

Gia On The Move
Curating the World

Antaeus Flexes Its Muscle in Henry IV Part I

Posted on [March 17, 2015](#) | [Leave a comment](#)

By Tracey Paleo, Gia On The Move



Gregory Itzin and Ramón de Ocampo

Photo by Karianne Flaathen

I had hardly a doubt that Antaeus could pull off their 2015 season opener, a streamlined version of William Shakespeare's Henry IV, directed by Michael Murry. When I merely entered and viewed the space, I immediately got the feeling that my sentiments would be confirmed. The set was bare yet superbly

dressed with perfect simple lighting, an unobstructed raised wood floor, minimal set pieces and a dark overhead back wall mural of the cosmos. Tone and breadth established, there was no need for anything else to be done but the actors to walk on and speak.

To say Antaeus' style with classical material is unique to the company, intellectual, heady, perfected in speech would be to praise them for their natural extraordinary qualities. The "partner casting" whereby two actors share every role, a company tradition, in this case has created symmetry.

“Antaeus wholly actualized a tightly sewn presentation led by a spectacular Ramón de Ocampo ... and by a thoroughly indecorous Gregory Itzin as Falstaff.”

Notwithstanding, that I would have preferred more chemistry between some of the players and a Falstaff who was less pulled back in projection which affected other cast members momentarily towards the end of the first act, but was in every other way, remarkable, or a much more fiercesome Bollingbrook, or a bit more emotional range from both Percy and his wife Kate, would critically overlook the fact that this company's Henry IV delivered with absolute clarity and bold muscularity throughout and especially in the second act battle scenes.

For the uninitiated, Henry IV is a history play, one of the most popular written by William Shakespeare and is the second in a tetralogy dealing the successive reigns of Richard II, Henry IV (parts 1 & 2) and Henry V. [Henry IV](#) depicts a span of history that begins with Hotspur's (Henry Percy's) battle at Holmidon against the Douglas in 1402 and ends with the defeat of the rebels at Shrewsbury in the middle of 1403. Part comedy, part tragedy, part growing-up tale of youthful rebellion, Antaeus' Henry IV asks the question, "What does it mean to become a man?"

Antaeus wholly actualized a tightly sewn presentation led by a spectacular Ramón de Ocampo who drove the events no less impressively here as Hal, as he did in a prior performance of Oedipus, which was my first view of him, and by a thoroughly indecorous Gregory Itzin as Falstaff.

One other actor's work really stood out for me. Adam J. Smith as Mortimer married complete fluidity with the text and a tremendous emotional register and brought the kind of heightened experience that I always hope for in a classical piece. I was inspired to hurriedly dart through my program in the dark no less to highlight his name.

March 12th's Rogue Cast:

King Henry: James Sutorious; Hal, Ramón de Ocampo; Hotspur, Joe Holt; Falstaff, Gregory Itzin; Westmoreland/Glendower/1st Traveler, Joe Hulser; Northumberland/Bardolph/Chamberlain, Marcelo Tubert; Poins/Douglas/Aide, Jason Turner; Worcester/Sheriff, Tony Amendola; Blunt/Mortimer/Peto/2nd Carrier, Adam J. Smith; Gadshill/Lady Mortimer/Messenger, Tro Shaw; Quickly/Vernon/2nd Traveler, Elizabeth Dennehy; Lady Percy/1st Carrier, Desiree Mee Jung

Scenic design for *Henry IV, Part I* is by **François-Pierre Couture**; lighting design is by **Michael Gend**; costume design is by **Terri A. Lewis**; sound design is by **Peter Bayne**; props design is by **Adam Meyer**; fight choreography is by **Ken Merckx**; dramaturge is **Armin Shimerman**; assistant directors are **Maureen Lee Lenker** and **Rachel Berney Needleman**; assistant stage managers are **Anne Kelly** and **Emily Lehrer**; and the production stage manager is **Kristin Weber**.

Now playing until May 3

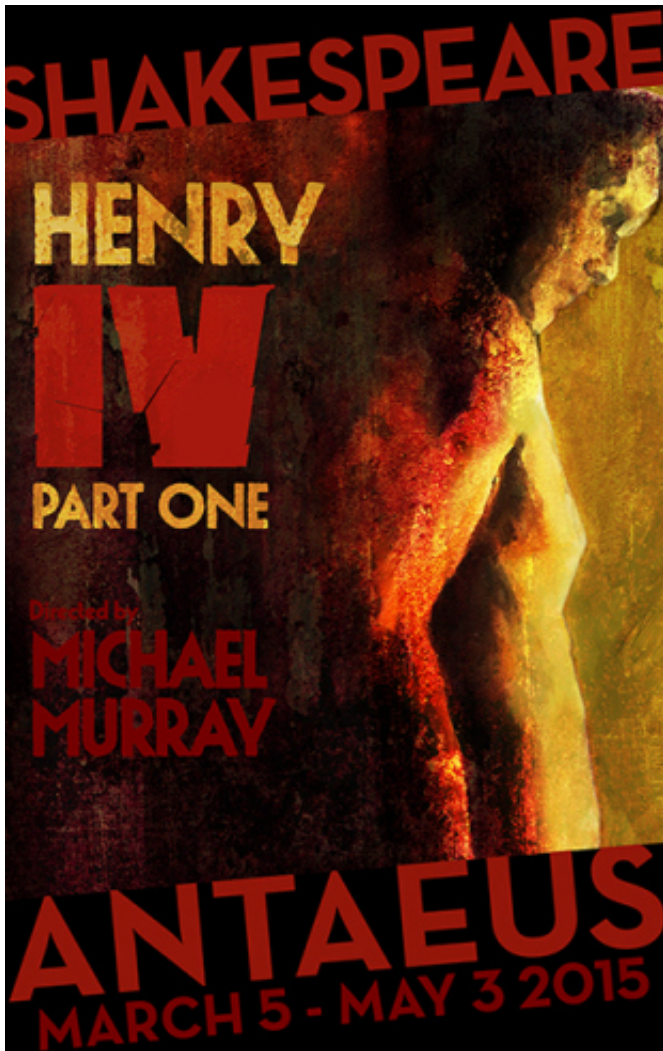
Thursdays at 8 p.m.:

March 19, 26; April 2, 9, 16, 23, 30

Fridays at 8 p.m.:

March 20, 27; April 3, 10, 17, 24; May 1

Saturdays at 2 p.m.:



March 21, 28; April 4, 11, 18, 25; May 2 (no 2 p.m. matinee on Sat. March 14)

Saturdays at 8 p.m.:

March 21, 28; April 4, 11, 18, 25; May 2

Sundays at 2 p.m.: March 22, 29; April 5, 12, 19, 26; May 3

WHERE:

ANTAEUS THEATER
5112 Lankershim Blvd.
North Hollywood CA, 91601
(1½ blocks south of Magnolia)

PARKING:

\$7 in the lot at 5125 Lankershim Blvd. (west side of the street), just south of Magnolia.

FOR TICKETS AND MORE INFORMATION:

818) 506-1983 or www.Antaeus.org

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TICKET PRICES:

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Saturdays and Sundays: **\$34**

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