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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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SHAKESPEARE & VETERANS KICKS OFF ITS OUTDOOR SUMMER PRODUCTION OF

OTHELLO

TOURING THROUGHOUT LOS ANGELES

LOS ANGELES—(May 26, 2010)— The newly formed Shakespeare & Veterans announces its summer outdoor Shakespeare production: *Othello*, the most intimate of Shakespeare's tragedies. *Othello* will premiere on the famous Band shell of West Los Angeles (11338 Santa Monica Blvd.) on July 10th through August 8th. Band shell performances are Saturday and Sunday evenings at 6 p.m. and admission is free. We suggest patrons bring a blanket or a jacket, as the evenings can be chilly.

Othello is Shakespeare's masterful work incorporating elements of jealousy, intrigue, betrayal, love, power, and love of power, set against the rivalry of 16th century Islamic and Christian empires.

Sir Richard Eyre says of the play *Othello*:

"Shakespeare suggests that the threat to Christian civility comes not from an alien power but from the enemy within."

In the past three years, the company has performed for over one thousand people in the Los Angeles area. Productions of *Coriolanus*, *Twelfth Night* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* attracted critical acclaim and enthusiastic audiences.

LA WEEKLY said of last summer's production:

"Staged in a makeshift theatre space atop a musical band shell behind a West L.A. library, the show's...intimacy combined with the picnic-like atmosphere offer a laid-back, unpretentious spectacle that's perfect for summer."

The company's third summer touring production, now called Shakespeare and Veterans, will also perform on some of Los Angeles' beautiful, but lesser-known landmarks. The show will tour to the West Los Angeles VA, South Central Los Angeles and other parks (times and dates to be announced).

Shakes & Vets offers high-energy, accessible, ninety-minute touring productions of Shakespeare, provided free to the public and performed by military veterans. Shakes & Vets is more than a nice idea, it is a national resource. Shakes & Vets is different than any other Shakespeare troupe for two reasons: One, Shakes & Vets helps veterans with

their transition into civilian life, one play at a time. Two, this professional troupe can come to you!

About The Shakespeare & Veterans Organization

“Shakes & Vets” is a military veteran-based, non-profit, touring theatre company based in Los Angeles. The company is a partnership between United States Veterans Artists Alliance (USVAA) and Veterans Center for the Performing Arts (VCPA), two veteran-run organizations dedicated to reuniting military veterans and their civilian communities through the performing arts.

Shakes & Vets:

- Embraces and welcomes all veterans into a positive, creative environment.
- Educates veterans through hands-on collaboration with professional artists.
- Employs veterans in the production of classic-based theatrical productions.
- Empowers veterans by focusing their already strong work ethic towards producing a Shakespeare play.

Shakes & Vets is made possible through grants from: LA Councilman Bill Rosendahl, West LA Neighborhood Council, AmVets Department of California, Metropolitan Transportation Authority, Dax Foundation, Mortise & Tenon, Kucan Family Trust, Dolores Restaurant, United States Veterans’ Artists Alliance, and the Veterans Center for the Performing Arts.

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PRESS RELEASE

WHO: *Shakespeare & Veterans (Shakes & Vets)*

Using Shakespeare to Embrace, Educate, Employ and thereby Empower our military veterans. Further, providing professional touring productions of Shakespeare, which are free and open to the public.

Shakes & Vets is a partnership between USVAA & VCPA, two veteran-run organizations dedicated to using the performing arts towards reuniting military veterans and their civilian communities.

WHAT: **OTHELLO** by William Shakespeare

The *Tragedy of Othello the Moor of Venice* by William Shakespeare as told by our traveling troupe of actors.

Military Veterans, regardless of their experience with acting or Shakespeare, are mentored by professional actors, who may or may not be veterans, to provide a professional, high-energy, highly accessible, ninety-minute version of Shakespeare's classic to the city of Los Angeles.

WHEN: July 10- August 15, 2010

Saturday & Sunday evenings at 6 pm

WHERE: Touring the greater Los Angeles Metropolitan area

West Los Angeles Civic Center (address) (dates/times)

South Central Los Angeles (specific address & time to be announced)

West Los Angeles V.A. (specific date & time to be announced)

WHY: To reunite the military veteran with their civilian communities through

Shakespeare. Further to provide free, professional, accessible productions of Shakespeare

HOW: Your Donations

Los Angeles City Councilman Bill Rosendahl

West LA Neighborhood Council

Metropolitan Transportation Authority

AmVets Department of California

Mortise & Tenon

Dax Foundation

USVAA

VCPA

Kucan Family Trust