



Hip to Hip's 2016 Free Shakespeare in NYC Parks Performances Begin in July

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Hip to Hip Theatre Company celebrates its tenth season of Free Shakespeare in the Parks with the sparkling comedy *As You Like It* and venerable tragedy *Julius Caesar*. The plays will tour in repertory to 11 New York City area parks, with special gala performances in Southampton and Jersey City. 35 theatre artists. 2 exciting plays, 13 diverse parks: July 27-August 28.

These family-friendly productions are for lovers of Shakespeare and for those experiencing Shakespeare for the first time. All performances are free and open to the public. Bring blankets, low chairs and picnic fare. No lines. No tickets. Seating is first come, first served. Plus, Hip to Hip's free children's program "Kids & the Classics" will be offered one hour before each performance. This companion piece to Hip to Hip's program of "Free Shakespeare in the Park" is a free 45-minute interactive workshop designed for children ages 4 to 14, giving them a chance to interact with the text by previewing the characters and situations, creating links between the text and their own lives through theatre games and close reading of text.

AS YOU LIKE IT

Shakespeare's sparkling comedy about love, family and identity is full of wit, music and gender-bending fun. The rightful duke and his supporters have been banished, while his impulsive daughter Rosalind remains at the mercy of the oppressive new regime. Comic twists and turns abound when Rosalind, disguised as a boy, flees the court to seek her father in the mysterious Forest of Arden. Her journey of self-discovery brings her face to face with Orlando, the man she loves.

JULIUS CAESAR

In this sensational political thriller, Shakespeare explores the tension between private loyalties and the public good, and unflinchingly questions the price of freedom. Caesar is determined to crown himself as Rome's first emperor, but a few senators, led by the idealistic, intellectual Brutus and his manipulative, rebellious friend Cassius, are prepared to sacrifice everything to liberate their country. Instead of being greeted as liberators, they are met with civil war.

Shakespeare's comedy *As You Like It* will be directed by HTH Assoc. Artistic Director David Mold (*Hamlet*, *Love's Labor's Lost*, *Cymbeline* and *Merchant of Venice*), and the tragedy *Julius Caesar* will be directed by Joel Leffert (Artistic Director of Salamander Repertory Theatre, London and Broadway premieres of *Tennessee Williams' Not About Nightingales*).

The casts include Chaunce Chapman* (Afrikan Womens Repertory Company, The Bronx Repertory Company, Theatreworks U.S.A.), Holly Chou (The Flea Theatre, "The Blacklist," "Nurse Jackie"), Erick Gonzalez* (El Repertorio Espanol, INTAR Theater, Premiere Stages), Devin Haqq* (The Arden Theatre, Alabama Shakespeare Festival, "Surprise" directed by Sam Mendes), James Harter* (Pasadena Playhouse, Niccu Spoon Theatre), Michael Hinton (Eugene O'Neill Theatre Center, Flock Theatre), Kurt Kingsley* (The Storm Theatre, Emerging Artists Theatre), Jason Marr* (Off Broadway: *Loose Knit*, *Eula Mae's Beauty*, *Bait & Tackle*. Regional: Indiana Rep. "Law & Order: SVU"), Joy Marr* (American Globe, Lynx Ensemble, Alabama Shakespeare Festival), Matthew Oats (South Africa's Playhouse Theatre) and Jackie Schram (Aquila Theatre Company, Florida Rep). The cast also features Joe Hetterly and Katie Holden. *denotes members of Actors' Equity Association