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Hip to Hip Theatre Company Announces Summer Productions for 2019 Season Tour

Hip to Hip Theatre Company is pleased to announce that they will showcase two of Shakespeare's classic plays during their 2019 Free Shakespeare in the Parks summer tour. Audiences will have a chance to enjoy the romantic comedy, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (directed by S.C. Lucier), and the historic tragedy *Richard III* (directed by David Mold), under the stars.

The two productions will perform in rotating repertory from July 24 to August 25, at fourteen parks throughout Manhattan, Queens, Brooklyn, Staten Island, and the Bronx. Performances

will also take place in Jersey City and Southampton. Hip to Hip's popular children's workshop "Kids & the Classics," will be offered thirty minutes before each performance.

Audience members are encouraged to bring a blanket or low chair, picnic fare and enjoy a Shakespeare play in the open air. No tickets are necessary. Tour schedule will be announced in mid-June.

Artistic Director Jason Marr, discussed this season's play selection, "If you're going to produce something as dark and bloody as *Richard III*, you need something as light and fluffy as *A Midsummer Night's Dream* to balance the season."

Marr went on to share, "Both as a producer and as an actor, *Richard III* has hovered near the top of my "yet-to-do list" for years. It's never made the cut, because on some level the play doesn't quite sing for me. After thirteen years with Hip to Hip, and with my "yet-to-do list" getting shorter and shorter, it seemed time to take another look at *Richard III*." He went on to say, "I came across the fascinating documentary, "The King in the Car Park," which tracks the exhumation and reburial of The Remains of *Richard III*, which culminated in 2012. With the discovery of *Richard III*'s remains, we now know that Shakespeare's portrait of *Richard*'s deformity is grossly exaggerated. The exhumed skeleton reveals *Richard* had severe scoliosis, but it bears no suggestion that he was a hunchback with a withered arm and unequally sized legs. Hip to Hip's new radical adaptation of *Richard III* attempts to bridge the divide between the real man and the caricature the Tudors, aided and abetted by Shakespeare, perpetuated."

The repertory cast includes Leah Alfieri, Kendall Devin Bell, Katie Fanning*, Rebecca Wei Hsieh, Kurt Kingsley*, Tristan Land, Jason Marr*, Joy Marr*, Josh Miccio, Austin Nguyen, Anuj Parikh, Sophia Parola and Colin Wulff*. *appears courtesy of Actors Equity Association

A Midsummer Night's Dream: Four young lovers escape the tyranny of the court to find love in a magical forest. On the same night and in the same forest, the king and queen of the fairies declare war on each other and a company of amateur actors meet to rehearse a play. See what happens when a mischievous sprite called Puck weaves their three stories into one.

Richard III: After a long civil war, England enjoys a period of peace under King Edward. But Edward's younger brother Richard, who helped him to the throne, grows restless in the shadows. Shakespeare's searing drama chronicles the bloody rise and fall of the last English king to die on the battlefield.

"Kids & the Classics" is the companion piece to Hip to Hip's program of "Free Shakespeare in the Parks." This free interactive workshop is offered 30 minutes before every performance, and is designed for children ages 4 to 12. It gives children a chance to interact with the text by previewing the characters and situations and creating links between the text and their own lives.

About Hip to Hip Theatre Company

Hip to Hip, now in its 13th year, is dedicated to stimulating and developing interest in the theatre arts in underserved communities by providing free, family-friendly, professional productions of popular classics, and free theatre workshops for children, in public spaces.