



THEATRE RHINOCEROS & TJPA PRESENT

PRODUCED BY & IN MEMORY OF IRA KURLANDER

OTHELLO

BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

ADAPTED & DIRECTED BY JOHN FISHER

FUNDING PROVIDED BY



THE
EAST
CUT

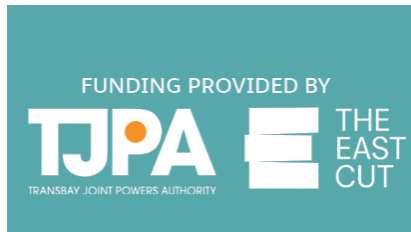
SEPTEMBER 26-28 **RSVP: theRhino.org**

TJPA's Salesforce Park • 425 Mission St, SF • Starts at Amphitheater

AMERICA'S PREMIER AND LONGEST-RUNNING QUEER THEATRE • JOHN FISHER, EXECUTIVE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

From the Executive Artistic Director

Shakespeare's *Othello* is the most domestic of his tragedies. It is the story of marriages. It has not nearly the sweep of *Lear*, the bloodthirstiness of *The Scottish Play*, the philosophizing and scope of *Hamlet*. Yet it is vicious, mean spirited, and savage, in a domestic setting. In our production, it further becomes an indictment of the double standards imposed by men on women. And no men are absolved from this judgment for, in this case, all the men are gay/queer/bi. *Othello* is also a journey – across the Mediterranean, across a huge facility, from light into darkness. So, though it is essentially the tale of marriages (thus domestic), our production speaks to larger problems and sojourns (thus universal). We hope you enjoy the show. – *John Fisher*



Land Acknowledgement

The Bay Area is the homeland of the Multiple Ohlone Tribes, including the Ramaytush in San Francisco, where we are right now. Despite the atrocities of colonization and genocide, these Native communities persist today and are active in efforts to preserve and revive their culture. We are committed to educating ourselves about land theft and supporting and celebrating the Native communities who call these lands home.

**Theatre Rhinoceros & TJPA
present**

produced by and in memory of Ira Kurlander

OTHELLO

by William Shakespeare

adapted & directed by John Fisher

Producers John Fisher, Crystal Liu
Producing Partner Transbay Joint Powers Authority & The East Cut
Production Manager Crystal Liu
Stage Manager Isaac Traister
Assistant Stage Manager..... Raye Goh
Intimacy Director & Fight Safety Consultant..... Bessie Zolno
Sound Design Isaac Traister
Costume Design Lynell Aldafari
Props Design Crystal Liu
Production Crew Little Boxes Theater
Production Photography..... Aaron Simunovich, Christina Linskey
Promotional Photography..... Scott Sidorsky
Production Video... Lawrence Dillon
Volunteer Coordinator Chris Mancini
Assistant Crew..... Allan Paisley, Jeremy Laurin
Marketing/Box Office/Program Crystal Liu
Web..... Raphael Buenaventura
Website Design... Scott Sidorsky

Special thanks to Little Boxes Theater, James Kirby, Nick Rojas, the staff at TJPA/BRV, Desired Effect, and, as always, Michael Sherrod-Flores.

Othello is approximately 1 hour and 45 minutes in length and is performed without intermission.

First Theatre Rhinoceros Performance: Friday, September 26, 2025.

Theatre Rhinoceros' production of *Othello* is made possible with generous support from TJPA & The East Cut, Grants for the Arts, and San Francisco Arts Commission. We are grateful to them for their support and the theatre they have made possible tonight.

Cast

John Fisher	Iago
Erica Flor	Emilia
Taryn Hannigan	Bianca
John-Thomas Hanson	Duke of Venice, Lodovico, Clown
Christian Jimenez	Cassio
Rachel Ka’iulani Kennealy	Desdemona
Zolboo Namkhaidorj	Musician, Cop, Understudy
Ma’Sherrod Swinson	Roderigo, Understudy - Othello
Denise Tyrrell.....	Brabantio, Montano, Gratiano
Dedrick Weathersby	Othello
Raye Goh	Understudy

Time

Now & Then

Place

Here & There

Who's Who

LYNELL ALDAFARI (Costume Designer) is a visionary fashion designer and CEO of SwaggCreator, a cutting-edge brand known for its bold designs and trendsetting style. As a leader in the contemporary fashion industry, Lynell pushes boundaries, crafting collections that inspire confidence and self-expression, redefining what it means to make a statement in the world of fashion. In addition to designing for the theatre, Lynell also styles for music videos and film. Lynell previously designed costumes for *Gumiho*, *Cabaret*, and *Group Therapy* for Theatre Rhinoceros.

JOHN FISHER (Director, "Iago") enjoyed an eight-month run of his show *A History of World War II* at The Marsh, after playing two successful runs of the show in Manhattan (United Solo Festival/Theatre Row – Best Actor Award – and Pangea Performance Venue) and another in Los Angeles (The Broadwater). He is a two-time winner of the Will Glickman Playwright Award, as well as being a recipient of the GLAAD Media Award, the Theatre Bay Area Award, two Cable Car Awards, The Bay Guardian Goldie Award, the BackStage West Garland Award, and ten Critics' Circle Awards. His plays include the award-winning *Action Hero*, *Shakespeare Goes to War*, *To Sleep and Dream*, *Combat!*, and *Medea*, *The Musical*, recently performed in a successful run Off-Broadway in NYC. He has numerous Off and Off-Off Broadway credits and recently performed his solo-show *Little League* at Grant's Tomb in Manhattan.

ERICA FLOR ("Emilia") is ecstatic for her Theatre Rhinoceros debut! Favorite roles include Beatrice in *Much Ado About Nothing* (Bard Theatre SF), Lois Lipstick in *The Speakeasy: Age of Scofflaws* (Boxcar Theatre Co.), Nina in *Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike* (Pacifica Spindrift Players), Stephano and Antonio in *The Tempest* (Inferno Theatre), Lady Macduff and Witch in *Macbeth* and Judith in *Equivocation* (directed by Irwin Appel). A grateful graduate of UC Santa Barbara's BFA program, Erica is most proud of her solo show about murderess Erzsebet Bathory, *Bloody Beautiful*, as well as her two-woman show about the UK's "fake penis trial" of 2013, *Strap-On*. You can see her next in Into the Dark Productions' *Terror Vault: Hexed* at the San Francisco Mint, as well as every last Saturday of the month as part of The Bawdy Caste's shadow cast of *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*! Thanks to my fellow cast, wonderful crew, Mom, Dad, Erin & Bailey (the goodest boy). IG: @ericacflor. www.ericacflor.com.

RAYE GOH (Assistant Stage Manager, Understudy) joined The Rhino family in 2023 as stage manager for *The Rita Hayworth of This Generation*. They are a queer and neuroqueering Asian American performer who was born and raised in San Francisco, the unceded homeland of the Ramaytush Ohlone peoples. They have performed in dance productions with Kruciaal Element Dance Company in San Diego and OngDance Company in the Bay Area. Raye's theatre journey began with stage managing John Fisher's *The History of World War II*, and they are gratefully embarking on a continuing adventure with Theatre Rhinoceros.

TARYN HANNIGAN ("Bianca") was born and raised in the Bay Area and is excited to be part of the arts community once again! She grew up performing and training with

organizations such as Studio A Dance, Peter Pan Foundation, Diablo Valley College, and many more. After graduating from Chapman University, she spent several years performing with theme parks in Shanghai and Tokyo. She was most recently seen in *Murder on the Dance Floor* with Plethos Productions. This is Taryn's first production with Theatre Rhinoceros, and she's had much more fun performing Shakespeare than reading it in English class! IG: @tarynhannigan.

JOHN-THOMAS HANSON ("Duke of Venice, Lodovico, Clown") programmed robots at a large biotech company in a previous life. After escaping in 2015, he returned to school to earn his MFA in Musical Theatre from Notre Dame de Namur University and train at the American Conservatory Theater in San Francisco. Favorite roles include VP Douglas Panch (*Spelling Bee*/ Landmark Musicals), Mal Beineke (*The Addams Family*/ Coastal Repertory Theatre), and Banquo (*Macbeth*/ Theatre Rhinoceros). When not being dramatic, John-Thomas is a certified yoga and meditation instructor, an uncertified hippie, an adventurous world traveler, a decent cruciverbalist, a multi-disciplined volunteer, and a master at the art of coddwompling.

CHRISTIAN JIMENEZ ("Cassio") is an actor and playwright from San Francisco and a graduate of the Ruth Asawa School of the Arts' Theatre Department. Jimenez is excited to return to Theatre Rhinoceros, where he last appeared in *The Laramie Project*. Regional credits include American Conservatory Theater (*Measure for Measure*, *Julius Caesar*), California Shakespeare Theater (*As You Like It*), Word for Word/Z Space (*Citizen*), Oakland Public Theater (*Inventory: James Baldwin*), SF Youth Theatre (*Fantasmias*), Sausalito Shakes (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*), Theatre Lunático (*Romeo and Juliet*), SFBATCO (*Sign My Name to Freedom*), and Teatro De Las Tías (*Two Sisters and a Piano*). He is represented by JE Talent.

RACHEL KA'IULANI KENNEALY ("Desdemona") is an East Bay-based actor, director, and teaching artist, and happy to make her Rhino debut. Training: BA, UCLA. Some credits: Viola in *Shakespeare in Love* (NTC), Puck in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Curtain Theatre), and Katherine in *The Taming of the Shrew* (UCLA). Rachel would like to thank her husband and two kitties for their unwavering love and support. IG: @kai_kenn. www.rachelkennealy.com.

CHRIS MANCINI (Volunteer Coordinator) is a seasoned digital marketing executive with a strong background in technology and a lifelong passion for theater. As Chief Growth Officer at Study.com, he leads efforts to make quality education more accessible and affordable. Prior to this, Chris held marketing and leadership roles across the Bay Area, driving growth and innovation at several tech companies. Though he earned a Pharmacy degree from Duquesne University, it was there he discovered his love for theater—acting, stage managing, and serving in leadership roles with the Red Masquers, the oldest theater troupe in Pennsylvania. That experience sparked a creative passion that still fuels him today. Chris recently joined the Board of Directors at Theatre Rhinoceros and is thrilled to support its mission. A thirty-year resident of the Castro, he tries to blend his professional background with creative energy.

ZOLBOO NAMKHAIDORJ (“Musician, Cop, Understudy”) is a queer Mongolian American actor, writer, teaching artist and creative based in San Francisco. She is excited and humbled to be returning to Theatre Rhinoceros. She looks forward to creating more connections that lead to meaningful, creative collaboration and the downfall of imperialism. In her spare time, she enjoys exploring all that the Bay Area has to offer, dancing and trying new things.

MA'SHERROD SWINSON (“Roderigo, Understudy - Othello”) is an actor and model based in San Francisco, California and happy to make his Rhino debut. Ma'Sherrod has had a love for the arts since he was 4 years old and is now living his dream of acting, having begun his acting journey in 2022. Ma'Sherrod's favorite things to do in his spare time are working out and cooking; he makes a mean Cajun shrimp over rice.

ISAAC TRAISTER (Stage Manager) is thrilled to be returning to Theatre Rhinoceros. Previously he stage managed *Cabaret*, *A Guide for the Homesick*, *BAD HOMBRES*, *How Black Mothers Say I Love You*, *At the Wake of a Dead Drag Queen*, *The Normal Heart*, *Transitions*, *DareBnB* and *Sister Act* with Rhino. Isaac has also worked backstage with various companies throughout the Bay Area.

DENISE TYRRELL (“Brabantio, Montano, Gratiano”) re-entered the theatrical world after a public affairs and executive career spanning over 30 years. Local credits include: Jonathon Spector’s *Best Available* at Shotgun Players, *Reciprocating Pumps* by Dirk Alphin at The Marsh, *Macbeth* at TJPA’s Salesforce Park by Theatre Rhinoceros, Nathaniel Robert’s *Genesis* at Project Artaud, Edward Albee’s *Occupant* at the Embarcadero, and Will Eno’s *The Realistic Jones* by Too Soon Old Productions and Caryl Churchill’s *Here We Go* for Anton’s Well Theatre Company in Berkeley. Denise spent a year abroad at The Royal Academy of Dramatic Arts in London and has locally studied with Susan-Jane Harrison and Jonathon Moscone at Berkeley Rep.

DEDRICK WEATHERSBY (“Othello”), Emmy Award-winner for Best Interview Discussion with *Theatre Corner* on PBS/KPBS. A Broadway World Award-winner for Best Lead Actor in a Musical. Favorite roles: Regional/Tour: *Dreamgirls* (James “Thunder” Early); *Ragtime* (Coalhouse Walker, Jr.); *Rent* (Angel); *In the Heights* (Benny); *Hairspray* (Seaweed); *The Fantasticks* (El Gallo); *The Music Man* (Harold Hill); *Much Ado About Nothing* (Don Pedro); *The Mountaintop* (Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.); *Remembering James – The Life and Music of James Brown* (James Brown), *Cabaret* (Emcee), *The Scottsboro Boys* (Clarence/Haywood u/s), *A Soldier's Play* (Capt. Davenport) and currently touring his new musical *Tutti Frutti – The Life and Music of Little Richard*. He is thrilled to be making his Theatre Rhinoceros debut. All Praises Goes to God for His undeniable Favor and Grace! IG: @dedrickweathersby. www.dedrickweathersby.com.

BESSIE ZOLNO (Intimacy Director & Fight Safety Consultant) is a mental health-informed violence & intimacy choreographer and mental health coordinator for theater and film. She thoughtfully cultivates collaborative and consent-driven environments, an approach deeply rooted in her certification in Mental Health Coordination (Association of Mental Health Coordinators). Her expertise is dedicated to facilitating the safe and impactful

execution of heightened moments on stage and screen for performers of all ages, across both professional productions and educational settings. This fall, you can see her work across the Bay Area in: *Hamlet* (Oakland Theater Project), *Frankenstein* (Theater Lunatico), and *The Addams Family* (Berkeley Playhouse). For more information, please visit: bessiezolno.com.

THEATRE RHINOCEROS - Founded in 1977, The Rhino is the longest running LGBTQ+ theatre in the nation. We develop and produce works of theatre that enlighten, enrich, and explore both the ordinary and the extraordinary aspects of our queer community. Our emphasis is on new works, works about under-represented members of the larger queer community, and revivals of lesser-known queer classics. Over the years Theatre Rhinoceros has received many awards of recognition including: Theatre Rhinoceros Day in the City Proclamation from Mayor Gavin Newsom, State Assembly Certificate of Recognition from Senator Mark Leno, recognitions from Congressperson Nancy Pelosi and Assembly Persons Tom Ammiano and Carole Migden, numerous Cable Car, BATCC and TBA Awards and Nominations, and the GLAAD Media Award for Best LGBT Theatre. Theatre Rhinoceros was unsurpassed in COVID-era live theatre production, having presented over 100 individual Zoom performances of over 80 plays during 2020-21, garnering two special commendations from the Bay Area Critics' Circle.

About TJPA's Salesforce Park

Seventy feet above the Grand Hall, Salesforce Park runs the entire length of the multimodal Salesforce Transit Center, which is owned and operated by the TJPA. The TJPA is a historic collaboration between San Francisco Bay Area government and transportation agencies that manages the daily operations of the Transit Center and Park. Nearly four blocks long and home to 600 trees and 16,000 plants arranged in 13 different botanical feature areas, the rooftop park is an iconic garden oasis that is open daily and offers free public activities. Everyone's welcome to enjoy this public park, consisting of a living roof with a curved half-mile walking trail and benches surrounding grassy lawns, dancing fountains, a children's play area, and an amphitheater. More info at tjpa.org.

Theatre Rhinoceros

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In Memoriam

IRA P. KURLANDER

1938 – 2025



We mourn the passing of Ira Kurlander, friend and benefactor of Theatre Rhinoceros for decades and brilliant, iconic San Francisco architect. He and his husband Andrew Guest hosted many out-of-town Rhino artists in their Po-Mo Masterpiece in Cole Valley, itself designed by Ira. Together, Ira & Andy were great supporters of our work and attended virtually every production. We shall miss Ira's ready wit, endless good cheer, and stories about travel, art, architecture, and the good life.

Rest in peace, dear, sweet Ira. You were a gift.

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jofish94117@yahoo.com*

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THE BREAK-UP!

A queer Latina torch song

By Tina D'Elia

Directed by Mary Guzmán

November 6 – 23

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*Brand new works conceived and
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