

LIZASTRATA



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Based on Aristophanes's *Lysistrata*
Adapted and directed by Matt Walker
Co-produced by Troubadour
Theater Company

September 9–October 2, 2021
Thursdays–Saturdays, 8:00 p.m.

Outdoor theater production
at the Getty Villa Museum

Getty



View of the Barbara and Lawrence Fleischman Theater and the entrance of the Getty Villa. Photo credit: Ellen M. Rosenbery

The performance is approximately 90 minutes long, without intermission.

This theater operates under an agreement between the League of Resident Theatres and Actors' Equity Association.

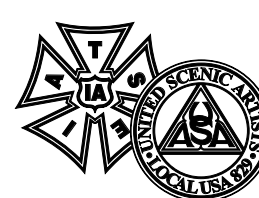
Director Matt Walker is a member of the Society of Stage Directors and Choreographers (SDC), an independent national labor union.



ACTORS'
EQUITY
ASSOCIATION 1913



The Director and Choreographer are members of
the **STAGE DIRECTORS AND CHOREOGRAPHERS
SOCIETY**, a national theatrical labor union.



The Designers at this Theatre
are Represented by
United Scenic Artists • Local USA 829
of the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees

LIZASTRATA

Based on Aristophanes's *Lysistrata*

Adapted and directed by Matt Walker

Co-produced by Troubadour Theater Company

The Cast (in order of appearance)

Matt Walker*

**Emcee/Lampito/
Magistrate**

Cloie Wyatt Taylor*

Lizastrata

L.T. Martinez

Calonice

Rick Batalla*

**Myrrhine/Spartan
Herald**

Suzanne Jolie

Ojai Amy/Reconciliation

Amanda Pajer*

**Karen/Chorus Leader/
Spartan Ambassador**

Jess Coffman*

Valley Deb/Wife

Beth Kennedy*

**Madge/Athena/Rodney/
Athenian Ambassador**

Michael Faulkner*

Chorus Leader

* Member of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

The Band

Dave Wright

Ryan Whyman

John Ballinger

Nick Stone

Banjo

Piano

**Guitar, Clarinet, Banjo
& Misc.**

Percussion

The Creative Team

Christopher Scott
Murillo**

Bo Tindell

Halei Parker **

Eric Heinly

Ryan Whyman

Alyssa Escalante*

Daniel Tator
Margaret Koldinger

Taylor Decker

Suzanne Jolie

Lily Bartenstein

Joe Seely

Benjamin Rapoport

Scenic Designer

Lighting Designer

Costume Designer

Music Supervisor

Music Director

**Production Stage
Manager**

Additional Sound

Costume Assistant

Wig Designer

Props designer

**Additional Phallus
Designer**

**Covid Compliance
Officer**

Matt Merchant

Assistant Director

Suzanne Jolie

Movement Consultants

L.T. Martinez

Jess Coffman

Corey Womack

Deck Supervisor

Bradford Barnes

Running crew

James Bane

Matt Merchant

Beth Kennedy

Troubadour Theater

Suzanne Jolie

Producers

Mike Sulprizio

Matt Walker

Erick Weiss

+ Member of SDC

** Member of USA

Museum Director's Letter

Welcome back to outdoor theater at the Getty Villa, an annual tradition that was put on hold last year along with all our in-person gatherings. This year's performance of *LIZASTRATA* marks Getty's return to in-person events, and we thank you for coming out and joining us this evening.

Aristophanes's *Lysistrata*, originally performed in Athens in 411 BCE, is the comedic account of the title character's one-woman mission to end the Peloponnesian War by denying the men of Greece the one thing they desired most—sex. The ever-persuasive Lysistrata convinces the women of the warring cities to withhold sex from their partners as a means of forcing peace negotiations, a strategy that ultimately inflames a battle between the sexes. Take this ancient comedy and set it to the music of Liza Minnelli, and you have the comedic genius that is the Troubadour Theater Company (aka Troubies).

Getty's history with the Troubies is a long one. You may recall their 2016 performance of *Haunted House Party* in this same venue, or one of their Theater Lab productions, well-loved plays set to the music of everyone from Elvis to ABBA. During Covid, they produced our first virtual program, *The ODDyssey*, Homer's epic tale in five webisodes. In each instance, the Troubies created memorable mashups in the way that only they can.

We're thrilled to welcome the Troubies back to the Getty Villa. Our hats off to Matt Walker and his troupe for having so brilliantly reinterpreted classic plays for modern audiences. I also acknowledge

and thank Dr. Amy Richlin, Distinguished Professor of Classics at UCLA, who served as this production's dramaturg, and Dr. Jeffrey Henderson, William Goodwin Aurelio Professor of Greek Language and Literature, Boston University, whose translation of *Lysistrata* is the foundation for tonight's production.

At Getty, I extend special thanks and appreciation to all those who work so diligently on making our annual outdoor theatrical production a success. Performances of ancient Greek and Roman plays have been at the core of our programming at the Getty Villa since 2006, and plays like *LIZASTRATA* are key to that tradition.

Following 18 months of social distancing, I hope the collective sound of laughter this evening will be a welcome return to life as we once knew it.

—Timothy Potts

Director's Note

Excited to embark on the deliciously decadent ancient comedy by Aristophanes, we convened at the Getty Villa for our first day of developmental rehearsal on March 14, 2020.

The next day the world shut down.

The Getty Villa Public Programs team was splendidly resilient and forward-thinking, and by April we were producing a [virtual web series](#) based on *The Odyssey*.

And while the Zoom-style sandbox was a blessing and a haven, the vacuum was palpable—no audience laughing and groaning. Not ideal for a live theater company celebrating its 25th birthday (est. 1995).

During that time, I sat with *Lysistrata* and its many translations, iterations, remakes, re-dos, updates, derivatives, and knockoffs, and realized we were attempting to scale the Everest of Ancient Comedies—an apt phallic metaphor. If YouTube is any indicator, *Lysistrata* is the most produced play in the history of colleges and universities—I imagine because it gives the hormones an outlet.

The themes of companionship, community, and cooperation shone through the debaucherously depraved comic premise, and I found myself loving the play not for its outrageousness, but for its simple message. Make love, not war.

What I couldn't know was how much more relevant the material would become.

On January 4th of this year, I was discussing how we might achieve an actor-friendly smoke effect for Aristophanes's original chorus scene where the men *storm the capitol*.

Two days later the Capitol riot in Washington, DC, happened.

This archaic play about a divided country seemed to be saying, "Where we *were* is very much where we *are*." And I was reminded of Shakespeare, who wrote that theater holds "the mirror up to nature."

In the time of cancel culture, I'm sure there's plenty to get riled up about when it comes to this piece and our adaptation of it. But for theater artists, that's old hat. Theater checks our societies and reflects our collective mind, however dirty. Public performance reminds us to laugh at ourselves, and in times of stress to picture everyone in their underwear. (We've got that covered, or un-covered, as the case may be.)

We've had enormous fun mashing-up the musical works of Ms. Minnelli and adopting her wonderfully whimsical and famously flamboyant style. But the salacious source material initially seemed fraught with peril.

I wasn't convinced we were the company to tackle a ribald and raunchy play with genitalia jokes that are thousands of years old...even though we're the trope troupe.

Typically, the Troubies offer family fare. We don't swear, we don't get naked, and we generally don't mate in public. But we've been cooped up for a

while. So, for our 26th birthday we're breaking out our birthday suits.

We encourage you: If something's funny, *laugh*. When something's distasteful, groan. We missed that.

With *LIZASTRATA* the Troubies hold the mirror up to nature...but it's a funhouse mirror, and it's on the ceiling over the bed.

About the Play

What was Greek comedy *for*? Its obscenity and gender-bending made people laugh and sold the writers' political critiques during the darkest days of Athens.

Lysistrata: the name means "Disbander of Armies" and belongs to the title character, an Athenian who organizes a sex strike by the women of Greece to persuade their husbands to end the war between Athens and Sparta. Sitting in the front row at the play's debut performance in 411 BCE was Lysimache, priestess of Athena Polias, the city's guardian goddess; maybe the star of the show was a nod to her.

On the surface, then, the play is not only anti-war, it also empowers women. However, like all Aristophanes's plays, *Lysistrata* has plenty of nasty things to say about women—that they're big drinkers, promiscuous, sneaky—and, in the climactic scene, a naked woman is brought onstage to represent "Reconciliation" and the men take turns dividing up her body as if it were the map of Greece. Moreover, this character (probably) and all the rest of the women onstage (certainly) were played by men, and Aristophanes used this same kind of comic drag in two of his other plays: no women here at all.

And yet, in both those plays, characters cross-dress, so you have male actors playing women who dress up as men, and male actors playing men who dress up as women, so that the explosion of gender itself is what takes center stage. Meanwhile, the Peloponnesian War had been going on for 20 years; people in Athens were hungry, crowded into impro-

vised shelters, mourning the loss of kin in battle. The anti-war message must have struck home, as must have the loving reconciliation that ends the play and the beautiful hymn to Sparta's guardian goddess Artemis. How did that play in Athens? Seven years later, Sparta would win the war and the Athenian democracy would begin to die.

At the start of the 20th century the play appeared in London as a naughty book in two limited editions, with illustrations by Aubrey Beardsley (1926) and his great follower, Jean de Bosschère (1928). By the 1970s, it was available in cheap paperback editions for use in college teaching. In the 21st century, it re-entered political life with The Lysistrata Project, brainchild of actors Kathryn Blume and Sharon Bower, who coordinated a worldwide reading of the play that took place on March 3, 2003, to protest war between the US and Iraq. In that same year, the Second Liberian Civil War ended with help from Women of Liberia Mass Action for Peace, organized by Leymah Gbowee, Tawakkul Karman, and Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, who won the Nobel Peace Prize in 2011. Their protests included a sex strike, inspiring the new Lysistrata at the center of Spike Lee's 2015 film *Chi-Raq*, whose goal was ending gun violence in Chicago. In 2013, Getty staged Eduardo Machado's play *Lysistrata Unbound*, starring Apollo Dukakis and Olympia Dukakis, a *Lysistrata* prequel that took war's destruction seriously. All these performances harnessed the power of comedy to make a serious point—just what Aristophanes intended.

—Amy Richlin, Distinguished Professor of Classics,
UCLA

About the Company

The Troubadour Theater Company is a free-wheeling, no-holds-barred, commedia dell'arte-flavored, slapstick-driven, Los Angeles-based ensemble of actors, musicians, and comedians that has been performing for audiences throughout Southern California and beyond since 1995. The Troubies' fast-paced, laugh-filled, loose musical adaptations (some of the lines are still there) of classic plays, literature, television specials, and film, as well as their original productions and hilarious sketch material, make this company a unique and exciting experience for theatergoers of any age.

The Troubies have been in residence at the Villa many times. In the summer of 2020 they premiered *The ODDyssey*, Homer's epic tale in five webisodes, offering a wild retelling of Odysseus's adventure for audiences of all ages on Getty's YouTube channel. Other performances include the 2016 outdoor theater performance *Haunted House Party*, a hilarious adaptation blending music, comedy, and circus-style performance based on Plautus's Roman comedy *Mostellaria*; and three Theater Lab comedies: *Oedipus: The King, Mama!* in 2009, a musical parody that mashes up the Greek tragedy with the music of Elvis Presley; *For the Birds* in 2011, based on Aristophanes's feathery utopian comedy; and *ABBAMEMNON* in 2014, a physical and musical romp, set to the music of ABBA, featuring one of the most famous dysfunctional ancient Greek families.

For more information on the Troubies or details on how to donate to this growing troupe, please visit www.troubie.com.

About the Cast



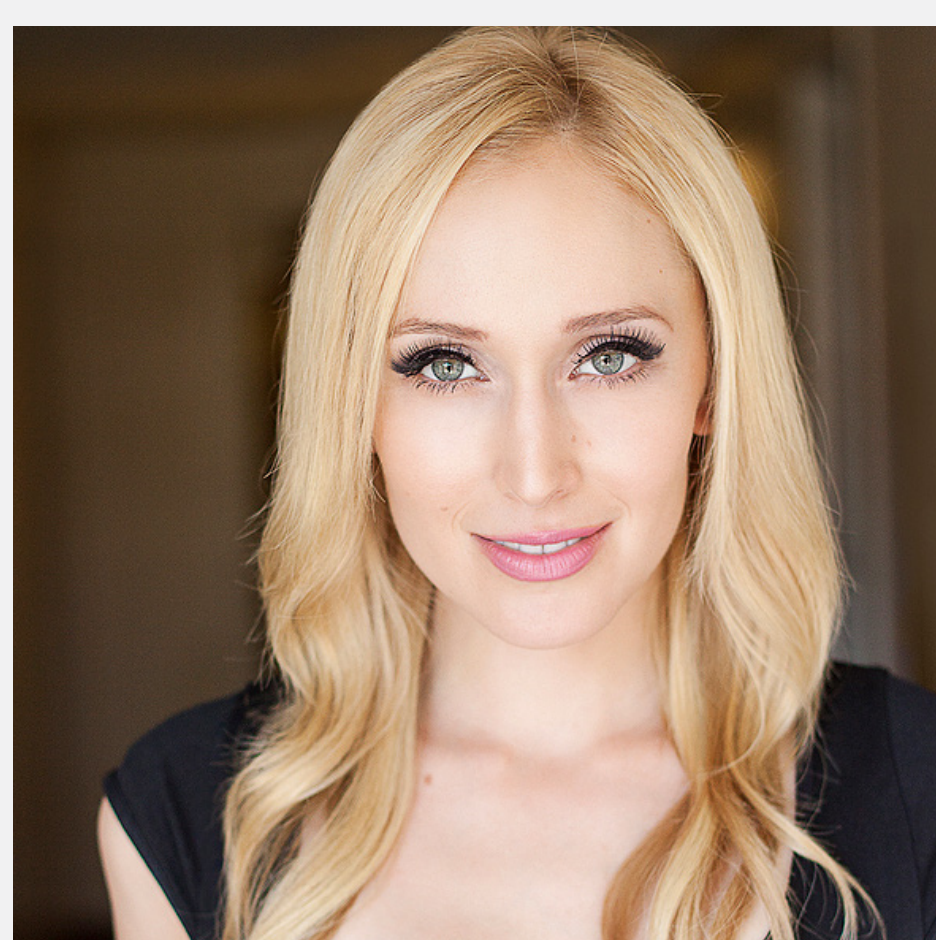
Rick Batalla is an award-winning performer, writer, and director for television, film, and theater, and one of the founders of the Troubadour Theater Company. Rick studied with the creator of the Groundlings in Los Angeles, and at the Second City. He has been a series regular on shows like CBS's *Payne*, ABC's *True Love*, and TBS's *Dinner and a Movie*, where he also was the writer and director. He just finished filming Aaron Sorkin's *Being the Ricardos* with Nicole Kidman, which will be released early 2022.



Jess Coffman has performed with Tuacahn Amphitheater in *Aladdin*, *Hairspray*, *The Sound of Music*, *The Little Mermaid*, and Disney's *When You Wish*; Sacramento Music Circus in *West Side Story*; Alabama Shakespeare Festival in *Mary Poppins*; The Troubadour Theater Company in *The Year Without a Santana Claus*; The National Tour of *Hooray for Hollywood*; the Disney Dream cruise ship; and Transcendence Theatre Company. Jess had her professional directing/choreography debut with Transcendence this summer with the premiere production of *Road Trip*.



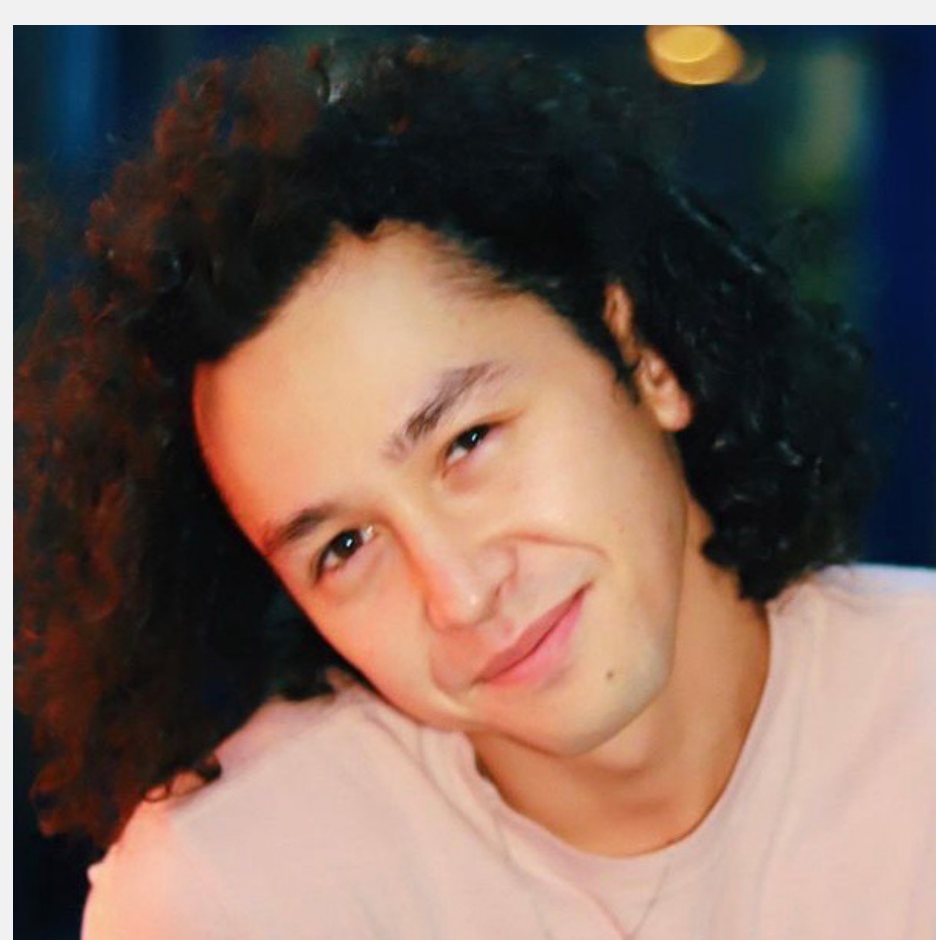
Michael Faulkner: “Best Shakespeare Performance 2012,” by StageScene LA (Malvolio). Recent film credits: *Stoker Hills*, *Proximity*, *Freakin’ Weekend*. Previous Troubie shows: *The ODDyssey*, *Haunted House Party*. Other theater: Reduced Shakespeare Company (20-year member), Geffen Playhouse, South Coast Repertory, Kingsmen Shakespeare Festival, the Kennedy Center, A Noise Within, MainStreet Theater, Parson’s Nose Theater. Also a Banana Slug (UCSC) and half of the music duo Mike and Mandy.



Suzanne Jolie was last seen in the Getty Villa outdoor theater production *Haunted House Party* (Ovation nomination, ensemble). Other works with the Villa: *Roman Holidays* and *The ODDyessy*. She has performed in *La Rondine & Eugene Onegin* (Los Angeles Opera), *Symphonie Fantastique* (LA Phil), and at the Laguna Playhouse, Segerstrom Center for the Arts, and Walt Disney Concert Hall.



Beth Kennedy is a long-standing member of the Troubies, performing in and producing over 30 productions. She is the recipient of multiple Ovation, LA Drama Critics Circle, and Backstage awards. She was last seen in the Getty Villa's production of *Haunted House Party* and the 2020 virtual offering of *The ODDyssey*. "Glad to be back in the flesh...and then some!"



L.T. Martinez is a performing artist, filmmaker, and arts educator from Whittier, California, with a deep passion for music and film production as well as a not-so-secret affinity for pointing and/or flexing his toes. He is an alumnus of the Emerging Leaders of Color program with the Western States Arts Federation, and CEO of CASA ALTA, LLC.



Amanda Pajer: “Best Production in a Large Theater” Ovation Nomination: *A Wrinkle in Time* (Mom, Mrs. Who, Aunt Beast, IT). Film/TV: *Curb Your Enthusiasm*, *The Nowhere Inn*, *Freakin’ Weekend*. Previously with the Troubies: *The ODDyssey*, *Roman Holidays*. Other theater: Porthouse Theatre, Chicago Dramatists, ShawChicago, Buffalo Theatre Ensemble, Organic Theatre, Artistic Home, Grove Theatre Center, MainStreet Theatre, Parson’s Nose, South Coast Repertory, and half of music duo Mike and Mandy.



Cloie Wyatt Taylor is thrilled to be back on stage with the Troubies AND at the lovely Getty Villa. A New York University Tisch alum, her past credits include *Future Man*, the final season of *Shameless*, and the role of “Vikki” in *Partners in Rhyme*—the fun new sitcom starring legendary rapper MC Lyte.



Matt Walker: As artistic director of the Troubadour Theater Company since 1995, Matt has directed over 40 original productions and been honored with the Orange County Weekly Theater Award for Career Achievement, the Los Angeles Drama Critics Circle award for Sustained Excellence in Theater, the Los Angeles Drama Critics Circle's Joel Hirschhorn award for Outstanding Achievement in Musical Theater, and nine Ovation awards. Matt would like to thank the cast, crew, band, and Getty staff for their hard work and belief throughout this process. Matt sends the most special thank you to his most special collaborator, his partner Suzanne.

About the Creative Team

Matt Walker (Artistic Director, see cast bio)

Amy Richlin (Dramaturg) is professor of classics at UCLA, where she teaches undergraduate and graduate courses on ancient comedy. Her work includes translations (*Rome and the Mysterious Orient: Three Plays by Plautus*, University of California Press, 2005) and the book *Slave Theater in the Roman Republic: Plautus and Popular Comedy* (Cambridge University Press, 2016). In 2007 she served as consultant on the Getty Villa production of Plautus's *Rudens*.

Beth Kennedy (Producer, see cast bio)

Bo Tindell (Lighting Designer) is a freelance lighting designer based in Los Angeles and is very excited to be back working again with the Troubies after previously designing *Julius Weezer*. Regional designer credits: San Diego Repertory Theatre, Tuacahn Center for the Arts, Greenway Court Theatre, Berkeley Playhouse, NY Fringe, Circle X Theatre Co., Couerage Theatre, The TRIP, Ubuntu Theatre Co., and La Jolla Playhouse.

Christopher Scott Murillo (Scenic Designer) is a scenic designer, artist, and educator based in Los Angeles. He is thrilled to be working with the Troubies at the Getty Villa once again. Christopher is a member of United Scenic Artists, Local USA 829. Additionally, Christopher is an assistant professor of theater arts at Loyola Marymount University. He is a 2016 recipient of the Princess Grace Foundation Theater Fellowship, Pierre Cardin Award.

Corey L. Womack (Deck Supervisor), deck manager, associate production manager (Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Circus: North American Tour); production stage manager (Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Circus: North American Tour, Walt Disney Television, Rockwell Table & Stage, Disneyland Resort, Troubadour Theater Company, Avalon Hollywood, King King Hollywood, Japanese American Cultural & Community Center); set supervisor (Dakota Pictures).

Eric Heinly (Music Supervisor) has been a musician, drummer, and music contractor for more than 30 years and is proud to be a long-time member of the Troubadour Theater Company. This will be his 40th Troubie production. Awards: LA Drama Critics Circle and Garland awards for: *A Wither's Tale* and *JACKson FROST*. Ovation nominations for Best Musical Direction: *A Christmas Westside Story*, *Two Gentlemen of Chicago*, *A Wither's Tale*, *Alice in One-hit Wonderland 2*, and *As U2 Like it*.

Ryan Whyman (Music Director) is a seasoned pianist and composer from Los Angeles, and has made a living performing and recording with various artists and ensembles over the last decade. As a composer, he writes regularly for film, TV, and video games. Ryan released his debut album, *Fantasies & Memories*, in 2019, and expects to release another album in 2022.

Halei Parker (Costume Designer) is an Ovation-nominated costume designer in Los Angeles who works in live events and film. Recently, Parker designed for the LA Phil at the Walt Disney Concert Hall, East West Players and the Japanese American Cultural and Community Center, and several family events at the Getty Villa.

Jess Coffman (Movement Consultant, see cast bio)

Joe Seely (Additional Phallus Designer) is an award-winning actor/designer. His masks and puppets have appeared internationally and locally with Center Theater Group, LACMA, REDCAT, professional ballet companies, and countless other smaller theaters throughout Los Angeles. This is his third foray with the Troubadours (“Thanks Matt Walker!”). In September he will perform with the Gawdafful National Theater at the Lab in San Francisco.

Suzanne Jolie (Wig Designer, Movement Consultant, see cast bio)

Lily Bartenstein (Props Designer) is a multidisciplinary designer for theater and live performance based in Los Angeles. In addition to props, her work includes scenic, video, and lighting design. With the Troubies: *A Christmas Carole King* (props), *The Year Without a Santana Claus* (props), *Little Drummer Bowie* (props). Other work: *Red Ink* (scenic and video design, Playwrights’ Arena), and *The Tale of Turandot* (video design, the Imagine Project).

Alyssa Escalante (Production Stage Manager) is a Los Angeles-based Equity stage manager. At the Getty Villa her credits include *Bacchae* (SITI Company), *The Haunted House Party* (The Troubadour Theater Company), and *Mojada; A Medea in Los Angeles* (Boston Court, Pasadena). She has credits across the Southern California region including South Coast Repertory, Pasadena Playhouse, East West Players, and San Diego Repertory.

Special Thanks: Lynn Batalla, Shelby Brown, Ralph Flores, Jeffrey Henderson, Laurel Kishi, Heather Leisey, Sharon McGunigle (for past Troubie costume treasures!), Jeff McLaughlin, Jeannette & Peter Narbonne, Amy Richlin, Nancy Walker, Eddy Will, Adrienne Wohleen, Anna Woo.

As a courtesy to our neighbors, we ask that you keep noise to a minimum while enjoying the production. Please refrain from unnecessarily loud or prolonged applause, shouting, whistling, or any other intrusive conduct during the performance. While exiting the theater and the Getty Villa, please do so quietly.

Performance at the Getty Villa

The Getty Villa's public programming enhances the experience of the ancient world by offering a diverse schedule of events anchored by an innovative theater program. Live performances of classical drama offer insight into the social, cultural, and political realities of life in ancient Greece and Rome. The J. Paul Getty Museum's permanent collection of antiquities, alongside its changing exhibitions, strengthens the connection between modern audiences and the stories enacted in the tragedies and comedies onstage.

Classical dramatists explored basic human stories that often parallel our contemporary experiences. Ancient plays are ever-powerful and resonant, continuing to inspire reinterpretation. The Villa Theater Lab series, presented throughout the year in the Auditorium, fosters experimental and modern approaches to ancient stories, enabling directors, designers, musicians, playwrights, and actors to freely incorporate advanced stage, sound, and visual elements into productions developed in residence at the Villa.

Each September a major production is commissioned and presented in the Barbara and Lawrence Fleischman Theater, an outdoor performance space based on ancient prototypes. These performances have become a much-anticipated annual tradition for Museum audiences. *LIZASTRATA* is the 15th annual play to be presented in this dramatic setting.

To receive information about Getty Museum exhibitions, performances, and lecture events, please sign up for the weekly newsletter at getty.edu/subscribe.

Next Year at the Getty Villa

Oedipus Tyrannus

By Sophocles

Directed by Jenny Koons

Co-produced by Deaf West Theater

This reimagined take on Sophocles's classic features a bilingual production in American Sign Language and spoken English, by Los Angeles's Tony Award-winning Deaf West Theatre. Through this staging, Oedipus is confronted not only with legacy and destiny, but also culture and language as he uncovers the multiple truths of his journey.

The Barbara and Lawrence Fleischman Theater Staff

Public Programs Head

Laurel Kishi

Sr. Project Specialist

Ralph Flores

Sr. Public Programs Coordinator

Anna Woo

Sr. Education Specialist

Shelby Brown

Technical Coordinator

Adrienne Wohleen,
Production and Special
Events Services

Technical Production

Heather Alvear, Chris
Jeong, Marvin Jones,
and Bill King

Getty Villa Events

Heather Leisy, Ashley
Hayes

Public Programs Intern

Jocelyn Soriano

Previous Outdoor Theater Productions

- 2006 *Hippoytos* – Euripides
Directed by Stephen Sachs
- 2007 *Tug of War* (based on *Rudens*) – Plautus
Directed by Meryl Friedman
- 2008 *Agamemnon* – Aeschylus
Directed by Stephen Wadsworth
- 2009 *Peace* – Aristophanes
Directed by Bill Rauch
- 2010 *Elektra* – Sophocles
Directed by Carey Perloff
- 2011 *Trojan Women* (after Euripides) – Euripides
Directed by Anne Bogart
- 2012 *Helen* – Euripides
Directed by Jon Lawrence Rivera
- 2013 *Prometheus Bound* – attributed to Aeschylus
Directed by Travis Preston
- 2014 *Persians* – Aeschylus
Directed by Anne Bogart
- 2015 *Mojada: A Medea in Los Angeles* – Euripides
Directed by Jessica Kubzansky
- 2016 *Haunted House Party* (based on *Mostellaria*) – Plautus
Directed by Matt Walker
- 2017 *Iphigenia in Aulis* – Euripides
Directed by Charles Newell
- 2018 *Bacchae* – Euripides
Directed by Anne Bogart
- 2019 *The Heal* (based on *Philoctetes*) – Sophocles
Directed by Aaron Posner

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