

AFRICAN-AMERICAN
SHAKESPEARE COMPANY
"Envisioning the Classics With Color"



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**AFRICAN-AMERICAN SHAKESPEARE COMPANY ANNOUNCES
NEW ARTISTIC DIRECTOR**

SAN FRANCISCO, Calif. (18 October 2009) – San Francisco's **African-American Shakespeare Company** announced today the appointment of **L. Peter Callender** as Artistic Director. Callender has worked professionally as an actor, writer, and director for over 30 years. He received his formal training in theater at the Juilliard School in New York City, and has appeared on Broadway, off-Broadway, and in regional theaters across the United States and abroad. An associate artist at California Shakespeare Theater, Callender's Bay Area and regional credits include roles at Berkeley Repertory Theater, Aurora Theatre Company, American Conservatory Theater, Lorraine Hansberry Theater, Magic Theater, Cincinnati Playhouse, and Arena Stage, among others. Callender officially begins his duties as African-American Shakespeare Company's Artistic Director in May 2010.

"We are ecstatic to have Peter Callender as our new Artistic Director," said Sherri Young, African-American Shakespeare Company Executive Director. "Peter is an established artist in the Bay Area and on a national level. He is passionate about Shakespeare and he maintains a demand for quality and excellence while balancing a nurturing approach to developing emerging theater artists. He is exactly the right fit for the continued growth and success of African-American Shakespeare Company."

"We are so pleased to add Peter to our family," said Board president Terry Copeland. "His creativity and passion mirror that of the African-American Shakespeare Company. We have a unique opportunity with Peter and look forward to taking the company to the next level with him. Watch us grow!"

“I am thrilled to join African-American Shakespeare Company at this pivotal moment in its history,” said incoming Artistic Director L. Peter Callender. “I look forward to working with Sherri and the Board to further our mission to create provocative, dynamic productions of classic plays that celebrate the rich diversity of Bay Area audiences and artists. I eagerly anticipate renewed collaboration and dialogue with other Bay Area theaters and the community at large.”

African-American Shakespeare Company opens its 15th anniversary season in December with a dazzling, soulful holiday production of **CINDERELLA** (December 10-27). Closing the season in March is a powerful modern-day interpretation of Shakespeare’s **OTHELLO** (March 12-28). For more information about African-American Shakespeare Company, or for tickets to upcoming productions, the public can call **1-800-838-3006** or visit **www.African-AmericanShakes.org**.

African-American Shakespeare Company was introduced in 1994 to create an opportunity and a venue for actors of color to hone their skills and talent in mastering some of the world’s greatest classical roles. Additionally, the company seeks to unlock the realm of classic theatre and these time-favored works to a diverse audience in a style that reaches out to, speaks to, and embraces their cultural aesthetic and identity. African-American Shakespeare has produced over 30 productions, toured to 97 schools, and reached over 105,000 patrons through its mainstage productions and arts education program.

African-American Shakespeare Company is funded in part by Zellerbach Family Fund, The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, Grants for the Arts/SF Hotel Tax Fund, San Francisco Foundation, the California Arts Council, a state agency, and the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency.

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