

Antony and Cleopatra at Maynardville

Antony and Cleopatra, one of Shakespeare's better known tragedies, opens the 55th Shakespeare season at Maynardville Open-Air Theatre on January 16, 2010. This production is presented by Artscape.



Shakespeare's Antony and Cleopatra is a play of epic proportions. Spanning a ten year period of high drama and politics and covering most of the Mediterranean world, Antony and Cleopatra is considered not only Shakespeare's most luxuriant tragedy, but was written by the poet at the height of his literary powers and gives rise to some of his most sensual poetry.

For centuries the tale of the very attractive Cleopatra, last Queen of Egypt, and her adulterous affair with the Roman hero Mark Antony, has captured the imagination and has given rise to a multitude of plays, films and books, but seldom with as much bristling sexuality and insight into the workings of love and politics between male and female, desire and duty, the bed and the battlefield, emotion and reason and between age and youth as in this complex work by Shakespeare.

Cleopatra is without a doubt Shakespeare's most complex female character. Apart from being a mother, wife, lover and ruler of a country with an extraordinary and refined culture and a history spanning three millennia, she, unlike Mark Antony, torn between pleasure and duty, is an astute commentator on life. Intensely aware of herself as a player on the global stage, her sheer unpredictability of behaviour gives the play the syncopated rhythm of a thriller.

The two lovers, Antony and Cleopatra, may be world leaders, but they are also, after all, only human beings—flawed and ageing ones at that. As human beings they share their mortality, jealousy, love, shame, and insecurity. Despite their historical grandeur and thanks to Shakespeare's sensitive portrayal of them, Antony and Cleopatra are no more—and no less—extraordinary than we are.

Antony and Cleopatra is directed and designed by Marthinus Basson; starring an award winning cast - Tina van Wyk Loots (Cleopatra), André Weideman (Antony), Caesar (Andrew Laubscher), Eros (Clyde Berning Sextus Pompeius, a rebel (Nick Pauling) with a full cast.

Antony and Cleopatra opens on Saturday, January 16 at 20:15. Special previews will be January 12, 13, 14 at 20:15 and January 18 & 19 at 19:45 - two tickets for the price of one, the best bargain for the New Year. School performances are scheduled on January 25, 26, February 1, 2, 3, 8, 9, 10 at 19:45. A special

pre-Valentine's Day performance takes place on February 13 at 20:15 with interesting prizes to be won!

Enjoy a lazy pre-show picnic in the park. Picnic hampers can be pre-booked from the Picnic Company (02 706 8470 or) if you do not have the time to carefully select your own picnic ingredients.

Book now at Computicket outlets countrywide or www.computicket.com or Artscape Dial-a-Seat 021 421 7695. For more information visit www.artscape.co.za or www.maynardville.co.za Book early and enjoy the pick of the seats!

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