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Hip To Hip Theatre Company Reopens with Free Shakespeare in The Parks

Audiences will have a chance to enjoy Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* and *Antony & Cleopatra* under the stars.

Hip to Hip Theatre Company got the green light from Actors' Equity to relaunch its flagship program of Free Shakespeare in the Parks and on July 28 it officially set sail in Flushing Meadows.

Until August 22, audiences will have a chance to enjoy Shakespeare's brilliant romantic comedy *Twelfth Night* (directed by David Frederick Mold) and his epic romantic tragedy *Antony & Cleopatra* (directed by Jason Marr), under the stars. The two productions perform in rotating repertory now through August 21, at a dozen parks throughout Queens, Staten Island, Jersey City, and Southampton.



All performances are free and open to the public. Audience members are encouraged to bring a blanket or low chair. No tickets are necessary. Run time: 90 minutes. Masks are optional for fully vaccinated individuals and required for unvaccinated individuals.

Artistic Director, Jason Marr, discussed Hip to Hip's reopening: "During the darkest days of the pandemic, I reminded myself of the resilience of the theatre arts and its creators. Shakespeare survived three ferocious outbreaks of the bubonic plague: he was an infant during the first; he launched his career as a playwright during the second; and he wrote some of his best plays during the third. I knew Hip to Hip would reopen, but I didn't know when. Then, in mid-June a window of opportunity opened thanks to NYC's low COVID positivity rate and high percentage of vaccinations. New York lifted many restrictions and Actors' Equity followed suit by reinstating some types of contracts. Working in our favor was the fact that we'd assembled a fully vaccinated company to rehearse and perform strictly out-of-doors. We were approved to start rehearsals on July 10 and we were slated to open on July 28, so that gave us eighteen days to mount two full Shakespeare productions complete with professional actors, sumptuous costumes, sets, lights and sound."