

**WATERSHED
PUBLIC THEATRE**

presents

Romeo & Juliet

by William Shakespeare



June 16,17, 23, 24, 2023 7:00 pm

June 18 & 25, 2023 3:00 pm

*Cherry Theater
Columbia State Community College*

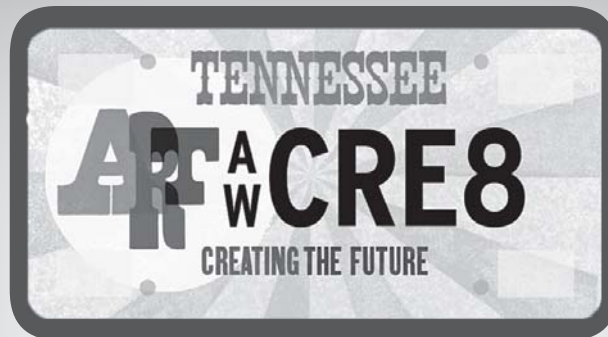
Director's Note

Romeo & Juliet is arguably the most popular of Shakespeare's works, whether performed or read. Audiences continue to be captivated by this story of two star-crossed lovers. To bring this more than 400-year-old play closer to us, we found a similar long-standing family battle on American soil in the infamous Hatfield—McCoy feud. We are taking a few historical liberties, expanding roles for women.

In prepping for this production, one theme kept creeping into my mind: Division. The town of Verona is completely divided due to the feud between the Capulets and Montagues. This animosity is visceral and timeless. One cannot help but notice the parallels to the division felt in our current climate, around any number of issues. You name it, we fight about it.

Through his play, Shakespeare seems to say that two things can conquer this type of unrest: love and shared tragedy. But that is entertainment; real life is much more complicated. The divisions we experience in our present moment come from several sources, but we as individuals can make a conscious effort to combat them before we go through devastating tragedies. Just like the characters of *Romeo & Juliet*, we can choose to let go of the biases we hold, both in small ways and large, and learn to come together in love, understanding, and friendship.

— Brad Oxnam



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Romeo & Juliet

by William Shakespeare

Cast

Romeo	Christian Randell
Juliet	Hallie Long
Lady Capulet	Kay Ayers
Nurse	Deb Meeks
Mercutio/Mayor	McKenna Steel
Friar Laurence	R Scott Cantrell
Tybalt/Friar John	JR Knowles
Benvolia	Shaelyn Taylor
Lord Montague	John Mauldin
Paris	Tyler Worden
Georgina	Inez Vega-Romero
Beatrice	Katelyn Rust
Sampson	David Fonville
Annabel	Clare Bowman
Petra	Heather Barnard*
Apothecary	Zach Perkins*

Production Team

Director	Brad Oxnam
Stage Manager	Susan Gaw
Assistant Stage Manager	DeAnna Parker
Fight Choreographer	Eric Pasto-Crosby
Intimacy Director	Rachael Murray
Costume Design	Sara McLoud
Hair & Makeup Design	Charlotte Nickell
Light Design	Eva Orman-Garrett
Sound Design	Kristin Carter
Technical Director	Justin Blackburn
Scenic Construction	Justin Blackburn, Jamie Blakeney Steven Miller, Zach Perkins, Krista Totten

Setting

A fictional Appalachian town of Verona, in the American South,
circa the late 1800s

* Indicates a member of WPT's Journeyman Troupe

There will be one 15-minute intermission between acts.

The Cast



Kay Ayers (Lady Capulet) is thrilled to be back again on the WPT stage! She was last seen in *Little Women the Musical* as Marmee. Previous WPT credits include Nurse in *Romeo & Juliet* and Ghost of Christmas Past in *A Victorian Christmas Carol*. Her love of Shakespeare drew her back to the stage to share this timeless story in a very stimulating gender-bending role. Kay is grateful for the opportunity to work with this remarkable

company again! An Illinois native, Kay has become a staple in Middle Tennessee's theatre scene for almost three decades. She is a graduate of Millikin University's theatre program and has graced most of Nashville's stages at some point. She'd like to thank her partner-in-crime, Michael, for his support, especially when running lines!



Heather Barnard (Petra) has been involved in theatre her entire life and is so excited to be a part of this amazing production of *Romeo & Juliet*! This is her second show with Watershed Public Theatre and she is looking forward to doing more with them. She would like to thank her family and friends for always being a giant support to her in following her dreams of acting and also her dog Gibbs for just being the best! She would like to dedicate

this show to two of her dear friends, Rachel and Michael. While their love story is not quite like *Romeo & Juliet*, it's still inspiring. Enjoy the show!



Clare Bowman (Annabel) is thrilled to be performing in her first show with Watershed Public Theatre. Favorite roles she has played are Sarah in *Sarah Plain and Tall* and Ouiser in *Steel Magnolias* with her high school theater. She is grateful to make her professional theatre debut and to be a part of the amazing cast and crew of *Romeo & Juliet*.



R. Scott Cantrell (Friar Laurence) is a professional actor with more than 30 years in the theatre. He earned his BA in Theatre from Anderson University and his MFA in Acting from Michigan State. As founder of the Spokane Shakespeare Society, Scott would be happy if he could do nothing but Shakespeare for the rest of his life.



David Fonville (Sampson) is from Mt. Pleasant and is delighted that you are witnessing his Watershed Public Theatre debut! His most recent productions include Dr. John Seward in *Dracula*, Lucien P. Smith in *The Boys Next Door*, and Richard Hannay in *The 39 Steps*. He is extremely appreciative of his loving family, friends and wife who continuously support his theatrical endeavors.

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watershedpublictheatre.org/support-us

The Cast *(continued)*



JR Knowles (Tybalt/Friar John) is a Nashville-native actor who received his Bachelor's in Theatre at Middle Tennessee State University. You may have seen JR at WPT as Prince Rude in *Those Wicked Stepsisters*, Professor Bhaer in *Little Women the Musical*, Mr. Darcy in *Pride and Prejudice*, himself in *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (Abridged)*, and Bob Cratchit in *A Victorian Christmas Carol*. He is deeply grateful for this opportunity to serve the community with his craft. Thank you for supporting local arts.



Hallie Beth Long (Juliet) is excited to have the opportunity to perform in such an iconic Shakespeare play! Previous credits include: *Little Women the Musical* (Beth, Watershed Public Theatre), *Brooklyn: the Musical* (Brooklyn, Street Theatre Company), *Cendrillion* (featured ensemble, Franklin Light Opera), *Sister Act* (ensemble, Chaffins Barn), *Gypsy* (ensemble, Studio Tenn), and upcoming: *Pinafore* (Women's Chorus, Franklin Light Opera). Hallie graduated from Belmont University with a BFA in musical theatre. She is currently completing her masters in education at Middle Tennessee State University and working as the theatre teacher and director at Sunset Middle School.



John Mauldin (Lord Montague) is an Atlanta native, but he has called the Nashville area home since 1992. He graduated from Middle Tennessee State University with a BS in Speech & Theatre in 1997. He went to graduate school and received his MFA in Theatre from Florida Atlantic University in Boca Raton, FL. He returned to the Middle Tennessee area in 2003 and pleased to have been working in the Nashville professional theatre community for the past twenty years.



Deb Meeks (Nurse) has been donning a costume and taking the stage to share her love of theatre with audiences for more than forty years — years filled with characters and costumes and stories and shared experiences. She holds an M.Ed. in Speech & Theatre and considers it a joy to be able to continue to do what she loves — whether from a classroom, a director's chair, or in front of an audience like yourselves. This is her second Watershed Public Theatre production; she portrayed Aunt March in *Little Women the Musical*.



Zach Perkins (Apothecary) moved here two years ago from Kansas. Local credits include *Those Wicked Stepsisters* with Watershed Public Theatre, as well as *Hamlet for Community Theatre*, *Inherit the Wind* and *Father of the Bride* with Maury County Arts Guild. He has enjoyed getting involved in local theatre and can't wait to do more!

The Cast *(continued)*



Christian Randell (Romeo) is happy to be back on the stage after a three-year hiatus! This is his first show with Watershed Public Theatre and he is loving every minute of it. Previous credits include *Macbeth* (Macbeth), *Silent Sky* (Peter Shaw), and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Demetrius). He is glad to be sharing the stage once again with his wife, McKenna, and wishes WPT would have cast their cat to make it a full family show! Check out his podcast “Improv Tabletop,” anywhere you get your podcasts. Enjoy the show!



Katelyn Rust (Beatrice) is so excited to be performing again with Watershed Public Theatre! She spent time studying musical theatre at California State University of Fullerton, where she received vocal and acting training. Some of her favorite roles to date are *Stagedoor* (Terry), “The Sin Eater” (Little Sister), and *Little Women The Musical* (Amy). All her love to Tim and their boys.



McKenna Steel (Mayor/Mercutia) is excited to be working on her second Watershed Public Theatre production! With her previous work on the Watershed stage as Meg March in *Little Women the Musical*, she is thrilled to explore such a different character as Mercutia. Other roles include *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Helena), *Cymbeline* (Queen u/s, Cornelius), and *Silent Sky* (Williamina Fleming). She is loving being able to share the stage with her husband, Christian, and is very grateful to their cat for not destroying their house since they have been gone so much! Down with Capulets!



Shaelyn Taylor (Benvolia) is a recent graduate from Nebraska Wesleyan University, with a BFA in Acting. She is seen all around the theatre, but has a heart for performing. Shaelyn is happy to be making her Watershed Public Theatre debut. She thanks her friends and family for supporting her, and the audience for supporting live theatre. Enjoy the show, and be brave!



Inez Vega-Romero (Georgina) is so excited to be appearing in her first production with Watershed Public Theatre. She's recently been seen in *The Welkin's* US premiere and *Pippin*. A special thanks to those she holds dear—thank you always for the support.



Tyler Worden (Paris) is so excited to be in another Watershed Public Theatre production! Previously, they have played John Brooke in *Little Women the Musical*. Other credits include *Enemy of the People* (Hovstad), *When She Had Wings* (Sound-Op), *Mamma Mia!* (Ensemble/Harry u/s), *Bright Star* (Ensemble) at Lipscomb University; *Twelfth Night* (Valentine/Malvolio u/s) for Nashville Shakespeare Festival; and *26 Pebbles* (Actor 3) for 2nd Theatre Company; among others. They would like to thank their friends and family for their continued support.

The Production Team

Justin Blackburn (Technical Director) is excited to work on yet another production with Watershed Public Theatre. Prior to joining the WPT team, he was actively involved in Theatre Charlotte and worked a variety of jobs on several productions. In his spare time he enjoys thrifting, practicing magic and providing support for theatre programs in Middle Tennessee schools. He resides in Mount Pleasant with his amazing wife Joyce and dogs Ralphie and Rickie. Thank you for supporting local arts!

Kristin Carter (Sound Designer) has traveled the country and world as a sound engineer/designer. Kristin's credits include: Disney on Ice, Princess Cruise Lines, Smoky Mt. Opry, *Church Basement Ladies*, *Menopause: The Musical*, *Evita*, *Gilligan's Island: The Musical* and *The Medora Musical* — just to name a few. She lives in Duck River, Tennessee with her daughter Jean and is very happy to be a part of Watershed Public Theatre.

Susan Gaw (Stage Manager) has been in live entertainment for over 25 years, doing everything from dressing ice skaters at a theme park to traveling with Muppets across the country to working concerts to being a wife and mom! She'll let you guess which has been the most challenging. Thanks to Nate, Allison, and Adam for letting her live the dream!

Sara McCloud (Costume Designer) is a Nashville-based reuse artist who loves to forage in thrift stores and other people's houses for the materials she needs. A native of Murfreesboro, TN, she studied costume and fashion design at Middle Tennessee State University. Her work was showcased in *American Tall Tales* (2004) and *Necessary Targets* (2005). She later worked in NYC designing *Underwear: A Space Musical* (2008) and running crew for Terrance McNally's *Some Men* (2007). Sara is delighted to be returning to theatre after a long hiatus by participating in her first Watershed Public Theatre production. She currently resides in Nashville with her two children, Arthur and Beatrice, and her partner Alex Saylor.



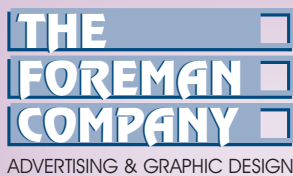
The Production Team *(continued)*

Rachael Murray (Intimacy Director) is a director, intimacy choreographer, deviser, playwright, and producer with ties to Virginia, Tennessee, DC, and New York. Previous intimacy credits include: *RENT* (Nashville Rep); *Little Women the Musical* (Watershed Public Theatre); *Macbeth*, *Pericles*, and *Two Gentlemen of Verona* (Match: Lit's BARDcore series, Brooklyn). Selected directing credits: *The Best Punk Band in Conway Missouri* (UP Theater Company); *Failure: A Love Story* (Saddle River Day School); *The Desk Set* (Fordham University); *#MomVlogLyfe* (NTC/The Tank); *The Right and Left Plays* (Elemental Women); *Sioux Falls* (Mead Theatre Lab); *ClickB@it* (NTC/CapFringe) and *R.U.R.* (NTC/CapFringe). Founding company member, Naked Theatre Company. rachaelwithanamurray.com

Charlotte Nickell (Makeup & Hair Design) loved creating the hair and makeup looks for this show! She worked with WPT on *Little Women the Musical* (Hair & Wig Assistant), "A Christmas Cabaret" (Wardrobe Coordinator) and *Those Wicked Stepsisters* (Hair & Makeup Design). She received her BA in Theatre Performance at Colorado State University. Other credits include *Little Shop of Horrors* (Hair Assistant), *Three Sisters* (Wig, Hair, & Makeup Design), *Cinderella* (Hair Design), Nashville Ballet's *Peter Pan* & *The Nutcracker 2021* (Makeup Artist & Wig Assistant). She is a hair stylist and extension specialist at Trace Salon in Franklin! More hair extensions like Hallie's and portfolio @beautybythewayside

Eva Orman-Garrett (Lighting Designer) is a media specialist with a focus on lighting design and programming. She earned a bachelor's degree from Middle Tennessee State University and holds an associate degree in video production. Much of her experience as a lighting designer was gained while working in Nashville as a concert technician. A lifelong Tennessean, she lives in Columbia with her partner and dog.

Brad Oxnam (Director) is honored to direct Watershed Public Theatre's production of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, building on the work done by Beverly Mitchell in our tragically cancelled production in 2020. He previously directed WPT's *The Complete Works of Shakespeare (Abridged)*, *Charlotte's Web*, and *James and the Giant Peach*. As an actor and voice talent, he has worked with Actor's Bridge Ensemble, the Inexplicable Dumb Show, the Nashville Shakespeare Festival, Street Theatre Company, WPT (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *A Victorian Christmas Carol*), and as an acting coach for Tennessee Voiceover Studios. He earned his MFA in Theatre Performance from University of Southern Mississippi. He wishes to dedicate this production to the memory of his directing teacher, Louis N. Rackoff.



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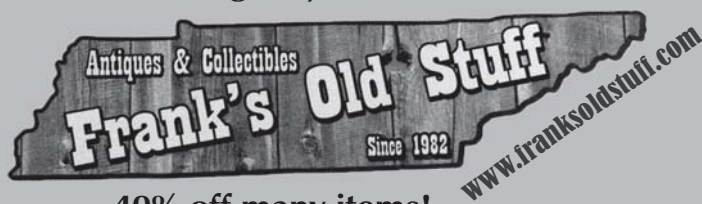
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The Production Team *(continued)*

DeAnna Parker (Assistant Stage Manager) is a Columbia local who has been involved in the theatre community since 2014. She was assistant stage manager in Watershed Public Theatre's production of *Little Women the Musical* in October 2022. Before then, she worked in stage management for Building Blocks School for the Arts, as well as Lee University, her alma mater. She looks forward to working with WPT on future productions.

Eric D. Pasto-Crosby (Fight Choreographer) is a proud native of Nashville. He graduated from University of Colorado at Boulder with a B.F.A. in performance studies. There he studied stage combat and fight choreography under Fight Master Geoffrey Kent, and later with Fight Master Richard Ryan. He has choreographed fights for Nashville Children's Theatre, Belmont University, Vanderbilt University, Nashville Opera, Chaffin's Barn Dinner Theatre, Street Theatre, Nashville Shakespeare Festival, Tennessee Shakespeare Festival, Tennessee Repertory Theatre (Nashville Rep), People's Branch Theatre, Blackbird Theatre, Woven Theatre, and was fight captain and co-choreographer for Stage One: The Louisville Children's Theatre and The Colorado Shakespeare Festival. A loyal member and certified advanced actor combatant through the Society of American Fight Directors, he has choreographed violence for many films, for schools in the Nashville area, and has been the stage combat instructor for Belmont University for the last 10 years. He is also a proud member of Actors' Equity Association.

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Our Mission

At Watershed Public Theatre, we believe that theatre is the ultimate collaborative art and work to bring together arts professionals, volunteers, students and patrons to share in the illumination that only live performance can provide. We maintain our focus on nurturing community and practicing social and environmental responsibility while striving for the highest quality of artistic and educational experiences.

Watershed Public Theatre extends special thanks to the following individuals and organizations for their assistance and in-kind donations:

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John M. Schweri, MBA
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