



# Midsummer of Love

WE PLAYERS  
PRESENTS

AN  
EROTIC COMEDY  
OF  
CONSENT,  
CRUELTY,  
AND  
CONTROL

 We Players

WE PLAYERS PRESENTS

# Midsummer of Love

A NEW ADAPTATION OF SHAKESPEARE'S  
A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM

WRITTEN BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE  
ADAPTED AND DIRECTED BY AVA ROY  
ORIGINAL SCORE BY CHARLIE GURKE

NATHANIEL JUSTINIANO: BOTTOM/ LYSANDER  
AMY NOWAK: SNUG/ HERMIA  
NICK DICKSON: FLUTE/ DEMETRIUS  
AVA ROY: QUINCE/ HELENA  
JOHN STEELE: PUCK/ TITANIA  
BRITT LAUER: PUCK/ OBERON

CHARLIE GURKE: MUSIC DIRECTOR & COMPOSER  
NATHANIEL JUSTINIANO: ASSISTANT DIRECTOR  
ANNE KELLY: PRODUCTION STAGE MANAGER  
BROOKE JENNINGS: COSTUME DESIGNER  
TING NA WANG: PROPS ARTISAN  
JOHN STEELE JR: MAKEUP DESIGN  
LAUREN "LOE" MATLEY: HOUSE MANAGER, PHOTOGRAPHER  
DANA TAYLOR: SEAMSTRESS  
BRIANA SCHWARTZ: PRODUCTION INTERN  
KATORI KNIGHT: PRODUCTION ASSISTANT, STRAWBERRY HILL  
NICHOLAS SHERWIN: PRODUCTION ASSISTANT, KENNEDY GROVE  
NICK MEDINA: SCRIPT CONSULTATION AND DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT

MIDSUMMER OF LOVE PRODUCTION SPONSOR:  
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AN EROTIC COMEDY OF  
CONSENT, CRUELTY, AND CONTROL

# ABOUT WE

We Players presents site-integrated performance events that transform public spaces into realms of participatory theatre. We bring communities together, reclaiming local spaces for public discourse and civic celebration through art. Extending the transformative powers of performance beyond the stage, we invite our collaborators and audience to engage fully and awaken to the spectacular world around us.

The company's site-integrated focus and commitment to engage with history and ecology, build community, and use art to foster a personal connection with place has led to unprecedented partnerships with the National Park Service and California State Parks.

Production history highlights include: *Hamlet on Alcatraz*, *The Odyssey on Angel Island State Park*, *Macbeth at Fort Point*, and *Ondine at Sutro*, and many more.

We Players produces performance and engagement programs that are accessible to the diverse population of regular park visitors, and also draw local visitors to park sites specifically to experience our work.

2017 marks our 10 year anniversary working in partnership with the National Park Service and our first time working with the SF Recreation and Park Department. We love to play in the park!



# ABOUT THE PLACES

## San Francisco Recreation and Park

The roots of San Francisco's Recreation and Park Department stretch back to the 1870s, when city officials, responding to residents' demands for a large public park, established a Park Commission to oversee the development of Golden Gate Park. Over the years, many more parks were added to the system, and playgrounds, athletic fields, and recreational facilities were developed under the auspices of the Recreation Commission. In 1950, the two commissions were merged, and the modern **Recreation and Park Department** was born.

SF Recreation and Park is proud to welcome more than 13 million visitors each year to Golden Gate Park, one of San Francisco's greatest treasures. From a vast, windswept expanse of sand dunes, park engineer William Hammond Hall and master gardener John McLaren carved out an oasis—a verdant, horticulturally diverse, and picturesque public space where city dwellers can relax and reconnect with the natural world. The rest, as they say, is history.

## East Bay Regional Parks District

Founded in 1934, The East Bay Regional Park District is a system of beautiful parklands and trails in Alameda and Contra Costa counties east of San Francisco. The system comprises 120,931 acres in 65 parks, including over 1,250 miles of trails. EBRPD acquires, manages, and preserves natural and cultural resources for all to enjoy now and into the future. These parks are ideal for healthful recreation and environmental education, offering opportunities to enjoy hiking, biking, golfing, picnicking, horseback riding, camping, fishing, boating, and nature study. [ebparks.org](http://ebparks.org)



## Golden Gate Park

Measuring close to 430 feet tall and serving as the highest point in Golden Gate Park, **Strawberry Hill** offers some of the best views of surrounding vicinities. Strawberry Hill in its heyday delivered the sweet scent of wild berries, which are particularly pleasant and intoxicating after a downpour. Over the years, these wood strawberries have largely been displaced by invasive cape ivy and ice plant. Today, the presence of the strawberries is not entirely lost; vigilant examination of the sandy slopes may disclose the whereabouts of a few surviving patches.



## Kennedy Grove

Long before Kennedy Grove's 222-acre area became a park, it was the site of ranchos, wheat fields, and stations for a narrow-gauge railroad that ran from Oakland to Orinda through Richmond and the Sobrante Hills. Kennedy Grove was once a portion of the 17,754-acre Rancho San Pablo. Francisco Castro took possession of the rancho in 1823. Later the grove was the site of the Clancy Ranch. In 1886 there were scheduled railroad stops of the California and Nevada Railroad at Frenchman's Curve and Laurel Glen. The park's picnic areas are named for some of these historic railroad stops. The eucalyptus trees were planted in 1910. The park was dedicated on October 22, 1967 and named to honor the late President John F. Kennedy.

# THE MIDSUMMER OF LOVE

2017 marks San Francisco's 50th anniversary of the 1967 Summer of Love. We Players embraces it with our new adaptation of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

Golden Gate Park and Strawberry Hill were landmarks that summer as thousands of young people descended on Haight-Ashbury encouraged by tunes like Scott McKenzie's "San Francisco (Be Sure To Wear Some Flowers In Your Hair)" and Harvard professor Timothy Leary's call to "Turn on, tune in, drop out."

The Summer of Love was a 20th Century pivotal event. The Baby Boom resulted in more American young people than any time in the country's history. The era was characterized by prosperity in the post-war boom, but also anxiety, living in a Cold War age of "mutual assured destruction." Tensions between the establishment and the counterculture had never been higher. The American population was on edge as the Civil Rights movement gained momentum and the Vietnam War escalated in the face of massive public dissent.

Organizers espoused ideals of expanded consciousness through use of psychedelics, freedom of expression, and free love, and rejected consumerist values that inundated Americans via mass media. They modeled their utopia on a sharing economy. "The Diggers", a San Francisco activist street theatre group, established a free food service in Golden Gate Park's Panhandle to prove it could be done.

San Francisco's establishment braced for impact, its infrastructure pushed to its limits, as thousands of "hippies" surged into The City. Despite the efforts of organizers to maintain order with the creation of free clinics, food distribution, and the "Free Store", conditions became worse, amplified by drug use and crime. Important figures who drew the youth to San Francisco left The City before it began. Later in the summer, some staged a performance piece, "The Death of the Hippie," as those in attendance for the summer became more jaded about creating their utopia.

Nevertheless, the Summer made an indelible mark on America as many left to forge similar communities elsewhere as San Francisco's flower children returned to their hometowns and universities. The Summer of Love could be considered the last moment of American idealism before a barrage of tumultuous events in 1968, including the assassinations of Robert Kennedy and Martin Luther King, Jr. as well as rioting at the Chicago Democratic National Convention.

We Players' production is set in the "now"- not in 1967- however, we are influenced by the Summer of Love and our Golden Gate Park backdrop in the creation of this piece. Echoes of these themes are everywhere throughout Shakespeare's text.

There is no question that there is a psychedelic quality to the "flower power" that the Pucks use on the Mechanicals to transform and tease them out their inhibited qualities as they alter them into Lovers.

The world of our play is an atmosphere of sexual exploration, challenging traditional roles, roleplaying and gender swapping as our Pucks transform themselves layer upon layer, at first into Titania and Oberon, and then into Theseus and Hippolyta.

Even in 1600, Shakespeare was writing speeches that ring true with today's climate change debate. The Summer of Love was also characterized by a heightened political awareness and resistance against government positions. Listen carefully to Titania's speech about the "forgeries of jealousy", with "every pelting river made so proud / That they have overborne their continents."

Perhaps the most apt connection between the Summer of Love and our *Midsummer*, is the flouting of authority, seen most clearly in Hermia's interaction with her father Egeus and the Athenian duke Theseus. We see the rebellion of our Athenian youths before their sexual and psychedelic romp in the woods, at the hands of the mischievous Pucks.

As we open this show on the 2017 Summer Solstice we consider our Lovers to be the spiritual descendants of those Haight-Ashbury flower children.

# NOTES ON THE PRODUCTION

## *"What visions have I seen!"*

The forest has forever represented a place beyond the everyday, an "other" land where extraordinary events can occur and where strange visions may be seen; a land of dreams and nightmares. The violence and ecstasy of Nature herself, the supreme goddess of change and transformation, mirrored a dominant theme that arose from our initial read throughs: cruelty in love. It suddenly seemed apparent that this distilled *Midsummer* would be an exploration of this theme—the ways in which we are both our best and our worst selves when in love, and how we sometimes enact the most intense cruelties upon the people we love or who love us.

Fundamentally inspired by the environment, as we are with all We Players productions, we offered ourselves up on the altar of Summer and our desire grew towards becoming as unapologetically lush and unrestrained as the natural world at the height of this season - dripping, sweaty, effusive, gushing, steamy, bursting at the seams. We became intensely inspired by flowers that clamber for the sun, desperately fluffing petals and exploding with color in a feverish pursuit of pollination, and by the dripping juices of summer's harvest, ripe berries and succulent stonefruits. Out of this inspiration an interest grew in exploring kink and BDSM cultures within the realm of the fairies and lovers and a pursuit of effortless sexiness and endearing sweetness in our mechanicals.

To our delight and surprise, our collaborator Nathaniel discovered an essay by the theatre critic and Shakespeare scholar Jan Kott, which detailed the brutal and intense eroticism of the text. Kott also speaks to the splitting and doubling of characters, especially Puck, in a way that reinforces this particular adaptation. So often seen through a gossamer-winged filter, in Kott's seminal essay *Titania and the Ass's Head*, The Dream is described as "a most truthful, brutal, and violent play" and a very "contemporary play about love". In Kott's writing we found reinforcement and inspiration for following this emergent path towards a Dream of heightened sex and violence. And of course, as Oscar Wilde so pithily put it, "Everything is about sex. Except for sex. Sex is about power."

## *"No more yielding than a dream"*

You are really here on Strawberry Hill or Kennedy Grove with the mechanicals and the Pucks. These are the core personas upon which our other characters are imposed. The Pucks, these two central figures, revel in the dimensionality of fluid sexuality and gender. They beat back the potential boredom of immortality through their games - be they kinky, cruel, or celebratory. They have rules to these games, and when the rules are broken, new wars of domination and submission, of consent and control, ensue. Titania and Oberon and Theseus and Hippolyta are simply the roles they play while working out their own relationship dramas and dynamics through the manipulation of the mortals. They wield their fairie magic for their own amusement and pleasure, as well as for pain and power. They manipulate the mechanicals, transforming them into the lovers, through whom they play out all sorts of cruelties and extreme emotional states. When all is well between them they unite as one entity. It is through the Pucks' magic that our Mechanicals, living locally in 2017 and dressed in the homogenous palate of everyday utility garb, become Athenians suddenly clad in the saturated hues of summer flowers. Thus, we exist both here and now and are also a world away.

The Mechanicals, when they eventually emerge, will have only misty memories of what has transpired in the forest. They will not know what shapes they've taken, what roles they've played. They will perhaps remember strange details or struggle to understand where certain accessories or garments came from. But they will never be certain what actually happened and what was a dream. The mechanicals, enchanted and conducted by the Pucks, believe they have invited you to join them for their rehearsal in the woods. Sometimes called Hobgoblin and sometimes Robin Goodfellow, the Pucks have conceived and directed the whole thing; always cognizant that you are watching. They want you to witness their love and madness. This Dream is really their love story. They are divided, they fight, they mend, they heal, they continue on - much like the seasons of nature, likely to repeat this cycle throughout the ages. That they, for all their power and cleverness and wit, are no better or wiser than us. The folly of lovers and faeries alike.

-Ava Roy

***"Lovers and madmen have such seething brains  
Such shaping fantasies, that apprehend  
More than cool reason ever comprehends"***

# NOTES ON COSTUMING

My process with We Players has typically been informed by the history and inherent memory of the space, discovered through dramaturgical research of the stories and lives that once occupied that site as well as the natural flora and fauna that has survived and persisted over the generations. I look for common threads between the two to help inform the aesthetic and, at times, the physical pieces created for the show such as natural dyes from native plants, wool from local sheep, natural fabrics that were traded/shipped/spun in the period, and so on.

Usually, a We Players show is built for one location and is not transferable to any other location. In this case, the production is intended to be transferable to other sites so long as each site fits a set of spatial and environmental parameters. Thus, the process for creating our aesthetic deviates from all previous productions. With *Midsummer of Love*, our aesthetic bounces off the time period of the Summer of Love in 1967 and focuses on the classic themes and images of Americana - white t-shirt and jeans, and making everyday wear sexy and provocative. With this design I am guided by the themes and motifs of Shakespeare's most erotic play- themes of sex, love, control, submission, luxury, utility, and above all - transformation.

The role costumes must fulfill in this show is the seamless transformation of each actor as they descend down the rabbit hole of plays within plays within plays... From the mechanicals pulling costumes out of their trunk of goods to the Pucks dressing them in whatever they see fit. My research for these functions is largely focused on straps, clasps, ties, pins, and layering to create a world that is constantly shifting depending on who has hold of the strings. Making sure the audience sees these transformations as extensions of characters' intentions is paramount.

Our Pucks are master puppeteers- constantly playing with control through both physical and emotional manipulation. They don costumes and accents, they alternate identities and wield these identities as weapons for both pleasure and pain. Using the mechanicals as tools to reconcile their fractured identity, the Pucks eventually rediscover their inherent unity. While we mortals celebrate the 50th anniversary of The Summer of Love, The Pucks both reflect and stretch the forefront in counter culture and free love. With San Francisco as our setting, we tap into the rich history of BDSM and kink culture as the irresistible landscape for our Pucks to pursue control of pleasure, love, and pain.

-Brooke Jennings



# OUR CAST AND CREW

**Ting Na Wang (Props Artisan)** makes her We Players debut with this production. A Taiwanese-native scenic designer, painter and props designer, she has worked in the Bay Area since 2013. Her recent credits in props design includes *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, *Assassins*, and *Bat Boy* with Los Altos Stage Company, *Sordid Lives*, *Leaving the Blues*, and *Casa Valentina* with New Conservatory Theatre, *The Little Mermaid* and *Into The Woods* with Palo Alto Players, *Uncle Vanya* with Pear Theatre, *Potrero Nuevo* and *Best of PlayGround 20* with PlayGround.

**Nick Dickson (Performer)** is a graduate of University of California Santa Cruz and the Clown Conservatory of San Francisco. He last joined We Players in 2012, playing Sebastian in *Twelfth Night on Hyde Street Pier*. He has performed with Marin Shakespeare and understudied with California Shakespeare Theater. He feels exceedingly fortunate to rejoin this fantastic company and plans to work with them again. Besides acting, Nick spends his time writing fiction and playing Beatles songs on ukulele.

**Nicholas Sherwin (Production Assistant, Kennedy Grove)** is the founder and creative director of Screenshot Productions, an immersive installation collective with a long-term vision to establish a year-round immersive experience culture in Los Angeles and San Francisco. He is involved in the creation of integrated marketing communications plans, creative direction, writing and videography for all Screenshot installations. His desire in working in immersive experience design is to instill a sense of personal responsibility and stewardship in relation to larger cultural and societal issues faced in our world today. In addition, he was a project manager for west coast operations for Vortex Productions LLC., where he stage managed the show, the cast, and the inventory for Blackout Haunted House, an extreme immersive theatrical event in its eighth year of production.

He graduated with an MBA in Leadership and Managing Organizational Change from Pepperdine University and for undergrad attended Biola University, graduating with a B.S. in Management Sciences.

**Nathaniel Justiniano (Performer)** is an actor/creator, director and teacher, as well as the founder of Naked Empire Bouffon Company. Since 2001, he has worked as a performer with several California companies including Shakespeare Orange County, Dell'Arte, Cornerstone, Son of Semele, Cuttingball and the Thrillpeddlers. This marks his 6th appearance performing for We Players. Previous productions include *The Odyssey* on Angel Island, *Macbeth* at Fort Point, *Ondine* at Sutro (TBA Award), *HEROMONSTER* (co-creator/co-director), and *BEOWULF* (co-creator). With his company he creates and performs outrageously physical and grotesquely comic satires derived from today's tragedies. Under his direction, Naked Empire's productions and training program have toured the US and Canada and have been Official Selections at the Toronto Festival of Clowns, Vancouver's Dancing on the Edge Festival, Shotgun's BLAST Festival and Victoria's UNO Fest. Awards for his work include the SF Best of the Fringe Award, the Guardian's Best of the Bay Award, and SF Weekly's Best Puppetry Award. He is a private acting coach, has served as Movement Designer at UC Berkeley, and taught at Solano City College, Sacramento City College, Kinetic Arts Center, and the Clown Conservatory. He holds a BFA in Theatre Performance from Chapman University and an MFA in Ensemble-Based Physical Theatre from Dell'Arte International.

**Lauren "Loe" Matley (House Manager, Photographer)** is excited for *Midsummer of Love*, her thirteenth production over the past seven years with We Players. As House Manager and Company Photographer her favorite part of the job is engaging with audiences and capturing the special



moments that make attending a We Players production so magical. Each actor, audience member and site location inspires her to continue her work with We. You can see Loe's photographic work on [www.weplayers.org](http://www.weplayers.org) and her own website, Rock Shots by Lauren Matley at [www.rockshotsbylm.com](http://www.rockshotsbylm.com).

**Katori Knight (Production Assistant, Strawberry Hill)** grew up in a commercial haunted house and now creates immersive experiences, most recently with The Obfuscia Hotel by Foma Labs. This past semester, Katori facilitated a course on Immersive experience design at UC Berkeley. Katori is also a performance artist working in burlesque, drag, and a tactical frivolity group. Their work examines social issues and the human experience, and their work can be found in The Body Political this year. Katori recently graduated from UC Berkeley with distinction, majoring in political science and minoring in public policy. Katori is a member of Phi Beta Kappa, Golden Key, and Pi Sigma Alpha honors societies.

**John Steele Jr. (Performer)** is a professional actor, makeup artist, playwright, and theatre creator based in San Francisco. This is his second We Players production, having played Benvolio in last summer's *Romeo & Juliet*. You may have seen him as Polonius/Laertes in *Hamlet* (SF Shakespeare Festival Tour), assorted roles in Playoffs Short Play Festival (PCSF), Trip in *Daniel's Husband* (NCTC), or most recently as Dick in *The Speakeasy* (Boxcar Theatre Company). He would like to thank his family for their support and his partner Jordan for always being his anchor. Play on!

**Charlie Gurke (Composer, Music Director)** is thrilled to be continuing a collaboration with We Players that began in 2010 with *Hamlet on Alcatraz*. Since then, Charlie has composed scores for We Players' productions of *The Odyssey on Angel Island*, *Twelfth Night at Hyde Street Pier*, *Macbeth at Fort Point* (winner of Theater Bay Area's best original score award), *Ondine at Sutro*, HEROMONSTER, and *Romeo & Juliet*. An active performer and composer in the Bay Area's jazz and latin music scenes, you can

hear Charlie with the Electric Squeezebox Orchestra, Candela, Jazz Mafia, and his own groups- [gurkestra.com](http://gurkestra.com)

**Brooke Jennings (Costume Designer)** is elated to continue her collaboration with We Players with this transformative adaptation of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. A graduate of UC Santa Cruz's Theater Arts Masters Program, Brooke is an award winning Costume Designer working in the Bay Area and New York, including Cutting Ball Theater (*Phèdre*), San Francisco Playhouse (*Colossal*, *The Nether*, *Stage Kiss*), Magic Theater (asst. designer: *A Lie of the Mind*, *Bad Jews*), FaultLine Theater (*Where All Good Rabbits Go*, *Every 28 Hours*, *Maggie's Riff*), Custom Made Theater Company (*Sam and Dede* (NYC and SF premiers), *Belleville*, *Chess*, *Grey Gardens The Musical*, *The Crucible*), Virago Theatre (*The Singularity* (NYC Premier)), and Santa Cruz Shakespeare (asst. designer, *Frog and Toad*). Brooke is the 2015 Recipient for Best Costume Design by Theatre Bay Area for her first collaboration with We Players: *Ondine at Sutro*. Since then, she has designed HEROMONSTER and the three iterations of *Romeo & Juliet*. Her work with We Players centers on resurrecting a dialogue with experiences held in our performance space. Offering audiences a rich visual conversation steeped in research and lived experience, her work continues to reach for connection through our collective chronicles to inform our present.

**Britt Lauer (Performer)** is delighted to count *Midsummer of Love* as her fourth production with We Players following *Romeo & Juliet* (Stage Manager and Fight Captain), HEROMONSTER (Assistant Producer), and *Ondine at Sutro* (Stage Manager). Other Bay Area credits include: *Q.E.D* with Indra's Net and Center REP's *A Christmas Carol*. As a teacher, director, and coach Britt spent six years working with teens in Center REP's Young Rep program. In addition to her work on stage Britt is passionate about applying theatrical skills in nontraditional contexts, working in the medical and business industries to help develop and enhance empathic communication. Britt holds a BA in Theatre with an emphasis in acting from Willamette University and a Semester Credential from the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Arts.

**Briana Schwartz (Production Intern)** is a Dramaturgy/Criticism Major at The Theatre School at DePaul University in Chicago IL. Her school credits include: *Tender* (Stage Manager), *Just A Lonely Man* (Dramaturg), *For Want of a Horse* (Assistant Director/Dramaturg), and *Dying City* (Dramaturg). She is a production and administrative assistant at Artemisia: A Chicago Theatre where she was the Assistant Stage Manager on *Shrewish*, a feminist adaptation of Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew* and is slated to Assistant Direct their 2017 fall production. Bri is interested in finding the intersection between activism and immersive events throughout her theatrical career, and is excited to be a We Players production intern this summer, dipping her toes into this immersive and site specific work .

**Ava Roy (Producer, Director, Performer)** is the Founding Artistic Director of We Players. Her unique style of interactive, site-integrated performance aims to highlight the historical and natural treasures of the local landscape and encourage new ways of experiencing and appreciating these places. She is an alumna of Stanford University, where she founded We Players in the spring of 2000. She holds a BA in a self-designed major: Ritual and Performance in Aesthetic Education, 2003. Since 2008, she has pioneered unique partnerships with both the National Park Service and the California State Park system, creating large-scale performances at park sites throughout the Bay Area. Inspired and guided by Shakespeare since her teenage years, Ava has explored many characters from the canon ranging from Juliet to Henry V, Mercutio to Lady Macbeth. In addition to her love of Shakespeare, classic literature, historic sites, crumbling buildings, and majestic natural landscapes, Ava likes espresso, salt spray and sunshine. She is a yoga teacher, a sailor, and in her next life, plans to live in the ocean.

**Amy Nowak (Performer)** is very pleased to be spending another summer with the We Players gang after last year's *Romeo & Juliet* adventure. Thanks for coming out!

**Anne Kelly (Production Stage Manager)** is thrilled to be joining We Players in her first production! Anne's background is in theatre and location-based entertainment. She has spent the last three years at Google, leading the design of Experience Centers, the physical spaces and interactive exhibits that serve Google's most important clients. Prior to that, she spearheaded the design of theme park attractions as a Show Producer for Walt Disney Imagineering. With her BA in Theatre Arts (Virginia Tech) and her master's degree in Entertainment Technology (Carnegie Mellon University), Anne is delighted to be back to the world of immersive theatre after a long hiatus.

**Lauren Anne Hewitt (Managing Director)** has served in the nonprofit arts sector for over 20 years. Lauren Anne provides We Players senior administrative management. She began her career as the Director of the Jon Sims Center for the Performing Arts in San Francisco, where she founded AIRspace, a new works residency program, and later produced a new opera, *Wuornos*, on the main stage at San Francisco's Yerba Buena Center for the Arts in 2001. As the past Development Director of Berkeley's Aurora Theatre, Lauren Anne headed up a capital campaign to fund the buildout of their Addison Street theatre and studios. As the Executive Director of EarPlay, she presented works by emerging Bay Area composers as well as established composers such as Andrew Imbrie and Lou Harrison. For nine years she served as the Managing Director of 42nd Street Moon, producing musicals and Salons from the Golden Age of Broadway, starring Broadway greats such as Rebecca Luker, Lea Delaria, and Brent Barrett. Most recently she served as the Managing Director of Berkeley Playhouse overseeing the company's professional season and conservatory. A fourth-generation Northern Californian from the Bay Area, Lauren Anne has a BA in Theatre from San Francisco State University and a Graduate Degree in Nonprofit Arts Administration from Golden Gate University.

# ON THE HORIZON

## Mother Lear

Autumn 2017

First premiered in autumn 2014, this new take on our distilled two-person King Lear features powerful female performers in a fraught mother-daughter relationship.

The mother is the monarch of her story and her imagination chooses the most epic death (Lear's) to emulate in her final hour; her caretaker daughter becomes Cordelia, Fool and a host of other voices, conducting her mother to her last breath.

Their story, one of the familiar and familial struggles of age, pride, regret, power-forgiveness and love, is played out through the incomparable text of Shakespeare's Lear. The piece invites us to explore our own relationship to mortality, death and loss - and how we might move from fear to acceptance.

Featuring Courtney Walsh (Mercutio in We Players' 2016 *Romeo & Juliet*) as 'Lear' and Artistic Director Ava Roy as 'Cordelia'.

## Summer Music Concert Series

### *Sites and Sounds*

A music concert and celebration  
November 2017

Charlie Gurke, We Players' composer and music director, brings together an ensemble of his favorite musical collaborators to perform arrangements and interpretations of music from the past seven (!) years of We Players productions. We'll take trips back to Ithaka and Illyria, to Denmark and Scotland and Verona - with selections ranging from *Hamlet on Alcatraz* (2010) to *Romeo & Juliet* (2016), and everything in between. Immediately following the concert, we'll open up the bar and dance floor in celebration of autumn and another year of site-integrated theatre adventures with We Players.

### *Canciones del Mar*

September 2017

Our fifth annual concert of sea-inspired music from Latin America, performed aboard the tall ship *Balclutha* at San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park. This concert brings together some spectacular Latin singer/songwriters including the glorious Diana Gameros and the astounding Edgardo Cambon. Don't miss this!



*Midsummer of Love* production sponsor:

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Dana Taylor

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If you would like to learn more about how to volunteer with or support We Players please contact us at [info@weplayers.org](mailto:info@weplayers.org), or call our Managing Director, Lauren Hewitt, at 510-710-5584

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