

St. Mary's College Drama Club

William Shakespeare

# Romeo & Juliet



Wednesday, March 20, 7:00pm

Thursday, March 21, 7:00pm

Friday, March 22, 7:00pm

Saturday, March 23 7:00pm

McCabe Theater

## Dramatis Personae

Prologue/Chorus: Mary Ellen Pedersen  
Romeo, a Montague: Simon Estrada  
Juliet, a Capulet: Caroline Snyder\*, Susanna Childs†  
Lord Montague: Nicholas Foley  
Lady Montague: Mary Verlander\*, Nichole Burns†  
Lord Capulet: Michael Treacy  
Lady Capulet: Mary Peterson\*, Evelyn Dorobek†  
Capulet Nurse: Calista Hermann\*, Theresa Bryant†  
Friar Laurence: Joseph Trask  
Escalus, Prince of Verona: Eduardo Gonzalez  
Paris, friend to Capulet: Matthew McDonald  
Tybalt, Capulet kinsman: James Meuwissen  
Mercutio, friend to Romeo: Joseph Apuzzo  
Benvolio, friend to Romeo: Joseph Grieco  
Sampson, a Capulet/Watch: Michael Godlewsky  
Gregory, a Capulet/Watch: Louis Ruegemer  
Balthasar, Romeo's page: Katrina Dvorak  
Abraham, a Montague: Zachary Gabbard  
Capulet Maid: Madeleine Taleck  
Paris' page: Georgia Gerdes  
Apothecary: Rachel Andrews

\*W/F; †Th/Sa

### Properties & Sets; Costumes; Make-up

Zachary Gabbard, James Meuwissen, Joseph Trask  
Rachel Andrews, Theresa Bryant, Emily Brown  
Adelina Demers, Veronica Foley, Loretta Lopez,  
Valerie Radonich, Theresa Sick, Bernadette Szemborski,  
Madeleine Timura, Philomena Wingerter

Assistant to the Director: Catherine Janacaro  
Technical Director: Nathaniel Sevigny  
Director: Andrew Childs

# Thoughts on Romeo & Juliet

Olivia Baquerizo, SMC class of 2015

Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* has withstood the test of time and rightly maintains its place among the great tragedies.

Some people perceive *Romeo and Juliet* as little more than a frustratingly tragic story of "love at first sight" gone horribly wrong. Worse still, the story has engendered the idea of the primacy of romantic love as expressed through various cinematic renditions of the play and countless parodies in the popular media. Beyond this, many feel discomfort at the idea of coming face to face with the physical realities involved with love.

A number of problems attend these criticisms, however. In the first place, it is unfair to criticize a work of art on account of its numerous parodies. As the proverb goes, "imitation is the sincerest form of flattery," and the number of imitations points rather to the excellence of the original work than its limitations. There is more to *Romeo and Juliet* than just the love story: it has endured for 400 years, and makes facing any personal discomfort worthwhile. On one level, this discomfort can be attributed to our puritanical background, but it is as much genuine fatigue from the battle against pressures to equate love with airy emotion and base carnal desire. It's understandable that the constant fight against an incessant, inverted popular influence can create a distaste for, or at least a mistrust of anything relating to love and physical relationships, yet the play presents serious moral and social lessons both for parents and children.

Love and marriage are themes very relevant for young people, and the titular couple do present an example of true love, at least at the beginning. Romeo gives young men an example of the difference between his sniveling adolescent infatuation with Rosaline, and his true love for Juliet which inspires reverence rather than selfish gratification. Juliet is an example of generosity, self-sacrifice, and fidelity even in the face of intense pressures. If all couples honored each other and treated each other with the tenderness and affection of this pair, far more marriages could avoid crisis. At the same time, married love should be tempered by reason. As Friar Lawrence says, one must "love moderately," lest romantic passions entirely cloud reason, leading to disaster.

The more serious part of the play's moral concerns the older generation. The love of Romeo and Juliet could have healed their city and reconciled their parents, but instead, Romeo and Juliet die despairing of their passion—why? Why do Romeo and Juliet not know how to love rightly? Their youth is partly to blame, but blame lies with their parents as well. The play is not only—or even primarily—about the suicide of two teenagers thwarted in love. As the Chorus enjoins from the very beginning, the play is about “two households, both alike in dignity/...[who] From ancient grudge break to new mutiny,/ Where civil blood makes civil hands unclean.” The authorities who should intervene to guide Romeo and Juliet all fail. Their parents fight out a useless, causeless grudge, senselessly staining the streets of Verona with blood. The Prince of Verona weakly rails against the chaos, but does nothing. Friar Lawrence, whose counsel directs the actions of the two “star-crossed lovers” in the most critical moments, gives them tragically imprudent advice.

This failure in society at large is mirrored in the scions of these houses, who faithfully follow the example of their parents—irrational, passionate anger and violence. Born into a world of violence, they live in violence and end their lives in that violence, their natural recourse when faced with any problem. If parents, then, do not properly prepare their children for love and the vicissitudes of life, “all are punished”—the children through a miserable life leading to a wretched death, the parents through gnawing remorse that comes too late.

Nothing can mitigate Romeo and Juliet's responsibility for taking their lives, but much of the blame rests upon those who gave scandal to young minds and twisted their development. We see the frightening picture of violence begetting violence played out in today's reality: either drunk on modern lies, or falsely secure within the circle of tradition, people do not know how to love. Suicide, divorce, unhappiness, and vice surround us: if we do nothing, what can happen to our own youth we must “with patient ears attend,” and learn.

A.M. † D.G.