2019 ISC STUDIO PRODUCTION OF JULIUS CAESAR.

IN THE ISC STUDIO: JULIUS CAESAR

The ISC Studio is a 70-seat venue that can hold readings, workshops, and experimental versions of classical plays.

It is a place that encourages risk taking and fosters an intimate relationship with our audience.

The work done in the ISC Studio leads to artistic growth, and is a key component to developing the vision and the artists that inhabit the summer stage in Griffith Park.
IN THE ISC STUDIO: ANITA BERBER IS DEAD!

An important function of the ISC Studio is to create, develop, and produce new works.

*Anita Berber is Dead!* brought together a creative team that included co-founders Melissa Chalsma and David Melville alongside composer Jim Lang and performer and choreographer Tonya Kay. The original musical tells the story of Anita Berber, a real life Weimer-era nude dancer. This work in development explores feminism, expressionism, and artistic ambitions in an immersive environment that involves the audience in the performance.

The two-week workshop run played to nearly full capacity, and a world-premiere production is in the planning stages.

ISC BOARD CHAIR, EDUARDO BRANIFF, ON THE IMPORTANCE OF PRODUCING NEW WORK:

“After many years of supporting ISC, I continue to be surprised by the company’s work. Its ability to stage the classics in a manner that is true to the text but relevant to the moment, holding up a mirror to today and reflecting who Los Angeles is now, and defying, year-after-year, the belief that theater is for older, white and rich audiences.

But, never have I been as surprised than by the first staging of ISC’s new musical: *Anita Berber is Dead!* The eye-opening realization that our company is equally brilliant at the bleeding-edge as at the classics was a reminder that ISC is simply not just about Shakespeare. I can’t think of another theater in the city that has both King Lear on its calendar as well as a world premiere new musical about an expressionist dancer who is also a transgressive queer icon!

Providing everyone in Los Angeles access to free, first-rate classical theater is our purpose. It remains as urgent as ever. I will always be delighted by seeing young families from the far corners of our vast city experiencing The Bard and theater for the first time. But, now...our purpose expands to provide everyone in Los Angeles bold and novel new theater that includes their stories, and perhaps will one day be consider classical!”
Revenue: $753,659

Contributed: 70%

Individual: 73%
Foundation: 19%
Government: 8%

Earned: 30%

Expenses: $781,991

Programs: 64%
Administration: 22%
Fundraising: 14%

2019 Foundation and Government Funders:

The Annenberg Foundation
California Arts Council
Department of Cultural Affairs, City of Los Angeles
The Capital Group Companies Charitable Foundation

Hal and Kathleen Gershman Family Foundation
John C. Hench Foundation
Los Angeles Philanthropic Committee for the Arts
Los Angeles County Department of Arts & Culture

Los Feliz Neighborhood Council
The Rosenthal Family Foundation
Rossi Family Foundation
Venable Foundation
Dale and Edna Walsh (DEW) Foundation
YOU’VE GOT A PART TO PLAY!

**BECOME A MONTHLY DONOR.**

By being a monthly donor, you provide the core support for ISC’s year-round performances and programs and signal your belief that when we come together through the arts, we create a stronger and more connected community.

**DONATE STOCK.**

When you donate stock, you’ll not only make an impact on the cultural landscape of Los Angeles, but you’ll avoid paying costly capital gains tax as well. Our trained staff is ready to help you through the process.

**LEAVE A LEGACY**

You believe that access to the arts plays a crucial role in people feeling connected to, and valued by, their community. Your estate gift ensures your commitment will extend far into the future. Learn more at www.iscla.org

**LEARN MORE AT WWW.ISCLA.ORG**

**VOLUNTEER.**

Volunteers are a critical part of our theater-making. Whether you’re interested in helping greet audience members one night in the Studio, or being a summer-long part of part of the Festival team, we’ve got a role for you!

**ATTEND A PERFORMANCE**

We have something for you to see 11 months out of the year, whether in the indoor ISC Studio in the Atwater Village neighborhood of Los Angeles, or outdoors at the Griffith Park Free Shakespeare Festival. Join our mailing list and never miss a performance!

**SERVE ON THE BOARD.**

As a 501c(3) not-for-profit organization, ISC relies on a committed, energized Board of Directors to maintain vitality and craft strategy.