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SAN FRANCISCO SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL ANNOUNCES ARTISTIC DIRECTOR TRANSITION Artistic Director Rebecca J. Ennals to depart at end of 2022

San Francisco Shakespeare Festival announces that Artistic Director Rebecca J. Ennals will be leaving the company as of December 31, 2022.

Ennals has served as Artistic Director for over a decade, having assumed the role in 2012. She first joined the company in 2002 as a Marketing Assistant; her skills and talent were quickly recognized and a series of promotions and expanded responsibilities ensued. Ennals' accomplishments include launching the Festival's intern company; leading Pleasanton's youth theatre program, Civic Arts Stage Company; and participating in the New California Arts Fund cohort, expanding the role of community engagement within the organization. She directed eight of the Festival's Shakespeare on Tour productions and six Free Shakespeare in the Park productions, including a new musical adaptation of *As You Like It* in 2019 and a digital episode of SF Shakes' hybrid episodic version of *Pericles* in 2021. She also conceived and produced the pop-up Shakespeare projects "30 Days of Free Shakespeare in the Parklet" and "35 Famous Speeches in 35 Famous Places", celebrating milestone anniversaries of the Festival all over the city of San Francisco.

Ennals shares that her departure comes with mixed emotions: "I've worked here with some of the most amazing, inspiring, and beloved people in my life. In my tenure as Artistic Director, I have become a partner and a parent, and these new roles have reordered my priorities and made me consider carefully where I spend my time and energy." Ennals plans to spend some time reflecting and considering what's next: "I want to be able to define myself outside of this organization, and find a yet-undiscovered 'second act.'" She looks forward to more time writing, teaching, and directing as she steps back from full-time management.

Plans for an event in October to celebrate Ennals and the Festival's 40th anniversary are underway, and a search for SF Shakes' new Artistic Director has been launched - interested applicants are encouraged to apply via the [SF Shakes website](#). Though the position is open until filled, priority will be given to candidates who apply by August 8, 2022. The search is being conducted by a transition team comprised of Board Chair Cynthia Francis, Teaching Artist Evan Held, Executive Director Toby Leavitt, Resident Artist David Everett Moore, and Production Manager Pratiksha Shah; the team is supported by Robert Martin, of Aquarius Consulting.

The new Artistic Director will be a key participant in an upcoming strategic planning process. "Leadership change is an important step towards us becoming a more equitable and anti-racist organization." says Ennals. "My exit will create space for new voices in leadership and for a new

organizational structure, and it is my deep desire that this leadership reflects the diversity of the Bay Area and our stated values. I will do everything I can to set them up for success.”

Rebecca J. Ennals ([click for high resolution image](#))



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Note to Editor: For more information please email sfshakes@sfsakes.org or call 415-558-0888.

The mission of the San Francisco Shakespeare Festival is to make the words and themes of Shakespeare accessible to everyone, regardless of age, ethnicity, financial status, or level of education. San Francisco Shakespeare Festival is celebrating their **40th Anniversary of Free Shakespeare in the Park** this summer with a production of Shakespeare’s romantic comedy *Much Ado About Nothing*; performance schedule is as follows:

- July 23 - August 7; Fridays, Saturdays, & Sundays; 6:00 pm; Cupertino’s Memorial Park
- August 13 - 28; Saturdays & Sundays; 4:00 pm; Redwood City’s Red Morton Park
- September 3 - 11; Saturdays, Sundays, & Labor Day Monday; 2:00 pm; San Francisco’s McLaren Park