Romeo
and Juliet
by WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE
directed by JOSEPH HAJ

PLAY GUIDE
Inside

Guthrie Theater Play Guide
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The Guthrie Theater, founded in 1963, is an American center for theater performance, production, education and professional training. By presenting both classical literature and new work from diverse cultures, the Guthrie illuminates the common humanity connecting Minnesota to the peoples of the world.

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Romeo and Juliet is set in Verona, Italy, where the rival houses of Capulet and Montague have a longstanding feud that erupts with a new fight in the streets. Following this latest brawl, the Prince decrees a penalty of death for whoever next breaks the peace. Romeo, a Montague pining in unrequited love for Rosaline, wasn’t part of the brawl but jumps at the chance to crash a party at the Capulet house when he learns Rosaline is to be there. He, his friend Mercutio and cousin Benvolio arrive at the Capulets in masks, but Tybalt, a hot-headed Capulet, recognizes Romeo’s voice and vows revenge for Romeo arriving uninvited. Romeo sees Juliet, the daughter of Capulet, and they fall in love immediately. Later that night, he climbs the orchard wall to talk with Juliet from beneath the balcony outside her bedchamber. With the help of Juliet’s Nurse and Romeo’s friend and confessor Friar Lawrence, and hoping to mend the families’ division, the two secretly marry the following day, but their happiness does not last long. Tybalt challenges Romeo to a duel, and when Romeo refuses to fight his new kinsman, Mercutio faces Tybalt and is killed. In anger and revenge Romeo kills Tybalt, for which he is banished from the city. He spends a single night with his new bride and leaves for Mantua the next morning. Apparently divided forever, the two young people take desperate action to overcome the forces that keep them apart, but mistimed communication leads to an unfortunate and deadly end.
Production History for Romeo and Juliet

Compiled by Gina Musto, Literary Intern

*Romeo and Juliet* was first performed between 1595 and 1598 at the Curtain, the theater where Shakespeare’s company performed before the Globe opened in 1599. Richard Burbage created the role of Romeo and Robert Goffe, who played most of Shakespeare’s leading ladies, played Juliet. Given the size of the company and number of roles, there was likely a lot of doubling. The production would have used contemporary clothing of the time, as was the norm in Shakespeare’s productions.

The first performance of which we have an official record occurred in 1660 by the Duke’s Company and a revival took place on March 1, 1662. Famed diary-keeper Samuel Pepys was unimpressed with this production, writing “it is the play of itself the worst that I ever heard in my life, and the worst acted that ever I saw these people do.” (Though it’s possible Pepys saw an adaptation of the play by James Howard which featured a Mrs. Saunderson as Juliet, probably the first woman to play the role.)

In October 1679 the Duke’s Company produced Thomas Otway’s *Caius Marius*, an adaptation of *Romeo and Juliet*, giving the play a Roman republican setting with Restoration political overtones. Though critics did not have kind things to say about the production, it held the stage for over 60 years.

In 1744, Shakespeare’s play, with many intrusions from Otway’s version, was revived and adapted by Theophilus Cibber at the Little Haymarket.

David Garrick undertook a revival at Drury Lane in 1748 and prepared an acting version which, with minor changes, held the stage for the rest of the century. It received more than 450 performances by 1800 and between 1750 and 1800 was the most popular of Shakespeare’s plays. Slightly modified by J.P. Kemble around 1803, Garrick’s version continued to be performed until the middle of the 19th century.

In 1845, the play was performed using Shakespeare’s text (albeit heavily cut) at the Haymarket Theatre. Susan Cushman played Juliet opposite her sister, Charlotte, as Romeo.

While the Garrick-Kemble script continued to be used in minor/amateur productions, major revivals (Edwin Booth’s in 1868, Henry Irving’s in 1882, Mary Anderson’s in
1884 and Maude Adams’ in 1899) did not use the script, though Mary Anderson’s did retain a funeral procession Garrick had written in.

Toward the end of the 19th century, changes in the presentation of the play were implemented. Previously, productions were done in contemporary dress (such as Romeo appearing in a waistcoat, knee breeches and a three-cornered cocked hat in the mid-18th century), but from the latter part of the 19th century, an interest in setting and costuming the play for 12th century Verona took hold, and a need for “historical accuracy” could be found in productions into the first decade of the 20th century, particularly under Henry Irving and Herbert Beerbohm Tree.

William Poel, who wished to return to Elizabethan costuming in his productions, and Harley Granville-Barker, who used some of Poel’s ideas and restored Shakespeare’s texts as far as possible, were the leading innovators of what has become known as the modern approach to staging Shakespeare.

Modifications to the text continued, including a 1919 production with Ellen Terry as the Nurse in which all of Act 3, Scene 2 (Juliet learning about Romeo’s banishment) was cut and the play ended with Juliet’s suicide.

Peter Brook’s 1947 Stratford production omitted all of Act 4, Scene 1 (Juliet’s visit to Friar Lawrence) apparently to avoid a scene change and ended with Juliet’s death and a short comment from the Chorus, borrowed from the Prince’s lines.

In 1960, Franco Zeffirelli directed a production of Romeo and Juliet at the Old Vic which, through his later film version in 1968, has greatly influenced the way people generally perceive how the play should be staged and acted. Zeffirelli cut the text to accommodate a more cinematic focus on large action scenes and spectacle.

Interest in making the young lovers more socially recognizable has become a common intent, from a production with Juliet played in a modern American secondary school uniform to Michael Boyd’s RSC production in 2000 where Mercutio was also a suitor for Romeo’s affection, haunting the relationship even in death.

Baz Luhrmann’s 1996 film William Shakespeare’s Romeo + Juliet follows closely to the plot and language of the original play while staging the story in a modern, seaside dystopia of Verona Beach. The setting borrows from other Shakespeare plays to name establishments “Merchant of Verona” Loan Company and a “Mistress Quickly” massage parlor. With densely packed cultural locales, young Claire Danes and Leonardo DiCaprio in the title roles, and a racially and ethnically diverse cast in a setting that could be in Florida or Southern California, this film is visually rich, complex and indicative of America and post-modern culture.
Shakespeare showed the best of his skill in his Mercutio, and he said himself, that he was forced to kill him in the third act, to prevent being killed by him. But, for my part, I cannot find he was so dangerous a person; I see nothing in him but what was so exceedingly harmless, that he might have lived to the end of the Play and died in his bed without any offense to any man.

John Dryden, “Defence of the Epilogue,” 1672

Romeo and Juliet is lyric tragedy, and this must be the key to its interpreting. It seems to have been Shakespeare’s first unquestionable success, proof positive of his unique quality. If marred by one or two clumsy turns, its stagecraft is simple and sufficient; and the command of dramatic effect is masterly already. It is immature work still, but it is not crude. The writing shows us a Shakespeare skilled in devices that he is soon to reject or adapt to new purpose. This, which to the critic is one of the most interesting things about the play, is a stumbling block to its acting. But the passion and the poignant beauty of it all, when we surrender ourselves to them, make such reservations of small enough account.

Harley Granville-Barker, Prefaces to Shakespeare, Princeton University Press, 1947

What I have attempted is to break away from the popular conception of Romeo and Juliet as a pretty-pretty, sentimental love story, and to get back to the violence, the passion, and the excitement of the stinking crowds, the feuds, the intrigues. To recapture the poetry and the beauty that arise from the Veronese sewer, and to which the story of the two lovers is merely incidental.

We knew before we started that to attempt anything so radical as a complete break with tradition in a play so well loved an popular was bound to arouse fierce antagonism. We were right – it has. And we welcome the criticism – it is healthy and it is helpful – but it is only by the judgment of the people coming to Stratford-on-Avon purely to enjoy the performance, and with no preconceptions about Shakespearean production, that we shall be able to tell to what extend our attempt to find a new path for the 1940s is justified and is the right one.

Peter Brook, “Shakespeare Isn't a Bore,” in The Shifting Point, Harper & Row, 1987

Franco Zeffirelli’s “Romeo and Juliet” is a lovely, sensitive, friendly popularization of the play – the lovers, Leonard Whiting and Olivia Hussey, as young and full of life as they ought to be. ... But for the poetry, and the fine archaic dignity of Romeo and Juliet, the story could be taking place next door. It is the sweetest, the most contemporary romance on film this year.


Shakespeare wrote A Midsummer Night’s Dream in the same years that he wrote Romeo and Juliet, and the two plays have a great deal in common. In a way we could say that A Midsummer Night’s Dream is Romeo and Juliet turned inside out, Romeo and Juliet transformed into a comedy. In both plays there are strong central figures of authority who attempt to order the world – the Prince in Romeo and Juliet; Theseus, Duke of Athens, in A Midsummer Night’s Dream; In the two plays there are fathers who want to choose their daughters’ husbands – old Capulet wants Juliet to marry Paris, Egeus wants Hermia to marry Demetrius – and in both cases the women refuse, choosing instead other lovers (Romeo, Lysander) and planning to run away with them. In both plays the disobedient or rebellious daughter is threatened with the life of a nun (Friar Laurence says he will “dispose” of Juliet among “a sisterhood of holy nuns”; Hermia is asked to imagine wearing “the livery of a nun, / ... Chanting faint hymns to the cold fruitless moon”). Both plays strongly emphasize the difference between night, which transforms and changes, and day, which is rigid, inflexible, and associated with law.

Marjorie Garber, Shakespeare After All, Anchor Books, 2004
About the Playwright

William Shakespeare was born in 1564 to John and Mary Arden Shakespeare and raised in Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwickshire, in England’s West Country. Much of the information about him comes from official documents such as wills, legal documents and court records. There are also contemporary references to him and his writing. In all, while much of the biographical information is sketchy and incomplete, for a person of his class, as the son of a town alderman, quite a lot of information is available.

Young Shakespeare would have attended the Stratford grammar school, where he would have learned to read and write not only English, but also a lot of Latin and some Greek. In 1582, at age 18, Shakespeare married Anne Hathaway, and the couple would have three children, Susanna in 1583 and twins Hamnet and Judith in 1585.

After an eight-year gap where Shakespeare’s activity is not known, he appeared in London by 1592 and quickly began to make a name for himself as a prolific playwright. He stayed in London for about 20 years, becoming increasingly successful in his work as an actor, writer and shareholder in his acting company. Retirement took him back to Stratford to lead the life of a country gentleman. His son Hamnet died at age 11, but both daughters were married, Susanna to Dr. John Hall, and Judith to Thomas Quiney.

Shakespeare died in Stratford on what is thought to be his birthday, April 23, in 1616. He is buried in the parish church, where his grave can be seen to this day. His known body of work includes at least 37 plays, two long poems and 154 sonnets.
The Poetry of Shakespeare was Inspiration indeed: he is not so much an Imitator as an Instrument of Nature; and 'tis not so just to say that he speaks from her, as that she speaks through him.

Alexander Pope, Preface to The Works of Shakespeare, 1725

We do not understand Shakespeare from a single reading, and certainly not from a single play. There is a relation between the various plays of Shakespeare, taken in order; and it is work of years to venture even one individual interpretation of the pattern in Shakespeare’s carpet.

T. S. Eliot, Dante, Faber & Faber, 1929

Shakespeare’s mind is the type of the androgynous, of the man-woman mind. ... It is fatal for anyone who writes to think of their sex. It is fatal to be a man or a woman pure and simple; one must be woman-manly or man-womanly.

Virginia Woolf, A Room of One’s Own, 1929

His characters are intimately bound up with the audience. That is why his plays are the greatest example there is of a people’s theater; in this theater the public found and still finds its own problems and re-experiences them.

Jean-Paul Sartre, On Theater, 1959

[Although each play is a separate and individual work of art, they all generally illuminate one another, and taken together they form an impressive achievement in which each individual play acquires more weight and dignity when placed against the background of the whole corpus. Each play is more or less a landmark in the road along which Shakespeare the artist traveled, or, to change the metaphor, each play is a variation on a number of themes that recur in the poet’s work.

M.M. Badawn, Background to Shakespeare, Macmillian India Limited, 1981

If one takes those thirty-seven plays with all the radar lines of the different viewpoints of the different characters, one comes out with a field of incredible density and complexity; and eventually one goes a step further, and one finds that what happened, what passed through this man called Shakespeare and came into existence on sheets of paper, is something quite different from any other author’s work. It’s not Shakespeare’s view of the world, it’s something which actually resembles reality. A sign of this is that any single word, line, character or event has not only a large number of interpretations, but an unlimited number. Which is the characteristic of reality. ... An artist may try to capture and reflect your action, but actually he interprets it – so that a naturalistic painting, a Picasso painting, a photograph, are all interpretations. But in itself, the action of one man touching his head is open to unlimited understanding and interpretation. In reality, that is. What Shakespeare wrote carries that characteristic. What he wrote is not interpretations: it is the thing itself.


Every age creates its own Shakespeare. ... Like a portrait whose eyes seem to follow you around the room, engaging your glance from every angle, [his] plays and their characters seem always to be “modern,” always to be “us.”

Marjorie Garber, Shakespeare After All, Anchor Books, 2004

A Legacy that continues to inspire
Romeo and Juliet is a relatively early work in Shakespeare’s canon, usually dated between 1591 and 1596. Speculation varies about when it may have first been performed, though between 1595 and 1598 seems probable. The first time the play was published was in 1597, when the first quarto appeared.

The primary source for the play was Arthur Brooke's poem The Tragicall Historye of Romeus and Juliet (1562), which was itself based on a French version of the Romeo and Juliet story, Of Two Loves by Pierre Boaistuau, and an Italian novel Giulietta e Romeo by Matteo Bandello, both of which date to the 1590s.

Among the changes and inventions Shakespeare made for his version are the creation of the character of Mercutio, condensing of the action’s timeframe from months to just a few days, and placing the feud between the Capulets and Montagues front and center from the first scene.

Authorship and dating of Shakespeare’s plays is a subject of much academic debate. These dates are speculative, but are the “most probable” dating from The New Oxford Shakespeare: the Complete Works.
Can you describe the world where our production of Romeo and Juliet takes place?
There isn’t a play of Shakespeare’s that is as much written for young people as this play is. There’s an impulsiveness to the rhythms that mirrors the teenage mind. I performed this play several times as a young person and saw the play through the young people’s eyes. Now, as a grown person, I recognize how badly the adults fail these kids. The parents on both sides, the nurse, the Friar, all working from best intentions, fail these young people entirely.

Even though it’s billed as a tragedy, more than half of the play operates as a romantic comedy. When it tips into tragedy, both Romeo and Juliet become more and more isolated from the adults. Especially in Juliet’s case, her parents threaten to disown her, her nurse acquiesces and advises Juliet to wed Paris, leaving absent everyone who can offer a perspective that the young mind can’t possibly process. In the end, the tragedy is not that these are horribly neglectful parents, but loving parents who lose their kids and are devastated.

How does the feud between the Montagues and the Capulets play out on stage?
Our production extends that “brawl” to the whole town, and everyone has chosen sides. We are led to believe that this hatred between the two families goes back generations. So it’s entirely possible that the people involved in this civil strife don’t actually remember or know the source of it. It just exists. So, in the midst of turmoil these two kids, each from the opposite side, fall in love with one another. We hope, together as an audience, that they can somehow bridge this divide.

Is there any hope in the tragedy of the play?
As the Prologue promises at the top, only the destruction of two of the youngest, most promising and most astonishing members of these households will be the catalyst for their parents to begin to reconcile. There’s an idea of redemptive hope at the end of the play: the hope that this community, through this great tragedy, finds a way to heal.
From the Sound Designer: Vincent Olivieri

Describe the world where this production of Romeo and Juliet takes place.

We covered a lot of ground in our first design meetings, but the thing that stuck with me most significantly was the idea of time passing. How do we feel it and mark it? Does time passing feel differently to different characters in the play? Less than a week passes over the course of the play, but each character has a completely different experience during that week. Juliet and Romeo start out not knowing each other, but by the end of the play, they’ve met, fallen in love, gotten married, been kept from each other, and finally been reunited fatefully in the church. That’s a lot of living to do in one week - they’re experiencing life at full-tilt. For their parents, the week passes differently.

From a production and script standpoint, Joe has created an edit of the text that is, as he says, very muscular. It’s lean and ready for action. Things happen fast and furious, and in all of my conversations with Joe and Victor Zupanc (the composer on R&J), we talk about how the play needs to move at a clip. I think of it as moving so fast that it’s almost tripping over its toes. That’s another way to think about time passing. The first is how it passes for the characters, and the second is how it passes for the audience.

In what ways are your design choices helping to build that world?

We experience sound and music over time, so it obviously falls to the sound and music areas to help shape the rhythm of the piece. Throughout the design and rehearsal process, I look for ways to support the rhythm that Joe has set up. Sometimes, we push forward, using music to drive energy and pace via underscoring or transition pieces. Sometimes, we arrest that forward motion, letting the production take a breath, achieve a momentary stasis, before the next frenzied push forward. I’ve got a lot of tools that can help me do this: I can take Victor’s music and make decisions about where the music comes from, how big it feels, how loud it sounds. I can surround the audience with music, or I can have it come from a singular location. I can use sounds, both real (bells, atmospheres) and unreal (tones, pulses) to help support the production’s rhythm and arc.

Cast of Romeo and Juliet (Photo by Jenny Graham)
Can you tell us a bit about the set? In my first conversation with our director, Joseph Haj, we discussed the world of this particular production of *Romeo and Juliet* being somewhere in which the young, exuberant characters are constricted by an environment steeped in tradition. This restrictive and repressive world is where Romeo and Juliet, against all odds, encounter each other and fall in love.

With this in mind, we decided that Verona is too large of a city visually to feel like a more isolated environment. So, for inspiration, I began looking into smaller, more remote mountain towns that exist throughout Italy. These little villages are built on the tops of hills and are walled off, most likely to prevent rival towns from attacking.

The mechanisms that revolve the set from scene to scene are fairly complex. Could you talk about how you developed the concept for these mechanisms? I started playing around with this idea of a tower anchoring the set with two or three different “wheels” pivoting around the tower to convey different parts of the town. I played with where these different scenic elements are located on the thrust stage, taking into account the challenges of audience sight lines and necessary scene changes. To experiment with this interesting jigsaw puzzle of these three dimensional pieces, I made rough white model versions of these elements and fiddled with different ideas. Then I recorded little videos and sent them to the Guthrie’s Scene Shop, asking them to weigh in on the feasibility of these concepts. It’s one thing to come up with the idea and it’s another thing to have it executed.

Why did you choose to surround the set with a wall? I wanted to give the impression that this place is very isolated, and that beyond the wall there is a valley below. So the central tower and the buildings are surrounded by a curved wall that confines the city for the characters.
Talk a little about the inspiration behind the lighting for our production.
Initially, Joe and I wrestled with the idea that although the nighttime is considered by most to be the "scary" time when bad things happen, we saw the opposite happening in this play; bad things happen in the heat of the day. Throughout *Romeo and Juliet*, the characters make many references to how hot and bright it is. So I used that as a jumping off point for creating lighting that suggests what it feels like to be on the streets of our Verona in the middle of a super-hot day. If the sunlight represents menace, then the evening is about love and discoveries. Romeo and Juliet first fall in love at night, and I wanted to explore what that might feel like through lighting.

**Theatrical lighting design seems to be a combination of art and science. Do you think so?**
Lighting design holds a unique place in the creative process for theater because there is a lot of physics and math that go into the design. It starts with ideas and very little science, and then moves to a lot of science as a designer figures out how to make those concepts happen on stage. We must figure out how to create and recreate certain natural and synthetic looks with the equipment that we have at our disposal. This requires an understanding of the physics of light in terms of how it travels, how it generates color and how it is perceived. We have to know how different instruments shine different beams and how different colored lights interact. We also have to know how light affects the eye and how the eye adapts to different amounts of color.

Then we step away from science again as we get into the theater and closer to the opening of the show. Now it’s about the art of lighting. We hope that the science is correct so that the lights are in the right place and they’re doing the right things. As I make the creative choices seen on stage, I don’t want to rely too heavily on science because then I think the lighting feels mechanical. In the end, the lights should invoke emotions, so the process must return to the artistic realm.

*John Catron and Ryan-James Hatanaka (Photo by Jenny Graham)*
To your mind, what is this world of Romeo and Juliet that you created music for?
For me, the world of the play is the old clashing with the new. The young people of the play live in a world layered in history. This really hit home for me when I first saw the set design, which looks like an Italian village dotted with architecture that is hundreds, if not thousands, of years old. But then we contrast that with the contemporary clothes and cell phones of the younger characters.

So this idea of old versus new, or old living in the same space as new, is also mirrored in the music I’m composing. Much like contemporary Italian music, the modern sounds are layered with more traditional, classical instruments, such as mandolins, violins and accordions. Therefore, my approach to the music was to keep some of those old world sounds and at times underlay that with hip hop contemporary sounds.

What does your creative process look like?
I’ll first meet with the director and I’ll hear about his or her vision for the play. Then I’ll see pictures of the set design and costumes. Then I go away and compose eight to ten short pieces, each about two or three minutes long. I probably won’t use any of them anywhere in the final production, they’re just my musical interpretations of characters or places or moments in the play. For Romeo and Juliet, I named one of these musical pieces “Juliet” and another “Apothecary” and yet another one “Capulets.”

I come into rehearsal with all of that material. And then I just start to play. My process is to be in rehearsal as much as possible, and most of that time is me just improvising along with the actors. I’ll just start throwing music in while keeping my eye on the director. Sometimes I get the thumbs up or thumbs down, or sometimes the director will offer suggestions for the intensity, volume or length of the music. The final score that I generate from those ten pieces will most likely be hundreds of sound cues.

In this process, failure is huge. You have to have the courage and also the faith in what you’re doing to just try things and be willing to throw things out when they don’t work. And if it doesn’t work, you’re probably going to be the first one to know. Each failure narrows the path to what will become successful, so failure is very important.
Activities Guide

The activities in this section are divided into four categories based on the Guthrie Education Creative Process Model. This model is a series of collaborative, self-reflexive acts that lead to the creation of art. Although most theater artists create their expressions in a variety of ways, we believe there are four basic characteristics that these processes have in common. In the Guthrie Education Curriculum, these characteristics are how Guthrie Teaching Artists uniquely teach skills and understandings. Our curriculum encourages the use of this process as a jumping off point for “Thinking like an Artist,” leading to a more imaginative and inventive way of approaching individual, community and world challenges.

**IMAGINE – EXPLORE WITHOUT BOUNDARIES**

**Setting the Scene**
*Essential Question:* What other places and time periods can a Shakespeare play be set?

Materials Needed: A large selection of old magazines, art supplies, scissors, glue, large sheets of paper or poster board.

*Description:* Placing the students in groups, ask them to collectively select a setting or scene from the play, studying the scene directions and dialogue carefully. Challenge them to come to a consensus on three things about their scene: what time period, where the scene is located and what the mood or tone of the scene seems like.

Then distribute the magazines, materials and poster board to each group. Displaying an example, ask each group to comb through the magazines and cut out images that represent what their group imagines. Encourage them to draw images if they are not finding exactly what they need in the magazines. Finalize their Vision Boards by gluing these images to their poster board, making sure to fill every blank space.

**Conflicting Ideas**
*Essential Question:* What real-life conflicts mirror the conflict between the Montagues and the Capulets?
*Materials:* Copies of the Romeo and Juliet prologue

*Description:* Begin by asking students to read the prologue out loud, asking them to pay close attention to what it says about the conflict between the families. In small groups, ask students to generate a list of current conflicts that might resemble or relate to the conflict in the play. Using Shakespeare’s R & J prologue as a template, they will create a new prologue for a play about that conflict.

**PLAY – EXPERIMENT WITH POSSIBILITIES**

**Going to the Party**
*Essential Question:* Who are the other people that exist in the world of Romeo and Juliet?
*Materials:* a variety of party favors

*Description:* In small groups, ask the students to imagine what the Capulet party actually looks like and who might be at there. Ask each group to create a short scene around another event that happens at the party. Encourage the groups to think about how their characters ended up at the party (i.e. did they get invited because they are a family member?), what they hope to gain by being at the party (i.e. hoped to be seen at a popular function) and if the situation of their scene is getting them closer to those goals. Ask each group to perform their scene for the class.

**In Not So Many Words**
*Essential Question:* How can the same story be told through movement and gestures?
*Materials:* None

*Description:* Select scenes from Romeo and Juliet that involve a good amount of action (i.e. a fight scene). Dividing the class into small groups, ask them to read through the scene and determine what is actually physically happening. Selecting roles, instruct each group to tell the story of their scene without the use of words, using only action to convey what is happening. Process with the group by asking them to explain what they saw to see if the performing group’s scene was effective.

**CREATE – MAKE ARTISTIC CHOICES**

**What Is a Montague and a Capulet?**
*Essential Question:* How can artistic choices be represented on stage?
*Materials:* Art Materials, Logo examples

*Description:* Start the activity by reviewing logos, pointing out that logos use images, colors and words to convey meaning. Individually or
in small groups, ask the students to imagine how they picture each family looking. From that vision, pass out the art materials and ask them to create a logo for the Montagues, the Capulets, or both.

**REFLECT – INVESTIGATE THE IMPACT**

**Stopping the Conflict**

*Essential Question: How could different decisions lead to a different outcome?*

*Materials: None*

*Description: After reading or seeing Romeo and Juliet, ask the class in small groups to draw a straight line on the board or on a piece of paper. Explain that the beginning of the line is the start of the play and the end of the line is the last scene, so the line represents the linear plot of the play. Instruct them to go through Romeo and Juliet scene by scene, making a dot for every decision made in that scene. They should estimate where the decision happens in the story and place it on the line corresponding to that location. Also, for every dot on the line, ask them to draw a line and write a brief description of that decision.*

For the second part of the activity, ask the groups to draw a parallel line below their Romeo and Juliet timeline. Ask the groups to each pick one of the decisions on their timeline and to brainstorm other possible ways that decision could have been made. Connect that dot to the line below (creating an “alternative timeline”). Ask the groups to imagine a new timeline from that point in the play forward, choosing one of the alternative ways that decision could have been made.

**Interviewing the Characters**

*Essential Question: How is a story told from multiple perspectives?*

*Materials: None*

*Description: Divide the class into interviewers and interviewees (there should be less interviewers than interviewees). For each interviewer, ask them to imagine they are reporters on the scene shortly after the killing of Mercutio and Tybalt. Ask the interviewees to imagine themselves either a named character from the scene (i.e. Benvolio) or a bystander that was present in the streets. Encourage them to picture the incident from their character’s perspective. Roving around the “streets,” ask the reporters to interview the characters, gathering more information about the incident. Finally, ask the reporters to describe to the class what they learned about the event from their interviews.*

Ryan-James Hatanaka and Kate Eastman
(Photo by Jenny Graham)
For Further Reading and Understanding

EDITIONS OF ROMEO AND JULIET

- Romeo and Juliet, The Arden Shakespeare, edited by Brian Gibbons
- Romeo and Juliet, Norton Critical Editions, edited by Gordon McMullan
- Romeo and Juliet, The Oxford Shakespeare, edited by Jill L. Levenson


FILMS

- Romeo & Juliet, directed by Carlo Carlei, adapted by Julian Fellowes, with Douglas Booth as Romeo and Hailee Steinfeld as Juliet, 2013
- *William Shakespeare's Romeo + Juliet*, directed by Baz Luhrmann, with Leonardo DiCaprio as Romeo, Claire Danes as Juliet, 1996
- Romeo and Juliet, directed by Franco Zeffirelli, with Leonard Whiting as Romeo and Olivia Hussey as Juliet, 1968
- Romeo and Juliet, directed by George Cukor, with Leslie Howard as Romeo and Norma Shearer as Juliet, 1936

BOOKS ABOUT ROMEO AND JULIET AND THE ELIZABETHAN WORLD


OTHER MEDIA

- Folger Shakespeare Library
  www.folger.edu
  The wealth of resources found on this site include lesson plans, study guides, and interactive activities.
- *Internet Shakespeare Editions*
  Shakespeare Unlimited
  A biweekly podcast produced by the Folger Shakespeare Library that features interviews with Shakespeare experts on topics ranging from adapting Shakespeare, to what Elizabethans ate, to discussions about current productions.
  http://internetshakespeare.uvic.ca/index.html
  Collection of materials on Shakespeare and his plays, an extensive archive of productions and production materials.
- Shakespeare Uncovered
  http://www.pbs.org/wnet/shakespeare-uncovered/
  A series that goes in-depth into one play per episode. A host investigates the text, and its interpretations, visiting companies in rehearsal and in performance. Full episodes can be viewed online.
- *MIT Shakespeare: The Complete Works Online*
  http://shakespeare.mit.edu/
  PlayShakespeare.com: The Ultimate Free Shakespeare Resource
  After registration, access to the full texts of the plays, synopses, the First Folio and study aids. Also produces a smartphone App with the full texts of the plays.