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NEWS RELEASE

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Headline

News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 10, 2015

***33rd season of Free Shakespeare in the Park presents “Romeo and Juliet”
July 18 – August 2 in Cupertino***

Cupertino, CA – The San Francisco Shakespeare Festival presents *Romeo and Juliet* for its 33rd season of Free Shakespeare in the Park. “Come and crush a cup of wine” with us and bring your family and friends, a blanket and a picnic to enjoy professional theater at no charge in a beautiful park setting!

2015 Performance schedule for *Romeo and Juliet*:

- Cupertino’s Memorial Park Amphitheater, Stevens Creek Blvd and Mary Avenue
- Saturday, July 18 at 7:30 pm - Preview
 - Sunday, July 19 at 7:30 pm - Opening
 - Friday, July 24 at 7:30 pm
 - Saturday, July 25 at 7:30 pm
 - Sunday, July 26 at 7:30 pm
 - Friday, July 31 at 7:30 pm

- Saturday, August 1 at 7:30 pm
- Sunday, August 2 at 7:30 pm

Audiences can further their enjoyment of this production by attending a 15-minute Green Show (30 minutes before the performance), which provides context and historical background for the play in a fun, family-friendly format.

Admission is free. For more information, call the San Francisco Shakespeare Festival at (415) 558-0888 or visit www.sfshakes.org

The Festival's first Free Shakespeare in the Park production of *Romeo and Juliet* since 1992 will celebrate Shakespeare's remarkable genre-defying play, which soars to the heights of romantic comedy before plunging into heartbreak. The title characters will be played by Festival Resident Artists, Carl Holvick-Thomas and Lauren Spencer. Additional cast members include Festival favorites Sean Garahan, Phil Lowery, David E. Moore, Carla Pantoja and Valerie Weak. Talented newcomers to the Free Shakes stage include Michael J. Asberry, Gwen Loeb, Regina Morones and Mohammad Shehata.

Artistic Director Rebecca J. Ennals continues her historically-based, thoughtfully relevant approach to Shakespeare's plays with this beloved favorite, filled with some of Shakespeare's most beautifully poetic language. While the doomed lovers will always be remembered for their romantic devotion, this tale of five young lives needlessly wasted could have come straight from today's Twitter or Facebook feeds. A culture of violence, inherited from past generations, leads young people to harbor meaningless prejudices and commit terrible acts. Shakespeare's young characters live secret lives unknown to their parents, and love, kill, and die without most of the older generation knowing why. How does a community recover from a culture of violence? Shakespeare leaves us with the possibility of hope and healing, a message much needed today.

Cupertino, CA, is on the western edge of Silicon Valley against the foothills of the Santa Cruz Mountains. With a population of 62,000 within 13 square miles, Cupertino is 42 miles south of San Francisco and home to many high-tech companies, most notably Apple, Inc.

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Note to Editor: Artists and staff are available for interviews at (415) 558-0888.

About San Francisco Shakespeare Festival

The mission of the San Francisco Shakespeare Festival is to make the words and themes of Shakespeare available to everyone, regardless of age, ethnicity, financial status, or level of education. We accomplish this through the presentation of **Free Shakespeare in the Park** and a wide array of education programs: **Shakespeare On Tour**, **Tailor-Made Residencies**, **Bay Area Shakespeare Camps**, **Midnight Shakespeare**, and **Shakespeare for All**. *Shakespeare On Tour* performs an abridged Shakespeare play at schools, libraries, and community centers all over the state. *Tailor-Made Residencies* connects teaching artists with classroom teachers for in-class theatre enrichment, specifically tailored to their learning objectives and their students. *Bay Area Shakespeare Camps* for

ages 4-6, 7-13 and 12-18 are two-week theatre camps held throughout the Bay Area. *Midnight Shakespeare*, the Festival's after-school program for under-served and low-income youth, serves participants in San Francisco, Oakland, San Jose and Antioch. *Shakespeare For All* in three Central Valley communities, Salida, Madera, and Chowchilla, gives residents a chance to stage community productions of Shakespeare's plays with the assistance and guidance of theater professionals.

About Rebecca J. Ennals

Ennals, who took the position of Artistic Director in 2012, has been a staff member of the San Francisco Shakespeare Festival since 2002. She has extensive acting, directing and teaching experience and holds a BA in Theatre and English from Scripps College (summa cum laude) and an MFA in performance from U.C. Davis. Bay Area directing credits include productions at Peninsula Youth Theatre, Los Altos Youth Theatre, California Conservatory Theatre-San Leandro, Pear Ave. Theatre, PlayGround (where she is a company member), Shakespeare at Stinson Beach, Napa Valley Shakespeare Festival, and Napa Valley Repertory Theatre. For the San Francisco Shakespeare Festival, she has directed *The Taming of the Shrew* for Free Shakespeare in the Park, eight Shakespeare on Tour productions and various projects including *Romeo and Juliet* for Napa's Festival del Sole, numerous Free Shakespeare in the Parklet playlets (a program she devised), and the 2013-14 Green Shows at Free Shakespeare in the Park.

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